

Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Sixth Meeting of the College Council  
Formed on November 14, 2002

Date: Thursday, October 17, 2024, 2:30pm – 3:25pm

Location: 1P-119 & Zoom Meeting

**CC Members in Attendance**

Zaghoul Ahmed, Jane Alexander, Neo Antoniades, Karen Arca-Contreras, John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Banu Aslanertik, Michael Batson, Warrick Bell, Alan Benimoff, Holly Block, Vandana Chaudhry, Thomas Chen, David Curcio, Deborah DeSimone, Kevin Do, Valkiria Duran-Narucki, Valerie Forrestal, Rosane Gertner, Kenneth Gold, Hernan Green, Michel Hodge, Susan Holak, Emma Johnson, Burnett Joiner, Wilma Jones, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Timothy Lynch, Lisa Manne, Tara Mastroilli, Ralf Peetz, Jonathan Peters, Greg Philips, Mark Aaron Polger, Sarah Pollack, Angelina Raio, Adrian Rosales, Randelle Sasa, Alex Scott, Carlos Serrano, Suzy Shepardson, Susan Smith-Peter, Carles Solà Belda, Michael Steiper, Sarolta Takács, Barbra Teater, Thomas Tellefsen, John Verzani, Robert Wallace, Simone Wegge, Rhoda Wilson, Siona Wilson, Mark Zdziarski.

**CC Members Via Zoom**

Winsome Alston, Yumei Huo, Anatoly Kuklov, Halil Ege Ozen.

**Guests In-Person**

Vincenza Albarano, Cheryl Adolph, Maria Bellamy, Jason Bishop, Sharon Christian, Jessica Collura, Nina Del Gatto, Aleks Dudek, Emmanuel Esperance, Catherine Ferrara, Stephen Ferst, Nicole LaMassa, Jacqueline Lamberti, Michael Lederhandler, Mark Lewental, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Tara Mastrangelo, Dan McCloskey, Christine McEvilly, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Lisa Roe, Frank Salzillo, Terri Sangiorgio, Jessica Stein, Amy Stempler, Dana Trimbolo, Brenda Valentin, Rosemary Vitale, George Wang.

**Guests via Zoom**

Barbara Cohen, Celeste del Maestro, Danielle Dimitrov, Antonio Gallego, Matthew Ganz, Katrina Fama, James Hamilton, Doriann Hyland, Linda John, Michele Karpeles, Koby Kohulan, Thomas Lauria, Andrew Leykam, Mary Murphy, Ed Patri, David Pizzuto, Carly Racioppi, Janine Scotto, Joyce Taylor.

- I. **Approval of the proposed agenda** – approved with no changes
- II. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting** – approved.
- III. **Executive Committee of College Council Report – Kenneth Gold**

Good afternoon, everyone. The Executive Committee met with President Lynch, Provost Steiper, and Chief of Staff Collura on October 8 for its monthly consultation.

We opened with a lengthy discussion of transportation to and within campus. We were pleased to note that the administration had heeded one small recommendation we had made in September: the

placement of public safety officers at city bus stops. I have seen these officers transform chaos to order, though it is premature to see whether an orderly boarding of the bus will lead to a small uptick in payment to ride the bus. You will recall that last month President Lynch shared that the MTA's non-payment rate at CSI bus stops is 85%. With us last week he also shared that he would not be surprised if MTA agents started riding these lines in order to ticket fare evaders. President Lynch also informed us of his administrations ongoing communications with the MTA, with local politicians about funds for a loop bus, with the Department of Transportation about a feasibility study for campus bike paths with a bike station, and with his own administrators about steps that Student Affairs a team reporting to Associate Administrator for Business Development Trimboli might take.

We then discussed the status of potential reorganization of academic units. In the last week, both Provost Steiper and Chairperson Smith-Peter held meetings with the chairs of the potentially affected departments. While faculty and presumably administrative leadership are still processing what they have learned, I am confident that the College will proceed in ways consistent with what faculty have voiced. I have been deliberately vague because department chairs, not me, need to convey information to their faculty, and the same is true for the Provost to the academic deans.

Finally, we held a brief discussion about concerns that HEOs with expertise were being moved out of their current roles and into offices for which they have not built-up specialized knowledge. The President observed that retirements and what AVP Serrano would call operating efficiencies account for some movement. I did not say then but will remind our administration now that while such involuntary moves may make sense in terms of finances and organizational charts, they are not good for morale and not just for the people being moved and but also for people who would have liked the opportunity to apply for the higher level positions in the offices where they work but are now stymied. Too many transfers may become a negative value proposition for the College.

#### **IV. President's Report – Timothy Lynch**

The state of our college budget was the first topic of President Lynch's report. Based on where we started for FY24, (our estimated deficit at the start of FY24 was around \$8 million), we closed out the year in an enviable position, just north of four and a half million dollars in the red. Although we are still in the hole, he stated that it was a smaller one than we had been led to believe. In the meantime, the first quarter of FY25 had just closed and we await information from the University as to where we stand. He noted that our financial plan for FY25 and the succeeding two years had been approved by the University, including our hiring plan. While there were some challenges, he was optimistic that the budgetary situation was moving in the right direction, and he thanked everyone for their partnership in that work.

