

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

Date: Thursday, October 16th, 2025, 2:30pm – 3:25pm
Location: 1P-119 & Zoom Meeting

CC Members in Attendance

Zaghloul Ahmed, Neo Antoniades, Paul Archibald, John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Banu Aslanertik, Warrick Bell, Alan Benimoff, Holly Block, Paolo Cappellari, Vandana Chaudhry, Lorianne Crowder, David Curcio, Debbie DeSimone, Valkiria Duran-Narucki, Aris Efting, Gene Fellner, Rosane Gertner, Kenneth Gold, Hernan Green, Susan Holak, Nathalia Holtzman, Eric Ivison, Emma Johnson, Burnett Joiner, Wilma Jones, Anatoly Kuklov, Carlo Lancellotti, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Robert Lovering, Timothy Lynch, Alan Lyons, Lisa Manne, Tara Mastroilli, Dan McCloskey, Christine McEvilly, Vincent Mirabella, Jackson Mushnick, Halil Ege Ozen, Michael Paris, Ralf Peetz, Jonathan Peters, Mark Aaron Polger, Sarah Pollack, Gabriella Rosales, Alexander Scott, Carlos Serrano, Suzy Shepardson, Carles Solà Belda, Sarolta Takács, Christina Tortora, John Verzani, Ashley Villalva, Robert Wallace, Simone Wegge, John Wing, Cindy Wong, Mark Zdziarski, Kelly Zyko.

CC Members Via Zoom

Angelina Raio, Madonna Shaker, Siona Wilson

CC Members Absent:

Andrew Colbeck, Clarisse Domingo, Ismael Garcia-Colón, Yumei Huo, Patricia Kahn, Philippe Marius, Angie Mekki, Catherine Paradiso, Michelle Pasaca, Allen Tesdall, Gaolan Wu.

Guests In-Person

Michael Anderson, Stefan Charles-Pierre, Thomas Chen, Sharon Christian, Jessica Collura, Jonathan Cope, Chrystal Deosaran, Danielle Dimitrov, Aleks Dudek, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Katrina Fama, Erlan Feria, Ruta Gordon, Tom Lauria, Michael Lederhandler, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Christine McEvilly, Terri Sangiorgio, Donna Scimeca, Jessica Stein, Amy Stempler, Dana Trimboli, Brenda Valentin, Rosemary Vitale, Rhoda Wilson.

Guests via Zoom

Barbara Cohen, Celeste Del Maestro, LaToya Dubey, James Hamilton, Linda John, Koby Kohulan, Jane Marcus-Delgado, Mary Murphy, Leonardo Pignataro, Gary Pizzolo, Carly Racioppi, Janine Scotto, Don Selby, Joyce Taylor.

- I. **Approval of the proposed agenda** – approved.
- II. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting** – approved with no changes

III. Executive Committee Report – Kenneth Gold

Good afternoon. It has been an eventful semester to date. The Executive Committee met with President Lynch and Chief of Staff Collura on October 7th for its monthly consultation.

We began by discussing the task force on commencement I proposed last month. The term “task force” is a misnomer as what the XC has done is establish a small working group made up of faculty, staff and

students with a single charge to consider and propose alternative ways of preventing a rogue commencement speech that don't lead to the unseemly spectacle of a valedictorian present on stage while her recorded speech was played. We are still in discussions about how best to collect and convey sentiments on other aspects of commencement.

We inquired about the President's concerns about the current remote workforce policy, heard about some ill-advised stretching of it, yet agreed that in many offices the status quo works just fine. President Lynch observed that most state agencies have rescinded remote agreements and that he takes seriously students' desire for more face-to-face contact with faculty and staff, which we all heard President Ashley Villalva express in her report last month. Remote work policies are a privilege that is undermined when employees take actions that do not serve their offices or departments well.

I am pleased to report that President Lynch was very amenable to something the executive committee urged: the completion this academic year of searches for a Provost and a Dean of Education and Social Work. It helped that the CUNY Board of Trustees agreed with us in principle.

We had a robust conversation about issues related to executive committee membership that arose during the previous meeting of the Faculty Senate. Executive Committee members noted the impropriety of electing the Dean of H&SS as the body's secretary. President Lynch noted the dearth of faculty members willing to run but was also reminded that in this instance there was a faculty member who had already accepted nomination for the position. As a longstanding and appropriate custom broke down last month, the by-laws committee will be asked to consider whether a member of the administration should be excluded from eligibility for the executive committee and whether anyone besides the Faculty Senate chair can serve on the executive committee of both the Council and the Senate.

