

MINUTES

Meeting of the Hunter College Senate

3 December 2008

1 The 497th meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 3:45 PM in Room W714.

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3 **Presiding:** Richard Stapleford, Chair

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5 **Attendance:** The elected members of the Senate with the exception of those listed in Appendix I.

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7 Alternate Senators were formally seated in accordance with the procedures approved by the Senate, and
8 clickers were distributed to them.

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10 **Report by the** The Chair presented the report as follows:

11 **Administrative**

12 **Committee:** Approved Curriculum Changes

13 The following curriculum changes as listed in the Report dated 12/3/08 were approved as per Senate
14 resolution and were submitted for the Senate's information: Items US-1540 (C&T/Educ. Foundations),
15 USD-1545 (C&T), US-1546 (Philosophy), US-1547 (Urban Affairs), US-1548 (Economics), US-1550
16 (Classics), US-1542, US-1543, and US-1544 (Film & Media Studies, US-1551 (THHP)

17
18 **Committee** Teacher Evaluations Committee

19 **Reports:** Mr. Steven Beard, Chair of the Committee, presented the following report:

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21 On May 18th, 2005, the Hunter College Senate passed the resolution "that Hunter College shall further
22 investigate conducting all teacher evaluations on-line" and called for "the Senate Teacher Evaluations
23 Committee and the Assistant Vice President for ICIT to work out details for implementation, including
24 security and confidentiality concerns, and submit a final report to the Senate."

25
26 In the 2007-2008 academic year, the Senate Teacher Evaluations Committee investigated various
27 vendors and various types of online evaluation models. A pilot on-line evaluation was conducted in
28 the 2008 Summer Session II. Approximately 33% of the students taking courses in that session
29 responded, a smaller percentage than in-class evaluations, which average around 50% response rate.
30 The vendor who conducted the on-line evaluation was not sufficiently responsive to the security and
31 other requirements of the process and was dropped for future use. A new vendor has been found who
32 assures that they will observe security and confidentiality concerns.

33
34 The committee is recommending the following resolution for Senate approval:

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36 BE IT RESOLVED, that Hunter College move to a full-scale trial of online teacher evaluations
37 for one calendar year; and

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39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the structure and format of the teacher evaluations currently
40 used at Hunter College will be carried over to the online system; and

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42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the online evaluations begin as early as the Spring 2009
43 semester; and

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45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Teacher Evaluations Committee reexamine the on-line
46 evaluations upon completion of the one-year trial and submit a report to the Senate.

55 **Rationale:**

56 Many features recommend the online system of evaluation. It is cost efficient and ecologically
57 responsible. The evaluations will be easier for students to execute and the results will be easier for
58 everyone to access. Moreover, changes when necessary can be more easily implemented, including
59 modeling the instrument to the particular needs of a course or a discipline. For the open ended
60 responses pertinent to the individual class, security and confidentiality will be assured as it is in the
61 current system so that only the individual professor will access that part of the student responses. To
62 increase participation reminders can be sent to students, instructors, and departments before and during
63 the evaluation period. The re-evaluation of the online system at the end of the first year will enable the
64 Senate to tailor the program to conform to the best interests of the College.
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66 After discussion the question was called and carried.
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68 Voting by clickers produced the following results: 32 in favor, 23 opposed, and 4 abstentions. The motion
69 did not carry, the required number of 51 votes not having been achieved.
70

71 **Report by the**
72 **President:**

A summary statement of President Raab's report to the Senate is as follows. She said:

73 "Regarding the budget I want to reiterate what I said last time, particularly to our students to the extent
74 that there is a decision by the State Legislature to raise tuition. I really want to ask all of you to please
75 help us reach out to students to ensure that no student needs to leave or have their education adversely
76 impacted by a tuition increase. At the moment there is a hearing at CUNY on the budget, and about a
77 week ago one of the CUNY Committees voted on the resolution that will be sent to the Board of
78 Trustees next week that would give the Chancellor authorization to raise tuition \$600 for a year
79 starting in September 2009. That authorization is purely that. It requires a vote of the State Legislature
80 to be implemented, and the Chancellor will make very clear in this authorization that the Board will
81 vote on that only on condition that the Governor implements his proposal to have 10% of the tuition
82 re-invested back into the CUNY system. That would be \$10M coming back into the CUNY system as
83 a result of any tuition increase in the year that starts September 2009.
84

