

**Steering
MINUTES
September 4th, 2015**

Present: Amy Martin (AM), Hamad Sindhi (HS), Jen Prince (JP), Cecilia Salvi (CS), Liza Shapiro (LS), Theodor Maghrak (TM), Kyla Bender-Baird (KBB), Charlotte Thurston (CT), Carlos Camacho (CC), Jeremy Randall (JR).

Absent: Saiful Saleem (SS)

Plenary

Hamad Sindhi calls the meeting to order at 6:14pm.

Executive Committee

I. Approval of Agenda

1. TM motions to approve the agenda, JR seconds.
2. HS motions to amend the agenda, to add the following items to new business, AM seconds.
 - a. Alternate for Curriculum and Degree Requirements Committee (#8)
 - b. Steering Retreat Discussion (#9)
3. The agenda is approved unanimously.

Steering Committee

Constitution and Bylaws

Grants

Health & Wellness

II. Approval of Minutes

1. CS motions to approve the minutes of June 17, 2015, LS seconds.
2. The minutes are approved unanimously.

Outreach

Student Services

III. Executive Committee Reports

1. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Amy Martin)
 - a. During the summer the DSC received complaints about an event hosted by the chartered org Africa Research Group, where the students did not follow room reservation guidelines. The Co-Chairs are sending an email to the group about the importance of respecting policies, and will discuss this with Elise Perram in Student Affairs at our meeting this month.
 - b. On the DSC website, there is a Non-DSC Room Reservations form which does not work. Please inform students who would like to request one of the rooms in the GC other than our rooms to contact AM or their APO to make a request.
 - c. When placing a room request on hold because it is more than 8 weeks away, please check the requests already on hold for any conflicts. We can usually suggest a room change or a slight time change to accommodate.
 - d. All chartered orgs are currently marked with a pending status. They will be marked active and be eligible for their \$300 allocation once they have received enough roster signatures (around 20) and have submitted a report for Spring 2015. Forward questions from chartered org leaders to AM or Jen (for funding questions). If you hear from students hoping to start a chartered org, please put them in touch with AM.
 - e. AM will be notifying two chartered orgs shortly that the de-chartering process has begun because they have been inactive for three semesters, those are the Internet Research Team and the Utopian Studies Group.
 - f. The DSC tries to encourage students to form Program Student Associations within their programs, which are student governments for the program. They really can increase student communication, engagement and power within programs. This is important because there are programs that have internal practices that run counter to GC bylaws or sometimes don't act in the best interest of students. If you hear about any students who are organizing within

USS Advisory Committee

Advocate Advisory Board

OpenCUNY Board

Governance Task Force

- their own program and need some guidance, please point them to the PSA section on our website and send them to AM.
- g. The Doctoral Theatre Students Association hasn't yet renewed their recognition by submitting a list of officers and updated constitution. AM will inform them that they are on probation and renewal will now require a simple majority vote by the Plenary.
 - h. AM will be convening the Governance Task Force in the coming weeks.
 - i. CS asked about the room reservation 2 room for 1 day policy; AM and JP clarify that it must be reviewed by steering. TM is unclear about the exception. AM clarifies it must be a program rep or leader that has to ask to use it.
 - j. LS asks about the upcoming Baruch IO Psych Dept party. AM says that if it is organized by the program, they should ask their APO; if it is organized by students or a chartered org, they can see her. LS asks about off campus events. AM says the same rules apply.
2. Co-Chair for Communications (Hamad Sindhi)
- a. Meetings with Admins for Fall 2015: EC is scheduled to meet with President Robinson on Sep 24th and then again on November 11; EC will be meeting with Provost Lennihan sometime in late October (date TBD).
 - b. Meeting with Duncan Faherty, Director of the Early Research Initiative (9/4/15): Provost Lennihan announced this initiative in late August. Its purpose is to house many the smaller internship-like and some summer fellowships in one place, especially fellowships that encourage students to collaborate outside the GC and/or apply for more funding from outside sources. Duncan talked about his goals for the initiative, i.e., trying to create a sustainable institutional culture of getting GC students into research institutions as quickly as possible and for as long as possible; Duncan would like to get student input on other institutions that would be good sites for research internships. Co-Chairs encouraged Duncan to house information about these fellowships on a website.
 - c. Provost & Senior VP Search Committee: President Robinson announced the search last week. JP and HS are the student representatives on the search committee, which met on Sep 3rd, and was officially charged by Chase to initiate the search. Includes 10 faculty, 1 admin and 2 students. Janet Gornick (Soc) is Chair of the committee; a consulting firm has also been hired to help with the search (Witt/Kieffer). Ads for the position have been placed. The timeline for the committee is set to finalize a candidate by the Spring semester.
 - d. Convocation: HS will be speaking at Convocation this year about the DSC.
 - e. All Committee Chairs: please cc all of the Co-Chairs when you organize your meetings, letting us know of the dates and agendas for the meetings.
 - f. New practice on distributing agendas and resolutions: Due to the experience from last year and feedback from reps, the Co-Chairs met and decided that though agendas for meetings will always be distributed on a regular schedule one week before the meeting (as per NYS Open Meetings laws), resolutions will be emailed to all Reps as soon as they are received by the CCC.
 - g. Lastly, printed agendas will not happen again, in keeping with DSC policy on using less paper; please bring your own or access them digitally from now onwards.
 - h. LS asks about paid internships, and if there is a move away from unpaid ones. AM answers the goals of the ERI are to create a project/internship if there is money behind it already. HS says Duncan is supportive of getting students funding.
3. Co-Chair for Business (Jennifer Prince)
- a. JP explains how officers should do movie tickets. Regal tickets may be added.
 - b. JP discusses issues with the website. There is a disagreement between the company server team and development design. In terms of the server: IT is asking the DSC to update security patches now or else is threatening to shut