We asked about plans to capitalize on Wagner College's unfortunate elimination of many academic departments and programs and learned that the potential pool of additional students was quite limited. We highlighted ongoing concerns about the physical condition of the campus and will have an administrative report on planned improvements at our December meeting.

Finally, I want to follow up on the previous College Council meeting. One thing that became clear to me is that the chair must better enforce Robert's rules and the body's longstanding customs regarding duration of speaking, which I will do so for both the standing reports and comments/questions from the field. Standing reports should be no more than and preferably less than five minutes. Invited reports can last up to ten minutes. Individual speakers have no more than two minutes and are unable to speak again while other members seek to speak for the first time

IV. President's Report – Timothy Lynch

President Lynch welcomed everyone and encouraged the College Community to extend grace and understanding to our students as midterms approach, recognizing the stress and challenges they may be facing. He also emphasized the importance of self-care, urging faculty and staff to prioritize their own health and well-being during this busy time.

President Lynch began his report by recognizing Dr. Donna Gerstle, who was recently commended by Chancellor Matos for her impactful work on breast cancer. Her efforts have extended beyond Staten Island, contributing meaningfully to the broader community through advocacy and awareness for individuals affected by the disease. He also congratulated [Dr. Ralf Peetz and 12 colleagues](#) from the Division of Science and Technology, who were named among the top 2% of researchers in their fields by

the Stanford University–Elsevier. This recognition places them among the most influential researchers worldwide.

President Lynch provided a brief update on the College’s budget, reporting that CSI closed FY25 with a deficit of \$1.967 million—an 85% reduction in the structural deficit over the past two fiscal years. He emphasized that this progress was achieved without resorting to the austerity measures that many other campuses and institutions have had to implement. Earlier in the day, President Lynch toured the campus with the president of the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) to review progress on several DASNY-managed projects. The DASNY president expressed satisfaction with the significant improvements made to CSI’s athletic, academic, and research facilities. These investments, made during challenging economic times, reflect President Lynch’s—and the institution’s—commitment to providing faculty, staff, and especially students with the resources they need to succeed.

Despite these advancements, CSI remains on the university’s list of campuses of high financial concern. President Lynch stressed the importance of continuing to be responsible with how we allocate time, energy, and resources, including exercising prudence in hiring decisions. Nevertheless, he expressed confidence that by maintaining this disciplined approach, CSI is well positioned to end the current fiscal year in the black. He concluded by acknowledging that reaching this goal will require continued effort from all of us, but affirmed his belief: *“I’m confident that we will get there.”*

Q&A

A question was raised regarding the plan for faculty searches for this academic year. President Lynch responded that he did not anticipate any negative impact on positions included in our hiring plan. All positions within the plan are expected to move forward. If the university requests explicit justifications for these positions, both President Lynch and Provost Holtzman were well prepared to advocate on behalf of the campus. However, positions not within our hiring plan will be subject to scrutiny by the university.

Another question raised concerned the College’s plan for increasing enrollment. President Lynch shared that CSI had a comprehensive strategy in place, which AVP Scott would detail in his upcoming presentation. The plan included several targeted campaigns to bring in adult learners and individuals with some college credit but who have not completed a degree. Meanwhile, CSI made significant strides for student retention. The year-over-year retention rate for first-year freshmen was 75.9%, marking an improvement over previous years.

V. Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report – Jonathan Cope

CSI Chapter Chair Jonathan Cope delivered the following PSC-CUNY report:

1. **No Kings Labor March - Saturday, October 18th.** I know that in this room we all have a wide range of political beliefs, but if you think our republican form of government is being threatened by the current administration in Washington DC, then you should join us. If you have not participated in public demonstrations before, this is the one you should join. The Labor March steps off from Duarte Square (6th Ave and Canal St) at 11:00 am and will meet the general public march at 14th Street.

