

Minutes of the 178th Meeting of the Faculty Senate

Thursday, February 20th from 3:30 to 4:25 pm in 1P-119

Faculty Senate (FS) Members in Attendance:

Zaghloul Ahmed, Jane Alexander, Neo Antoniades, Banu Aslanertik, Michael Batson, Alan Benimoff, David Curcio, Deb DeSimone, Valerie Forrestal, Kenneth Gold, Patti Gross, Orit Gruber, Susan Holak, Eric Ivison, Emma Johnson, Wilma Jones, Sylvia Kahan, Catherine Lavender, Sharon Loverde, Lisa Manne, Michael Paris, Jonathan Peters, Greg Philips, Susan Smith-Peter, Carles Solà Belda, Sarolta Takács, John Verzani, Cindy Wong, Mark Zdziarski, Sarah Zelikovitz.

Guests in Attendance:

Stephanie Allen, Michael Anderson, Warrick Bell, Jason Bishop, Thomas Chen, Sharon Christian, Brian Cortijo, Kate Cumiskey, Mario D'Alessandro, Chrystal Deosaran, Veronica DiMeglio, Aleks Dudek, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Gene Fellner, Anthoni Garcia, Michel Hodge, Jeremiah Jurkiewicz, Robert Kee, Nicola LaMassa, Jackie Lamberti, Carlo Lancelotti, Michael Lederhandler, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Tara Mastroilli, Vincent Mirabella, Angelina Raio, Lisa Roe, Terri Sangiorgio, Matthew Scally, Alex Scott, Suzy Shepardson, Ruth Silverberg, Amy Stempler, George Wang, Rhoda Wilson.

Meeting called to order at 3:30pm by Chair Susan Smith-Peter.

I. Approval of the agenda.

Motion seconded, and passed.

II. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Senate of December 19th, 2024.

Moved, seconded, and passed.

III. Executive Committee Report (Appendix A)

IV. Provost's Report (given remotely via Zoom)

- Provost Steiper acknowledged the current uncertainties in higher education and thanks President Lynch, College Council Chair Ken Gold, Faculty Senate Chair Susan Smith-Peter, and PSC Chapter Chair Jason Bishop for their leadership, along with faculty and staff's commitment to CSI's core mission in research and education.
- CSI was designated a research college/university by American Council on Education (ACE) and the Carnegie Foundation for 2025, which is a testament to the productivity of faculty and the key contributions of staff to the research and creativity aspects of our mission.
- Enrollment and retention numbers are exceptionally strong. Please keep it going by submitting progress reports as soon as possible, as it greatly helps with retention efforts.
- Provost Steiper also affirmed the administration's commitment to staff development in the Strategic Plan. Please bring ideas and concerns to him, Assoc. Provost for Faculty Success, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, and/or Director of The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development (CTLPD), Wilma Jones.
- Listing of faculty accolades by school/division.

V. Consent Agenda:

DEGREE CHANGES

UNDERGRADUATE – N/A

GRADUATE – N/A

NEW COURSES

UNDERGRADUATE

1. Department of History

- a. New course: HST 293 Modern France and Its Empire

GRADUATE – N/A

CHANGES IN EXISTING COURSES

UNDERGRADUATE

1. Department of Media Culture and Department of English

- a. Change in existing course: COM//EWR 445 Journalism and Society

GRADUATE – N/A

Consent Agenda approved with minor correction by C. Lavender.

- VI. Undergraduate students in graduate courses – Double Counting Policy (presented by Prof. Jonathan Peters)

- Brief discussion on financial impact
- Affirmation that departmental rules still in effect

Motion seconded, and passed.

