



## DOCTORAL AND GRADUATE STUDENTS' COUNCIL

The Graduate Center, CUNY  
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### Steering Committee Meeting

*Minutes*

—

October 14th, 2022

4:00PM

#### **Attendance**

Present: Christopher Campbell (CC), Jonathan Hanon (JH), Alex Jiang (AJ), Ian Williams (IW), Natalia Lara (NL), Roderick Hurley (RH, Proxy for Silvia Rivera Alfaro), Angela LaScala Gruenewald (ALG), Daniel Okpattah (DO)

Meeting Chair: Christopher Campbell

Minutes: Jonathan Hanon

Minutes Assist: Alex Jiang

Meeting called to order at 5:37PM

#### **I. Approval of Agenda**

Motion to Approve: Ian Williams

Seconded: Jonathan Hanon

Vote: Unanimous

#### **II. Approval of the Minutes of the 9 September 2022 Meeting**

Motion to Approve: JH

Seconded: IW

Vote: Unanimous

#### **III. Executive Committee Reports**

## A. Co-Chair for Student Affairs (Silvia Rivera Alfaro)

### *Updates:*

-I have been following up with the Chartered Organization process of those organizations we voted to decharter. During the Summer I started checking the Chartered Orgs and the offices. Now I will reorganize the offices according to the status of the organizations. This process might take time as Covid has played a part in keeping people out of the offices for a long time.

-With the affiliates, I have paused any hiring process following the interest expressed by the representatives in the September plenary. As steering, it would be important for us to decide if we want to create a task force to analyze the case of the Adjunct Project or if we want to have a task force for the affiliates in general.

-About the Child Care Center, a few EOs wrote a message to Matt expressing that it would be important to extend the hours of the center to respond to the needs of the students in their program. It could be important for us to follow up on this. Matt replied they could do a survey on the subject. There was another survey around August, but the information that was asked was mostly demographic according to students who participated as they have classes (this semester) in hours when the Center is closed. It would be really important, as it was mentioned in the plenary, that the Child Care Center representative could participate actively in the Center's meetings as it was done in the past so that we can have input on the center.

-Natalia and I will be meeting with the Wellness Center on October 24th at 12:30 PM. Please let me know if there are any details you would like me to bring into the conversation.

-It would be important to discuss the meeting roles thinking of the changes that in-person meetings imply. I checked the archive and found that from 2019-2020 (before Covid). The tasks for steering meetings were: chair, minutes, display/minutes assist, food and food assist; the tasks for plenary meetings were meeting chair, minutes, minutes (assist), plenary incentives, display, social media, food, food (assist), attendance. [This](#) is the document with the information. They had a budget of around \$125 per steering meeting and \$350 per plenary.

-Remember the deadline to complete SPARC is 10/15.

### *Discussion:*

RH: Something I was thinking about on my way here, you usually have a transition meeting from one steering committee to another. You find yourself now with a steering meeting in person, but the steering before was fully online. I think it would be helpful to meet with steering committee that was in person or both in person and online. That would help a lot in getting things back, moving in the direction of online to in person. I'd be willing to meet with steering committee and get former steering members to join that meeting. We can cover things like meeting tasks (some of these might be able to be modified).

JH: What is the meeting at the Wellness Center?

NL: As they're transitioning to more in person services and support groups, they want to tell us about these services.

## **B. Co-Chair for Communications (Christopher Campbell)**

### *Updates:*

- David Olan, former associate provost and dean for academic affairs, sent a letter to Robin Garrell, Steve Everett, and Brian Peterson demanding action be taken to assure that late payments for vendors, speakers, and others are resolved. The letter is signed by over 80 EOs, APOs, and certificate program directors. The late payments within the DGSC are part of a wider web of late payments across the Graduate Center. The Co-Chairs have signed the letter as well. This is a positive turn of events for us as well as Graduate Center students, staff, and faculty – everyone is demanding that the Business Office be held accountable. The letter also asks for directors to have access to a credit card to pay for things used in events etc. instead of having to use our own funds and wait to be reimbursed.
- Steering & Plenary Meeting Duties: Sayantika, Natalia, Daniel, and Alex still need to sign up for meeting duties. I'll resend the email leading to the excel sheet where you can sign up.
- Board of Trustees Clause: I sent an email out two weeks ago with a PDF containing the draft clause that BoT intends to pass that will allow “extraordinary circumstance” requests to be taken to allow people to attend CUNY public meetings virtually. We should be prepared for a number of these requests while making sure that we still meet quorum in person for both Steering and Plenary meetings –again, quorum must be met in person.
- Lastly, the Executive Committee is meeting with President Garrell and Provost Everett on October 26th. Let's discuss some of the items we'd like to bring up during this meeting during the discussion segment of my report. We'll do the same during the Plenary meeting next week as well.

