

Steering Committee *Minutes* October 6, 2017

Plenary Present: Andrew Alger (AA), Shoumik Bhattacharya (SB), Raj Korpan (RK), Teresa Ober (TO),
Executive Committee Alison Parks (AP), Marlene Nava Ramos (MNR), Liza Shapiro (LS), Charlotte Thurston (CT), Anais Wong (AW), Tellisia Williams (TW)

Steering Committee Absent: Nicholas Glastonbury (NG)

Constitution and Bylaws TO Calls the meeting to order at 4:46 PM

Grants

I. Approval of Agenda

Health & Wellness SB moves to approve the agenda. AW seconds.

Outreach

TO suggests the following friendly amendment to the motion to revise the new business items on the agenda as follows:

Student Services

USS Advisory Committee

Advocate Advisory Board

OpenCUNY Board

Governance Task Force

1. Budget
2. Participatory Budgeting
3. Room reservations
4. Minimum course requirements
5. Dsc steering retreat
6. DSC Party.

EDLAB

No Discussion.
Motion with emendations passes unanimously.

Student Tech Fee

II. Approval of Minutes of September 1, 2017
SB moves to approve the minutes from September 1 2017. AA seconds.

No Discussion.

Motion passes unanimously.

III. Executive Committee Reports

1. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Charlotte Thurston)
Report for 10/6 Steering

Currently, there are 5 active chartered organizations: AELLA, STRC, TSO, KSO, and WOCN, of which Tellisia is one of the leaders. 14 with reports.

Sent second email of the semester to chartered org leaders to remind them of active status, room reservation, etc. Also updated the post on getting active status on the website to make sure it reflected current year/semester

Have also been emailing groups who have submitted reports to let them know if they need to make any changes to their report and to give them numbers of roster signees. This seems to have worked so far to get people rallying their members to sign rosters, and to even in some cases change the assumption that you have to wait till the end of the semester to become active, so I'll keep doing it. That said, if you have a chance and want to support some chartered orgs by signing rosters, please do! Even now, now, very now, during this meeting, you can sign some. All but the ones I just mentioned are *not* yet active.

Have also been trying to answer any chartered org leaders questions about reports and active status. Please do send any chartered org leaders who have questions my way, if you see them during office hours.

Am thinking of having a *specifically chartered org related* office hours during the week, to encourage people to come by with q's.

If any of you as steering members are trying to drum up some ideas for what to do for your domain, consider working with or reaching out to chartered orgs (example, off-campus orgs may be good contact for Outreach; H&W and SLS could reach out to see if these orgs can co-sponsor student life events or help get out Safer Sex Materials). Leaders are on DSCWorks website.

Chartered org website: Last year Cecilia made a lovely OpenCUNY website for Chartered Org information, and I want to figure out how to make best use of that, so I'll be meeting with Kristen Hackett of OpenCUNY next Tuesday, 11/10, to see how to encourage chartered orgs to use the site and learn more about using it myself.

Have reviewed 2 new chartered orgs and sent feedback to these leaders about what they might change before presenting at plenary. One of them, a CUNY STEM Outreach Group, seems mostly in order--their signees are all registered students, and their constitution/purpose seem unique and in line with DSC ideals--though the other, a Material Researchers Society Group, may not work out because their constitution as it now stands has a membership fee, which goes against the spirit and letter of DSC by-laws: if they can take out the membership fee, hopefully they can present next plenary. A third one, the ___ group, needs to give me list of signatures.

Thanks to Anais for helping the CUNY STEM group leader with the paperwork for starting the org. On the other side, we have reached out to 3 orgs who have been inactive 3 semesters, based on our vote last steering to begin de-chartering process.

Hoping to have room 5396 open for reserving by next Plenary.

Have contacted Security about leaving the door open/fire code, and waiting till next Monday before contacting Facilities about taking extra furniture in there; wanted to give chartered orgs time to claim that furniture, but as I've mentioned it in two emails now and gotten no takers, I will assume as of Monday that no one wants it.

Thinking a bit about decoration without taking over the space: extra posters, perhaps a corkboard or marker board. Ideas welcome. Probably going to call it something like social/work lounge, because it's set up much like what we have in 5495.

Also on the non-DSC Room Res front: I have met with Gayle Moynihan of Room Res, in September. She is very clear about not having any co-sponsoring outside organizations (because these outside orgs are expected to pay for space), and that my ability to arrange rooms with her is solely for "student organizations" like chartered orgs and, presumably, PSAs, though I think for any PSA event I make with her I have to make it very clear that it's a *student* event, otherwise she'll refer me to APOs. That said, please do refer to me anyone who asks about non-DSC rooms so that we can keep track of whether or not students get charged for rooms. This is an issue we hope to pursue with Provost Joy this month, making sure students are not charged for non-DSC room reservations. On the PSA front: Based on some questions from the last steering meeting, I'm planning on having a PSA info session.

In my research, what I have found out is that an active Student Org in a program, who may already have a voice in their department and a handle on governance, can get access to Votenet, the voting system we use, as well as a more direct connection to DSC info and resources. But there is room, I think, for making these connections stronger, in order to make PSAs power stronger, too.

