

THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND  
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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Minutes 185<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Faculty Senate  
Thursday, December 18, 2025, from 3:30 to 4:28 pm in 1P-119.

Faculty Senate Members in Attendance:

Zaghloul Ahmed, Neo Antoniadis, Paul Archibald, John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Alan Benimoff, Paolo Cappellari, Vandana Chaudhry, Andrew Colbeck, David Curcio, Deborah DeSimone, Valkiria Duran-Narucki, Aris Efting, Gene Fellner, Valerie Forrestal, Rosane Gertner, Kenneth Gold, Susan Holak, Nathalia Holtzman, Emma Johnson, Burnett Joiner, Wilma Jones, Carlo Lancellotti, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Timothy Lynch, Alan Lyons, Lisa Manne, Dan McCloskey, Christine McEvilly, Catherine Paradiso, Michael Paris, Jonathan Peters, Sarah Pollack, Carles Solà Belda, Sarolta Takács, Christina Tortora, John Verzani, Simone Wegge, Siona Wilson, John Wing, Cindy Wong.

Faculty Senate Members via Zoom:

Madonna Shaker, Yumei Huo

Guests in Attendance:

Cheryl Adolph, Warrick Bell, Stefan Charles-Pierre, Jessica Collura, Jonathan Cope, Brian Cortijo, Lorianne Crowder, Aleks Dudek, Emmanuel Esperance, Hernan Green, Orit Gruber, Stephen Ferst, Qiao-Sheng Hu, Patricia Kahn, Michael Lederhandler, Jorma Loci, Carey Manifold, Jane Marcus, Susan Massara, Tara Mastroilli, Vincent Mirabella, Chrystal Montalvo, Steve Monte, Jackson Mushnik, Dimitrios Pavlides, Ralf Peetz, Gary Pizzolo, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Alexander Scott, Carlos Serrano, Suzy Shepardson, Jessica Stein, Amy Stempler, Matthew Scally, George Sulley, Ashley Villalva, Rosemary Vitale, Robert Wallace.

Faculty Senate Members not in Attendance:

Jane Alexander (sabbatical), Banu Aslanertik, Ismael Garcia-Colón, Eric Ivison, Anatoly Kuklov, Jeanne-Rachel Leroux, Rob Lovering, Philippe Marius, Halil Ege Ozen, Mark Aaron Polger, Allen Tesdall, Mark Zdziarski.

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Meeting called to order at 3:30 pm by Chair Deborah DeSimone.

- I. Approval of the agenda.  
*Motion moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*
- II. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Senate of November 2025.  
*Motion moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*
- III. Executive Committee Report, Dr. Deborah DeSimone (See Appendix A)

#### IV. Interim Provost's Report, Dr. Nathalia Holtzman (See Appendix B)

In answering questions from senators, the interim provost addressed faculty concerns regarding the review of under-enrolled programs and the potential for program closures. The current phase is strictly for information gathering and no decisions regarding program closures have been made. At this point, the review is collecting comprehensive data on enrollment, faculty workload, students served, resource needs, and long-term sustainability. There is a commitment to meeting with department chairs to discuss findings. If data suggests changes to scheduling or operations, guidance will be issued early to allow for departmental planning. The review seeks to understand *why* numbers are low (e.g., lack of staffing, marketing issues, or structural barriers). Some programs, such as music, are recognized as essential to the institution regardless of size. The goal is not merely to cut, but to identify where programs require additional support, development, or restructuring.

In response to disruptions caused by the current final exam structure and calendar irregularities: Central CUNY administration shared faculty frustrations regarding recent scheduling complications. A system-level committee has been established to develop multi-year academic calendars (3–5 years in advance) to prevent future conflicts and irregular structures.

Clarification was sought regarding the resolution for an honorary degree for Ms. Laura Kennedy. The current resolution is an initial step. A comprehensive supporting package detailing Ms. Kennedy's full contributions and achievements will be submitted to the central office at a later stage.

#### V. University Faculty Senate Report (Dr. John Verzani)

The Chancellor addressed the University Faculty Senate regarding several strategic priorities. Key discussion points included:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI): Academic integrity and the integration of AI tools in the classroom.
- ESL Placement: Standardizing placement protocols across the university system.
- Compliance: An overview of current Title VI compliance measures and university obligations.

Dr. Verzani provided a formal correction regarding earlier statements on Title VI federal reporting obligations. Reporting requirements are not limited to specific settlement cases as previously suggested. Obligations apply broadly to all incidents submitted through the reporting portal. A formal apology was issued to a colleague for the prior misrepresentation of these facts.

