

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

Date: Thursday, February 20, 2025, 2:30pm – 3:25pm

Location: 1P-119 & Zoom Meeting

CC Members in Attendance

Zaghloul Ahmed, Jane Alexander, Neo Antoniadis, Banu Aslanertik, Michael Batson, Warrick Bell, Alan Benimoff, Thomas Chen, Brian Cortijo, David Curcio, Debbie DeSimone, Valerie Forrestal, Kenneth Gold, Patti Gross, Orit Gruber, Michel Hodge, Susan Holak, Eric Ivison, Emma Johnson, Wilma Jones, Sylvia Kahan, Catherine Lavender, Sharon Loverde, Timothy Lynch, Lisa Manne, Tara Mastroilli, Vincent Mirabella, Michael Paris, Jonathan Peters, Greg Philips, Angelina Raio, Adrian Rosales, Suzy Shepardson, Susan Smith-Peter, Carles Solà Belda, Sarolta Takács, John Verzani, Robert Wallace, Rhoda Wilson, Cindy Wong, Mark Zdziarski, Sarah Zellikovit.

CC Members Via Zoom

John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Vandana Chaudhry, Clarisse Domingo, Rosane Gertner, Patricia Kahn, Alfred Levine, Lee Papa, Ralf Peetz, Carlos Serrano, Michael Steiper, Barbra Teater, Thomas Tellefsen, Simone Wegge, Kelly Zyko

Guests In-Person

Cheryl Adolph, Stephanie Allen, Michael Anderson, Jason Bishop, Sharon Christian, Jessica Collura, Kate Cumiskey, Mario D'Alessandro, Chrystal Deosaran, Aleks Dudek, Veronica DiMeglio, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Gene Fellner, Anthoni Garcia, Jeremiah Jurkiewicz, Robert Kee, Nicola LaMassa, Jackie Lamberti, Carlo Lancellotti, Michael Lederhandler, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Lisa Roe, Terri Sangiorgio, Matthew Scally, Alex Scott, Ruth Silverberg, Amy Stempler, Dana Trimbolo, Rosemary Vitale, George Wang.

Guests via Zoom

Manuela Alongi, Barbara Cohen, Linda Coull, Celeste del Maestro, Danielle Dimitrov, Catherine Ferrara, Matthew Ganz, Kate Goodland, Doriann Hyland, Michele Karpeles, Lisa Korchma, Lynne Lacomis, Thomas Lauria, Jane Marcus-Delgado, Mary Murphy, Debbie-Ann Paige, David Pizzuto, Carly Racioppi, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Janine Scotto, Jessica Stein, Joyce Taylor, Brenda Valentin

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

Good afternoon. I hope that the semester is off to a good start for you, the upheaval and malice in DC notwithstanding. The implications of some of the changes for higher education was a major topic of discussion when the Executive Committee met with President Lynch, Provost Steiper, and Chief of Staff Collura on February 11th for its monthly consultation.

We opened by acknowledging some good news for the College regarding the robust Spring enrollment—no doubt more on that from the President and we'll hear details from Michel and Alex at our March

meeting. But kudos are in order for the leadership and work among many members of the administration. We also congratulated President Lynch for the completion of the Strategic Plan, which will be distributed to members of the College Council. The expectation is for all members to share and discuss it with the constituents who you represent. We will discuss it here in our March meeting and hold a vote to ratify it at our April meeting. As we laid out this process, we discussed how staff professional development was removed as part of Priority 4. The Executive Committee was not of one voice as to how to redress its elimination, but I for one am/would be satisfied with its addition to a different priority so that 4 could retain its clear focus on research.

Our discussion of potential round ups by ICE on campus resulted in agreement on several needed efforts at communication with campus constituencies. One of the outcomes is the presentation we'll have from Mike Lederhandler today. Another is the need for making "know your rights" information more readily available via red cards and presentations by experts. I expect that the XC will be weighing in each month for foreseeable future on how the College responds to attacks on immigrants and DEI initiatives, elimination of federal research dollars, and all other provocations.

