

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

Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2026, 3:30pm – 4:25pm

Location: 1P-119 & Zoom Meeting

CC Members in Attendance

Jane Alexander, Neo Antoniadis, Paul Archibald, John Arena, Comfort Asanbe, Banu Aslanertik, Warrick Bell, Alan Benimoff, Paolo Cappellari, Andrew Colbeck, Brian Cortijo, David Curcio, Deborah DeSimone, Valkiria Duran-Narucki, Aris Efting, Gene Fellner, Valerie Forrestal, Kenneth Gold, Hernan Green, Susan Holak, Nathalia Holtzman, Eric Ivison, Emma Johnson, Wilma Jones, Sylvia Kahan, Patricia Kahn, Anatoly Kuklov, Carlo Lancellotti, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Rob Lovering, Timothy Lynch, Alan Lyons, Lisa Manne, Tara Mastrorilli, Dan McCloskey, Christine McEvelly, Catherine Paradiso, Ralf Peetz, Angelina Raio, Alexander Scott, Tobias Schaefer, Carlos Serrano, Carles Solà Belda, Sarolta Takács, Christina Tortora, Paola Ureni, John Verzani, Robert Wallace, Simone Wegge, John Wing, Cindy Wong, Mark Zdziarski.

CC Members Via Zoom

Lorianne Crowder, Yumei Huo, Jackson Mushnick, Jonathan Peters, Mark Aaron Polger, Gabriella Rosales.

CC Members Absent:

Zaghloul Ahmed, Ismael Garcia-Colón, Rosane Gartner, Jeanne-Rachel Leroux, Philippe Marius, Angie Mekki, Vincent Mirabella, H. Ege Ozen, Michelle Pasaca, Sarah Pollack, Carlos Serrano, Madona Shaker, Allen Tesdall, Siona Wilson, Gaolan Wu, Ashley Villalva, Kelly Zyko.

Guests In-Person

Cheryl Adolf, Anita Bulan, Stefan Charles-Pierre, Jessica Collura, Chrystal Deosaran, Aleks Dudek, Nicolas Durst, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Ruta Gordon, Orit Gruber, Darryl Hill, Qiao-Sheng Hu, Michael Lederhandler, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Crystal Montalvo, Terri Sangiorgio, Matthew Scally, Donna Scimeca, Amy Stempler, Rosemary Vitale, Rhoda Wilson.

Guests via Zoom

Thomas Chen, Barbara Cohen, Christine Cohen, Sharon Christian, Veronica DiMeglio, Danielle Dimitrov, Catherine Ferrara, Stephen Ferst, Antonio Gallego, Matt Ganz, Koby Kohulan, Lynne Lacomis, Thomas Lauria, Jane Marcus-Delgado, Mary Murphy, Doriann Pieve-Hyland, Leonardo Pignataro, Carly Racioppi, Caterina Scarimbo, Janine Scotto, Joyce Taylor, Brenda Valentin,

- 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 and welcome back. The Executive Committee met with President Lynch, Interim Provost Holtzman and Chief of Staff Collura on March 10 for its monthly consultation.

President Lynch reported on various lobbying efforts and the positive trends regarding spring enrollments and mid-year budget projections. He also noted that the College fared well at the recent CUNY Trustees Borough hearing. I then reported on AREC's focus for its next study, which Cindy will share with you during the committee's report. I mention this because it led to a positive discussion where several of us shared views about other areas AREC might have selected. We also discussed the near universal frustrations with the implementation of One RF. The president observed that the system is geared towards compliance not convenience and would discourage if not eliminate more transactional relationships researchers forge with RF staff. Regarding commencement speeches, I shared that other CUNY governance bodies are beginning to express concern about recorded speeches.

We had a lengthy conversation about snow removal. The administration noted some key improvements from earlier storms despite that the most recent one was especially challenging. We appreciated that an email about the storm went out and urged for even more clarity and precision in the future. In my testimony before the trustees, I urged that CSI be allocated additional funds for snow clearance and be given the authority to depart from CUNY decisions regarding opening or closing campuses.

