

# Office of the Hunter College Senate

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## RESOLUTIONS OF THE HUNTER COLLEGE SENATE CONCERNING ACTIONS OF THE CUNY BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE CUNY OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS WITH RESPECT TO THE DISPOSITION OF THE CUNY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CONSORTIAL PROGRAMS

WHEREAS, Hunter College has some of the oldest and most distinguished health programs in New York City; and

Whereas, Hunter currently enrolls more than 500 students in its graduate programs in public health, and hundreds more complete public health courses as they pursue coursework and dual degrees in its nationally-recognized programs in Nursing, Social Work, and Education; and

Whereas, the degree programs, courses of study, and courses in public health offered at Hunter College were created by Hunter College faculty following procedures defined in accordance with the College's duly adopted governance plan; and

Whereas, CUNY Bylaws recognize the prerogatives of the faculty to "formulat[e] policy relating to the admission and retention of students [...], curriculum, [... and] granting of degrees" (8.5), and the same Bylaws grant the *priority* of "duly adopted college governance plans" as superseding CUNY Bylaws with respect to "Duties of the Faculty" (8.11); and

Whereas, these programs are inextricably entwined in other academic programs offered at the College, including those in the School of Education, the School of Nursing, and the School of Social Work; and

Whereas, the university funding model has required the college to adopt a budget model that relies on graduate student tuition fees, which, if lost, would exceed \$1,000,000 annually; and

Whereas, the loss of its graduate programs, faculty, students, equipment, library resources, and facilities would have devastating economic, curricular, and structural consequences for the entire college as well as governance within the university as a whole; and

Whereas, the CUNY Board of Trustees, *without any prior notice*, passed a motion at its meeting on November 23, 2015, to consolidate the consortial programs, which will dramatically affect academic programs yet in so doing failed to give the affected colleges, faculty, students, and the public the opportunity to exercise their rights to testify as to the likely impact of such a momentous decision; and

Whereas, the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs is *interpreting* the Board's actions as authority to disregard the rights and responsibilities of the faculty, college governance plans, and the processes and procedures adopted by the Board itself concerning academic program development and change; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hunter College Senate calls on the Board of Trustees to immediately revisit the matter and clarify its directives with respect to effecting academic program changes by *following its own adopted procedures and policies*, which include respecting duly approved college governance plans and the processes and procedures defined on that basis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board is called to reconsider its desired outcome with respect to the disposition of existing programs, many of which predate the existence of the CUNY School of Public Health and which may be sustainable independently through existing institutional structures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board direct the Office of Academic Affairs to cease the hasty and ad hoc implementation of any plans that have been developed without the benefit of deliberation and public review; and, working through university and college governance structures to devise and submit for approval a sound plan for the future of the public health programs within CUNY