Elections: we've received the list of registered students, which meant I've been able to do the (somewhat tedious) work of uploading a list of voters to the Votenet system, and that hopefully after a week I'll be able to *officially* work with Alison to get some special elections going for any resigned or delinquent reps. Comp Sci and Possibly Physics special elections coming up.

Have sent out an email about having a Governance Task Force meeting, and need to settle on a date for that meeting, but hopefully it will have happened by plenary or soon after.

On the Room Reservations front, I've been tinkering with the website to make some policies clearer, like clarifying on the Room Res page that events are not officially added to the calendar until 6-8 weeks beforehand. I've also tried to clarify on the "starting a chartered org" page to say it's best to contact me at least 2 weeks before plenary if you want to present your org at the next plenary.

Other things people ask about that you think can be better clarified on website? Tell me!

Upcoming meeting: I am on the Strategic Planning Implementation Committee, which is meeting October 23rd or November 2nd. If you have thoughts about the implementation of the strategic plan, which can be found online: let me know.

Finally: I've added to new business an item about Room Reservation Exception policy, but just to make sure you know: in Room 5495 there is now a list of Programs and Chartered Orgs, so that you can "check off" when orgs or programs use their exceptions

Generally, too, just make sure, when you do room reservations, to double-check with the "room res on hold" list to make sure rooms are not double-booked accidentally.

Another house-keeping item: when you reach out to committees to meet, please CC co-chairs, as we are ex-officio members of your committee. We don't add to quorum, as our governance expert Alison has let me know, but we can be there at your meetings to provide any institutional knowledge if you want. And we just want to know when these meetings are happening, and that they are.

Right now its mid-October, so if you haven't reached out to your committee yet, now would be a good time to do so, to make sure you do meet with them at least once this semester.

Questions:

TO: Is the strategic task force meeting part of Grad Council?

CT: It's a university-wide body.

MNR: Can the furniture that's being given to chartered orgs from the new room be donated to students/student lounges.

CT: I will look into it.

MNR: The ES just expanded its lounge/office to include a library and it may be nice to offer the furniture to student spaces.

2.Co-Chair for Communications (Teresa Ober)

Meeting with Library: We were alerted to the existence of a NYPL Library Advisory Committee and will be following up on that. We are hoping to connect with them to stress the importance of digital databases as essential resources for research purposes. We have also agreed to solicit feedback from students about suggestions or ideas they had about library space on the first floor. Among some concerns with any possible plans are issues related to functional workspaces (i.e., sufficient tables, chairs, electrical outlets, computer stations) and accessibility.

Meeting with Office of Student Affairs: On-site health services or alternative services: Still being decided upon as we speak. Reminder: Any resolutions or surveys distributed to the student body should be sent to the OSA by way of CC before distribution. These are instructions coming from the OSA.

Meeting with IT: The remoting compute software, Citrix, was discontinued due to the high cost associated with, perceived low usage, and increasing difficulties in getting legal approval. Since approximately last year, new policies require that CUNY Central Legal reviews the terms of agreement for all software licenses that are procured by the campuses. This creates a bottleneck. Unfortunately, for now, getting software onto CUNY Virtual Desktop may be the most likely means of getting remote access. The Director of IT is exploring the possibility of "restricting" the access of certain licenses in VD to students on certain campuses so that only students of campuses that are paying for the software have access.

We have agreed to create a form where students can submit complaints about CUNY VD.

If you or students in your program would like to have double monitors in your program lounge, you may want to reach out to IT by submitting a helpdesk email request. They may be able to provide additional monitors, pending availability of equipment.

IT staff is requesting that the DSC website be removed from the server. The proposed timeframe is to have this finished by the end of May/early June. If you know someone who is tech-savvy and could provide some consultation or advice on this matter, please let CCB know.

After the meeting (today), we received an email from IT in follow-up to the meeting with information about the transition to CUNYFirst and how it will impact new and continuing students' log-in credentials.

Meeting with President Robinson: The President's Office has specifically requested that the DSC has encouraged us not to bring non-representatives to these meetings as it encourages the seeking out of support on an individual basis. Rather, the Office has asked that students seek support during his upcoming office hours on Wednesday, November 15 from 4:00-5:00 PM in room 8201.06.

With that said, DSC EC would be glad to bring specific concerns on behalf of students, especially if they are of general concern across the student body.

We discussed issues pertaining to international and master's degree students, students who may be affected by the travel ban and rescinding of DACA, general financial support for master's students, diversity initiatives at the GC and recent faculty hires, advocacy for more state funding to GC and CUNY, stance on policies of freedom of expression, course enrollment minimums.

Meeting with Linda Asaro of the Office of International Students: Earlier today, CCC and CCSA met with Linda to inquire about student visa statuses. During the meeting, we discussed different permissions under F-1 and J-1 status, including full-time/part-time enrollment requirements for maintaining visa status, work permissions, and health insurance. We plan to continue to communicate with OIS and Linda was encouraging of communication by way of social media, the OIS listserv, as well as email and scheduling in-person meetings. We are reminded not to advise students about specifics of their visa status, as each student's case is unique, but rather to direct concerns to appropriate offices.

Upcoming guest speakers at plenary have been posted on the website under on the "Schedule/Meetings" page: <http://cunydisc.org/meetings/>

Future meetings: We have a meeting scheduled with the Provost later this month. We will be discussing issues related to the first floor library make-over as well as other issues. If there is something specific you would like to have raised during this meeting, or meetings to come, please let us know.