### *Discussion:*

- We should discuss whether or not we'd like to find a different time to meet during the week now that we're required to (mostly) meet in person. Would you like me to send out a new When2Meet to figure out what time works best for us? Or should we stick with this time?

AJ: I suggest bringing up the centralized payment resolution.

## **C. Co-Chair for Business (Jonathan Hanon)**

*Updates:*

- GC Business Office
  - VP Ken Tirino has been pushing his staff to handle things better.
  - If I haven't informed you of any difficulties since Chris's email on Monday, then there have been no difficulties, and you should be paid soon.
  - If I have informed you of any difficulties, please remain in contact with me.
- CUNY Central and Board of Trustees
  - I was reappointed as the Student Representative on Board of Trustees Committee on Finance and Administration.
  - CUNY COO Hector Batista came up to me to discuss CUNYBuy, and to acknowledge that he was made aware by CUNY CFO Christina Chiappa, who was made aware by VP Ken Tirino of the difficulties we have been having.
  - He connected me to CUNY Procurement Director Martin Sturla, head of CUNYBuy. I will follow this connection to work towards making this more efficient in the long-term.
- New Check Request Rules from CUNY Central
  - I have been micromanaged about many things, including uploading rosters for old events and editing old check requests for pennies in sales tax. These are not suggestions from me, they are demands from CUNY Central.
  - Attendance rosters must be kept for all events and meetings.
  - Food must be kept to a maximum of \$15 per person.
  - A flier or notice of any event or meeting must be provided.
  - Tax-exempt forms must be used, CUNY will not reimburse any sales tax.
  - Stipend requests must be submitted on the first of the month or after, i.e. your November Stipend can be requested anywhere between November 1st and June 30th.
- DGSC Website
  - I updated the permissions for the workflow on the new DGSC Website for Check Requests and Grants.
- Upcoming Meetings:
  - Oct 18th: IT Committee, October 18th
  - Oct 26th: Meeting with CUNY CIO Seb Formoso

*Discussion:*

AJ: What is this deal about flier and notice for events and meetings?

JH: Everything about the event, need attendance roster for student events. Event, host, date, time, location.

CC: The website is something we've been waiting for a while, the permission updates were something that was just done this morning.

JH: Start-up grants is something I'm still working on getting the permissions set up for at the moment, since right now, it has to go Funding -> CCB -> Expedited Reviewer. I want to be able to sign in any order, so I'm working on it.

#### **D. University Student Senate Delegate (Alex Jiang)**

*Updates:*

- USS Election (Oct. 2nd 2022)
  - Result:  
Chairperson: Salimatou Doumbouya, New York City College of Technology  
VC for Legislative Affairs: Frank Lachapelle, New York City College of Technology  
VC for Fiscal Affairs: Jonathan Colon, Brooklyn College  
VC for Graduate Affairs: Xiaole "Alex" Jiang, Graduate Center  
VC for Senior College Affairs: Aharon Grama, Brooklyn College  
VC for Community College Affairs: Nikki Tam, Kingsborough Community College  
VC for Evening and Part-time Affairs: Daniel Flores, Baruch College  
VC for Technology Fee Affairs: Tessalia Serighelli, Kingsborough Community College  
VC for International Students Affairs: Gridlock, Zhuo Yin (GC), Zeinab Cisse (CSI)  
VC for Disabilities Affairs: Gridlock, Zaire Ali (SPH), Lucia Chavira (LGCC)

The gridlock will be resolvable in December at the earliest.

- Board of Trustees Committee Appointment
  - Education Policy Committee: Tania Caldwell (SLU)
  - Enrollment Sub Committee: Carlene Nelson (BMCC)
  - Investment Sub Committee: Abigail Boateng (HCC)
  - Student Life Committee: Salimatou Doumbouya (City Tech)
  - Facilities Planning and Management Committee: Aharon Grama (Brooklyn College)
  - Research and Innovation Sub Committee: Janyah Mercedes (CSI)
  - Advancement and External Affairs Committee: Xiaole Jiang (GC)
  - Finance and Administration Committee: Jonathan Hanon (GC)
  - Subcommittee on Technology Planning: Tessalia Castro (KCC)
  - Subcommittee on Diversity, Inclusion and MWBE: Assantee Mitchell (SPS)
  - Audit Committee: Akilah Clarke (Medgar Evers)
  - Governance Committee: Gilles Seulio (CCNY)
  
- I had my first Board of Trustees meeting, it was just accepting donations, but there will be orientation.