Closer to home, we discovered that department chairs were replaced by deans as hiring managers for faculty searches. Discussions of this issue have just begun and the XC would like to see department chairs resume their role in managing faculty searches. Our position is grounded in the assumption—shared by CUNY search guidelines—that faculty searches are a different entity from other searches and that faculty must play the central role in conducting and overseeing them. We encourage—and I speak from experience here—our colleagues who serve as deans to continue to rely on longstanding policies and practices that ensure a vital role for them.

We briefly addressed the guidelines for bicycles on campus and then reflected on the convocation/holiday party held last month. For the latter, we urged that there be a bit more pomp involved when celebrating longevity at the college. We also suggested that convocation be separated from the holiday party and held, more appropriately, near the start of the fall semester.

IV. President's Report – Timothy Lynch

President Timothy Lynch began his report, as always, with good news. Enrollment for the spring semester was robust and strong. As of February 14th, the head count was at 10,700 students, surpassing our target by over 200, including a substantial growth in our graduate programs that contributed to this success. He extended congratulations to Assistant Vice President Alex Scott and his team for their efforts. He also thanked Provost Steiper and his team in academic affairs for the hard work accomplished in improving our retention initiatives, which had also helped to exceed our enrollment target. Not only had our head count grown and our graduate enrollment grown, but more importantly, from a budgetary perspective, our FTE numbers were up considerably, which placed us in a very good position with our budget.

In terms of the budget, President Lynch spoke about focusing on the following two efforts. One was to lobby to secure increased funding in the next fiscal year. Regarding that, he has had some ongoing conversations with local, state elected leaders and even national elected leaders to secure funding for the campus. The other item was for us to adjust our current year's financial plan, based on enrollment, hiring, and some assumptions that had been built into our financial plan. Eight months into the fiscal year, our mid-year budget revision had been submitted to the university and under review by their budget office. All signs point to a lessening of our deficit and a strengthening of our position. From a

budgetary standpoint, he thanked in particular Assistant Vice President Carlos Serrano and his team but also extended thanks to everybody else who tightened their belts during these challenging times.

In terms of facilities, President Lynch mentioned a few initiatives. There will be construction on our athletic facilities, particularly our soccer field and subsequently our baseball and softball fields. The hope was to enhance their attractiveness and generate revenue for the College. This project was largely under the direction of Dana Trimboli, but also with support from our new Director of Athletics, Matthew Scally, who joins us from Columbia University. Matthew Scally has brought with some great ideas, not just about monetizing our athletic facilities, but also about working closely with the faculty. He encouraged anyone with an interest in learning more about his vision for athletics or how to better integrate academics with our Division II Athletic Programs to make themselves known to Matthew Scally.

With regards to our strategic plan, it would soon be made available for review on the intranet. President Lynch stated that he was very pleased with the final product and that it was an amazing testament to the wonderful things happening at CSI. More importantly, he stated that it was visionary in what we wanted to achieve as an institution, moving forward. He stated that the process was inclusive, collaborative, and consultative. The strategic plan was going to be our North Star for the next five years and he noted that it was in alignment with CUNY's own strategic roadmap. He looked forward to everyone's input and feedback, and more importantly, he hoped that all would vote in the affirmative at the April meeting, so that we can begin to actualize and operationalize the strategic plan.

Lastly, President Lynch noted that there had been a lot of consternation concerning perceived or real challenges coming from the federal government relating to educational institutions. He had also received concerns from members of the community about the recent "Dear Colleague" letter. President Lynch stated that CSI was in absolute compliance with federal mandates, the 14th Amendment, and Title VI. There are no plans at the university level or the campus level to deviate from our current practices, current policies, or from our course of protecting our students and honoring our responsibilities to all of them.

Q&A.

A member raised the concern that the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan Priority IV: Supporting Faculty Research, Scholarship, Creative Activities and Staff Development, no longer included "staff development," and wondered why this was the case. President Lynch noted that the oversight had since been addressed with some slight modifications to move the bullet point that alluded to staff development from Priority IV to Priority II. Jason Bishop, co-chair of Priority IV, added that the observation on the oversight was accurate, but he disagreed with the characterization of the exclusion of staff development. He clarified that the working group intentionally excluded staff development to prioritize research and pedagogy. Other concerns were raised about the inclusivity of the working groups that lacked staff representation.

