# Feb 2021 CC Chair's Report

The CC Executive Committee met with President Fritz, Provost Parrish, and Interim Chief of Staff Collura on February 9th. Our conversation included:

## An overview of the budget position

* The state has announced that rather than a 20% cut for FY21, the amount will be 5%. This same amount is in the FY22 State Executive Budget for [FY22](https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/budget-and-finance/FY2022-State-Executive-and-City-Preliminary-Budget-Analysis.pdf)
* The new federal stimulus monies include 22.565M for CSI of which 16.267M is for the campus (the balance a match of the direct student support from the CARES act). These monies should have more relaxed rules as regards their usage (along with the balance of the unspent CARES funds):

Institutional portion funds may be used to defray expenses associated with coronavirus (including lost revenue, reimbursement for expenses already incurred, technology costs associated with a transition to distance education, faculty and staff trainings, and payroll), and to carry out student support activities authorized by the HEA that address needs related to coronavirus. Institutional funds may also be used to make additional financial aid grants to students.

* The board approved a budget [request](https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/budget-and-finance/FY2022-Budget-Request.pdf) for FY22 which reflected a recognition that the state and city will be unable to enhance support of the University.

(The Board will be asked to approve a budget for this fiscal year --running to the end of June--at its March meeting -- the above request is for next year -- but until then, each college has been operating in a very speculative environment)

* We asked about enrollment (currently down 3.8% from last year)
* We asked about the college's positions on CAs:

several committee members have heard stores of staffing changes at the CA level. Has there been any policy changes related to part-time personnel, especially college assistant staffing (for those with health insurance)

We heard that we are not out of the woods, that layoffs had been postponed, but that there was a perception that some positions are not as effective when staffed remotely. The CC XC emphasized the precarious position of many CAs whose job provides health care for the family, the long-time commitment many CAs have made to the campus, and the need to ensure any mandated separations consider the expertise that must be replaced in the future.

* We asked about the activity of the Vacancy Review Board

We heard that there will be 5 faculty searchs this year, all at the lecturer level -- 2 in Nursing, 1 in Social Work, 2 in CS (as funded through a STEM initiative). There are other approved searches, but we did not discuss these.

In addition, the college is said to be working on a multi-year plan for position control. We heard that all searches will have members from outside the department to encourage diversity in hiring. We heard that the Deans have been charged to play a more involved role in the process.

# Diversity

We had asked:

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The executive committee would like to have several concrete pieces of information. First, what are the current statistics on faculty and staff of color (positions, length of service, promotions, etc.). Second, how has this changed over time (comparative data looking at the past 5-10 years). And, third, what are the administration's plans, targets and goals in this area? Similarly, what is the College's plan for recruitment, retention, and support for students from underrepresented groups?

We heard that some data will be collated. Members of the XC urged an explicit articulation of goals in this area. The closing of achievement gaps for students were discussed; the goal of closing under-utilization rates by department was mentioned. It was pointed out the value of the students seeing a reflection of their diversity in the curriculum and in staffing.

# Ombudsperson

We had asked:

Members of the executive committee have heard several stories of issues arising from the transition to Division II athletics. As was made evident during the December Faculty Senate issue, many members of the college community still have concerns about this move. We propose the establishment of an ombudsperson who can act as a faithful intermediary so that an accurate narrative can be agreed upon for this particular matter, and others that may arise in the future. Historically the college has had such a position, though it has not for some time now.

The president said he would consider this. We will follow up on this promise. It was mentioned that he is comfortable with the current process of accountabilty. It was suggested that members of the community desire an honest broker ("Switzerland") be empowered here.

# Reopening plans

We asked:

Members were informed of a preliminary target of just 25% percent capacity for Fall 2021. Is this the case? Could we have a report at this February's College Council on current expectations for Fall 2021

The Chancellor had said the goal was 100% in person. We learned that "100%" is actually open to interpretation. For example, "100% of students have the opportunity for some in person experience during the fall semester" may be the scope of this statement.

We heard that the state may have the college still in a Phase III of reopening which requires masks and social distancing be used during any in-person setting. Social distancing dramatically reduces room capacity, perhaps down to as little as 25% of the original capacity. How this restricted size is implementws via hybrid, blended, fully online is to be determined.

We heard about efforts underway to make classrooms technologically able to handle "blended" instruction (some student in person/some remote).

We emphasized the need for clarity to the campus, especially in light of the need to schedule for Fall at the present time. We mentioned that funds are or will certainly be available through federal monies to address needs and that expense should not be a reason to delay the full return to campus.