Finally, we discussed various aspects of hiring faculty, staff and administrators. President Lynch indicated his intent to search for a replacement for Keith Pisons as soon as possible. We discussed the appropriate level for that department, with some of us arguing to return it to the VP level and President Lynch noting that CUNY's transition to shared services argued for keeping the position at a lower level, although still a cabinet member. We discussed the number of faculty lines that might be authorized and learned that even with the likely elimination of our budget deficit this year, CUNY will still be closely monitoring how many positions we try to fill. We reiterated the need for more assistant professors and the desirability of lines to grow the faculty. As for staff and administrators, we urged the uncoupling of disparate responsibilities that were only combined to save money. President Lynch indicated his own interest in this regard—note that the current VP search for student affairs no longer has enrollment management welded to the position—as long as the College remains fiscally responsible. President Lynch reiterated what Alex Scott shared last month—our recent gains in enrollment are facing a demographic cliff: the pending decline in the number of 18 year olds.

Comment

John Verzani, Professor of Mathematics and current Chair of the University Faculty Senate mentioned two items: 1) that the CUNY notebook on enrollment, which allows one to filter by borough, showed a favorable report of a less steep demographic decline for Staten Island and Brooklyn; 2) that he was willing to be the sympathetic ear and convey to CUNY RF any issues that CSI faculty and staff have encountered with OneRF.

IV. President's Report – Timothy Lynch

Before President Lynch began his report, he acknowledged comments that Professor Verzani mentioned about Staten Island's demographic cliff regarding enrollment and the need to protect Richmond County students from competitors. With regards to Professor Verzani's other point about OneRF, he also offered to help any faculty who were experiencing issues through appropriate channels.

That said, President Lynch began his report with the usual updates on enrollment and budget. He alluded to Chairperson Gold's report which was an accurate assessment of enrollment for the spring semester along with the welcome news that our mid-year financial report was still on track to end the year without a deficit, though still short of the required cash reserve. As such, he stated that CSI will continue to be cautious and prudent to stay on course and yield positive results.

President Lynch reported that there had been a request from the Executive Committee of the College Council to have today's administrative report focus on recent efforts regarding snow removal and lessons learned. Instead of that report, he was prepared to answer any questions anyone had. He also acknowledged that while they had learned lessons from prior storms and blizzards, the recent storm was historic in proportions with 29 inches of snow on Staten Island. Preparations included:

- A campus wide communication sent out advising individuals to allow for additional travel time and alerting individuals with information consistent with Department of Sanitation's guidelines.
- Communications also included that individuals wear appropriate winter clothing to protect themselves from the elements.
- CSI pre-ordered 22 tons of salt and had two-and-a-half pallets of salt for every building.
- The focus was on clearing the main roads on campus and the parking lots, making sure that at least one pathway was cleared towards each building. It might not have been the most direct path, but there was one path to every building.

President Lynch praised the hard work of our colleagues in Buildings and Grounds and Public Safety, who worked in 12-hour shifts for two days straight. He noted that they could not go home because of travel bans. He expressed sincere thanks to the eleven laborers and a complement of custodians who shoveled entrances to the buildings, as well as public safety officers who were on hand to ensure safety.

President Lynch also addressed anticipated questions related to delayed opening of the campus, closing the campus for another day, or having another day of remote work. He stated emphatically that the authority to close the campus could only be done by CUNY Central. Requesting a fourth day of campus closure, with the DOE and all other CUNY campuses open, would have required several threshold clearance.

President Lynch also expressed his thanks to members of our community who took time out to send an email or a phone call acknowledging the hard work of our colleagues, and, to others who, more importantly, pointing out issues where they arose. He appreciated feedback that said, for example, "the pathway to Building X is particularly icy, you might want to send somebody over to spread some more salt or shovel out an additional path." Those got a prompt response. He received e-mails and phone calls that expressed disappointment with the work done, many of which were inappropriate and not helpful. However, he encouraged anyone who had encountered a challenge or a problem on campus to bring the issue to his attention with as much specific information, enabling the administration to respond effectively and ensure that the campus is accessible and livable for all our constituents.