Final comments have been submitted for the senior lecturer title. The proposal is slated for review by the Board of Trustees in February.

The departure of the University Chief Financial Officer initiated a leadership transition.

A draft policy for micro credentials is in development, based on SUNY models. These credentials will apply to both credit-bearing and continuing education programs.

A new 18-member committee has been established to replace the previous structure. It was noted that there is currently no representative from the College of Staten Island (CSI) on this committee. Dr. Verzani clarified that while CSI names were submitted for consideration, they were not selected during the final appointment process.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) is currently reviewing policies regarding firearm authorization on campus following an Inspector General report. The review focuses on authorized peace officers and internal institutional policies, not external political demonstrations or visitors. CSI was identified as being involved in one of the three specific incidents referenced in the report.

The University Faculty Senate discussed the lack of a system-wide policy regarding students recording faculty during instruction. Currently, there is no CUNY-wide ban; however, individual campuses (e.g., Queens College, Law School) have implemented their own policies. Under the principles of academic freedom and copyright protection, faculty members maintain the authority to prohibit recordings in their classes. It was noted that there is a trend of recordings being used to target faculty on a national scale.

#### VI. Consent Agenda:

##### *DEGREE CHANGES*

UNDERGRADUATE – N/A

##### GRADUATE

###### 1. Department of Accounting & Finance

a. Change in existing degree program: Accounting MS

###### 2. Point of Information: Department of Social Work

a. Application to Add Distance Education: Social Work MSW

##### NEW COURSES

UNDERGRADUATE – N/A

GRADUATE – N/A

##### CHANGES IN EXISTING COURSES

UNDERGRADUATE – N/A

GRADUATE – N/A

#### VII. Item/s not on the Consent Agenda for Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025

UNDERGRADUATE – N/A

GRADUATE – N/A

*Motion moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*

## VIII. Reports of the Committees of the Faculty Senate

### Research Committee

Dr. Dan McCluskey presented an update on the Research Committee's recent activities, specifically regarding the charge to recommend directions for research development and advise the administration on expanding campus research opportunities.

On behalf of the committee, Dr. McCloskey reported on the flow of research capital, categorized into incoming funds and infrastructure expenditures. Expenditures include faculty release time, graduate student support, library resources, and shared facilities (e.g., Animal Facility, High-performance Computing Center, and laboratory maintenance). Funding is derived from the base budget and Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) from external grants. The committee highlighted a recent downgrade in the college's federal ICR rate which decreased from \$0.72 to \$0.65 per dollar on salary and fringe. Other CUNY institutions (Queens, Brooklyn, City College, Hunter) utilize a different structure based on total budget (recovering 50–60 cents per dollar spent) rather than just salary/fringe. The committee is investigating whether a renegotiation of this recovery model would be more advantageous for the College of Staten Island.

Approximately 7.5% of campus square footage is currently designated for research/scholarly purposes. The committee is evaluating if this rate is appropriate given the current grant landscape and the physical size of the campus.

A survey has been developed to gather data necessary for future negotiations with federal authorities and the Provost's office. The launch date for the survey will be in the first two weeks of January 2026 with a deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup>. The faculty will be asked to report on research expertise, scholarly interests, space usage (offices, libraries, labs), and expenditure patterns. The objective is to determine the most effective ICR rate for the campus and improve reinvestment in research infrastructure.

Concerns were raised from the floor that the current overhead formula is "punitive" for faculty in disciplines requiring less physical space (e.g., Humanities), as high overhead costs reduce the "product" budget without providing specialized infrastructure in return. There was some discussion regarding the lack of support from CUNY Central for CSI's unique physical scale, which places a strain on the general budget. Senators also noted a decline in morale due to the lack of travel funding, startup costs for junior faculty, and research assistance. It was suggested that the committee capture "aspirational" needs in their data collection to plan for future revenue reinvestment.

IX. Old Business -N/A

X. New Business

Resolution to Award an Honorary Degree at the 2026 Commencement to Laura Kennedy from The College of Staten Island (see under Appendix A)

*The resolution was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*

XI. Adjournment at 4:28 pm

## Appendix A

### Faculty Senate Executive Committee Report

Good afternoon, Senators and Guests of the Faculty Senate,

I am sorry to begin this meeting, our last of the year, with a request for a moment of silence for the students who lost their lives Saturday afternoon at Brown University, and for the families who lost their child, and the students who witnessed and were traumatized by this attack as their classmates were shot, sitting in a classroom –just like our own CSI Students -- in pursuit of an education and enlightenment. Among the number of heartbreaking comments made over the last week was that the police found the students to have responded well in the crisis. Of course they did. They have endured Active Shooter trainings since pre-K. But then again, so has the shooter.

