



Joint Steering Committee Meeting *Minutes* June 3, 2022

Attendance

Present: Sharanya Dutta, Debbie Leter, Adam Kocurek, Ian Williams, Katherine Rivera Gomez, Jonathan Hanon, Britt Munro, Natalia Lara, Angela LaScala-Gruenewald, Alex Xiaole Jiang, Daniel Okpattah, Carmin Quijano-Seda, Christopher Cambell, Silvia Rivera Alfaro, Parisa Osmanovic, Sayantika Mondal
Absent:

Meeting Chair: Debbie
Minutes: Christopher
Display/Minutes Assist: Silvia

Meeting called to order at 1:09PM

I. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: Adam (History)
Seconded: Silvia (LAILAC)
Vote: Approved Unanimously

II. Approval of Minutes of the May 6, 2022 Meeting

Motion to approve: Jonathan (CS)
Seconded: Sharanya (English)
Vote: Approved Unanimously

III. Executive Committee Reports

A. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Sharanya Dutta)

- Program student association elections are underway (Computer Science specifically).
- We've had a lot of issues with Works. We're in the process of figuring it out. Chartered org active status deadlines have been extended until June 10, and will be extended further until that is figured out. I will send an email to all chartered org leaders when it is resolved. Some of us still haven't signed the chartered org rosters, please do this so we can help orgs get to active status.
- Please do your SPARC/ESPARC/WVP trainings and if you can't see them in Blackboard, email Eric Brown.
- The CCSA maintains a list of chartered orgs who have offices on the 5th floor. Obviously this list needs updating because during covid many orgs have been dechartered and don't need offices anymore and

some orgs have been very consistent and deserve offices. I will discuss this with Silvia during our transition meeting. People have been indefinitely storing stuff in those offices, and have to now clear out over the summer. The coordination will be upto the new co-chairs + steering. Physical key access to these offices goes through the CCC. Once I give Silvia the list of orgs + their offices, will the new steering please work it out amongst yourselves to request keys for those offices, contact new/continuing org leaders to either give them keys or to ask dechartered orgs/old org leaders to clear out their stuff? (Note about my stuff: My books are in the CCSA office. I will try and pick them up when I am briefly in the city for a couple of days. I also have all my DGSC keys, so perhaps I can give them to you, Silvia?)

- Please make yourselves available in July and early August for extensive website testing. Make sure you understand the existing workflow clearly from the current people in the role, screen-record etc if needed. And then when the new website launches, try to repeat that workflow and flag any issues etc. The CCSA role has a handbook and a calendar which is a very useful format. The handbook especially needs to be updated when we change over to the new website—step by step instructions for everything.

Updates:

Discussion:

JH: I wanted to follow up on CS elections. So far we have less nominations than we do voting positions. If that's the case, then the elections might not need to be formally held. I'll hold special elections for the vacancies next year.

SD: You'll have to update officers if you have a PSA renewal report, otherwise it's internal and left up to you.

B. Co-Chair for Communications (Deborah Leter)

Recent Meetings:

- 05/18 Co-chairs meeting with OSA: Main updates include: Elise has started working on a childcare center survey; New Student Orientation will be August 27th (likely a mix of in-person and online); increase in positive covid test results of people who are randomly selected for tests.

Updates/Announcements:

- **Commencement:** Several students have reached out with concerns regarding commencement, including: PhD graduates will not receive the traditional blue gowns and regalia for commencement, but rather plain black robes, with velvet stripes on the sleeves to differentiate them from masters' graduates. There are issues with the regalia arriving uncleaned or late, and people are wondering whether they can be issued refunds. Students are also concerned that they have not received any information regarding how the ceremony will be conducted. There are also frustrations with the fact that no honorary degree has been awarded this year. I've reached out to the OSA about this and so far haven't received a response.

- **Student letter:** Individuals who wish to remain anonymous reached out with a letter that they asked me to circulate to the student community. Adam, Sharanya and I decided it would be helpful to turn that letter into a sign-on letter so that additional students can add their voice to this issue. After receiving approval from the letter writers to do so, I sent that letter out to the listserv today. My plan is to gather signatures and then bring this letter to the GC administration, specifically the President and Provost.
- ***Do we want to make this letter a DGSC statement or resolution?***
- ***Do we want former co chair Raj Korpan to raise these issues in his speech at commencement?***
- **Transition meetings & memos:** You are required to schedule a transition meeting with your successor BEFORE July 1. Once you have scheduled the meeting, email the co-chairs and let us know. Also please email your transition documents to your successor by the day of the transition meeting and cc the co-chairs, and please also add them to a folder on our shared DGSC google drive, [here](#). There's been issues with officers not receiving their transition memos in the past, and I want to make sure we have a record of them all in one place.
- Remember to do some clean-up work in your officer email account and cloud storage. Delete anything that may be personal or unhelpful but in general the email records serve as very important references for the future.