Q&A

A question was raised about opening the conversation again about bringing back the campus loop bus service, citing a need for it especially during bad weather and the walk across campus on dark winter days in dimly lit pathways. President Lynch responded by saying that he was open to the conversation; however he reminded all that usage statistics on the Loop Bus had been minuscule, and while it had not been exclusively funded by Student Activities fees, it was the students who had passed a referendum to

reallocate those monies to other purposes. Regarding lighting issues on campus, he stated that he would get the electricians involved.

Another question expressed concerns about the pre-recording of the valedictorian speaker for the upcoming Commencement and called for respecting democratic traditions at CSI. President Lynch defended his rationale for this decision stating that Commencement was designed to celebrate the accomplishments of all students; and not one that should be an opportunity for personal campaigns. While he appreciated the speaker's passion on the other side of the issue, as well as others who have shared the same concerns, he underscored his decision and emphasized the importance of safety.

Another question raised involved pedestrian safety at crosswalks on the loop road. The speaker shared personal experience of near-misses. President Lynch said he was sorry to hear this, acknowledged the issue, and mentioned that a plan was in place for additional speed bumps to improve pedestrian safety and enforce lower speed on the Loop Road.

Last question raised was about the cost of salt for the roads and pathways. Chief Financial Officer Carlos Serrano confirmed that the total cost was \$3,000.00.

V. Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report – Valerie Forrestal

Valerie Forrestal, Member of the PSC-CUNY CSI Chapter, gave the following report:

March 28th No Kings Protest - In response to the Trump administration's escalated, violent attacks on Americans the No Kings Coalition has called for our next non-violent mass mobilization on March 28. The PSC contingent will gather by **1:30 PM at 62nd St. and Central Park West** on the park side and will step off at 2 PM heading south down Broadway. At Times Square, we will converge with another stream of the march heading down 7th Avenue before continuing on to end at 34th Street. Register at the PSC CUNY Website.

Health and Safety Concerns - The CSI PSC Health and Safety Committee met with representatives of management from several offices yesterday, March 18th. While the current head of Facilities Management was unable to join us, we covered a lot of ground and shared the specific concerns of some of our members.

We shared our feeling that the campus was not ready to reopen on Wednesday, February 25th. This is an issue we plan to raise at the upcoming Labor Management meeting with the administration next week.

If you feel like you need cleaning or have a specific Health and Safety concern on campus, the importance of calling the Facilities Management office as the first step was emphasized. On weekdays 8:30 am to 5:00 pm they can be reached at extension X3210 for inquiries, problems, requests or service. After Hours Emergencies - Central Plant at extension x3204/3205.

Each department is supposed to have an individual who can submit work orders. If you see a problem or concern, it is important that you place a work order in the Archibus system.

As a union chapter here at CSI, we are working on creating a website form for you to submit your health and safety concerns to the union so that we can follow up on concerns. In the meantime, please contact Jonathan Cope directly jonathan.cope@csi.cuny.edu if you have any concerns.

Immigrant Solidarity Working Group Event - On a brighter note, on March 3rd the ISWG organized a fantastic and powerful event upstairs in 1P. Thanks to Emma Johnson, Geoff Johnson, and Ege Ozen, and everyone else who made an amazing event a reality. If you attended and signed the attendance sheet, be on the lookout for ways to get involved in this work in the future.

FUND CUNY - It is not too late to contact your New York state legislator! It's clear that a majority of New Yorkers want Governor Hochul and the state legislature to fund universal childcare, affordable housing, other essential services, and CUNY by taxing the richest individuals and biggest corporations. The PSC has been in Albany fighting for this agenda. Go to the PSC Website for information on writing to your representatives in Albany before this budget cycle ends. Every message helps!

