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

Draft Minutes for the One Hundred and Thirty-First Meeting of the College Council Formed on November 14, 2002

Date: Thursday, May 21, 2020, 2:30pm – 3:30pm
Location: Zoom Meeting**

**Attendance**: Jonathan Peters, Alfred Levine, John Verzani, Alyson Bardsley, Catherine Lavender, Chang-Hui Shen, Christine Flynn Saulnier, Cynthia Chris, Deborah De Simone, Deborah Franzblau, Ellen Goldner, Florette Cohen, Francisco Soto, Gene Fellner, George Sanchez, Gerry Milligan, Heidi Bertels, Hosu Kim, Jane Marcus-Delgado, John Wing, William Fritz, Michael Parrish, Zaghloul Ahmed,Yi Chen, Wilma Jones, Thomas Tellefsen, Tara Meteik, Suzy Shepardson, SusaSrolta Takacs, Srah Zelikovitz, n Holak, Simon Wegge, Sebastian Poget, Orit Gruber, Neo Antoniades, Micahel Cavagnero, Maryann Feola.

**Guests**:Alan Hoffner, (**347-552-1806 , 551-427-1050, 609-751-4640, 646-535-4826, 718-494-3993, 718-761-5366, 917-981-9438),**Alana Gaymon, Alex Scott, Amy Stempler, Anat Niv-Solomon, Andre Colbeck, Anita Romano, Anjail Ameen-Rice, Barbara Cohen, Brian Far, Byron Taylor, Carlo Lancelotti, Cesar Arenas-Mena, Charles Gomes, Chrisanthi Anastopolou, Clarisse Domingo, Craig Manister, Danielle Dimitrov, Deborah Meise, Donald Hudec, Elizabeth Kane, Erma Tacopino,Hernan Green, Ismael Garcia-Colon, James Saccardo, Jasmine Cardona, Jennifer Borrero, Jennifer Durango, Jennifer Lynch, Jeremiah Jurkierwcz, Jessica Collura, Jessica Stein, Jodi Meremdino, John Jankowski, Joseph Nicolosi, Joyce Taylor, Ken Iwama, Ken Wolpin, Kerri Gerson, Kevin Ascolese, Koby Kohulan, Kristi Brescia, Kuan Yi Chen, Lara Saguisag, Leo Pignataro, Linda Conte, Lisa French, Louis Petingi, Lucas Marchante, Lynne Lacomis, Mary Boland, Mary Murphy, Maureen Garvey, Maxwell Velikodniy, Mazal Bozaglo, Mel Pipe, Michael Baybuskey, Michelle Borowski, Mohamed Mahmood, Nada Michael, Nadine Abram, Natalie Fiscetti, Neila Green, Nina Del Gatto, Patricia Kahn, Susan Massara, Shannon Cammarano, Sharon Christian, Stephen Ferst, Susan Been, Tara Mastrorilli, Terri Sangiorgio, Patti Gross, Qiao, Sheng Hu, Rachel Sanchez, Ralf Peetz, Richard Veit, Rob Wallace, Rosane Gertner, Roshen Hendricksen, Russel Davis, Sarah Berger,Tony Gallego, Vandana Chaudhry, Veronica DiMeglio, Warrick Bell, Winsome Alston

I.     Approval of the proposed agenda - *approved*II.     Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting - *approved*III.     Executive Committee of College Council Report – **J. Verzani**

## March 3 consultative meeting

We March 3 with the President, Provost, and the President's Chief of Staff. We met in 1S-406, as significant concerns about coronavirus were already present.

We discussed several things, the following is not taken from contemporaneous notes, as these were left on campus.

On March 2, the president sent to the college community an email on "bullying:"

I write to address what I consider a serious issue we face as a campus. I believe that our College has a serious problem of bullying that we must overcome to ensure a civil campus climate and the success of our students. This problem is evidenced by both the Campus Climate Survey done by Rankin and Associates a few years ago and the recent COACHE survey which described bullying, especially faculty on faculty and staff on staff, as a major issue facing the campus.