### SILENCE

On Tuesday, December 9, the FSXC met with interim Provost Hotzman. We asked her to update us on her initiatives, which she will do in her report to the senate, as well as progress on past issues. We also brought to her attention concerns of the chairs and gave our own update on the three initiatives we identified for the upcoming year.

I'd like to begin with our update, as promised to you at our last meeting. If you recall, the FSXC identified 3 academic goals we would like to pursue during our time in office. The first was to focus on Continuing Education and Workforce Education. On October 30<sup>th</sup>, we met with representative of Continuing Education Program to discuss CSI's offerings, what ideas were discussed in the past, and to identify the courses needed to support NYPD and NYFD certifications. We agreed to explore other institutions' websites and programs. On December 4<sup>th</sup>, I attended the CUNY wide workshop on Credit for Prior Learning to explore possible connections between CPL, Workforce Education, and Continuing Education. The FSXC hopes to meet in early February with our colleagues in Continuing Education to keep momentum going.

We are also focused on our associate's degree offerings to better serve the community and to build 2+2 avenues to Baccalaureate Degrees. Given the relationship of our Associate Degree Students to Adult Learning initiatives, the College sent representatives to the CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning) Conference in Memphis, TN in November. We will meet with Veronica DiMeglio to hear what was learned and to connect information from the CAEL conference to what was learned at CUNY's CPL conference. We hope to meet with Veronica DiMeglio in February.

Our third focus is on re-envisioning General Education and creating a First Year Experience – the Chair of Gen Ed, Jane Marcus, and I meet weekly and are working on a TEAGLE grant, due March 1. This will provide funding for us to pay faculty and staff from across the divisions, schools, and offices to re-envision Gen Ed & build a FYE within the Pathways construct.

The chairs asked us to discuss three issues with the interim Provost: conflicts in the exam schedule; the number of incoming freshmen requesting accommodations; and the data being collected regarding underenrolled programs. Regarding conflicts in the exam schedule, we were informed that, while

nothing can be done for this semester's exams, the Registrar's office is aware of the issue and will work with the conflicting departments to resolve it for Fall 2026.

It came to the FSXC's attention that an unusually large percentage of CSI's freshmen class has requested academic accommodations. The XC met with Stefan Charles-Pierre of the Accessibility Office on Monday of this week to learn more about the severity of the issue, about what, if any, infrastructure problems impeded the OAA's work, and what support that office might be able to give to Faculty – full & parttime. We had voiced our concern to the interim Provost for the faculty teaching these students – most of whom are adjuncts, who have little background in teaching, and even less in teaching students with special needs. The interim Provost shared our concerns and we discussed in person trainings, asynchronous Brightspace workshops, and other resources of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development for faculty and adjuncts to address this issue.

The chairs were also concerned about the data being collected on underenrolled programs, exactly what they are looking at, and the timeline for any actions taken. The interim Provost assured us that all programs, not just the underenrolled, are being examined in the light of efficiency, the number of majors or minors in a program, but also the number of students served by courses within a program. The interim Provost renewed her promise to inform the FSXC before any cuts to any programs or courses are made, most likely for FALL 2026.

This discussion connected to the interim Provost's concern, voiced at the beginning of the meeting, regarding enrollment and the demographic cliff that will negatively impact CSI in the near future. Given the cliff, the interim Provost encouraged focus on Continuing Education, Adult Learning, and the Credit for Prior Learning initiative.

Another topic of conversation was the data presented to you at our last meeting on the state of the faculty and staff and the issues around hiring, tenure, and promotion. We were told that 13 lines were approved for this academic year (nine professorial, three lecturer, and one open) and that she and the President hope to gain 13 more for AY 26-27. A serious discussion ensued regarding the role of service in promotion and we requested models from other institutions and the guidelines, written by Cynthia Chris & Matt Brim, to guide discussions at General Chairs about these issues.

Finally, we discussed the candidacy of Laura Kennedy for honorary degree recipient at the 2026 commencement ceremony of CSI. At this time, I would like to invite Lisa Manne to please read the resolution.

Thank you, all. On behalf of the FSXC, Happy Hannukah, Merry Christmas, Happy Kwanza, we wish you peace and love in the New Year.