- Reach out to more colleges for our centralized payment resolution.
- Orientation for USS Steering happening next weekend.

*Discussion:*

- Resolution on supporting Iranian student in the face of the murder of Mahsa Amini. [Resolution supporting Iranian students](#)
- Board of Trustees public hearing. Oct. 17th 4:30 pm at GC. You might still be able to testify (Zhuo will be!)
- JH: We want to know what we'd say before we put out a resolution.
- RH: We'd have a concrete physical document that represents the DGSC's wishes or intentions. Once we had that document we would publish it as far as we could. The DGSC listserv, the all student email, sending it to the press, tweeting it out, all social media. This is a way of saying this is the official position of our students. The resolution formats it with clear points emphasized, or you could do it as a statement. The resolution allows you to itemize the demands or the positions in a clear way. You can have a Steering Committee Resolution or Statement. That's quicker than DGSC Resolution or Statement. You need a majority of reps to sign on or approve in that case.
- AJ: This is a way to show support for students and their concerns. I'd want this to be a DGSC-wide resolution.
- NL: It would be good to know if the Wellness Center supports and provides resources for students impacted by these events in Iran.
- AJ: It's probably safer for the statement to be less political.
- JH: There's standing support for all human rights violations in Iran, a statement from President Garrell. [GC President Garrell Letter Supporting Iranian Students](#)
- RH: This is something you could bring up with the Wellness Center and say this is one of your priorities. You don't want to put something in a Resolution that would seem to call them out. You'll want to ask them if they intend to do programming around this. A resolution would be more of an ideological statement. Afterwards, see if anyone affected can reach out to the Wellness Center. Let's not call out the Wellness Center.
- NL: I think the Wellness Center should be the ones reaching out.
- RH: You should tell the Wellness Center about this Resolution. Say we believe it's your purview to provide support in this area. Will you be doing that? Think of this as more of a partnership.
- JH: The Counseling Services and CUNY Work/Life were mentioned in this email, so they're already aware of this.
- RH: You can send an email, asking them to outline how they intend to provide these services to students.

- ALG: I think making this general about human rights violations sounds right.
- AJ: Maybe the resolution can be adapted for general issues, i.e. human rights violations.

#### **E. University Faculty Senate Liaison (Parisa Montazaran Osmanovic)**

*Updates:*

*Discussion:*

### **IV. Steering Officer Reports**

#### **A. Officer for Governance & Membership (Ian Williams)**

*Updates:*

- Vacancies
  - No updates on vacancies discussed at previous Steering and Plenary meetings.
  - Linguistics is currently working on petitioning to fill their vacant Program Rep seat. Their 2021-2022 Program Rep was erroneously listed as their current rep on our website, but there was no election for a Linguistics Program Rep this past year (Katie confirmed this with me). The potential Rep is aware of the process and has the required petition but has not yet sent a completed one to me.
  - Earlier this week, Silvia brought to my attention several vacancies she asked me for assistance with filling.
    - Classics - it appears from a more recent email from Chris that their current rep is resigning and has identified a potential replacement.
    - Philosophy - Academic Appeals
    - LAILAC - Academic Appeals
- Plenary Attendance
  - Several Program Reps expressed their concerns about being able to attend in-person Plenary, either in September or in an ongoing capacity. I advised them that they could work with their programs to recruit students to Proxy for them on a rotational basis, as it is preferable for a Proxy to be from the program in which they are representing for their time as Proxy. They could also resign, but that might trigger a vacancy or special election.
  - I am working on tabulating attendance from the September plenary so I can follow up with Program Reps who did not attend. I am mostly concerned by those who did not attend, and did not contact anyone at DGSC about it (the “no call,

no-shows”). I am less concerned by those who were responsible enough to inform us that they could not attend.

- Follow-up from September Plenary
  - At the September Plenary it was suggested that I should reach out to EO’s and APO’s about vacant and currently non-represented programs. I aim to start this outreach by November. If anyone has personal connections with EO’s or APO’s of any programs that fall under this, please reach out to me so we can set up introductions.
  - At the September Plenary, students asked about committees they are a part of but have not had meetings scheduled yet. Since I Chair Constitution & Bylaws, I will contact C&B committee members before the next Plenary meeting, and aim to schedule a meeting in November.
- Proxy Requests
  - Currently Proxy requests are being handled by email.
  - When DGSC Works is able to handle Proxy requests again, I would like some guidance on managing this workflow. At present Proxy requests are occurring by email, and verbally.