VI. **Report from the Administration** – First-Year Freshmen Outcomes Review

Tara Mastrorilli, Director of the office of Institutional Research and Assessment, and Carey Manifold, Interim Assistant Provost for Student Success, presented information on First-Year Freshmen Outcomes at the College of Staten Island. Please find the slide presentation attached to these minutes. A summary is presented below:

Demographic Trends and Gender Distribution

Of the 10,000 undergraduates in fall 2025, 20% were freshmen (n=2,112); First-time freshmen were almost evenly split between associate and baccalaureate programs, with a notable shift in 2020; Gender distribution varied by degree track, with more males in associate programs and more females in baccalaureate programs; Race and ethnicity differences were slight, with higher proportions of white and Asian students in baccalaureate programs and more black and Hispanic students in associate programs.

Residence and Countries/US Territories of Origin

Most first-time freshmen resided on Staten Island, but associate degree students were more likely to come from outside Staten Island; The majority of first-time freshmen were from the United States, with Mexico, China, Italy, Puerto Rico, Egypt, Dominican Republic, Albania, Pakistan, Ukraine, and Palestine as the next most common countries of origin.

Academic Profiles and Feeder Schools

Associate degree students were more likely to be first-generation and receive Pell and TAP grants; The top feeder high schools for first-time freshmen were Tottenville, New Dorp, Susan E. Wagner, Curtis, and Fort Hamilton (Brooklyn).

Degree Program Interests and Course Enrollments

The most popular degree programs that freshmen were enrolled in were liberal arts and sciences, undeclared health science (pre-nursing), and computer technology for associate degrees; For baccalaureate degrees, the most popular programs were undeclared health science (pre-nursing), psychology, biology, and business; The highest enrolled courses included English 111, 151, and various math and science courses, with pre-nursing students heavily represented.

First-Year Metrics and Course Passing Rates over three years (AY22 –AY24)

Metrics for first-year success included passing gateway English and math courses; Associate degree students had higher passing rates for gateway English (76%) but lower rates for gateway math (48%); Baccalaureate degree students had higher passing rates for both gateway English (91%) and math (68%); First-time freshmen attempted an average of 13 credits (baccalaureate) and 12 credits (associate), with baccalaureate students earning more credits.

Credit Completion and Retention Rates over three years (AY22 –AY24)

Fewer students were earning 30 credits after one year, indicating a potential delay in graduation; First-year retention rates are high, with 64% of associate degree students and 79% of baccalaureate degree students returning for the second year.

Support Programs and Faculty Involvement

These results emphasized the importance of funneling students to high-support programs like ASAP, BMI, CSTEP, and SEEK; Other academic support services, such as Tutoring, and early pre-enrollment programs are crucial for student success; Faculty involvement is key in identifying struggling students and mobilizing support via EAB navigate to connect them to advising, tutoring, or other academic supports; A pilot program has been successful in connecting struggling students with necessary resources and support.

VII. Reports of the committees of the College Council

- a. Committee on Organization – Warrick Bell**
- b. By-Laws Committee – Kenneth Gold**

The Chair of the By-Laws Committee, Kenneth Gold, reported that the committee met last week and discussed a few ideas that were generated through outreach to various constituencies. There are no urgent issues that need to be addressed by changes in the bylaws so the committee is perhaps proceeding even more deliberately than usual.

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

Cindy Wong, Professor of Media Culture and Chair of the Administrative Review and Evaluation Committee (AREC) presented their recent report which focused on recruitment, admission, and retention at the College of Staten Island. Please find the slide presentation attached to these minutes. A summary is presented below:

Report on Recruitment, Advisement, and Retention at CSI

AREC members began work on this topic in Fall 2023, under the leadership of Darryl Hill, Professor of Psychology. They interviewed directors and key staff members involved in all operations of recruitment, advisement, and retention of first-year students, interviewed two students from the Student Government Association, and reviewed and analyzed data in Degree Works. Prof. Wong mentioned that AREC members were impressed with all personnel they interviewed, noting their unwavering commitment and dedication, despite resource constraints.

Challenges and Suggestions for Improvement

The report's recommendations included:

- Change CSI's reputation as a "safety school" and suggested a serious campaign to improve this image.
- Hiring an on-staff videographer for better visual communication
- Ensure consistent advisement, with a focus on treating all students equally, regardless of resource allocation
- Stronger student guidance needed, especially for first-generation students, noting disparities in advisor-to-student ratios.
- Acquire and install interactive screens on campus to help students find resources
- Develop a better structure to foster communication and collaboration among faculty and staff to support students more effectively.