85 We also reiterate that any student who receives maximum TAP, which is a large number of our
86 students, would not be impacted by a tuition increase. We remain extremely concerned about those
87 students who are part time, who do not qualify for TAP, and we really want to help the students. We
88 were absolutely thrilled to have recently received a \$4M gift for scholarships for minority and women
89 students. So, we do have the funds to help students and we urge everyone to please send students our
90 way. As I said, the increase will be voted on by the Board, and I expect that the Board will pass this
91 authorization. But nothing comes into effect until the Legislature votes on it, which will most likely be
92 in the beginning of next year when the Governor submits his budget package.
93

94 I also want to alert the community and ask for your participation to show the great support in this
95 community for the proposal to allow us to have a new high school built on our Brookdale Campus for
96 the students at Julia Richmond, and then to consolidate our campus on the site of the current Julia
97 Richmond building. There is going to be a rally against this proposal next Monday at 3:45 at the
98 Tweed Court House which is home as you know of Department of Education. Since the opponents are
99 going to rally, we have decided that we are also going to be in attendance, and we hope that many of
100 you will participate. Doug Jones is here and he has further information. You can speak to him after the
101 meeting or e-mail him at: douglas.jones@hunter.cuny.edu. We hope that all of you will come out and
102 support this project.
103

104 Finally, I want to ask Len to give us an explanation of the rather upsetting act of vandalism that you
105 see in this room."
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107 The President yielded the floor to Len Zinnanti who informed the Senate that the act of vandalism occurred
108 most likely between Saturday night about 7 PM and Sunday afternoon before it was discovered. A new
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115 screen has been ordered for W714, but most likely it will not get here before the semester break. In the
116 meantime the screen will be painted and, hopefully, will be usable. Hunter is working with the 19th Precinct
117 to try to figure out who was responsible for this.

118
119 Resident Raab continued her report and said:

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121 “This evening at 6:30 in the Kaye Playhouse we are having a wonderful program to celebrate the 60th
122 Anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, which was drafted in part at our former Bronx
123 Campus by a woman who is very much a part of Hunter, Eleanor Roosevelt. Tonight we celebrate that
124 wonderful document by inviting back two of our alums. The wonderful Blanche Wiesen Cook, the
125 author of the definitive Eleanor Roosevelt biography, will be speaking with Richard Goldstone who is
126 one of the leading International Human Rights jurors. The moderator will be Sheryl Wudann, who
127 received the Pulitzer Prize for her work in reporting on Tianaman Square. The opening remarks will be
128 given by another very distinguished alum, international human rights lawyer Rita Hauser. I hope that
129 many of you will join us.”
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131 **Update from the Middle States Steering Committee**

132 Professor Phil Alcabes, Co-Chair of the Committee informed the Senate that the President of the
133 Evaluation Team that will come at the end of April to evaluate Hunter and report to the Middle States
134 Commission visited the College on November 20th. He had meetings with the College President, the Co-
135 Chairs of the Steering Committee, the committee itself, and senior staff. He also had a brief tour of then
136 main campus but there was no time for him to see all of Hunter’s facilities. In summary, he assessed our
137 self-study process, looked at an early draft of the Self-Study Report, and gave his blessing. He felt that we
138 could go ahead with it, although he recommended that we make it a little more up-beat.

139
140 A number of forums were held right before that visit. One of them was held during the November 19th
141 Senate and another one in the FDA meeting on the same day. The Committee learned a fair amount from
142 attendance at those forums about what the focus should be. One of the themes that we heard about was the
143 adjunct load, the amount of teaching that is done by adjuncts, and the way we treat them. Another was
144 about the relative lack of resources for graduate students, since graduate students make up 25% of the total
145 student body at Hunter College. The Committee will work on that and will continue drafting the self-study
146 report. We hope to have a draft report that can be circulated around the college community sometime in
147 January.