2. **Health Care Update** - The Municipal Labor Committee (MLC)--the body of New York City Unions on which the PSC has one vote--has approved a new health benefits plan for active employees, pre-Medicare retirees, and their dependents. The New York City Employee PPO Plan, to be administered by Emblem and United Healthcare, will replace the current GHI plan administered by Emblem and Anthem/Blue Cross starting January 1, 2026. The contract needs to be reviewed by the NYC Comptroller and will be available for public comment. The plan's implementation follows two years of negotiations between representatives from the NYC Office of Labor Relations, the MLC, and the insurance companies. The other health plans now offered by the City will continue to be offered. Medicare-eligible retirees and their dependents are not affected by the new NYCE PPO.

Anytime there is a change like this, it is entirely reasonable for members to be concerned about the implications. PSC will schedule information sessions for members and announce dates soon. The City will offer an Open Enrollment period from November 1 – November 30, so participants will have time to make an informed decision. Updates will be made to the PSC website, [What's Happening to Our Healthcare?](#), including an FAQ page.

A few important points:

- Current participants in the GHI plan will automatically be enrolled in the NYCE PPO, and they should experience little to no disruption in access to their physicians, clinical providers, and hospitals.
- There will be no premiums for the 5 years of the contract and no changes from the current GHI CBP plan in copayments and deductibles for at least 2026.
- Hospitals currently in-network will remain in-network at least through 2026, including Memorial Sloan Kettering and Hospital for Special Surgery. There could be changes in later years.

VI. **Report from the Administration** – Alexander Scott

Alexander Scott, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Services and Dean of Admissions, presented a report on focused on enrollment for fall 2025. Below is a summary of his presentation and his full report is attached to these minutes.

To date, there were 11,426 students enrolled this fall 2025, slightly below the forecast of 11,485 (though numbers are still being reconciled). When compared to fall 2024, enrollment showed an increase by 3.25%. CSI outperformed CUNY senior colleges with a 3.4% increase. Retention efforts, thanks to staff in Enrollment Management, embedded advisors in the departments, and faculty, led to a 4.6% rise in returning students. Concerns that need attention include three areas: i) freshman and transfer enrollment dropped by 4.5%; we need to do better at improving conversion rates ii) graduate enrollment declined by 2.9%; currently working with Dean Joiner to address this with a comprehensive plan; and iii) general enrollment cliff – NY State is projected for a 27% decline in college aged students over the next several years; we need new strategies to improve enrollment include targeting new markets and enhancing retention efforts.

Q&A

A question was raised regarding the reported 4.5% decline in freshman and transfer enrollment—specifically, whether this figure reflected a snapshot of this year's admitted student ratio or a

comparison over multiple years. AVP Scott clarified that the decline was in comparison to the previous year. In response to a follow-up question, he noted that when disaggregated, transfer student numbers have held up better than those of freshmen.

Another question raised was whether CSI could address the 7% drop in conversion rates by emphasizing that its programs lead directly to employment. AVP Scott responded that his office is already highlighting this in outreach efforts. However, he cautioned that the broader national trend shows a shrinking pool of prospective students, which limits recruitment potential.

A concern was raised about the declining number of college-age students in New York, particularly on Staten Island, and how this demographic shift might impact CSI. AVP Scott explained that the competitive landscape is intensifying, with other institutions offering incentives such as in-state tuition to out-of-state students. For example, Kean University in New Jersey now offers in-state tuition to non-residents. Moreover, he expressed concern that private institutions in the metro area—facing shortfalls in international student enrollment—may increasingly target CSI’s traditional student base.

Two additional questions were addressed together. One asked whether CSI is leveraging the CUNY free application window, and the other inquired about the possibility of CUNY offering in-state tuition to out-of-state residents. AVP Scott shared that CSI is awaiting promotional materials from CUNY to distribute to feeder high schools. As for in-state tuition for New Jersey residents, the idea has been discussed, but no formal plans are in place. Meanwhile, SUNY has begun offering in-state tuition to New Jersey residents for the first time this year.

VII. Reports of the committees of the College Council

a. Committee on Organization – No report

b. By-Laws Committee – Kenneth Gold

The Chair of the By-Laws Committee, Kenneth Gold, reported that the By-Laws will be meeting soon to deliberate on questions he raised in his earlier report.

c. Administrative Review and Evaluation Committee – No report

d. Institutional Planning Committee – No report

e. Budget Committee – No report

f. Facilities Committee – No report

VIII. Student Government Report – Ashley Villalva

The new President of Student Government, Ashley Villalva, began her report by asking members of the Student Government at the meeting to stand and be recognized for their work. After much applause, she reported on the following recent and upcoming initiatives:

Past events/news

- Student Government senators held a Leadership Retreat on Oct 12-13, 2025. It is hoped that what they learned will support our leaders in ways to create more avenues for growth for our students.
- Student Government senators had Pizza with the President Lynch and Interim Vice President Gordon on Oct 14, 2025.
- Alex Cammarano, hired as the New Student Government Coordinator, started his position last week.