- down the website. Before, these updates could be maintained, but now would require 3 times the website budget. JP has asked the Drupal team to pick up the speed on the site.
- c. Budget update: half of the website budget will be used by September. There is a surplus of \$800, this will be a tight year. Please ask before buying supplies, and please use non-DSC printers to print personal items. Also, let's see what foods give more and work well for meetings.
 - d. Legal consultations begin on September 9, and only on the times indicated.
 - e. Ad Hoc Affiliate Review Committee will be meeting again.
 - f. VP for External Affairs committee will re-open.
 - g. Locker raffle: record numbers have signed up. The deadline is Sept 11.
 - h. JP will create a Google doc so that program reps can see how their allocations have been spent, since the form on the DSC website does not work.
 - i. JP discussed the coffee making process in the DSC room, including to make enough when people are around and to turn the machine off.
 - j. TM suggested ways for reducing our carbon footprint.
4. USS Delegate (Cecilia Salvi)
- a. BoT Public meeting will take place on September 21, and will be attended by alternate; BoT hearing takes place on October 1
 - b. CS is the BoT Fiscal Affairs student member (voting), and asked the Chair of USS, Joseph Awadjie about other students they may need for standing committees
 - c. CS met with Chair Joseph Awadjie on June 30 and had a follow up phone call on August 18. They discussed organizational issues within USS; Officer emails, which the Chair said would be instituted by end of his term; training for USS Delegates on Robert's Rules, which CS will conduct at the USS's 2nd Plenary; the Chair promised to get CS the USS budget and minutes (see below), and said that USS is having lots of Website issues, that's why things can't be uploaded; also, Graphic & Media Coordinator is not a web developer, does the best he can. The chair said he will send out 2012 audit by beginning of semester; Donovan updated (see below) that they still don't have the updated list of Delegates from CUNY Central, and once they do, they will send it out.
 - d. CS requested for a response from scholarship committee for numerous emails sent- They notified GC winners the next day. Jen Tang won!
 - e. CS is working on a USS Resolution in support of Adjuncts. CS met with the Adjunct Project on August 25 and discussed the feasibility and their interest in this.
 - f. A sexual harassment case and gender harassment claim by Ana Paola White (USS delegate from Hunter); CS verified that this was not a claim made against the USS, and offered support and resources.
 - g. CS is working together with the USS alternate, Rachel Chapman, and they have met informally to think about different ways to engage the USS and considered ways to reach out to more students and network regarding adjunct and funding issues. HS got USS Alternate email: ussalternate@cunydisc.org. General happiness level: great!
 - h. CS had a phone call with Donovan Borington, USS VC for Fiscal Affairs, re: 2014-2015 Budget. CS brought up a number of preliminary issues she had with budget, and he responded. CS said that applications should be made public and samples put on the website. CS will present a letter after USS plenary.
 - i. Food budget- Scholarship Committee had their food paid for several times; Response: They are required to meet; sometimes we pay out of pocket
 - ii. Travel- Almonte \$400 Amtrak is excessive; Response: It's because of scheduling issues, he couldn't be on the bus