Questions:

TW: Re. the meeting with IT. Why does IT staff want to remove the DSC website from the server?

TO: The labor to maintain the website is too costly. We asked about financial costs but they did not give us an answer.

RK: The issue is that there's not enough staff to run it and that our website is outside of the mainstream software that the rest of the Graduate Center sites are running on. We already do all the labor of keeping it up, but they have to check in on us to make sure that we're keeping it up to date, which we are.

TO: While we are a bit concerned, the futures initiative went off the GC server and thinks it's been going well.

RK: The issue is if they push us off their server, then they can also push off all the responsibility they have to support us as students.

SB: The issue for me is that it seems better to have our website to be housed on site with a server that we know and trust rather than trying to outsource it. As a student organization, we should be entitled to the security of that. Also, do you mean the first floor when we walk into the library.

TO: Yes. The concourse area will be changed into more a virtual, digital space that exists "outside" of the library and that's why there's a push to renovate the first two floors and why as students we should be definitely interested in the renovations.

AW: Given that we perform services for the student body, do we think it would be wise to bring the issue to the student body as a whole regarding the website?

TO: Perhaps - especially since our student tech fees go in part to this. But I agree, we do need a movement from the student body to bring attention to this.

CT: They brought up more anomalous websites who have gone independent, especially, research centers, but we could make the argument that our website is more crucial to the running of the GC.

MNR: I support the idea of our website remaining on the GC server. When they presented this idea was it a definitive plan or did they have a specific reasoning?

TO: Yes, they just cited an issue of labor. It's caused too much work stress for the person who's doing all the patches work. They will not give us a list of material costs of how much it actually costs to run it.

TW: Regarding the new log-in information for CUNYFirst - will the login include the numbers.

TO: Perhaps [provides email with the information for circulation].

AA: Regarding the server issue, sometimes the DSC passes resolutions and makes decisions that are controversial and uncontroversial. If we're on another server, it removes accountability from the GC regarding this issue so it may be an advantage to have an independent. Also, regarding the renovation. While it is irritating to walk through a reception, receptions are also noisy and given that there are so few quiet spaces in the GC maintaining that space in the library is crucial.

TO: Also, receptions are typically held in the evening which is prime time for students to do work in the library.

RK: Regarding the website, their argument is that they have deal with the process of maintaining security patches for both the GC websites and then the ones for the DSC websites so it's too much work. Wasn't the CUNYFirst roll-out supposed to happen last year? Also if our email addresses become our cunyfirst names will they include numbers? That looks unprofessional.

TO: The email says "mid-Spring" rollout, so perhaps 2018. And we we should seek clarification on that.

AW: Given that CUNYFirst is a CUNY-wide system and not a GC-wide system, there are more students and thus the need for the numbers will remain.

SB: HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO LIZA!!

MNR: I have another question regarding the first-floor renovations for the library - do we have any way to solicit student input or if there is any precedent for including student input for this process.

TO: We definitely could bring up the issue of forming an ad-hoc committee at plenary.

TW: You said in your report that there will be student input but the date is TBD.

TO: Yes, we have a meeting scheduled with the artist/architect before our meeting with the the provost, but it's going to be a brief meeting and it's yet to be determined.

MNR: Maybe we should strategize for this first meeting and indicate from the very beginning that we want the process to be open from the beginning, that's a good first step.

LS: We also need to make sure that we're giving input to the right people, whether it's the designer or the provost.

CT: Another option in response to MNR would be to have a survey to solicit information from a rider range of students.

3. Co-Chair for Business (Liza Shapiro)

Because I underestimated enrollment for the DSC budget we have an additional \$29,694 in budget!

IT is claiming that the DSC website is an "anomaly" and they are suggesting that they no longer want to host. As a result, we will explore external hosting options, but also will try to keep website

on GC server because our site is used by thousands of students and we should not be made to have to search for additional hosting services on principle.

Because our website is used by more students than any of the other side websites, it deserves to remain on the server. We also pay someone to maintain most of the website. My idea is that we should go to Student Affairs because it pushes the responsibility for serving students off of the GC and we need to push against that.

Will order Angelika tickets.

Update on GN bathroom: construction should be starting next summer

Housekeeping: clarifying on receipt signing requests.

Please sign your own stipend requests, because they do not require any receipts. When placing requests as program representatives, please do not sign the request immediately because CCB should go through the receipts first and make sure they're valid before going on to the next step of seeking a Steering officer's signature.

Questions:

RK: They said they're doing construction next summer, but they also said they've been starting construction for a long-time so I don't believe him.

LS: We laid out the process by which this was held up and that the bathroom and plumbing stuff has been done and the construction designs have been drawn up and the money from city council have come in and once the money has come in from CUNY Central it will be bid on and then construction should be *completed* by next summer. We will stay on Chase regarding this issue.

4. USS Delegate (Tellisia Williams)

The first USS Plenary was held on September 17th at Guttman Community College from 12:00 - 7:00 pm.