The Executive Committee had various responses to this. The chair responded as follows:

•     he reviewed the written commentary on bullying in the COACHE report and found just 3 items where the wording is mentioned, one was clearly related to an issue a faculty member had with their past deans (plural), one was non specific, and one personal. It was pointed out that these seem like isolated cases. It was also noted that the COACHE results showing our campus having worst performance of all senior campuses in terms of declines from the previous survey might be a more pressing issue. Also pointed out was the total silence certain administrators had when bullying was an issue between the past President and the chair of the College Council.

During the meeting we learned that in addition to the reading of the COACHE survey, this email was in part a response to the perceived tone of the consultative meeting in February.

We discussed the preparations on coronavirus. We had a discussion about facilities, and learned that the installation of all hot water heaters was imminent.

On the agenda we asked again on the desire to have the chairs of the college governance bodies be allowed to have direct email contact to their representative bodies, not just the senators. This was a followup to the February vote at the College Council where due to the size of the member present the vote for this was not passed, despite only ECP members voting in the negative.

We had a discussion about how to improve communication. It was suggested that faculty and staff members could speak to their accomplishments when they are being noted in administrative reports.

## March 30th letter regarding the cabinet

On March 30th, the executive committee sent a letter to the President indicating our good wishes for VP Iwama and concern for how the ECP positions should be arranged going forward. We made two suggestions:

•     "we suggest you follow the model used at nearly every other CUNY unit and colleges and universities across the country and search for a VP of Finance and Administration to oversee the bulk of the two portfolios currently assigned." (In lieu of formalizing the position of VP of Facilities.)

•     "We suggest holding off on hiring a Dean for the School of Education. We are not in a position to afford this position, at least in the short term."

Our rationale was:

"Now is the time to make these decisions. Though it is a significant change from your plans of a month ago, this next academic year is going to be one of difficult decision making. Before cutting back elsewhere, showing leadership at this point in trimming expenses on your cabinet costs will go a long way to showing that no entity is immune to the budget crisis."

We received a timely response from the president on April 2nd, but he remained committed to the hiring a facilities VP and said it would happen at the next board meeting and he remained committee to carrying out the search for a new dean of education.

## March 30 request for a joint meeting

On March 30th, the Faculty Senate chair wrote to the president requesting a joint meeting:

I am writing on behalf of the Executive Committees of the Faculty Senate and the College Council. We'd like to request that our regular monthly meeting for April with you and Michael be held jointly (with both Executive Committees), and as soon as our schedules permit. There are a number of issues that face all of us, and it would seem to make sense that we all get together online to have a conversation. I recall that you had said that a joint meeting might be possible this semester, and it would be great if we could arrange that.

This was not agreed to, but the president did agree to move up the consultative meeting scheduled for April two weeks to April 3rd.

## April 3rd Consultative Meeting

This meeting had several news items and requests. We were thankful of the willingness to accommodate a moved up meeting on short notice.

We again requested direct email access to the representative bodies for the College Council and Faculty Senate chairs.

At the time the field hospital was a very real possibility and we received an update on this including the likelihood that campus access would be even more severely restricted. We heard at the time the plan was for beds in 150 range with possibly more and that the National Guard had assigned someone to coordinate.

We learned about the complicated notebook distribution program. There was concern expressed that the faculty and staff without access were put behind the queue and that this could have been done in a more timely manner. We learned that the process of delivering such technology was difficult and required many efforts by staff.

We requested a zoom license be purchased for the campus, as has been done at other CUNY units. Anecdotally, several faculty have purchased upgraded versions as an alternative to BB Collaborate. We heard the president had personally requested this of EVC Sapienza as well.

We asked about the budgetary impact of all of this: There was concern expressed about collections, about the state budget, about what would be reimbursed through the hospital, etc. There was some optimism that the federal CARES act would bring relief, as the Pell-based funding model was advantageous for our student demographic.

IV.     President’s Report – **W. Fritz**

V.     Reports from the Administration

VI.     Reports of the Committees of the College Council

a.     Committee on Organization - *none*
b.     By-Law Committee - *none*
c.     Administrative Review Committee - *none*
d.     Institutional Planning Committee - *none*
e.     Budget Committee - **J. Verzani**

Budget Committee Meeting April 16th Zoom meeting with Provost Parish, AVP Serrano, Chief of Staff Wallace; Professors Cumiskey, Milligan, Sanchez, and Verzani; and HEO DeMeglio

The meeting was called to discuss a few things, as the current budget picture for the next fiscal year is uncertain.