Prof Wong announced that AREC had decided to review the CSI Website as their next project. She extended special thanks to Prof. Hill for initiating the project and gratitude to all past and present members of AREC (names included in slide presentation) for their sustained dedication and perseverance in seeing the project through to completion over the past three years.

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

e. **Budget Committee** – Kenneth Gold

Kenneth Gold, Chair of the Budget Committee, reported that there was no meeting scheduled yet, though one was anticipated since the CUNY mid-year numbers were just released earlier this week.

f. **Facilities Committee** – No report

VIII. Student Government Report – Rhoda Wilson

Rhoda Wilson, Vice President of Student Government delivered the following report:

Good afternoon, thank you so much for having me today. With the support of you all, Ashley and I are really excited about everything Student Government has planned for this semester and look forward to continuing the important work ahead to support and engage our campus community.

New SG Office Assistant

- A new SG Office Assistant has started this week, Susan Norman. Very excited to have her on board. It should make processing orders and such much easier.
- MTA support letter Initiative in partnership with NYPIRG, VP Ruta, President Lynch, Professor Peters, and Rob Wallace

Past Events

Club Feud Game Show to have been held on February 24, 2026 was postponed.

Mad Science Interactive Adventure held on March 3, 2026 was successful with about 100 students. It was a great way to blend fun and academics in an open and welcoming way.

Our Town Hall was held on March 17, 2026 - Over 40 participants were in attendance and we were very excited that so many people are much more engaged and wanting to participate in campus life. We are always welcoming to any and all concerns/issues and hearing compliments.

Upcoming Events

- USS March on March 27th (in partnership with higher head City Council Chair Rita Joseph) - Advocacy march urging the city and state to provide more funding for CUNY, open to students and faculty to attend in partnership with PSC, NYPIRG, and others.
- President/Vice president Panel- April 14th, 2026. Must still work on GDL
- Spring Club Fair: April 21st 2:30-4:30
- Spring Student Service Fair: Tues. April 28, 2026, 2:30 - 4:30 PM
- Community Day: Anticipated Part of Spirit Week April 23rd. Working hard to include the involvement of staff and faculty for the event.
- SG Memorial Awards: approve \$2,250.00 for nine \$250.00 SG Memorial Awards

Campus-Wide Elections:

We have 10 submissions for nominees and are expecting more as we get closer to the due date of March 24th. Campaigning and voting will be from April 14th to 23rd April.

Special Community Proposals

Everything has been processed on our end for approved Proposals, now waiting on CUNY's end to finalize everything. We will continue to keep everyone updated on this issue.

Closing remarks:

In closing, I want to thank you all for your time, support, and continued dedication to our students. We truly value the partnership between Student Government, faculty, and staff, and we look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen our campus community. We are excited for what's ahead of this semester and remain committed to supporting and advocating for our students.

IX. HEO Steering Committee – Tara Mastrorilli

Good Afternoon! The HEO Steering Committee had a productive meeting on Monday, March 16.

During the meeting we finalized the date for our spring semester meeting with the President. We discussed issues and concerns that arose from the last snowstorm.

Received updates from the AREC committee regarding the completion of the report, new topic ideas for the next reports, and the opening of seats on that committee for the next academic year.

We encourage all HEOs to consider running for a seat on the committee – and participating in this important governance committee. – Look out for the nomination form from Warrick in May.

We also received updates from a member of the Bylaws committee – asking for any suggested bylaw changes to be considered.

We had a brief conversation about the implementation of CUNY Workday, which will begin next year. Workday is a cloud-based system that will bring together HR and finance operations and will replace the CUNYfirst functions that exist for these areas.

Lastly, just a reminder to all HEOs, our next meeting is on Monday, April 27 at 12pm. The zoom link is on the College Council HEOSC website, and we will also send an email reminder.

X. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – No report

XI. Old Business -None

XII. New Business - None

Meeting was adjourned at 4:25pm

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