Another question raised pertained to the impact of recent federal policies on anti-racist work of students and faculty, emphasizing the need for a public statement from President Lynch with clear guidance to maintain the institution's mission and to ensure the safety of faculty and staff. President Lynch responded that he had already just made a public statement earlier in his report. Chair Gold made a suggestion to consider distributing the minutes more widely.

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

Jason Bishop, Chair of the PSC chapter at CSI, started his report by expressing gratitude to everyone who participated in negotiating the new contract, but called out Michael Batson and George Sanchez for their valiant efforts. He described the contract as a significant achievement, with hundreds of hours of work invested, highlighting the importance of a virtually five-year contract. He noted that CSI had a high participation rate in the ratification vote, with about 95% of the members voting in favor. Faculty and staff can expect their back pay, signing bonuses, and new raises to be happen by the end of the semester.

Shifting the focus to more serious issues, unsettling events happening both locally and nationally, Jason Bishop noted that the federal government's actions on Valentine's Day have made many activities illegal, which were unprecedented and challenging to navigate. He emphasized the need for patience and understanding as the local administration follows instructions from CUNY, the state, and the federal government.

Jason Bishop noted challenges with statements and promises from members and discussed the difficulty of making precise statements about protecting students, faculty, and staff from deportation. The PSC has a Working Group that was actively thinking about these issues and working on potential responses. He encouraged participation in the PSC Working Group to influence decisions and actions rather than demand specific statements.

No Questions

VI. Report from the Administration – Michael Lederhandler, Director of Public Safety

Michael Lederhandler presented procedures to follow, if ICE agents should happen to come onto campus. He addressed the following:

- Procedure that Public Safety follows when law enforcement officials come onto our campus. He noted that the College follows existing CUNY policy and procedures when dealing with law enforcement agencies.
 - a. If they stop at the main gate and identify themselves or if they are seen by my staff on campus they will be brought to the Public Safety office
 - b. Their credentials will be verified
 - c. We will ascertain their purpose for coming to our campus
 - d. They will be asked to show any documentation that they may have related to their stated purpose
 - e. Their stated purpose and paperwork will be communicated to our Legal Affairs Designee who will determine next steps
- Procedure to follow if any law enforcement officials arrive at an office or classroom
 - a. Calmly inform the agents that you are calling the Public Safety Department to assist
 - b. Call Public Safety at (718) 982-2111. Tell the officer who answers who you are, where you are and what is happening. This number is staffed and will be answered 24 hours a day and 7 days a week
- The difference between Judicial and Administrative warrants
 - a. Judicial Warrants come from a court and are signed by a judge
 - b. Administrative Warrants come from an agency

- c. The College will comply with a Judicial Warrant following a review and determination made by the College's Legal Affairs Designee.
- Challenges of having an open institution and the differences between non-public vs. public space
 - a. Examples of Public Space: our outdoor grounds, cafeteria, building lobbies, reception areas in offices where people are served
 - b. Examples of non-public space: places where a person would have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as your private office, any area behind a barrier such as a counter or locked door, or a classroom while class is in session. Individuals cannot access these areas, unless invited in.

Michael Lederhandler emphasized the importance of conveying this information to colleagues in offices and departments.

Robert Wallace, CSI's Legal Officer, who works closely with Public Safety, weighed in as well. He suggested that if approached, one should offer help by a referral to Public Safety or Legal Counsel for a response. He advised against misrepresenting information and emphasized the importance of not lying to federal law enforcement officers.

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 committee met and has begun to map out a strategy for a new round of bylaws revisions. The proposal approved last year is still with CUNY and hopefully will be approved at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

- c. **Administrative Review Committee** – **Cindy Wong**

Cindy Wong, Chair of AREC, reported that the committee had almost completed its work on the report on "Recruitment, admission, and retention." They aim to finalize the report by the end of the year.