## The State Enacted Budget.

On April 3rd, the state adopted an enacted budget for the next fiscal year. Unlike most years, this budget gives little clarity as to the financial picture for CUNY, as the budget reserves 3 periods in which the state budget director (CUNY Trustee R. Mujica) can reassess the financial outlook and suggest budget cuts. With projections of an at least 10B shortfall, this would seem all but certain.

The budget committee reviewed a spread sheet prepared by AVP Serrano that showed the CUNY allocation in the state enacted budget. There were two increases for CUNY totaling ~86M: an increase to cover fringe benefit increases and around 30M in new money from a proposed tuition increase. This budget does not cover contractual increases for FT faculty, the accompanying increase in fringe benefits due to this, and has none of the requested 75+M for strategic investments.

The CUNY allocation is one part of our budget, but that always included a revenue target. We learned that, despite promising mid-term numbers, the coronavirus closure of the campus has led to a decline in the collection rate for spring 2020, which would lead to a shortfall. We learned that some policies related to holds, sending past due balances to collection agencies, etc. will be relaxed from recently adopted policies. Though these have proven needed to increase collection rates, they are problematic given the circumstances now.

## The Cares Act

We discussed the impact of the Federal Cares Act, reviewing some materials provided by ACE. Half that money will be used for direct emergency aid to students. CUNY will be administering this, and there is some belief the college will see about 3% of this to be directed by the campus. We learned that there are issues of communication between the IPEDS data base that tracks students per campus and the Pell grant distribution system (which will be leveraged to distribute these funds).

We heard that the remaining half of the 12.6M amount award to CSI is unclear. Guidelines are being developed at the nation level.

It was agreed to that faculty and staff should be alerted that their covid-related expenses might be reimbursable through these funds and that an email would be sent instructing them of this possibility (so that receipts, etc. could be saved).

## Enrollment

We learned that though summer enrollment is up 4% from last year. We discussed that identifying all summer courses as online was being addressed that day.

More troubling, we learned that Fall enrollment is currently 10% off from last year. Retention was one explanation noted. A conversation on the tough choice the college and CUNY faces ensued: faculty would like to have a determination for the fall (at least some signal to the students that the college will accommodate coronavirus related disruptions through smaller meeting groups, or more lenient absence policies due to illness, etc) versus the realization that enrollment will likely be greater if we have face to face meetings, so we should push off any announcements that may signal to the student classes will be online until we no longer can. It was mentioned that the college should be planning for classes where social distancing guidelines are practical, such as not planning jumbo sections, perhaps have staggered hybrid sections. Further, we should be promoting extreme flexibility whereby every student is given the opportunity to complete their course work online if they needed.

## Contingency planning

There was concern expressed about the impact of the loan CUNY extended to make the mid-year projections balance. We heard that it is unclear what will become of that obligation, as other fiscal matters have taken priority.

Some concern was expressed that the 10B shortfall **may** lead to about a ~6.8% reduction to CUNY's allocation. This will likely be handled through a lessened allocation or an allocation with a large reserve. Either way, if it does happen, this amount is essentially the size of the non-personnel spending on campus. It can not be managed by driving this to zero, as that is not practical. There will need to be contingency planning. The committee firmly requested that college governance and representative stake holders be consulted during any planning regarding personnel reductions.

f.      Facilities Committee  - *none*

VII.     Student Government Report – **F. Amara**

1.     Student Government Coronavirus Emergency Fund; The Student Government has established a $80,000 student emergency fund for students facing financial hardship due to the coronavirus. A grant of $500 maximum will be allocated to eligible students and the Petrie grant committee will oversee the application and allocation of funds. Students can apply by completing the Petrie grant application.