This was the nominations plenary. Prospective candidates were nominated and gave speeches. During the Q&A session I asked pertinent questions pertaining to the needs of graduate students

- a. tuition increases
- b. leadership, representing the needs of all CUNY students
- c. responding to the Freedom of Expression Policy
- d. the plight of adjunct instructors

I also spoke about DSC activities during Announcements

- a. shared our DACA resolution and encourage other campuses to write statements as well
- b. shared the Adjunct Project's Zine - Towards A Just Contract
- c. networked with new student leaders from CUNY campuses

USS Scholarship recipients have been announced. The awards dinner is on October 10th at BMCC
Next USS Plenary is scheduled for Sunday, October 8th at 12pm at Baruch College. This will be the elections plenary

Diversity and Inclusion initiatives at the GC: EC met with President Chase Robinson on October 3rd, I was unable to attend but I did have an update regarding diversity and inclusion initiatives at the GC. This summer I worked with Dr. Martin Ruck on the IRB for this study. Developing protocol in regards to methods (focus groups and interviews), consent forms, and navigating IDEATE. Met with members of the GC IRB to get clarification about the process. This fall Dr. Ruck met with President Chase to give an update, and recently hired a project coordinator Jen Tang. I am meeting with Dr. Ruck and Jen Tang from 2-4 on October 13th to plan next steps. I am a co PI on this project.

Questions:

LS: Thank you for taking on this project. Is there any help that you need from us?

TW: Once the study begins we will need participants so any help you can provide to get the word out would be great.

CT: We did bring this up at the meeting with the President and he seems happy with this project and how it's going and cited, once again, the fact that if they were going to diversify the faculty they would need the money to make more hires.

LS: President Chase mentioned that there was some slight diversity in their new hires but that we don't attract new diverse hires because we don't offer the right kinds of support.

MNR: Regarding faculty hires: Do we have data on programs who have tried to hire new diverse faculty but then were held up by higher ups because I know that we have had experience with that in my program.

TW: We had that conversation and the answer from the Provost was that this takes time.

MNR: Cindi Katz may be a good person to bring on to contribute to this conversation.

TW: There is definitely a lack of transparency. We keep getting the same answers when we try to have these conversations.

5. UFS Liaison (Nicholas Glastonbury)

The first UFS plenary of the 2017-2018 academic year was held on September 26 at CUNY Central, 6:30-9:30pm. The vast majority of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of CUNY's strategic framework for the CUNY master plan, introduced by Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Vita Rabinowitz, along with Assistant Vice Chancellor for Strategic Partnerships Rachel Stephenson, and Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Strategy Amy McIntosh. Vita Rabinowitz spelled out the 'five pillars' of the strategic framework as follows:

- a. College readiness
- b. Access & completion
- c. Career success
- d. Knowledge creation
- e. A new economic model for CUNY

The first three focus on student success, and one part of the second pillar was what she called a "15/30 campaign," suggesting that faculty should be urging undergraduates to take 5 courses/semester so they can finish in a timely manner. There was of course a lot of resistance to this notion during the Q&A, saying that such a campaign is inappropriate for the vast number of students who attend part-time, who have family obligations, who have to work to pay their tuition, etc.

Rabinowitz also discussed expanding full-time faculty hires with an eye toward faculty diversification. She announced a new consortium between CUNY and Harvard for CUNY faculty to do some kind of 'leadership training' at Harvard, but this is only available to full-time faculty. Rabinowitz also said that the university needs to diversify its faculty hires, while faculty present criticized this plan on the grounds that the university is not doing enough to keep or promote its best women faculty, faculty of color, and other minority faculty.

Dean of Recruitment and Diversity Arlene Torres also spoke about faculty diversity, and she suggested that the faculty is currently approximately 35% minority across full- and part-time faculty at all the campuses. Faculty also called on her to do more to incentivize minority faculty to come to CUNY, saying that search committees do not receive enough support from the university to earnestly persuade the best academics to come to CUNY.

The new UFS website was also introduced, but that part was pretty boring.

No sign of the statement on expressive conduct/freedom of speech on the agenda or even in informal conversation with other people present.

The next UFS plenary is on Oct. 24.

Questions:

Email NG.

IV. Steering Officer Reports

1. Officer for Funding (Raj Korpan)

We had our first grants committee meeting on October 2nd. At that meeting, we reviewed 7 grant applications (requesting \$3600). 4 were approved for \$1950, 3 were asked to revise and resubmit. Next deadline is October 20th and the meeting is Tuesday, November 7th at 5:30 PM.

The grants website was updated based on feedback from the grants committee and a sample budget document was also added.

We plan to send out a survey to students about DSC grants in a few weeks, ideas and contribution from steering are very welcome.

Graduate Council Curriculum Committee 9/19: Minor changes to French and Psychology.

Substantial changes to the Speech-Language-Hearing bulletin. Full-time status for Masters students is 9 credits (was changed by CUNY central to be 12 credits CUNY-wide, GC got exception to this)

Future meetings: Graduate Council Curriculum Committee 10/12, IT Committee 11/13, Strategic Planning Implementation Committee 10/23, Student Tech Fee Committee TBD

Questions:

TO: For clarification - the office of student affairs doesn't need to approve the resolutions or surveys, just see them. Also, when you're referring to the bulletin you're referring to something separate than the governance docs, correct?

RK: Yes.

CT: I'm working now to figure out who all the students are on the Grad Council committees are so if you want to get together and strategize with them, let me know and we can work together.

RK: Great. And I'm on the IT committee for the Grad Council and can bring up the tech issues we're talking about.