- d. **Institutional Planning Committee** – No report

- e. **Budget Committee** – No report

- f. **Facilities Committee** – No report

VIII. Student Government Report – Adrian Rosales

Adrian Rosales, President of Student Government, made the following report:

- He thanked Public Safety for their help with the Spanish Club Valentine's Day Ball on February 13th!!!
- He announced that In-House Elections were coming up to fill three lower division seats and two upper division seats. Nominations close on Feb 21, 2025.

- He reported that the Spring General Elections for next year's Student Government nominations will be open from March 3-23, 2025. It will feature a first debate at CSI for Student Government President and Vice President candidates. The debates will be livestreamed on YouTube.
- He reported that he had spoken with Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Smith-Peters about Student Government co-sponsoring a "Know Your Rights" event given uncertainties regarding ICE raids.
- He announced that Student Government will partner with the Office of Dolphin Services for Student Government to schedule pop up shops for CSI merchandise at different locations on different days throughout campus. The first will be March 19th from 12:00pm - 2:30pm in 1C. They also discussed the idea of having a "campus closet," where students can borrow clothing at set appointment times.
- He reported that the Career Center has partnered with JCPenney to organize a "Dress for Success" event. The plan is to have Student Government senators dress as models/examples of proper professional outfits. Students will get their measurements taken and given discounts to shop before Career Fair.

IX. HEO Steering Committee – Suzy Shepardson

The HEO Steering Committee (HEOSC) is in the process of finalizing a brief, anonymous survey for distribution to all current HEO-series employees, through which we hope to gather specific information on challenges they're facing, suggestions on how CSI can better support them and/or HEOs in general, and what they value about CSI. This will help us not only structure the agenda and content of future events but also ensure that we are representing HEOs to the best of our ability by bringing their concerns forward and working together to find solutions.

Distribution of the survey (via email) will happen soon, and I want to thank the HEOs in advance for participating. We'll report our findings at a later date, and also use the information gathered to develop our agenda for our next meeting on March 17 at noon—which will be open to all HEOs. Meeting information, including the Zoom link, will go out electronically when we're closer to the date so that it doesn't get lost in the interwebs (as my mom would say).

During the HEO Steering Committee meeting on Tuesday, the committee discussed the final draft of the Strategic Plan. We learned that Strategic Priority #4, which originally included support of staff professional development, was changed to focus solely on faculty research, scholarship, and creative work (RSCW). The decision to remove staff professional development results in a misalignment between CSI's Strategic Plan and the CUNY Strategic Roadmap (Goal #2), which recognizes the importance of supporting both faculty and staff professional development to the success of the University. The Strategic Roadmap states, "Staff and faculty...will be provided with recognition of their contributions and first-class professional developmental opportunities that support continuous growth throughout their employment." The deletion and exclusion of staff from CSI's Strategic Plan eliminates key members of the CSI community, who are vital to the success of the College. CSI should make a commitment to supporting the training and skill development needed for all members of its community.

We're happy to hear that revisions to the draft document are already underway, as highlighted in reports made at today's College Council. We look forward to discussing this, and other topics that come forward as a result of our survey and March meeting, at our April 1st meeting with President Lynch and his team.

X. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – Robert Wallace

Robert Wallace gave a report on the following three items:

- There are three installations of large digital screens on campus, located in high foot traffic areas and will display content related to events at the college and other information (1P, 1C and 1R). These screens are sponsored by Trooh TV. His office is working with the Office of Communications to create content for the 30% of screentime that is available to the college as well as a process for determining content that will be displayed. The screens are not touch screens and cannot display interactive maps.
- Auxiliary Services would like to do a repeat of the pop-up shops for departmental merchandise. Please contact Anna Lambert for assistance with designs.
- A 5K event is planned for May 4, 2025, to raise funding to have the Cafe named in memory of Jody Merendino, and participants and donors are encouraged to join.

XI. Old Business - None

XII. New Business - None

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm

Respectfully submitted by Wilma Jones
Secretary, Executive Council of the College Council