*Announcements:*

*Discussion:*

- JH: C&B will be a heavy discussion this year, because affiliate modifications will be Bylaws.

## **B. Officer for Health & Wellness (Katherine Rivera Gomez)**

*Updates:* I am still waiting on OSA for the yoga instructor appointments. I have been emailing Eric Brown to ask about what is happening, he says he is working with HR (multiple weeks of setbacks). Students continue to email asking about the classes and I am directing them to Eric, since this process is out of my hands at this point. I have been in touch with the instructors and they’re also not very happy with the delays, they could have taken other clients, it is a bad look for the GC. Any suggestions are greatly appreciated since this process is becoming very discouraging to say the least.

*Discussion:*

JH: Eric has been unhelpful about a few things. We can discuss via email if you’d like.



### **C. Officer for Outreach (Natalia Lara)**

*Updates:* Meeting with Silvia, Cecilia and Matt Schoengood to discuss issues with the international office. Some of these issues are improper division of workload, dynamics in the office and lack of staff training.

Going to a Wellness Center staff meeting on 10/24/22 to learn about the services they offer as they have transitioned to more in-person services.

Sayantika and I will speak about organizing a Halloween party (still figuring out the details).

Natalia will reach out to the Wellness Center on 10/17/22 to check-in about current support services for students (particularly international students) in the face of human rights violations in the countries that are represented in the GC. Will discuss with Katherine (Officer for Health and Wellness) so that we can approach the Wellness center together.

*Discussion:*

CC: Halloween planning needs to happen soon, probably next Monday or Tuesday.

ALG: Does it make sense to loop Katherine into the Wellness Center conversation?

NL: She's already involved in the meeting.

RH: Are you talking about international students or GC students for the party?

NL: GC Students.

RH: We used to have crazy parties.

CC: Steering wide party input, we should organize something for students.

### **D. Officer for Student Life & Services (Sayantika Mondal)**

*Updates:*

### **E. Officer for Library & Technology (Daniel Okpattah)**

*Updates:*

1. I met with Maura Smale and Elvis Bakatis on 09/26/2022. Discussed about the room allocation for the zoom conferencing. I put forward the suggestion of allocating room 5396 for this purpose. Maura Smale also said that from the USS meeting they attended in September, they also thought about this issues and the school is planning on allocating certain rooms for this course but not finalized so she can't give me much info till then.
2. Several first year students of GC complained about not receiving their CUNY credentials and logins needed for using the computers in the library. I spoke with Mark Choon of the IT services and this is currently under control. The major issue

here was some studies didn't receive information on how to activate their GC emails hence all the information passed from the IT couldn't reach to them since that was the email used on CUNY first.

*Discussion:*

- IW: Same issue for the social welfare department in terms of no CUNY first access.
- RH: Did Mark Choon confirm that those emails were not sent at all?
- DO: It was sent to their GC email.
- RH: Before they have GC credentials, it is sent to their personal email. They're supposed to get an email to that email. Have you confirmed this being sent?
- DO: There was a break in staffing where it couldn't be done. Now when they go to their CUNYfirst, the email suddenly activates, and they cannot get into their account.

Motion to move into Executive Session for purposes of discussing private personnel matters: JH

Second by RH

Vote Unanimous

The meeting went into Executive Session at 6:01pm

Motion Public Session: JH

Second: RH

The meeting returned to Public Session at 6:06pm

**F. Officer for Funding (Angela LaScala-Gruenewald)**

*Updates:*

- Next Grant proposal deadline is Friday 10/21 at midnight
- Next Grants Committee Meeting is Friday 10/21 at 2 pm
  - First in-person grant committee meeting (OML applies)
  - Will discuss two requests
    - Application idea: Music program wants to do an online teacher resources/pedagogy website, monies to incentive GC students to contribute syllabi and other model class work (\$ TBD)
    - Formal application: Theater and Performance Program Student Conference (\$700)
- Funded first grantee, \$700, Philosophy Students Conference which happened two weekends ago
- Many new requirements from the business office that will impact our grantees (i.e., flier and attendance requirements)

- Working with Jonathan to address these, update our website/grant application and communicate appropriately with future and current grantees

*Announcements:*

*Discussion*

**V. New Business**

**VI. Announcements**

**VII. Adjournment**

Motion to Adjourn: Angela LaScala-Gruenewald

Seconded: Xiaole Jiang

Voted: Unanimously

Meeting is adjourned at 6:13pm