Discussion:

SA: You brought up the childcare center. I'm worried about it. Two students from LAILAC have children and classes until 6:15pm. The childcare center closes at 5pm. This makes me think of them and other parents, and they'll have to look for someone in the building to look after their children during that hour. I think the childcare center has a good schedule for administrative staff but not necessarily for students and professors. I think it's important to express this concern.

JH: Parisa's not in the room right now, she's the childcare rep, and that's a question better suited for Parisa.

DL: We can be in touch with Elise and make sure there's a question on the list regarding [childcare center] opening hours.

JH: Graduation regalia. Egregious that graduates aren't given CUNY regalia. They're also not allowed to keep it, they have to return it after commencement. The unique 5-sided regalia that represents CUNY/NYC isn't being given to them, the administration needs to be held accountable at commencement.

DL: Specific resolution with specific demands?

JH: Yes, we need to issue demands saying that this is unacceptable.

DL: I agree with you, too. One of these individuals reached out to us anonymously. They wrote such a powerful message. If we can do more to push these demands in a more powerful way, yeah.

JH: If not addressed this year, it needs to be brought up immediately in future years to push for this.

DL: This is something we can keep pushing for in the next few weeks. I'm not saying the refund makes the situation better, but this is one of the demands students have been making.

AK: This is a useful resolution. Broader student feedback, broaden student signature. I'm curious what kind of number we could get. It's a good idea for Raj to bring it up. There needs to be resistance to the neoliberalization of CUNY. We should use that big platform (graduation) to advocate for this broader problem that's chipping away at us. As for a resolution, we can't vote in a plenary but we can sign off as a steering body to approve this. It might be more powerful if it comes from the new steering body because most of us will be gone soon. They will be the ones to carry this on after us.

DL: We don't have writing to do, just some tweaking. Add a little more. The writing is already done so I don't think it would be difficult to make it into a more powerful thing. I've already reached out to Matt Schoengood about this, and if we're not satisfied with his response we have to reach out to the President and the Provost (so far Matt hasn't reached out to me). I think it would be better to do it sooner rather than later. Is it possible to do something with both outgoing and incoming steering?

AK: Yes, it can be. We would just need to have it voted on by email. The DGSC pays for food or drinks that you might have during that meeting. If it's virtual, treat yourself to grubhub gift cards.

BM: How do we do the gift cards?

AK: Go to GrubHub. Go to purchase gift card. Purchase digital gift card. Purchase one for yourself and the person you're training. Save the receipt, and make a check request on dscworks, attach receipt, and we will reimburse you. It's \$15 per gift card.

SD: GrubHub allows \$15. Everything else starts at \$25. If you're in person, keep receipt from restaurant. I'm fully for doing the DGSC resolution. Not a proper graduation ceremony for people who have managed to finish their dissertations during this pandemic? Raj should address that. For a resolution, get a hold of someone who's graduating, see how much they're paying, because these instructions were formally sent to them. While the letter is passionate, in terms of resolution we need to have quotes from the language of the email that they sent around. Quote language from that email to make our point. I do think it should be a resolution. As for the childcare center, I agree in terms of a concrete ask to have a question about times open. We've asked many times in the past. That's a cyclical complaint because they can say they only have student kids. RE: Graduation. We should go hard on this. They're sharing stuff from commencement on CUNY pages, on social media. This version of our understanding of it needs to be out there, too. The president cannot walk away from a conversation about the optics of this. That's where I think we should push.

DL: I'll reach out to students to ask about that email to see if there's some formal language we can use. I'll tweak the letter for resolution format. I'll be emailing all of us, and we'll vote by email, we all need to vote by email for that resolution to pass. Outgoing and incoming steering will both be on this resolution.

SR: Are they asking for a refund of other things or just the regalia? It's not clear in the letter.

DL: Just the regalia. I'll make that more clear.

KRG: As an incoming member, it would be really helpful if we did this as a joint committee because it would not only be a great way to see how the process works but also be guided by the outgoing committee in a process like this.

DL: I'll send it as a Google Doc and we can work on it collaboratively.

SD: One last thing for incoming CCC, keep track of this.

IW: I was wondering, and I agree that I think it's important to do this collaboratively between the two bodies, but I'm curious about institutional history. What has been the effect? Has this sort of thing been historically reacted well-to by administration?