- iii. Photographer fee- where are the pictures? Response: This is someone who has worked for us for free in the past (4 years, only got paid 2, so it's like "backpay")
 - iv. \$4000 iPads- hard to carry materials; Those are used instead of photocopying during meetings; CUNY property; not all have been sent yet
 - v. \$300 Magazines- educational purposes; people to read while they wait
 - vi. \$14,500 for Black and Puerto Rican Caucus Gala Tickets which is not CUNY- Response: they give us intern and scholarship opportunities; table at the caucus; USS delegates network with elected officials; 50-60 students taken; \$40 tickets
 - i. CS received most of the 2014-2015 USS Minutes on September 4, which will be put up on the USS blog after being reviewed. In the email, Fernando Araujo, USS Executive Director, noted "We are working to update the website. They will be up within the week."
5. UFS Liaison (Liza Shapiro)
- a. Goals for the year: 1. Continue Stephanie Vella's efforts to increase communication between UFS & USS as well as between UFS & DSC. 2. Co-write articles for advocates with USS delegate. 3. Invite the UFS executive director (or chair) to attend DSC plenary so as to raise the visibility of graduate student instructors.
 - b. NYS Sexual Assault Bill: CUNY must update its policies and procedures to comply with recently adopted NYS law on campus sexual assault. UFS sent out materials of drafts incorporating language with two days to respond. The bill requires all NY state universities and colleges to include uniform response policies and procedures to respond to sexual assault, dating and domestic violence and stalking. LS read some of the Bill's requirements which are being adapted into CUNY's Policy on Sexual Misconduct and other CUNY policies, including a statewide uniform definition of affirmative consent for sexual activity (CUNY's definition goes above what is required by the law); Alcohol and/or Drug Amnesty Policy; a Student Bill of Rights for those reporting sexual misconduct as part of its code of conduct. All in all seems to be a good step for student protection.
 - c. LS recommends advocating for a Bill of Rights for those who wish to report gender violence considering rise of violence against transgender men and women.
 - d. Next UFS plenary is September 29th.
 - e. AM adds that the state voted for these changes in response to the federal law. The Co-Chairs talked with the title XI coordinator and steering officers, chartered org leaders and affiliates will be attending a training. TM asks when, and HS has not heard back yet.
- IV. New Business
- 1. Search Committee for Provost and Senior VP
 - a. Already reported on by HS in III.2.c
 - 2. Appointment of 3 new EDLAB members
 - a. JP discusses the makeup of EDLAB: 9 emeritus officers, with three-year appointments.
 - b. Current members are: Jared Simard, Colin P. Ashley, and Jen Tang
 - i. CS nominates Dominique Nisperos
 - ii. CT nominates Rebecca Salois
 - iii. KBB nominates Anick Boyd
 - iv. JP nominates Stefanie A. Jones
 - v. CT nominates Ashna Ali
 - vi. AM nominates Chris Alan Sula

- vii. JP nominates Chrissy Nadler
 - viii. KBB nominates David Nagy
 - c. The officers discuss the candidates in ranked order, and take into consideration the offices they have held. JP clarifies that if the members graduate, they can still be consulted. CT brings up the list of the nominees from the last EDLAB discussion: Colin P. Ashley, Stefanie A. Jones, Kristin Moriah, Eero Laine, Jen Tang, Chrissy Nadler, Jared Simard, Anick Boyd, Anne Donlon.
 - d. CS proposes the ranked list be: Dominique Nisperos, Anick Boyd, Chrissy Nadler. CT seconds the motion. AM adds Chris Alan Sula and Eero Laine, and KBB seconds.
 - e. Motion passes unanimously.
 - 3. Review of Affiliate Goals
 - a. HS gives a brief overview of the process of reviewing affiliates.
 - b. AFC: The officers discuss the AFC's statement, and give suggestions which JP will relay. JP adds that the AFC brought in \$2,000 last year that came through the DSC.
 - c. Open CUNY: The officers discuss Open CUNY's statement, and give suggestions which JP will relay. Overall the officers are happy with Open CUNY, and CT suggests using this report as a model for others.
 - d. Adjunct Project: JP briefly contextualizes the report, stating that last year's officers were happy with the AP but wanted to make sure that each individual's merits were discussed, since the DSC does not appoint groups but individuals as affiliates, and is accountable for their stipends. The officers discuss the Adjunct Project's statement, and give suggestions.
 - e. The Advocate: The officers discuss the Advocate's statement, and give suggestions which JP will relay, including concerns about making the Advocate completely digital and including non-GC student contributors. JP adds that Dadland had asked about paying faculty for their contributions, which the DSC does not support. CT suggests he work with SS to outreach to doctoral students based on other campuses.