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149 In response to a question from the floor, he stated that the Steering Committee at next week’s meeting will
150 consider communicating with President Richardson to tell him that there was a paragraph in the report he
151 received which should not have been there and that the Committee does not stand behind it. The
152 Committee will then report back to the Senate.

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155 **Statement by the Chair**

156 A summary of Professor Stapleford’s statement is as follows. He said:

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158 “From the vantage point of the Chair I want to take a minute of your time to go into an issue that we
159 have just seen demonstrated, which has to do with the NY State Construction Law, the Open Meeting
160 Law and the Kaye decision in *Perez v. CUNY* and following that the interpretation of that decision by
161 the CUNY Legal Council. The reason we use the clickers is because we have been told that we have
162 to account for the vote and we have to have a positive vote for any action taken of one more than half
163 the total membership of the body, which is 51 people. Anyway, this is old news to most of you , but
164 over the last few years this interpretation hamstrings the majority of the body. I am not speaking about
165 the vote we just had per se, but rather in general. It is not difficult for us to generate 51 votes, but if 57
166 people are present 51 *positive* votes for a particular resolution is a problem. I am not quite sure what
167 exactly we should do, but I do think that it is a functional problem that we have here in the Senate. It is
168 functional problem that we did not have until this recent ruling, because the positive vote to move
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175 action was the majority of those in attendance, and that seemed to work for most of the years of the
176 Senate's life. Should we consider in the Administrative Committee whether or not we should go back
177 to the CUNY Council and ask him to reconsider whether that law pertains to this body? Many people
178 have said it does not and should not pertain to this body. "

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180 He then yielded the floor to Gail Scovell, Legal Counsel, who informed the Senate that the CUNY Vice
181 Chancellor for Legal Affairs had reluctantly reached that interpretation. He would need to have a legal
182 argument that he could buy into to reverse his opinion.

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184 After discussion, Professor Sproul moved that the Senate reconsider the above resolution by the Teacher
185 Evaluations Committee.

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187 Voting by clickers produced the following results: 37 in favor, 14 opposed, and 3 abstentions. The motion
188 did not carry, the required number of 51 votes not having been achieved.

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190 It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

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195 Respectfully submitted,

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199 Phil Alcabes,
200 Secretary

APPENDIX I

The following members were noted as absent from the meeting:

Faculty

Africana&PR/Latino Studies Pedro Lopez-Adorno (A)

Art Reiner Leist (A)
Paul Ramirez

Chemistry Pamela Mills
Dixie Goss (A)

Computer Science Ioannis Stamos (A)

Curriculum & Teaching Ann Ebe (A)
Sema Brainin

Economics Howard Chernick
Jonathan Conning (A)

English Christina Alfar (A) "E"

Film & Media Studies Michael Gitlin

German Annette Kym
Elke Nicolai (A)

Health Sciences Mimi Fahs (A)
Jack Caravanos "E"

Library Luis Gonzalez (A)

Music Richard Burke

Nursing Donald Smith
Judith Aponte "E"

Political Science Charles Tien (A)

Psychology Tracy Dennis (A)
Tricia Striano

SEEK Patricia Martin (A)
Maria Rodriguez

School of Social Work George Paterson
Lorraine Tempel

**Lecturers and
Part-Time Faculty**

William Mayer (Classics)
Constantin Radis (Sociology)
Carmela Scala (Romance Lang)
Aubrey Ewaroo
Jeffrey Mongrain (Art)
William Sakas

Administration

Bill Zlata
Acting Dean Ken Olden (A)

Ex-Officio

Deborah Francois, USG Pres.
Jason Ares, CLT Council President
Nadine Young, HEO Forum Pres.
Sarit Levy, GSA Pres.

Students

Maria Arettines
Kaveh Tabatabaie (PoliSci)
Claudia Caceres
Johanna Gurman
Dulgun Maidar
Jenny Alcaide
Amardeep Singh (Biology)
Christina Podkalicki
Peter Cardenas (Psych)
Zain Saeed
Tobi Jaiyesimi (Poli Sci/Engl)
Francesca Manieri (SEEK)
Ian Christner (Grad. Sociology)
Robert Walko (Econom)
Kareem Devonish
Darius Carr
Jessica Torres
Lorena Sanchez