President Lynch gave some updates on projects related to technology and on facilities. He shared that he had attended the FAQ Information session concerning the looming move from Blackboard to D2L Brightspace, our new learning management system. The session was offered by the Office of Information Technology and the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development. He

found it to be a wonderful session, with lots of good questions. He looks forward to how D2L would provide better services, not just to our students, but also to our faculty and staff who would be utilizing this new platform. Regarding Facilities, he referred to an email, earlier in the week, that referred to the impact the filtered water bottle filling station system had already had on our sustainability efforts. It showed that we have kept 6,000 plus plastic bottles out of the landfill. Thanks to funding from the Student Government, last year, CSI replaced half of the water fountains on campus with this new water filtration system and we have already reduced our carbon footprint significantly. It was his hope to have the remaining half of those water stations replaced next summer. Another project that was underway was the copier replacement project, albeit with a couple of hiccups related to technology and some software issues. Nevertheless, he was confident that the new copiers would introduce new efficiencies and maximize business processes on our campus.

President Lynch concluded his remarks with good news. Final headcount numbers for the fall enrollment were 11,163, just shy of our target which was 11,170. We missed our stated target, 0.1%; however, when the numbers were parsed out, we met our targets when it came to FTE and exceeded targets in some other categories. He was pleased with where CSI stood with enrollment and expressed that he was extremely pleased with where CSI was from a budget standpoint.

#### **Q&A**

A member made a comment regarding the MTA's lack of concern for collecting fares on buses that serve CSI and then using such data against the institution. He urged the institution to ask the MTA to do a better job in providing better services on Staten Island, given that Richmond County had one of the worst commutes in the country.

A member asked whether there was a strategic plan in place now that the enrollment appeared to be moving in the right direction. President Lynch responded that the strategic planning process was underway, and that our multi-year budget plan had also been approved by the university.

#### **V. Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report – Jason Bishop**

Good afternoon colleagues; just a few announcements for this month, after a number of longer reports recently.

First and most urgently: after many, many months of feet-dragging by management, the PSC leadership is calling for an escalation in our contract fight over the remaining weeks of the fall semester. This will begin with a protest on the steps of John Jay (10th Avenue entrance) on Monday, October 21st. Please join us there starting at 5pm, where the message to CUNY management, and their negotiators, will be “No more business as usual we get a fair contract offer!”

I also need to remind the HEOs who are present, and anyone who supervises a HEO, to please complete—and submit—any annual evaluations that are coming due this month. These evaluations are important to our members that may be eligible for reclassification; however, it has come to the attention of the chapter leadership that these evaluations are not always getting done in a timely manner. Expect to hear both from me about this on a monthly basis going forward (in the form of email reminders), and also from the CSI administration—an agreement arrived at this semester at one of our very productive labor-management meetings.

Finally, an announcement from Mary Murphy, one of our HEO colleagues: there will be a meeting for HEOs to attend tomorrow on Zoom. Please watch out for an email later today with the Zoom link for that meeting, and all HEOs are asked to please do their best to attend.

Have a great October, everyone, and see you next month. In solidarity.

**VI. Report from the Administration – Catherine Ferrera, Interim Legal Counsel & Labor Relations Director and Tara Mastrangelo, Director of Institutional Equity & Title IX Compliance**

Catherine Ferrera and Tara Mastrangelo gave a brief presentation about some of our obligations under CUNY new policy on sex-based misconduct, which took effect on August 1 of 2024. They discussed who confidential employees and mandatory reporters are and what they are required to do.

Confidential employees are required to report certain information to Law Enforcement (examples including an imminent threat of serious injury to the reporter, a potentially unlawful sexual act that's taken place involving a minor, a potentially unlawful sexual act that's taken place involving someone who has a cognitive disability, etc). Confidential employees include nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners or other CUNY health office staff members or on campus sexual assault response center staff members as well as counselors, guidance counselors or other staff members at community counseling centers, pastoral counselors or clergy ombuds on campuses and designated staff and community women's or men's centers.

Mandatory reporters are non-confidential employees who have authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of CUNY, or have responsibility for administrative leadership, teaching, advising within CUNY or coaching (athletic director, deputy and then coaches). A mandatory reporter is required to notify the Title IX coordinator or their school, college or unit when they reasonably suspect or observe conduct that may constitute such sex-based misconduct. The reporting obligations apply to information about conduct affecting students, employees or third parties participating or attempting to participate in the institution's program or activities. One significant change under this new policy is about pregnancy and related conditions. In circumstance where a student discloses a pregnancy or related condition to an employee and requires reasonable accommodations, unless the employee reasonably believes that the Title IX coordinator has already been notified, the employee must promptly provide the student with the Title IX Coordinator's contact information and inform the student that the Title IX coordinator can coordinate reasonable modifications to preserve their equal access to the institution's education program or activity.