AK: It's on a case-by-case basis. There are some resolutions that are broader (USS or outside entities around Hudson Yards for example), we cosigned a resolution for these. Sent to state and city legislatures. It's a sign of institutional support from the DGSC. It's hard to keep track of the material outcomes of these. GC resolutions can get things moving, we've been able to get office of student affairs to move on student concerns. More nebulous, harder things to get done, are typically related to CUNY Central. They administer all of CUNY colleges, the GC is pretty small on their radar. When we send letters to CUNY Central we hear crickets. Debbie has been good about this, following up on this messaging with provost and president.

C. Co-Chair for Business (Adam Kocurek)

Updates:

- I have been overwhelmed with an onslaught of late program allocation/spending requests, which have been overwhelming (particularly since our Business Office rep is going on vacation on June 24th to July 1st), so I'm trying to coordinate all of this ASAP.
 - Economics, Art History, and other departments are trying to host last-minute parties and events.
 - The CUNY BUY portal and having the Vendor Management System now based out of CUNY Central Office, and not the GC, has in some ways streamlined the honorarium process, but it also has slowed down the process, which has been a source of frustration. I'm hoping this process will continue to streamline.
 - There have been some issues with people getting their reimbursements - I've been coordinating this on a case-by-case basis, but if you know of someone who hasn't gotten reimbursed, forward them to me.
- The Advocate has released a new publication - their last for this fiscal year. Payments will be processed imminently.

- Jamila has resigned from The Adjunct Project - we are now hiring 3 coordinators, meaning that The AP will have a fresh start come the new fiscal year.
- Please remember to give over your keys to the new steering committee members if you are transitioning out of your role! Digital keys, emails, etc. will all be transferred once the new fiscal year begins and the roles officially switch over.
- The Graduate Education Task Force will be meeting again on 6/17/2022 - I can provide more details for the July steering meeting.

Discussion:

CQS: End of year activities for students question. Until when do they have to send you the receipts?

AK: I told everyone early June. Our business rep is going on vacation from June 24th to July 1st. Wei will be taking over. In order to ensure payment is done quickly, that should be done before the second week of June.

D. USS Delegate (Jonathan Hanon)

Updates:

- Silvia, Chris, Zhuo, Alex, and I met with Joseph Awadjie and Ian James regarding first contact with CUNY Central on timely payment.
- Reflections on my year as USS Delegate and Vice Chair for Technology:
 - USS, and CUNY in general, have many structural pitfalls, but some of them can be fixed.
 - I've worked closely with every USS committee to make things easier on those who want to do things as a group to be able to do so.
 - My proposal for student representation on administrative committees, particularly on decisions in technology, has reached the IT Steering and is awaiting the hiring of a new CUNY CIO to continue to move forward.
 - The USS Disability and Mental Health Committee is stronger than ever, having coordinated numerous campaigns with CUNY Central, CCSD, and elected officials, including a disability pride march upcoming this July.
- USS Scholarship Committee is looking for reviewers. If you would like to help us in reviewing, please contact me. A few scholarships being reviewed by a handful of students can, over time, turn into thousands.

Discussion:

E. UFS Liaison (Parisa Montazaran Osmanovic)

Updates:

Discussion:

IV. Steering Officer Reports

A. Officer for Funding (Angela LaScala-Gruenewald)

Updates:

- Grant Proposals
 - Approved one grant last month, "Breakin' BLACK Reachin' Back virtual conference on Black Rhetoric, DJ & Hip Hop Scholarship" (\$700)
 - One final ad-hoc meeting to evaluate one grant application for an event on June 11, "CUNYSciCom 2022 Symposium" (\$700)
 - Grants Committee Meeting TBD (early next week)
- Year in Review
 - Committee reviewed 20 grant proposals
 - Funded 15 grants (ranging from \$350-750)
 - Total \$9200+ to support student activities, events, and resources
- Bylaws Amendment
 - Grant committee bylaw amendment to fund summer grants; plenary voted *Yes* in May!
 - Need to update language in bylaws (if not done already?)
- Website Language Updates
 - Would like to spend time this month before my term is over updating grant and check request language on the website to reflect COVID-19 changes (in collaboration with Adam, perhaps?)
 - Let me know if you have any suggestions for the grants page, anything that's unclear. I am going to do my best based on email FAQs Adam and I regularly receive from people.
 - Sales tax policy/form
 - Grants committee meetings and grant deadlines (given new bylaws)
 - Check request receipt process
 - Expectation setting for reimbursement timelines and process (honoraria issues, etc.)

Discussion: No discussion.