- VII. University Faculty Senate Report (Prof. John Verzani)

- CUNY UFS participated in a conference in Albany, where President Lynch spoke on a panel entitled, “Public Good U”, about the public good of higher education.
- Remarks on President Trump’s “Dear Colleague Letter” (for more information, read the Chronicle of Higher Education’s article on the topic, available through the CSI Library with your CSI login:
<http://csi.ezproxy.cuny.edu/login?url=https://www.chronicle.com/article/in-sweeping-letter-ed-dept-says-scotus-ruling-applies-to-all-race-conscious-programs>)
- At prior Tuesday’s board meeting, a \$2 million contract was approved for CUNY to enter into relationships with 3 different legal firms so as to be prepared for any legal challenges the school might face regarding President Trump’s executive orders or directives involving higher education.
- A contract was also approved to hire consultants to help implement policy recommendations from Judge Lippman’s report relating to doxing and harassment on CUNY campuses.
- John Verzani will be co-chairing a group related to freedom of expression aka the Henderson Rules, along with General Council Derek Davis and about 10 others, including some other faculty members.
- CUNY has authorized the creation of a center to handle Title IX issues in order to centralize policies and processes regarding discrimination and harassment across the University’s 25 colleges. This will be in addition to local campus resources but will help standardize training and response, including an improved submission portal, as recommended by the Lippman Report.
- Brief discussion on admission rules and public versus private spaces on campuses. AUP recommends closing classroom doors when class is in session, and visibly marking spaces with signs that say “Private”. (For more information, see:
<https://www.presidentsalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/UPDATED-FAQ-Immigration-Enforcement-on-Campuses-Feb-25-2025.pdf>)

VIII. Reports of the Committees of the Faculty Senate

- Academic Freedom Committee report postponed in order to join an online session on NY State Protections for Immigrant Students - What you should know (First Gen Empower is hosting a virtual webinar to provide higher education specific information on protecting immigrant students.)

IX. Old Business

X. New Business

XI. Adjourned at 4:25pm

Appendix A: Faculty Senate Executive Report for February 20, 2025

These are difficult times for higher education, and more difficulties likely lay ahead. One of the crucial things we will need is to keep lines of communication open between all of us. We must all also be willing to listen to each other without assuming either agreement or disagreement with our own ideas. In a situation where an op ed the New York Times notes that the vice president of the United States seeks the destruction of academia, we should remain aware of the dangers around us, yet not be paralysed by them. Let us do what we can do and protect what we can protect.

At a meeting with the provost and dean on February 13, 2025, we discussed various actions that can inform students, faculty, and staff about their rights in case ICE comes on campus. The provost agreed to the creation of posters in the glass cases of the buildings and later the president confirmed that the CSI website landing page would include materials related to Know Your Rights. As of now, this has not happened, but I am sure it is in the planning stage. In the meantime, I recommend that everyone look at LaGuardia Community College's KYR section on their landing page for the best collection of information and resources that I have seen. The provost supported a campus-wide program on this topic at the Center for Teaching, Learning and Professional Development, which is in the process of being planned. We discussed concerns of faculty about how there is no central place to check IDs before coming onto campus. Dean of the Library Amy Stempler stated that now the library requires ID to enter, so that students can be directed to go there if this is needed. We raised the need for red cards, which provide guidance on what to say to ICE, and the administration agreed to distribute them to campus offices. We noted that ICE is scheduled to attend the career fair in April and shared how other campuses have dealt with this issue, including creating a floor plan showing of the location of ICE tables so that students can make informed decisions. We requested support for LBGTQIA students.

We discussed how department chairs are the appropriate hiring manager for faculty searches, as is stated in a 2013 CUNY publication still used as guidance. There have been cases of department chairs not being allowed to serve on search committees, which is particularly a problem in small departments. There was a debate over whether these changes were brought before Faculty Senate. Investigation after the meeting found that they were presented to General Chairs but never brought to governance bodies. Later discussion with DEI administrators was marked by an agreement in principle to include Faculty Senate, particularly the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee, in discussions around revising the search committee process going forward. The XC feels strongly that faculty should continue to play a leading role in searches.

We discussed a report of the Research Committee on research support for faculty members, which was well received. The report lays out basic expectations for research support for new faculty. It will be put forth to the administration for discussion and approval.

We also mentioned that there would be a training regarding the rights of NY State students at Faculty Senate.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Smith-Peter