Upcoming Events/Ideas

- In-House Election - There were 18 eligible students for nomination to fill 5 open spots and they were optimistic about having a full Student Government very soon!
- Halloween Bash will take place on October 24th in 1C-Green Dolphin Room from 6pm-10pm.
- Academic and Curricular Affairs Commission will organize a Club Fair on Oct 30th at 2:30pm in 1C Rotunda.
- Student Facilities, & Sustainability Commission has put forward several proposals for the game Room in 1C.
 - Game Room Manager - \$14,000 per year for a (15 hours per week). The ad will be posted to Indeed. This position would provide greater stability and support for both the Game Room and work-study students.
 - Game Room Equipment: \$2,000
 - HDMI Cord for SG Conference Room: \$50
- “Jammies and Jeopardy” in collaboration with the Tutoring Center
- The Student Services Fair organized by the Student Services Commission will be held on Nov 4, 2025, from 6pm – 8pm; and November 18 (during club hours) in 1C Rotunda. They will be reaching out to all resource offices and programs to continue the annual event and better support our students.

Additional Initiatives:

- The Student Government was exploring opportunities to decorate Alumni Walk to create a more inviting and visually appealing campus atmosphere.
- The Student Government was planning to extend Spirit Day into Spirit Week in collaboration with Interim Vice President Gordon. The aim is to bring more energy and engagement across campus for students, faculty, and staff.

Special Community Proposals

Several proposals have been submitted, and the group is currently reviewing them to determine whether each represents an appropriate and ethical expenditure of Student Activity Fees. This review is a multi-step process that requires time and collaboration among multiple parties, including the Finance & Funding Allocation (F&FA) Commission of Student Government, the Full Student Government Senate, and the CSI Association Board. For any questions or additional guidance, please contact Mario D’Alessandro.

Finally, Ashley Vilallva gave special thanks to the College Council, as well as our faculty, staff, and administration, for their openness and collaboration as we work together toward a shared goal, making CSI a welcoming and supportive community for all.

IX. HEO Steering Committee – Tara Mastrorilli-Geosits

Co-Chair, Tara Mastrorilli-Geosits gave the following report from the HEO Steering Committee:

On Tuesday, October 14, the HEO Steering Committee had its first open meeting of the academic year. The committee led a discussion about what HEOs value about CSI, challenges faced that impact our work, and suggestions for support needed.

We had a productive conversation around commencement, remote work, College-wide involvement in Executive searches, and the need for deepening our understanding of CSI-specific policies and practices. To elaborate:

- Our conversation on Remote Work focused on its benefits and challenges. Many HEOs value the opportunity, feel it is working well for their office, and in fact feel that their office functions more effectively as a result. However, others find that remote work can be challenging to manage alongside performance management concerns.
- We also discussed the absence of Town Halls during the most recent executive searches. HEOs emphasized the value of open forums where College stakeholders can meet with candidates and provide feedback.
- Lastly, we discussed the need for deepening our understanding of CSI-specific policies and practices specifically, around the budgeting and purchasing processes, how to prepare objective performance reviews, and having a solid understanding of CSI's performance management processes.

In closing, I walked away from the meeting reminded of the HEOs' commitment to CSI's success and their constant drive for improvement. The committee and I look forward to continuing our collaboration with the HEOs to better support their work.

X. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – Robert Wallace

Robert Wallace reported on the following items:

- Bike Lanes: Bike lanes on campus will be stripped shortly; waiting for the weather to cooperate.
- CSI swag: New CSI swags are available. Get them for 10% off at the next Spirit Week event. In support of Breast Cancer Month, there is a \$5 off the \$15 pink CSI hat.
- Mobile App: A little delay in the launch of online orders with credit cards and Apple Pay. Hoped that this will be resolved by November.

XI. Old Business - None

XII. New Business

Meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm

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