2.     In addition to our roles as student advocates, our budget is spent on initiatives that can promote student wellbeing. Brief overview of 2019-2020 Projects Funded by the Student Government Budget

     Student Government Coronavirus Emergency Fund

     Student Government Graduate School Assistant Fund

     Financial Emergency Student Loan

     Student Events and promotional items (fall & part of spring)

     Free scantrons for students

     Student Government Internship Program

     Renovation of the Green Dolphin Lounge

     Academic and Study Abroad Scholarship

     Academic and Research Conference Fund

3.     There was misinformation, and students contacted me about cutting funds for caps and gowns and asked me to refund their money back. I wanted to clarify that the Student Government budget was never responsible for paying for caps and gowns. In the most recent years, Student Government has offered to assist the Association by paying for caps and gowns because their budget could not afford it. This was a limited offer and was bound to cut at any time because it was not sustainable for our budget. The most recent 25% Student Activity Funds (SAF) refunds highlighted how necessary it is for student organizations to use their funds appropriately and only buffer for expenses that are not theirs when it’s possible. Our budget is very fragile, and we are working to make sure the upcoming student government is equipped with enough resources regardless of what summer and fall SAF decisions might be.

VIII.    Higher Education Officer Steering Committee Report – **M. Murphy**

The HEO Steering Committee held its regular monthly meeting virtually on Monday, April 20 and focused primarily on issues and concerns that have arisen due to the campus closure and movement to virtual processes for teaching and conducting business remotely.  The HEOs are concerned about the additional demands placed upon some of their colleagues and the overall lack of recalibration time provided to HEOs and other administrative personnel: with little notice, offices had to move all business to a virtual model, and had to learn many of the approved technologies in the moment, without a chance for timely training before having to go "live".  On the other hand, faculty and students were provided a one-week recalibration--even those who were already teaching and learning online, and who would naturally not need any adjustment period.

It has also come to the group's attention that multiple HEOs are being required to provide very detailed records regarding student contacts, numbers of phone calls made, number of students advised, number of emails sent, and the like.  While we understand that there is a need to ensure that student contact in the virtual world is necessary, if this tracking was not already happening as part of an office's regular business practice and data collection (for annual assessment purposes), it becomes a workload issue, as it can take away from time needed to work with the very students whose interactions are being tracked.

The group is also hopeful that additional guidance can--and will--be provided by the upper administration regarding an official policy for HEOs to work out flexible work schedules with their supervisors.  Many College personnel are having to balance their own work-from-home responsibilities with the need to supervise a child's (or multiple children's) home-schooling work, the demands of having a partner who is also working from home, and the likelihood that there's not enough technology to go around in the home.  Combine these factors with the knowledge that students are often more effectively reached outside of "normal" business hours, HEOs need the option to make a schedule that is sensitive to outside forces while still ensuring that necessary tasks are being completed appropriately and efficiently.

We're working to set up our regular meeting with President Fritz and members of his team, and we look forward to hearing his responses to the various questions that have come up during the recent town halls held by Academic Affairs and for the HEOs.

IX.     Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report   - **G. Sanchez**

Presented on what the union has been doing concerning health and safety issues at CUNY and CSI.

X.     Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – **K. Iwama**

At the meeting of the College Council on April 23, 2020, I reported that COVID-19 has severely impacted Auxiliary Services’ budget. During this period, in which only essential personnel are allowed on campus, it is no longer generating self-sustaining revenues. With remote learning extending into the summer, and uncertainty about the fall semester, I indicated that Auxiliary Services is faced with perhaps its most serious fiscal challenge since its inception.

Auxiliary Services is currently assessing various budget scenarios for its dining services, bookstore, parking, and accounting services operations based upon the possible learning modes to be implemented in the fall, including in-person, hybrid, and fully remote options. Auxiliary Services is similarly assessing various budget scenarios for its Dolphin Cove residence halls. Of particular concern, Dolphin Cove has mortgage payment obligations to the New York City Housing Development Corporation. The ability to meet this obligation could be compromised if Dolphin Cove is closed or operating at reduced capacity for the fall. All of the residence halls within CUNY are facing similar predicaments. CUNY has now convened a group consisting of representatives from all university residence halls to formulate plans to address their respective budgetary challenges.

In closing, it with great sadness that I report the passing of Auxiliary Services board member Scott Salinardi. Scott was the Associate Executive Director of Lifestyles for the Disabled, a community-based agency for adults with developmental disabilities. His service to Auxiliary Services was unparalleled and was indicative of his passion for public service, his selfless dedication to others, and his great support of CSI. He will be greatly missed by all of us.

XI.     Old Business

XII.    New Business   - The body expressed appreciation for Vice President Iwama’s work at CSI over the years and wished him well in his new position as chancellor of Indiana University Northwest campus.

XIII.   Adjournment - The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm