

**THE COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND  
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

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Minutes 186<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Faculty Senate  
Thursday, February 19, 2026 from 3:30 to 4:21 pm in 1P-119.

Faculty Senate Members in Attendance:

Jane Alexander, Neo Antoniades, John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Banu Aslanertik, Alan Benimoff, Paolo Cappellari, Vandana Chaudhry, Andrew Colbeck, David Curcio, Deborah DeSimone, Valkiria Duran-Narucki, Aris Efting, Gene Fellner, Kenneth Gold, Susan Holak, Nathalia Holtzman, Eric Ivison, Emma Johnson, Wilma Jones, Anatoly Kuklov, Carlo Lancellotti, Catherine Lavender, Rob Lovering, Timothy Lynch, Alan Lyons, Lisa Manne, Dan McCloskey, Christine McEvelly, Steven Monte, Catherine Paradiso, Jonathan Peters, Carles Solà Belda, Sarolta Takács, , John Verzani, Simone Wegge, Siona Wilson, John Wing, Mark Zdziarski.

Faculty Senate Members via Zoom:

Alfred Levine, Halil Ege Ozen.

Guests in Attendance:

Cheryl Adolf, Michael Anderson, Alyson Bardsley, Anita Bulan, Stefan Charles-Pierre, Jessica Collura, Chrystal Deosaran, Danielle Dimitrov, Aleks Dudek, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Ruta Gordon, Orit Gruber, Erlan Feria, Qiao-Sheng Hu, Jackie Lamberti, Michael Lederhandler, Jane Marcus-Delgado, Susan Massara, Chrystal Montalvo, Donna Scimeca, Jessica Stein, Amy Stempler, Dana Trimboli, Paola Ureni, Brenda Valentin, Rosemary Vitale, Rhoda Wilson.

Faculty Senate Members not in Attendance:

Zaghloul Ahmed, Paul Archibald, Valerie Forrestal, Ismael Garcia-Colón, Rosane Gertner, Yumei Huo, Philippe Marius, Mark Aaron Polger, Sarah Pollack (sabbatical), Allen Tesdall, Christina Tortora Madonna Shaker, Cindy Wong.

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

- I. Approval of the proposed agenda.  
*Motion moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*
- II. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Senate on December 18, 2025  
*Motion moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*
- III. Executive Committee Report, Dr. Deborah DeSimone (Appendix A)
- IV. Interim Provost's Report, Dr. Nathalia Holtzman

Dr. Nathalia Holtzman provided updates on academic scheduling, enrollment planning, faculty hiring, and accessibility compliance. She reminded faculty about the unusual final examination schedule for the

semester. The schedule includes exams followed by a class meeting on Tuesday, additional exams, a long weekend, and final exams on the following Tuesday. Faculty were encouraged to remind students to review the schedule carefully and avoid making travel plans during the long weekend if they have Tuesday exams scheduled.

Dr. Holtzman then discussed planning for the upcoming fall semester, noting that planning is already underway with department chairs and deans to determine course offerings. Because the College anticipates lower first-semester freshman enrollment, departments that offer many services or introductory courses for first-year students were encouraged to consider temporarily reducing or holding some sections until enrollment numbers are confirmed.

She also addressed faculty hiring and program development, noting that the campus is currently working to hire 13 new faculty members. She thanked faculty members serving on search committees and those who will participate in upcoming candidate town halls.

Dr. Holtzman emphasized that new faculty hires should be considered strategically, particularly in relation to how faculty scholarship and research align with teaching opportunities and program development. Departments were encouraged to consider strengthening programs that support student recruitment and retention, including expanding master's programs, developing 4+1 bachelor's-to-master's pathways, or creating new certificate programs.

She clarified that recruitment and retention should not be understood solely as participation in recruitment events, but rather as building strong academic programs that attract and retain students through teaching, research, and innovation.

Dr. Holtzman also noted that she had recently attended several department meetings and individual meetings with faculty and department chairs. She encouraged departments to reach out if they would like her to attend departmental meetings, hold one-on-one conversations, or participate in events celebrating student work.

Before Dr. Holtzman took questions, the Registrar spoke to the importance of Verification of Enrollment (VoE) Rosters and administrative deadlines. This current semester also saw an unusually high number of late submissions as well as late student registration requests.

Late submissions create significant complications for several administrative offices, including the Registrar, Financial Aid, and Bursar. Because financial aid disbursement depends on accurate enrollment verification, delays may result in aid being issued to students and the institution to have to repay federal funds. Faculty were therefore asked to ensure that VoE rosters are submitted promptly.

- Privacy of Course Materials and Brightspace

A faculty member asked about who has access to course materials and syllabi posted in Brightspace, particularly in relation to external requests for course materials.

Dr. Holtzman explained that Brightspace access is tightly regulated. Typically, only the instructor and individuals explicitly added to the course have access to course materials. Administrative access requires formal authorization and review. Faculty would be notified if such access was requested. It was also

clarified that course materials hosted in Brightspace cannot simply be extracted or used by external systems, including AI platforms.

- FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) Requests for Course Materials

Another question concerned the possibility of FOIA requests for syllabi or other instructional materials.

Dr. Holtzman noted that these requests are handled through institutional administrative channels. Her understanding is that faculty would likely be informed before any materials were released. The university typically seeks to disclose only the minimum information necessary to comply with legal requirements.

- ADA-Accessibility Compliance

Faculty also raised questions about ADA compliance for course materials, particularly in relation to complex diagrams and images often used in academic instruction.

Dr. Holtzman acknowledged that accessibility requirements can be challenging for technical content and complex visual materials. Faculty were encouraged to make reasonable efforts to improve accessibility where possible, such as adding descriptive text for images when feasible.

She noted that accessibility improvements can be implemented gradually and that accessible materials can be reused in future semesters. Current accessibility metrics indicate compliance levels of approximately 70–75%, and the goal is to gradually improve these numbers over time.

- ADA Title II Compliance Announcement

It was also announced that the ADA Title II compliance deadline was April 24.

To assist faculty, the Center for Teaching, Learning and Professional Development, in collaboration with the Library, will host a program on March 31, featuring Professor Rebecca Oling. The session will provide guidance and practical advice on improving digital accessibility in course materials.

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

Dr. John Verzani presented an update from the University Faculty Senate (UFS) regarding several issues currently under discussion across CUNY.

One issue concerned the mandatory Title VI training. Some faculty have raised concerns regarding how aspects of the training may intersect with academic freedom. The Chancellor's office has indicated that it is open to feedback and may revise the training materials. In response, an ad hoc committee has been formed to collect faculty feedback and provide recommendations.

Dr. Verzani also discussed questions regarding access to course syllabi and instructional materials. He noted that while the university's intellectual property policy addresses some aspects of ownership and access, it does not fully resolve all concerns. He suggested that clearer and more consistent policies across campuses may be beneficial.

Another topic involved students recording faculty lectures. Dr. Verzani explained that there is considerable confusion about whether a formal university-wide policy exists regarding classroom recordings. Although some sources suggest such a policy exists, further review indicates that no consistent system-wide policy currently governs unauthorized recording of lectures.

Some campuses have addressed the issue independently. For example, Queens College adopted a Faculty Senate policy in 2024 prohibiting unauthorized recording in classrooms. Dr. Verzani suggested that similar policies could potentially be developed either at the university level or by individual campuses. He also noted that certain campuses have policies addressing recordings made as disability accommodations, including rules governing how such recordings, may be stored or distributed.