2. Officer for Governance & Membership (Alison Parks)

We currently have 65 live seats and 61 active representatives. Now that we have the list of registered students I can begin the process of refilling those seats with runners-up and by holding special elections with Charlotte.

C&B met for the first time this semester on Wednesday (4 October). We discussed EDLAB requirements. On the agenda for next time is the relationship between the DSC and PSAs, the job description of CCC, and the process of grants revision.

At the 20 October plenary we will be voting on a change to Constitutional Article III.2.3. on the number of At-Large Representatives and I'll be reading the proposed changes to Bylaw 3.4.b. about the membership of Outreach Committee which will then be voted on for the November plenary.

Questions:

LS: If a program had 1 program representative, and now has 100+ students enrolled, are they eligible to establish a new seat?

AP: If there is a runner-up, then they may fill this seat. If there are no runners-up, then there may be a special-election.

TO: Two of the members of EDLAB have agreed to be on the body, one has declined. We've offered the position to the runner up and if they respond in the affirmative, they will be brought on. If not, it will be offered to the next person.

3. Officer for Health & Wellness (Andrew Alger)

The next Navigating NYSHIP workshop has been planned for Thursday, October 19th at 3 PM in Room 5409. Scott Voorhees will be on hand to explain the basics of the NYSHIP program and answer any questions. I will be present as well to facilitate the meeting.

The Health & Wellness Committee is coordinating with the Adjunct Project to host an overdose prevention training for all interested Graduate Center students. Representatives from the Corner Project organization will run the training. Health & Wellness Committee voted to allocate \$100 toward a stipend for the trainers. Adjunct Project will be matching it. Date TBA.

The 2017 Health & Wellness poll has been distributed over the DSC-L list host. It will help us assess student reactions to the prospect of discontinuing the Nurse Practitioner as well as gain student feedback on the new mental health services provider, Beacon Health Options.

Questions:

TO: Is there an update on the number of responses.

AA: Not yet.

RK: I really appreciate the survey and we're using it as a model for our funding survey. I also have a question regarding NYSHIP - switching between switching NYSHIP affiliation, I've run into some issues. Is there anyway to streamline this process? Is there something we can do about this?

AA: I am happy to bring this up with Scott Voorhees when I meet with him again because my goal is the continuity of coverage without the bureaucratic red tape.

TW: You can also contact Scott to fill out a "Change of Title" form because I've had to do that a lot and it makes things much clearer.

LS: Sometimes, he does it automatically but I don't know the process.

TW: He has automated emails that come each semester and I've never taken the chance of not filling out the form.

CT: At the meeting with Linda Asaro we had today, she said she really wants to hear about events we're holding to help advertise them to international students.

TO: Linda seemed very supportive of the advocacy work of the DSC and said that she would be happy to pass along information so you can send it to her or tag them on Facebook.

SB: When do you fill out a title change form?

MNR: No, it depends on your fellowship.

TW: It also depends on your campus IF you're an adjunct and not under the fellowship.

LS: I think it's connected to your title under the PSC contract because as a GAB you're one thing, as an adjunct you're one thing, as a grad assistant something else...etc.

RK: In addition to the health insurance...transferring over all of the benefits was very complicated so perhaps this is something we could consider.

AA: I think this is something that is definitely covered under the broad coverage of "wellness."

4. Officer for Outreach (Shoumik Bhattacharya)

Nothing to report.

Questions:

AW: Question regarding the requirements for committee meetings.

AP: The bylaw requirements that say "meet once" indicate meet at least once to remain constituted. We also have changes for the composition of Outreach Committee in the Bylaws in the pipeline and if there are other things that you can suggest that would make your life easier let me know but don't let a non-constituted committee stop you from doing what you want.

5. Officer for Student Life & Services (Anais Wong)

I have only met informally with 2 committee members to discuss potential projects (workshops including meditation, self defense, non-violent direct action trainings, origami, and board game nights).

Trying to schedule an official committee meeting next Friday, October 13th. One person still needs to respond to confirm their availability, but I might just go ahead and call the meeting.

There was a discussion of ex-officio members of Student Life and Services Committee and clarification of its general composition.

Questions:

RK: I am in support of board game night and will bring games!

AW: Do I have to get my committee's approval before I start doing things?

ALL: No! [Unless you'll be spending a good chunk of funds].

6. Officer for Technology & Library (Marlene Nava Ramos)

Four minor updates, and a handful of questions for each:

Meeting with IT on Citrix: Over the last couple of weeks I maintained communication with different parties regarding Citrix, it seems like there was some discontinuity or misunderstanding between Citrix usage between last year and this year.

Jessica Murray, a program representative and STF member, circulated a short survey, which she gathered 150 responses by last Friday.

Should I introduce myself to top admins?

Do we need to follow up regarding locks on printers? Should I follow up?

Follow up DACA Resolution: Working with Sean Kennedy of the Adjunct Project: I will be circulating a draft by Monday, would it be possible introduce it for next Plenary or wait for November's Plenary?

Follow up invitation/meeting regarding 1st Floor Library Changes: Started gathering examples of library plans -- Cornell University's Mann Library and Columbia University's Teachers College Library, as well as floor plans from College Rank survey (collegerank.net)

Begin to put together an ex-officio Library (informal, non-voting) committee for infrastructural changes.