B. Officer for Governance & Membership (Katie Anderson):

Updates:

Discussion:

C. Officer for Health & Wellness (Silvia Rivera Alfaro)

Updates:

-Elvis Bakaitis, from the library, told us they have seen a positive response to the mental health campaign at the Library, but pointed out there might not be enough stickers and suggested we acquire more. Therefore, we have done so.

-I have heard of the situation of two upcoming LAILAC students who have children and will have issues with the Child Care Center. The Center closes at 5 p.m. and they have classes until 6:15 p.m. so there's a sloth when they would have to look for alternatives the entire semester. This particularly calls my attention as other student-parents might be in similar situations. The schedule being from 8-5 p.m. sounds more for administrative personnel than for graduate students and fellows who are teaching, as the university works on a very different schedule. I believe this topic should come to the attention of the entire Steering for the next academic year. I know there's work being done by Parisa as representative in the Center, but I believe we should try to push forward to improve the conditions of student-parents.

-We have not used the entire budget of Health and Wellness, I know it could go to carry over, but I wanted to propose here if we could buy materials related to abortion rights as health rights. If this could be possible, I would reach out to the students who are working on the group "CUNY for abortion rights". If not doing the support now, this could be a subject we could keep for the upcoming year.

-Finally, Clare Wilson told me she would like to collaborate with the DGSC on a campaign on invisible disabilities next year, I believe this will be important for the incoming Officer of Health and Wellness.

Discussion:

AK: I wanted to quickly say that there's nothing wrong with having that money carry over to next year. If any standing committees want to make a donation that's up to the committee heads.

D. Officer for Outreach (Christopher Campbell)

Updates:

-I will look into the student-housing subject.

-I have a question on donations: is it possible to use program allocation for donations to people within the program such as campaigns in GoFundMe.

Discussion:

AK: Yes, it is possible, but the way of doing it is different according to what you will be donating the money to.

E. Officer for Student Life & Services (Carmin Quijano Seda)

Updates:

- I have received Whatsapp messages from students asking about funding for an end-of-semester event for international students. I have put them in contact with Chris and their student representatives at their departments. I told them that the activity should be scheduled before June 30th and the receipts should be submitted well in advance of the 30th.
- Angela has forwarded a message from a new student asking about housing. I will send her all the information that I have on hand. But I was wondering if Chris has some sort of document with extra-official information about how to find an apartment in NYC. In my department, we have created a Whatsapp group where we share rooms that have become available from other students' apartments. I don't know if we can create a DGSC's Whatsapp group just for that. That's an idea.
- I am editing my final memo to share with the new OSLS.

- I will also upload the photos and flyers that I have on my Google Account, so the next OSLS have some ideas for future events.

Discussion:

F. Officer for Technology & Library (Britt Munro)

Updates: Mental health campaign going well; books being organized at the library; [notes](#) from meeting with co-chairs and Elaine (wanted to ask re: missing printing money?); don't know if this is public knowledge yet but Maura Smale (city tech) was selected as new chief librarian. Pretty sad for Emily! But hopefully she'll be good to work with; some ideas from the librarians moving forward below.

Moving forward: * Want to organize a kind of welcome back to the library event for the beginning of next semester (poetry reading?)- something to do in collaboration with the officer for student affairs? We would need to provide the tech. *Need to officially request that Elvis be present in meetings with the chief librarian and dgsc rep. Elvis is AWESOME and more in touch with what's happening in the library on the ground * Elvis is also keen to collaborate with health and wellness folks on LGBTQI+ events, they are LGBTQI+ officer for grad center.

<https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/student-life/office-of-student-inclusion-initiatives-osii/cuny-lgbtqi-hub/> *The big graduate center survey that went out- many students expressed dissatisfaction in general areas, the librarians asked if we could survey students more closely about these issues to help with intervention. This would be a thing to do in the early Fall.

Discussion:

V. New Business

A. Appointment of Steering Officers

1. Officer for Funding
 - a) Angela LaScala-Gruenewald
2. Officer for Governance & Membership
 - a) Ian Williams
3. Officer for Health & Wellness
 - a) Katherine Rivera
4. Officer for Outreach
 - a) Natalia Lara
5. Officer for Student Life & Services
 - a) Sayantika Mondal
6. Officer for Technology & Library
 - a) Daniel Okpattah

Motion to approve: Jonathan Hanon

Seconded: Adam Kocurek

Vote: Passes Unanimously

Adam motion to table items B-F.