HS declared a break from 9:45pm until 9:55pm.

- 4. Steering Discretionary
 - a. JP motions that \$3000 of steering discretionary be used to pay the social media correspondents, and HS seconds.
 - b. The officers discuss the work of the social media correspondents, and calculate what they receive per hour. The officers express concern over the amount given the budgetary limitations, and consider that this must be balanced against other projects. The officers discuss doing some of the social media work themselves, but want to give the social media correspondents enough time to find other avenues of work. JP mentions that the \$3000 will cover the correspondents until May, and AM adds that the situation can be reevaluated then.
 - c. Motion passes unanimously.
 - d. JP motions to allocate \$500 for the Steering Life and Services committee, and CC seconds.
 - e. Motion passes unanimously.
- 5. Prayer and Mediation Space for Students
 - a. The officers discuss the need for a prayer and meditation space for students. CS suggests using a classroom, even if it changes every week. TM says it would be disrespectful to ask students to constantly move around. AM says this is an ongoing issue and she will bring it up to Chase Robinson during EC's next meeting with him.
- 6. Advocate Articles by Steering Members

- a. AM asks for clarification about the reasoning behind this activity is, and JP asks how it will be different from the DSC blurbs we already submit. CS says it is intended to increase the presence of the DSC and give more detailed information on issues the DSC works on that are of interest to students.
 - b. CS and LS will co-author an article in the upcoming September Advocate, followed by JP and CT and then TM and CS.
 7. Food and Space Issues during Orientation and Parties
 - a. The officers discuss the difficulty of managing food and space, both of which are limited, during events, and ways to make sure all participants are fed. HS says this is a legitimate concern and JP adds that we are running low on budget, so the DSC needs new and creative ways to handle events within our budget; think in terms of budget instead, dividing food into smaller pieces, getting outside funding, monitoring food.
 - b. CC adds that the DSC should be cognizant of participants who need kosher and halal foods.
 8. Alternate to Curriculum and Degree Requirements Committee
 - a. AM says this Grad Council committee meets once before each Grad Council, and is chaired by Duncan Faherty.
 - b. JR recommends HS
 - c. JP recommends Michael Rolland
 9. Steering Retreat
 - a. The officers discuss options.
- V. Steering Officer Reports
- a. Officer for Funding (Teddy Maghrak)
 - a. The Grants Committee met on August 25, with all members present. The total budget is \$19,750, with the maximum grant set at \$750 and the maximum start-up set at \$250. No grant money is awarded at this meeting.
 - b. Publicity requirements were changed, "CUNY Academic Commons" and "The DSC's social media event form" are now added to the approved media. A hyperlink for the event form is on the site.
 - c. Successful grants have been posted on the website. Blog post is also up on the DSC site and is featured.
 - d. Fall semester dates are set for Monday, October 5, 2015, Monday, November 2, 2015, and December 7, 2015; all meetings will be held at 6:30pm. Spring semester meetings will be decided at the December 7th meeting.
 - b. Officer for Governance & Membership (Kyla Bender-Baird)
 - a. The first Curriculum and Bylaws meeting is set for September 9.
 - b. Membership: all at-large positions are filled.
 - c. Program representation: KBB is working on an issue in the Philosophy with a runner-up and in the Theater Department, where there was confusion as to who was elected.
 - d. Petition drives for programs that didn't get a representative-Music DMA Dept is confirming with Elise Perram and are checking to see if 5 students who signed the petition in the spring count
 - e. Continue filling in suggestions on the proxy spreadsheet.
 - f. JP- commends the work KBB does, which is amazing.
 - g. AM asks who was contacted on the petition drive. KBB responds: Geography, Social Welfare, Business, Engineering, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Music DMA, all through their APOs.
 - h. JP adds that the process to get representation for Women's Studies Program is not finished yet, according to Duncan Faherty.
 - c. Officer for Health & Wellness (Charlotte Thurston)
 - a. The H&W survey still open until Sunday, Sept 6. 143 respondents have taken it, 102 have completed it. Comments were received on wanting to learn more about