Get buy in from Designer and Provost about student input, during late October Meeting and also hoping to schedule a one-on-one meeting to get his initial input.

Follow up on Concourse Level of Library/Digital Initiatives: I know very little about this process and need to figure out where it is in the process and how we can also provide feedback to ensure that students have seamless access to the concourse level.

Less intensive involvement, but my goal is to LEARN about changes!

Contact Matt Gold, thank him for the presentation to the DSC Plenary last May and reach out to ask for updated plans.

Questions:

MNR: Since I wasn't present at the last meeting, would it be good to go introduce myself? Or is there etiquette regarding this?

LS: I think it's definitely good idea for you to go because it's important for administrators who know who student leaders are so that they know to whom they are accountable.

TO: They mentioned during the IT admin meeting that all of the locks have been removed from the printers but if you see a lock anywhere, alert us immediately.

MNR: If I want the resolution on the October plenary agenda, is that viable?

TO: If you get it to steering by the Monday before the the October plenary that way we can give feedback before sending it out to the body by Wednesday, October 17, then yes.

SB: Since you're including information on the "Muslim Ban" we also need to make sure that we remember that this is also a refugee and asylum seeker ban because there is so much happening that the catch all terms have become almost meaningless and it doesn't matter where you're from you're going to be held up.

TO: Even if the resolution isn't in a space you're ready to open it up for more editing, you can make it open to commentary whenever you want.

TW: Since this [presidential] administration is working so quickly on things I think it's important that we keep all of our resolutions very timely. When you mention a series of resolutions, what's the timeline? How will they be linked?

MNR: I reached out to Sean because he is good at working on these things and volunteered himself. We are planning three linked resolutions on DACA, the ban, and then one about the state laws/policies and are hoping to keep them timely. We are also considering a clause regarding tuition coverage for Puerto Rico students who have been affected by the hurricane.

TO: Matt Gold would be a good person to reach out for the concourse level re-design. It may be a good idea to introduce yourself to him and let him know who you are because he's always been pretty receptive to meeting with students.. Jessica Murray is also on the Futures Initiative so she may also have a good idea about what is going on and may have some information.

LS: Because that space is being taken away from the library by the GC in order to create new digital initiatives, there may be some bumping of heads when it comes to all of this so you may want to be careful.

SB: Confirms that there is butting heads.

The Chair calls for a break at 6:50 PM. Meeting shall resume at 7:00 PM.

Meeting is called back to order at 7:12 PM.

V. New Business

1. Review of Budget.

LS: We have about \$29,000 because we had more enrollment than anticipated. I am proposing that we put \$24,000 back in our special purposes to repay what we spent on the new website last year but that still leaves us with \$5,000. Places where I'm considering putting the money is meetings and in parties because then we wouldn't need to wait for USS to decide on our money but the rest is up to you as steering.

SB: I would advocate putting it back in the fund and accruing interest because it's a fund that we can turn to in times of crisis.

RK: I agree with that reallocation to the special fund.

AW: What can we use the special purposes fund for?

LS: Our bylaws say that we can spend it on any unforeseeable expenses.

MNR: I've always wanted, as a student, extra long hours in the library during finals week and wonder if that's a possibility for spending our money on that?

SB: That's a good idea but it would be a lot of extra hours [about 70] and therefore a lot of money.

AW: Hunter College does it during finals week and we should ask the school to pay for it.

TO: I agree - we should ask the school to pay for it. It's a worthy use of funds but I don't think that it should come out of students' pockets. Perhaps they could do a matching project.

RK: Baruch College also does expanded hours during finals week.

SB: Because you were asking about how to redistribute the money - in case we make the decision to put the money in, would it be the case that we could go back in later to get the money out and do something like a match campaign.

LS: Yes. It was in a CD but now we're trying to put in a Money Market account which will make it easier to take it out. However, it would be a timely process to get approval for the money itself and then to get a budget from the Graduate Center.

AW: I'm in favor of the extended hours but think that we should bring it up and make the school pay for it before we suggest a match campaign.

CT: Are we still discussing putting money back into the special purposes fund.

LS: It seems that the group is in favor of putting the money back into the special purposes fund.

MNR: I'm in favor of putting money into the special purposes fund now and then re-allocating the line item things later on.

LS: So, we have the \$25,000 that we can put into the fund but we still have the leftover stuff to work with which is what I'm trying to get feedback.

RK: I like the idea of putting it in the participatory budgeting fund. We seem to make a lot of decisions about specific lines and it seems like we should get more input from the body.

TO: We are considering starting small with the participatory budgeting campaign because we've never done it before and we don't know how successful it would be.

MNR: Regarding the special interest fund, does the money not come out as easily, per our bylaws?

LS: Yes. The money market allows us to withdraw funds more easily in terms of banking, but we have extra steps in our constitution for taking money out of the special purposes fund.

CT: I think that the child care center is a good place to consider. Also, what about the affiliates, do they need any more money?

LS: The Childcare center always needs money, especially since we weren't able to fund them last year. I emailed the affiliates their budgets and they have indicated that they need any more money.

MNR: Do we need to reach out to people to see where to spend the money?

LS: Well, this will be brought to and voted on by the body but I think it's important for us as steering to think about this first so that it's not just me deciding things.