A copy of the slide presentation, showing the full report, is attached to the minutes.

**VII. Reports of the committees of the College Council**

**a. Committee on Organization – No report**

**b. By-Laws Committee – Kenneth Gold**

Kenneth Gold, chair of the By-Laws Committee, reported that the President will submit the Bylaws to CUNY and that the committee will hold its first meeting of the year in the next few weeks.

**c. Administrative Review Committee – Kenneth Gold**

Kenneth Gold reported that the new membership of the AREC committee elected Cindy Wong as the new Chair. He received a report from Cindy Wong that the committee was working on a report on “Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention and the Administrative Units Involved.” They aim to finish a draft by the end of the year and hope to present the report to the College Council Executive Committee by the beginning of next Spring semester.

**d. Institutional Planning Committee – no report**

**e. Budget Committee – Kenneth Gold**

The committee met with AVP Serrano, President Lynch and Chief of Staff Collura on September 26. It learned that the FY 24 closed out even better than expected by more than \$100,000, that the College’s structural deficit reduction expectations for FY 25 benefitted from our excellent performance last year (but still remain daunting), that CUNY has already approved our FY 25 budget (much earlier than last year), and that the College’s strategies will continue to prioritize increasing enrollment, improving tuition collection rates, control spending, and implement operational efficiencies. There was good news from CUNY, which is assuming the cost for St. George for this fiscal year, giving the college breathing room to find ways to make that facility profitable in the future, and that CUNY will again cover the remainder of our deficit if we reach our target as we did last year. AVP Serrano will report in much more detail to this body at our next meeting.

**f. Facilities Committee – No report**

**VIII. Student Government Report – Adrian Rosales**

Adrian Rosales, introduced himself as a senior, majoring in Finance and Information Systems, and the current President of the Student Government Association. He was joined by Rhoda Wilson, also a senior who was majoring in Communications and Digital Media Designs and was serving as the Advocacy Commissioner. Adrian Rosales presented the following from his report:

- Adrian Rosales apologized for not being present at the September College Council meeting due to a miscommunication in dates but promised to be present at all future meetings.
- Adrian Rosales gave a summary of last year's Student Government that included improvements study lounges in all academic buildings, water fountains, and more.
- Regarding the current semester, Student Government plans to focus on ongoing elections to fill remaining seats on the Senate. Their goal is to promote the elections, urge processors and faculty to encourage voting in their classes.
- Adrian Rosales discussed the fact that Student Government was receiving a lot of blame/heat concerning transportation issues with missing ferry shuttle and S93 congestion on campus. He claimed that a lot of misinformation was going around, with many students blaming us for it when it was a full campus vote with data provided. Transfer students and new freshmen have also latched on to misinformation about the situation, taking it as the end all, be all. He offered the following:

- Perhaps a statement should be sent out again to clarify the issue to the whole college community.
- The [MTA] service should not be altered because some students are not paying the fare when the drivers are taking as many students on the bus as possible. (There are big issues with overcrowding, it is neither the college nor the students' fault for not paying the fare. Drivers are being told not to enforce it either. This is on the MTA.)
- The Student Government wants to be involved in and work with the Transportation Task Force as much as possible to have the student perspective represented and be updated with any developments with the situation.
- Adrian Rosales discussed the situation of the Food Pantry on campus. He mentioned that the current space was not in operation due to past flood. More money is needed to support food pantry goods and staffing based on current demand while it is being run in an impromptu manner.

#### **IX. Higher Education Officer Steering Committee Report - Suzy Shepardson**

Suzy Shepardson, co-chair of the Higher Education Officer Steering Committee (HEOSC) presented the following report:

- The HEOC had its regular meeting with the President and members of the administration. Chief of Staff Jessica Collura and Provost Steiper joined us in a great conversation about campus improvements, infrastructure projects, technology upgrades (including the Life-Cycle Replacement project which has helped CAAS and the Registrar's Office better service our students and colleagues), composition of the HEO Screening Committee, and how we can work together to strengthen the partnerships and collaborations across the administration, offices, and HEOs who work in those areas.
- At our meeting on October 15, we were joined by special guest Wilma Jones (in her capacity as Director of CSI's Center for Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development) to discuss and brainstorm ideas for future CTLPD sessions that focus on areas of interest to HEOs.
- We'll also be working on reintroducing the HEOC members and the committee's functions to the campus community—and we'd like to give special thanks to Manuela Alongi, Director of Human Resources, for providing us with an updated list (including email addresses) of HEOs currently employed at CSI.
- As a reminder, the HEOC members are all listed on the College website, and we're here to help. The only bad question is the one you don't ask, so please reach out! We'll either know the answer or the best place to direct you for assistance.

#### **X. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – No report**

XI. Old Business - None

XII. New Business

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Wilma Jones

Secretary, Executive Council of the College Council