- non-NYSHIP health insurance options, more information on site, and more providers.
- b. Upcoming events will be Navigating NYSHIP event sometime in October.
 - c. In response to a recent issue with someone not being able to reach Scott Voorhees about a NYSHIP emergency, the plan is to contact Elise Perram, but students can also talk to Bill McGowan at UB
 - d. CT met with the civil service government office of employee relations, UB office (Talin, Darryl, Leslie) (Scott, Elise) (Jenn C, Jen P, Chrissy N) on August 18 and brought up issues students have been having with ValueOptions: we presented information we had about students getting very late payments, therapists not getting their payments, VO claiming lost paperwork, etc. and how that violates mental parity.
 - e. Darryl, from state: GOER, insisted that he wanted evidence that post transition, there are still problems. Chrissy also noted we might be "canary rather than anomaly"--we use these resources more and are here for a longer time dealing with them. We wanted a systematic way of dealing with issues with ValueOptions, but UB emphasized they deal with issues as they come up; Darryl from GOER seemed to say that he didn't want to look at each complaint about customer services individually, so that seemed to leave us with no one having that responsibility. He also says they, civil services, are monitoring VO and that they have had no issues to their sight with things like having an 18 day turnaround, but as Chrissy noted, this doesn't account for them saying they lost paperwork, or sent it to the wrong address.
 - f. At the meeting, it was brought up how GSEU-- SUNY Union--technically has no legal obligations to meet with us or listen to our concerns, though they probably would and invite us to meetings (in fact Decker said he wouldn't want to start precedent), but we did get a new contact at GSEU who Jenn and whom CT will contact. Our plan piggybacks on theirs, which was great at first, but also means we have no voice in negotiating it, which is problematic; GSEU negotiates what the plan is, but does not choose the providers, that goes through bids.
 - g. The contract was awarded 18 months ago, and there's an extension built in for it to be a 5 year contract, but the state comptroller is reviewing it, and there will be 3 years left if comptroller approves it. Comptroller has a lot of jurisdiction--can sue Empire Plan.
 - h. Command chain is---student, Scott, Bill and maybe Talin, they call civil services for advice, and probably reach out to agency/insurance company from there. CT plans a quarterly meeting with them, hopefully by phone.
 - i. CT met with the counseling staff and discussed how students can avail themselves of services offered. Dissertation group is popular, but there is difficulty in scheduling meetings. Off campus and Skype solutions might be difficult because of privacy laws.
 - j. CT discussed which staff are obligated to be confidential under Title IX. CT is working with the Center to make the signage clear.
 - k. CT suggested they send out an email about day-to-day services.
 - l. CT is also working to get more and different safer sex items, and plans to meet with Ashley, HEC coordinator for the Wellness Center.
 - m. CT is planning to email Steve Neligan, new chef, about getting weekly menus.
 - n. CT is planning to meet people on the Health and Wellness committee to discuss sharing survey results.
 - o. AM asks where the signage is located, and what language is used. JP answers with the names of staff, saying it is not clear who is a mandated reporter. Also, Anick Boyd and Colin P. Ashley are student representatives whose names should be included. LS says she will email the list to CT.
- d. Officer for Outreach (Saiful Saleem)
 - a. No report was submitted at the time of the steering meeting.

- e. Officer for Student Life & Services (Carlos Camacho)
 - a. With a \$500 budget, CC will bring back successful events, especially to continue institutional memory
 - b. CC is developing new ideas and figuring out cheaper prices for some
 - c. Will meet soon with the SLS committee and Co-Chairs
 - d. AM adds that Co-Chairs must be emailed when committee meetings are held
- f. Officer for Technology & Library (Jeremy Randall)
 - a. Meeting for the committee will take place on September 14
 - b. Students have brought up several issues, including lack of a help desk and problems associated with that.
 - c. The library is looking to buying Chrome books.
 - d. AM suggests pushing for varied hours for the help desk staff, since lack of services affects students working late
 - e. TM suggests access to cloud base which Chrome books can run
 - f. TM suggests the former help desk space can possibly be used for prayer and meditation space.
 - g. JP asks for an agreement to stock paper at end of day.
 - h. AM agrees with TM and JP.

VI. Announcements

- 1. CS asks for Steering Officers to get in the habit of sending out minute drafts as soon as possible, and also of sending their reports to the person taking minutes.
- 2. TM asks for a template for the minutes, which are available in emails and on the S drive.

VII. Adjournment

- 1. HS motions to adjourn, and JR seconds.
- 2. Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cecilia Salvi