AW: Would it be possible for us to create a hardship fund?

TW: That was going to be my idea.

LS: The administration has a lot more money than \$5,000 but we could still do something. The issue would be setting up criteria for a hardship fund and then we can consider it together.

SB: I like the idea, but I feel uncomfortable to decide what "hardship" means. Also, if we have the fund and we waited only for the people who came to the DSC we'd be excluding a lot of people. I think we should really lobby the school for this because they have more money and they have "hardship figures." Thus, deciding personally who needs money is uncomfortable but we should definitely advocate universally.

TO: Also, as students, we are not privy to certain information that we cannot ask that administration can ask.

AW: (1) I care more about being able to help people who need help immediately rather than being able to account fairly for every dollar. (2) Not everyone we advocate for is able to get help from the administration.

AA: Would this be a loan or would it be just money given away? It seems like we could run into the potential of running out of money for a service.

TO: It would be in the form of a fellowship.

TW: DSC Resolutions Initiative - we offer money to carry out resolutions and action steps to carry out the resolutions so that we're not deciding who is in "hardship" and who is not.

LS: Regardless, we need to come up with criteria for the distribution of funds and we need to do so before October 20.

RK: I like this idea, but I'm interested in potential legal issues like paying out income and issuing W2s and also coming out with criteria that show we're not just paying out our friends.

SB: Instead of calling it a "hardship" fund, what if we called it a crisis fund and made it a smaller amount of money so that we could just give it out just to tide people over with liquid cash for the moment because there would be the need for less information. This would also make it last longer and it would also give us time to do advocacy work for. So we could help them out immediately while still doing our job.

TO: What about creating positions like social media correspondence?

LS: That makes things taxable and we'll run into issue. But I think that we need to have some sort of vote or consensus before we move forward. I'm all forward to have something that is legally okay and that benefits students immediately, but I'm going to leave it in your hands. You have \$4,695.

AA: Liza, before you go. What are we deciding in your absence? A single option or a list of things to bring to plenary?

LS: I'd prefer a concrete suggestion about where we are going to put this money and maybe we don't need to frame this criteria right away, but if we decide that we do want to do this then we will need criteria by Oct 20 and if you don't come up with a new initiative I'll need suggestions about which budget lines you want to put the money. My suggestion is to put in places where it helps the most students.

[LS leaves]

RK: I have two ideas. We could donate the money for something like hurricane relief or to an existing hardship fund that would help students right now. Also, a lot of universities do homecomings and the Graduate Center doesn't do that and so maybe we could do something like that.

MNR: If I'm in favor of a hardship fund I think we should use more than the \$4,695. We could also use a raffle system rather than an application. For instance, have eligibility requirements and then just make it open to everyone. It would be hard, but I don't think that means we should shy away from. I'm also introducing a new idea - raffle away free movie tickets?

CT: On the hardship fund - we have this \$25,000 in the special purposes fund, we have more time to figure out how to distribute. We could distribute the \$4,695 across the budget lines and then hold onto the \$25,000 until we come up with criteria. We could also donate in good faith to the provost to administer in another way.

SB: Given that we don't have \$25,000 to \$30,000 to contribute and our way of acquiring funds is not set in stone it may not be a very tenable solution. I think it may be more beneficial to advocate for others offices like student affairs to distribute this money. Even if we talk about taking all of the

money it still may not be enough. I'm concerned about trying to find a way to spend money long term and utilizing funds more responsibly.

AW: On the option of donating money, I'd rather keep it in the CUNY community because that's who we serve and there are people who need it here. I also feel very strongly in favor of the hardship fund because given the current political climate it makes sense to use the money in this way rather than for party or other socializing events. I also don't think that we should shy away from things that get us accused of giving money to our friends.

AA: The nurse practitioner is still unwell and is probably not coming back next semester. There hasn't been something done to renew the current stop-gap measures. This would give us away to immediately help students and who are otherwise unable to obtain medical care and who need to fill gaps in NYSHIP.

RK: I did research on SUNY Stony Brook Graduate Student Association provides emergency loans with an application process for graduate students who have fallen on hard times and is funded by student funds. Emory College also has a similar funds but it was donated by students and is now run by financial aids. Stanford financial aid also has a graduate student hardship funds. They also have money for all kinds of events and travel conference/research grants.

TO: For historical purposes. We used to have PB that turned into our knowledge grants process so that may be another option.

AW: One reason why I don't want the money to go the administration is that they have very strict criteria and they may not be able to get money that way.

MNR: It seems that there is a consensus to have some sort of emergency relief fund available - and I don't see the medical proposal as being entirely separate. I had envisioned that we would work closely with the administration office but it does seem that it may make sense for us to help students access the money from the institution when they are eligible but also having money for students who aren't eligible under the admin's criteria.

AP: We have extra money because of MA enrollment and MA students aren't eligible to receive money from their programs or most admin offices. Having criteria separate from the administration is a good thing.

SB: This gives us a sense of people who are kept out of funds, otherwise, such as MA students so for instance we could narrow it down like "MA student hardship fund" or something else more narrow. Or we need to research how to be very intricate in terms of who is excluded from other institutional funding. It should simple rather than something that is extremely bureaucratic. If we start narrow, we can expand what this means once we have more money and once we have more experience managing something like a hardship fund.