## VI. Consent Agenda

### *DEGREE CHANGES*

#### UNDERGRADUATE

##### 1. DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

- a. Change in existing degree: Engineering Science BS & MHC Engineering Science BS
- b. Change in existing degree: Electrical Engineering BS & MHC Electrical Engineering BS

#### GRADUATE -N/A

### *NEW COURSES*

#### UNDERGRADUATE – N/A

#### GRADUATE

##### 1. DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

- a. Experimental Course: NRS 808 Advanced Care and Management of Wounds
- b. Experimental Course: NRS 809 Role Practicum: Advanced Care and Management of Wounds

### *CHANGES IN EXISTING COURSES*

#### UNDERGRADUATE

##### 1. DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

- a. Change in existing course: MTH 334 Differential Equations

##### 2. PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

- a. Change in existing course: INT 100 Introduction to International Studies (Pathways)

#### GRADUATE – N/A

*Motion moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*

- VII. Item not on the Consent Agenda for Thursday, February 19, 2026
  - 1. INFORMATION ITEM
    - a. Discontinuance of Zero-Enrolled Programs (Excel spreadsheet)
- VIII. Reports of the Committees of the Faculty Senate N/A
- IX. Old Business
- X. New Business
- XI. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Sarolta A. Takács, Secretary

## Appendix A

### GREETINGS

FSXC met with the interim-Provost and Deans on Tuesday 2/10 and discussed a number of issues, many of which Dr. Holtzman will mention in her remarks.

Three interrelated issues were the main focus of our discussion: building a culture that values service as well as scholarship; the indisputable need to hire more faculty and staff; and the real threat of faculty burnout.

Dr. Holtzman, Dr. Ramasubramanian (Associate Provost for Faculty Success) and the FSXC are looking at the demographics of our faculty to better understand who, when, how, and possibly why individuals remain within a particular rank for more than the national or CUNY average.

If service is a cause, we hope this demographic data can inform the conversation the chairs and, hopefully, the departments, are having regarding service's weight in the tenure & promotion process. There are many subtleties regarding service, including personal choice, departmental needs, the language in our contract, that we are just beginning to explore in regard to tenure and promotion. We will bring more data on this issue to the chairs and to you later in the semester.

All of this relates to our desperate need for faculty lines, for if program development is expected of new hires, that must be considered at the time of tenure and promotion. So too should program coordination, particularly since the rationale for new lines must clarify how this position will address recruitment, retention, and the department's disciplinary needs. Recruitment & Retention is often the responsibility of program coordinators.

You see the conundrum – we want to develop a culture in which service is valued and encouraged –but we flirt with the real danger of faculty burnout.

The faculty are being asked to do more and more service than ever before. Particularly in the areas of recruitment and retention. This includes participating in open houses, admitted student days, phone banks, high school visits, and other recruitment and retention events. And let's not forget the ever-increasing number of BrightSpace trainings, now up to 5 with the possibility of a 6<sup>th</sup> in Constructive Dialog Training to be added. We acknowledge the need for these trainings. We also know that our participation in recruitment & retention events is critical to the health of the college. We also know that this participation eats away at our ability to enliven our teaching, conduct our research, and provide the quality advisement our students deserve.

Remember, we are a top heavy faculty, (147 professors, 97 associate professors, 22 Assistant professors, 1 clinical professor, and 67 lecturers) and our governance limits by rank participation in critical departmental posts – specifically, on the appointments committee and as chair.

There are no easy answers – but we hope the data will inform the questions we continue to ask and bring some clarity to the issues at hand so we can finesse this conundrum facing us.

We did discuss other issues, particularly those raised in December:

1. Land Acknowledgement –we will *partner* with Snug Harbor Cultural Center to make sure that our land acknowledgement is meaningful to the few Lenape still living on the island.
2. Consent Agenda –was discussed at length and will remain but...we will slow down the pace and remind people of the rules. We acknowledge that the consent agenda has its drawbacks and will explore ways to overcome those.
3. FSXC is scheduled to meet with the chairs of all 3 curricular committees to consider our curriculum – as a whole.
4. Book Banning: The issue of academic freedom and the attacks on it has been a constant for the FSXC. The attacks are ubiquitous, but in this political climate, faculty are afraid to sign resolutions or petitions. I'd like to ask Gene Fellner to read his letter in support of Summer Boismier, the middle school teacher who lost her teaching license. We were asked by faculty not to make this a resolution but something for individuals to consider whether you feel comfortable and would like to sign or not.

Have a wonderful rest of the evening,  
Deborah De Simone  
Chair, Faculty Senate