Seconded: Britt (English)

Amend Motion to Retain Item C and F: Jonathan Hanon

B. Appointments to Standing Committees

1. Outreach Committee (2 to 5, 1 international, 1 senior college, limit 2 per program)
 - a) Natalia Lara
 - b) Interested: (1 to 4)
 - Eva Steinberg (Anthropology)
 - Natalia Lara Gonzalez (Health Psychology and Clinical Science)
 - Katherine Rivera (Biology)

2. Student Life & Services Committee (3 to 5, 1 senior college)
 - a) Sayantika Mondal
 - b) Silvia Rivera Alfaro
 - c) Interested: (1 to 3)
 - Xiaole Jiang (Physics)
 - Abhipsa Shatarupa (Biochemistry)
 - Yang Zhou (Physics) - NOT A REP
 - Michael Williams (Critical Social/Personality Psychology)
 - Natalia Lara Gonzalez (Health Psychology and Clinical Science)
 - Itsue Nakaya Perez (Philosophy)

3. Grants Committee (3 to 9)
 - a) Angela LaScala Gruenewald
 - b) Jonathan Hanon
 - c) Interested: (1 to 7)
 - Adam Kocurek (History)
 - Eva Steinberg (Anthropology)
 - Sichao Yu (Physics) - NOT A REP
 - Christopher Campbell (Comparative Literature)
 - Bryce Barthuly (Criminal Justice)

4. Health & Wellness Committee (3 to 9)
 - a) Katherine Rivera
 - b) Interested: (2 to 8)

Jonathan Hanon (Computer Science)
Abhipsa Shatarupa (Biochemistry)
Amour Castillo (Critical Psychology)

5. University Student Senate Advisory Committee (3 to 7)

- a) Alex Jiang
- b) Zhuo Yin
- c) Interested: (1 to 5)
 - Jonathan Hanon (Computer Science)
 - Yang Zhou (Physics) - NOT A REP
 - Sichao Yu (Physics) - NOT A REP

6. Governance Task Force - NON-REPS ARE OKAY

- a) Jonathan Hanon
- b) Silvia Rivera Alfaro
- c) Christopher Campbell
- d) Alex Jiang
- e) Parisa Montazaran Osmanovic
- f) Interested:
 - Yang Zhou (Physics)
 - Michael Williams (Critical Social/Personality Psychology)
 - Bryce Barthuly (Criminal Justice)

7. Constitution & Bylaws Committee (5 to 9)

- a) Officer for Governance & Membership
- b) Jonathan Hanon
- c) Christopher Campbell
- d) Silvia Rivera Alfaro
- e) Interested: (1 to 5)
 - Adam Kocurek (History)
 - Abhipsa Shatarupa (Biochemistry)
 - Itsue Nakaya Perez (Philosophy)

Motion to approve:

Seconded:

Vote:

C. Appointments to Graduate Council

1. DGSC Executive Committee Members to Graduate Council

- a) Jonathan Hanon

- b) Christopher Campbell
- c) Silvia Rivera Alfaro
- d) Parisa Osmanovic
- e) Alex Jiang (non-voting)

Motion to approve: Adam Kocurek

Seconded: Silvia Rivera

Vote: Approved Unanimously

2. DGSC Executive Committee Members to Graduate Council Executive Committee

- a) Christopher Campbell
- b) Alex Jiang

Motion to approve: Jonathan

Seconded: Silvia

Vote: Unanimously

3. DGSC Co-Chair to Graduate Council Budget Committee

Jonathan motions to nominate Silvia. Silvia accepts.

Motion to approve: Jonathan

Seconded: Silvia

Vote: Unanimously

4. The succession of DGSC Steering Officers as Graduate Council Representative Alternates

Jonathan motions to approve the order in the bylaws.

Motion to approve: Jonathan

Seconded: Adam

Vote: Unanimously

D. Room Reservation Policy

DL: I suggest we delve into this in further detail later in the summer, as we don't have the time to do a full training during this meeting. But please keep in mind that managing room reservations are part of

steering officers' duties.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PpuAMilpwQAOoqI1oJXSRE_yBKQGz85sKzLVfMSwPec/edit

<https://cunydisc.org/services/rooms>

E. Approval of the list of acceptable media for 'in-writing' notifications

DL: Each year we are supposed to define the list of acceptable modes of communication. Traditionally it has been regular mail and email. Can someone motion to continue this list?

Motion to approve:

Seconded:

Vote:

F. EDLAB

DL: Last year's EDLAB is still eligible to serve for 2 more years.

JH: We can appoint 3 people per year, there can be 3 cohorts on EDLAB at once, for up to 9 members.

Adam Kocurek volunteers.

Sharanya Dutta

Debbie Leter

Motion to approve: Silvia

Seconded: Jonathan

Vote: Unanimously

VI. Announcements

VII. Adjournment

Meeting is adjourned at 3:24 p.m.