TO: I think it's incorrect to assume that MA students are the only ones who experience hardship, but perhaps expand it to categories of students who are "unfunded."

RK: I have found even more universities whose graduate student associations have hardship funds so we have precedent.

TO: Do you have a sense of how many of these appear to operate autonomously of the university system.

CT: It seems now that we are all at least on board at this point of having a hardship fund. If we are using the smaller amount then we need to have criteria by plenary and if it's the larger amount, we need more time.

MNR: I think that if we need to make a decision now about how much to suggest to the special purposes fund and how much to allocate to the hardship funds.

AW: I agree. I also am in favor of guidelines versus strict criteria to keep us from entirely making definitions about what "hardship" means in advance.

AA: I am in favor of us starting with a small amount of money.

TO: I feel comfortable using this amount that's leftover to start the entirely new initiative. We don't have to decide right now how to create criteria because we have to present it to plenary. But if we could agree right now on an amount for the amount that may be helpful?

RK: I've created a google doc to take all of our ideas about this process.

MNR: I think, first, that there needs to be someone responsible for the research on this. Second, I think that there should be an even amount that we place into the fund - \$5,000, perhaps. Third, I think we should provide a range of amounts of money (that are smaller to help more people) to not create too strict of an amount.

TO: We could make this an even amount but then the budget would be uneven elsewhere so I don't think that's a priority. Also, if we offer a range, people will always ask for the most so perhaps offering a max amount would be better.

SB: I agree that we should start with a max amount rather than a range. What if, we offer \$4,000 for the hardship fund, give \$695 to the childcare center, and then putting \$25,000 back into the special purposes fund? The rationale would be that we could take the money from the special purposes fund in December to add more money to the hardship fund.

TO: If there are no objections, I would like to take prerogative as chair to end discussion and submit these suggestions to our Co-Chair for Business.

There were no objections. Consensus was reached to move on to next new business item.

2. Participatory Budgeting

TO: We need to decide both guidelines for participatory budgeting and constitute an informal committee to review these grant applications, and then the student body as a whole gets to decide on whether or not the grants get funded.

TO: As chair, I am making executive decision to limit discussion to 8:45 with no objections.

RK: Suggests that we make the grant amount be for larger amounts of money - for instance, up to \$2,000 in order to fund three projects in their entirety.

SB: Since we know what the basic guidelines are I was wondering whether we should set up an ad-hoc committee in order to get all of this together by November in order to get everything ready to go by February after the winter break because if we want to spend this money by this year, we need a timeline now.

TO: Announce things by December 1 and make the deadline be somewhere around January 31 in order to give us time to review things by the February plenary and then make it open to the body and DSO. However, that makes a very short timeline for actually spending the money before the end of the financial year.

RK: What if we made the deadline shorter, for instance, December 1 because this is less contingent on the DSC than on the DSO and leave more work to the committee?

TO: That may not leave sufficient time to collect qualifying, well-thought through applications. We could also constitute the committee in the October plenary and that would give them until the November steering committee meeting to create guidelines that we could bring to the body.

AP: Is this a steering committee or a DSC committee?

TO: I'm calling to constitute an informal steering ad-hoc committee among steering members and then we will constitute an ad-hoc committee among the DSC members at the October plenary to review the applications once submitted

TO makes a call for volunteers for the informal steering committee: RK, SB, and the 3 co-chairs volunteer and shall constitute the committee.

3. Room Reservation Request

CT: I would like to insert some flexibility on the exception policy. Last year the protocol was that things would get sent to CCSA if they were exceptions to the exceptions but I wanted to check what you all were comfortable with.

SB: I am comfortable with this decision in your hands.

RK: If it's in the period, I'm all for giving them the rooms since there probably won't be a conflict.

TO: I don't think it's fair to approve the second room request a week before the event because then that leaves the organizers scrambling at the last minute.

MNR: I'm in favor of prioritizing childcare for room exceptions at CCSA's discretion.

4. Steering Retreat

TO: The retreat is tentatively scheduled for October 29. Should we consider rescheduling or are we comfortable moving forward with this date? An alternative date would be November 5?

Seems to be loose consensus that the 29th is fine.

TO: Presents list of ideas.

General consensus on a potluck brunch on October 29 at 10 AM.

5. DSC Party

TO: We typically have a DSC party in the fall and in the spring. Is there interest in a party on the same night of plenary, which will be November 17th?

Room displays general interest in a November party.

TO: I'll send out a list of tasks for people to sign up for.

6. Minimum Course Requirements

RK: The issue of a minimum number of students in order for a specific course to run and it's leading to a great deal of courses being closed in Computer Science and it is impacting people's time to degree.

TO: This is something that the provost decides on and the minimum of 5 is already something that has been a reduction from a previous amount and he doesn't seem likely to budge.

SB: This is also a major problem in the English program because the number of enrollment has gone down.

TO: I suggest that anyone who has suggestions for this bring it to the co-chairs and we'll bring it to the Provost during our meeting.

IV. Announcements

AP: I'll be absent during the November plenary so if anyone is interested in taking on my responsibilities let me know before the October plenary and you can shadow me and see my responsibilities.

SB: Please sign the roster for the Post Colonial studies chartered org.

V. Adjournment

TO moved to adjourn by unanimous consent at 9:05 PM. No Objections.