Yours truly,

Deborah De Simone, Chair, Faculty Senate

Resolution to Award an Honorary Degree at the 2026 Commencement to Laura Kennedy  
from The College of Staten Island

WHEREAS, Laura Kennedy of Staten Island is a nationally recognized advocate for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, currently serving as the President of the Board of Directors for The Arc of the United States, the largest community-based organization in the U.S. advocating for and with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families; and

WHEREAS, Laura Kennedy earned her MA degree in Elementary Education and Teaching from Adelphi University, and her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and Teaching from Hunter College; and

WHEREAS, Laura Kennedy has deep ties to Staten Island, where she previously directed the Staten Island Early Childhood Direction Center for over 25 years. Her work there focused on providing technical assistance, information, and special education training to families and professionals; and

WHEREAS, Laura Kennedy has served on the Willowbrook Mile Committee at the College of Staten Island as a strong advocate for a permanent remembrance documenting the history of The Willowbrook State School. The Willowbrook Mile officially opened on September 17, 2022, the 35th anniversary of the closing of the school, as a 12-station accessible, outdoor museum, that recounts the steps leading up to the 1972 exposé by Geraldo Rivera, to the eventual closing of the facility and its place in history as a milestone for social justice; and

WHEREAS, Laura Kennedy was elected President of The Arc of the United States in 2022. Prior to that, she served as President of The Arc New York, demonstrating a long-standing commitment to disability rights and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, As President of The Arc of the United States, Laura Kennedy is focused on advancing national policies that support caregivers, improve wages for direct support professionals, and ensure full inclusion for people with disabilities across the country;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, That the College of Staten Island award Laura Kennedy, a stalwart disabilities advocate, the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, at the College's annual commencement ceremony on May 28 2026.

EXPLANATION: In awarding Laura Kennedy the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, the College of Staten Island honors her for accomplishments as a distinguished community member, advocate, and educator.

The College is proud to recognize Laura Kennedy with this honor.

This resolution is adapted from biographies available [here](#) and [here](#).

*The resolution was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*

## Appendix B

Interim Provost Dr. Nathalia G. Holtzman – Report to Faculty

Good afternoon, colleagues. [pause]

Before turning to my main remarks today, I want to briefly note a few updates from the Central Office that may be of interest to this body.

First, Central is advancing a series of programs and initiatives focused on student success and career readiness, including CUNYBeyond, which expands and coordinates efforts to better support students as they prepare for careers and post-graduate pathways. Keep an eye out for professional development opportunities to integrate career readiness into advising, mentoring and where appropriate the classroom.

Second, the three-year adjunct appointment pilot is sunsetting and will be replaced by a multi-year adjunct appointment program. Jess Stein, HR, and Central Office colleagues have been working closely with departments to identify eligible instructors and to ensure that instructor evaluations and program reviews are underway, so that these transitions are handled thoughtfully and in alignment with existing processes, while best supporting the teaching needs of the departments while supporting all our instructors.

You may have noticed that the Spring CUNY calendar has an oddity this year that we are not able to adjust locally. Exams start before the last day of Tuesday classes. Please check the campus calendar for details. In response, Central has convened a team that will begin planning the academic calendar three to five years out. This will allow campuses to provide feedback and make academic and instructional plans well in advance, which I know is something many of you have been asking for.

With that context, I want to turn to my main topic today—faculty service.

Much of what sustains this campus happens quietly. Committee work that never makes a headline. Mentoring that happens outside formal assignments. Faculty who step in to support programs, students, and departments because they see a need and understand the stakes.

These are, in many ways, the silent heroes of the institution. Their service creates continuity, trust, and stability. It ensures that shared governance functions not just as a structure, but as a lived practice. Without this work, we would not be able to move initiatives forward, respond thoughtfully to challenges, or sustain the academic culture we value.

When service is expected but not fully recognized, it can become a burden rather than a contribution. This brings me directly to tenure and promotion.

Service is considered in tenure and promotion at CSI, alongside teaching and scholarship. However, the 2023 COACHE survey made clear that many faculty and department chairs are seeking greater clarity and guidance about what is needed to support strong tenure and promotion application, particularly with respect to documenting and evaluating service.

To support a conversation about how service can and should be included in the support for tenure and promotion, I have asked the chairs to come together in a January retreat where I will provide a space for them to come together to begin to tackle this complex subject with the goal of creating some general campus guidelines and allow time for the chairs to create their department specific plans.

I look forward to continuing these conversations with Faculty Senate as partners in shaping how service is understood, supported, and valued at CSI.

Thank you.