

4 March 2009

TODAY MARKS THE
500th MEETING OF THE HUNTER COLLEGE SENATE.

IT IS OUR BIRTHDAY! HAPPY BIRTHDAY SENATE!



The Administrative Committee presented an Audio-visual Birthday Card to the Senate to the tune of “Largo al factotum...” from Rossini’s “The Barber of Seville.”

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

(Apologies to Rossini and ...)

Today is your birthday, an occasion of joy and glee.
A national holiday it should be SOON.
I can't think of anywhere I'd rather be,
Except for here to sing you this nice TUNE.

You were born long ago
Long ago, long ago, long ago,
Long ago
So now let's get started,
It's time for the party.
It's time for a blast,
A fine repast
And lots of guests.
Yes, lots of guests

It's a birthday. It's a party.
Pull your socks up,
Time for a blast.

Lets go.

Get you some cake.
Hey celebrate,
With cake
It's time to celebrate, have a big piece of cake.
It's time to celebrate, have a big piece of cake.
Don't count the calories, we spent our salaries
On fancy birthday presents for you.
La la la la la, la la la la la la.
Don't count the calories, we spent our salaries
On fancy birthday presents for you.

So we will party, 'till we have tummy aches
I'll have some ice cream
And lots of cake
I want some cake
I sure like cake
Oh lots of CAKE.

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MINUTES

Meeting of the Hunter College Senate

4 March 2009

1 The 500th meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 3:50 PM in Room W714.

2
3 **Presiding:** Richard Stapleford, Chair

4
5 **Attendance:** The elected members of the Senate with the exception of those listed in Appendix I.

6
7 Alternate Senators were formally seated in accordance with the procedures approved by the Senate, and
8 clickers were distributed to them.

9
10 **Report by the President:** There was no report.

11
12
13 **Report by the Administrative Committee:** The Chair presented the report as follows:

14
15 **Committee:** Special Election to fill vacant seats on the Senate

16 In accordance with Article IV.2.H.i & ii of the *Charter for a Governance of Hunter College* the
17 Administrative Committee presented the names of all nominees received to date for the at-large seats:

18
19 **Students:**

20 Jennifer Nina (Urban Studies)
21 Sarah Alshawish (Undeclared)
22 Jordan Diminich (Polic.Sci)
23 August Wojtkiewicz (Classics)
24 Sabrina Caprioli (Poli.Sci)
25 Rosemary Beato (Psychology)

26
27 **Faculty:**

28 Bill Williams (Mathematics & Statistics)
29 Stuart Ewen (Film & Media Studies)

30
31 **Approved Curriculum Changes**

32 The following curriculum changes, as listed in Part I and II of the Report dated 4 March 2009, were
33 approved as per Senate resolution and were submitted for the Senate's information: Items UR-1560
34 (Computer Science: Proposal to drop CSCI 160 and 360), GS-787 (School of Nursing: Change in
35 prerequisites for NURS 701 and 752), GS-788 (School Of Health Sciences: New MS in Biomedical
36 Laboratory Management), GS-789 (School Of Health Sciences: Changes in MS in Environmental &
37 Occupational Health Sciences), US-1558 (Mathematics & Statistics: New Course MATH 102, Change in
38 prerequisites MATH 260, 351, Inclusion of MATH 102 in GER Core, Stage 1.B.) US-1559 (Computer
39 Science: Change in co requisites: CSCI 135, New Course CSCI 394), US-1561 (Computer Science:
40 Changes in course numbers and/or prerequisites CSCI 145, 245, 265, 340, 345), US-1562 (English:
41 Modification of Major Requirements for BA in Creative Writing), US-1564 (English: Change in title
42 and/or description: ENGL 308, 309, 311, 313, 314, 316), US-1563A (Film & Media Studies: Change in
43 course level: MED 371).

44
45 **Update on Senate Voting Crisis**

46 The Chair informed the Senate that the Administrative Committee is in the process of considering ways to
47 deal with the crisis, but has not yet come to a conclusion. We will keep you posted.

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54 **Committee** Mellon Project Special Committee to Review the GER: White Paper on the Minor Requirement
55 **Reports:** Prof. William Sakas, Chair of the Committee, presented the report dated March 4, 2009, as distributed.

56
57 He yielded the floor to Provost Rabinowitz.

58
59 A summary of the Provost's statement is as follows. She said:

60
61 "Colleagues: rarely do we have the chance to do as much good as we do today. I am here to urge you
62 to consider the evidence and the arguments presented by the Mellon Committee and to support the
63 resolution to make the minor optional and put it in the hands of the minor, not the major department.

64
65 This is the academically sound choice, it is the academically exciting choice, and it is the right choice
66 for our students.

67
68 When our minor was established in 1943, Hunter College was a very different place. Hunter's majors
69 were almost all 24 credits, and few required courses outside of the major as pre-or co-requisites. The
70 basic prescription, and later, the distribution requirement, were relatively simple prescriptions that
71 encouraged breadth and not depth. There was no pluralism and diversity requirement, and there were
72 no writing intensive courses. There was no requirement of focused exposure, with its call to study a
73 discipline outside of the major in some depth.

74
75 Today, Hunter's students declare majors that can account for anywhere between 24 and 73 credits.
76 Well over half of our majors have grown since the 1980s by adding credits, sometimes many credits,
77 either within the major or beyond it in cognate disciplines. Our students are now required to take 12
78 credits to fulfill P&D, up to 12 credits in foreign languages, and three writing intensive courses. We
79 also now have a tiered GER that requires students to study in a discipline outside of the major in some
80 depth. Colleagues, I know that we have added requirements only and always after great thought and
81 deliberation. But we have not been as diligent in considering how we might reduce requirements in
82 other areas. And we have not looked hard at the cumulative effects of how all the new requirements
83 major, minor, gen ed, and graduation requirements have changed our students' academic programs.

84
85 No one is arguing that a feature of our curriculum for more than 60 years should be jettisoned because
86 it is inconvenient by modern standards or because most colleges are doing away with minors. Indeed,
87 no one is arguing that the minor should be eliminated at all. As JJR just stated, the college is poised to
88 invest in Asian American studies, public policy studies, and studies in human rights, all of which are
89 minors, concentrations, or certificates and none of which will be required if this resolution passes. We
90 believe that they will thrive because they are intellectually vibrant and represent important intellectual
91 trends, and because they represent commitments of Hunter faculty and they will be attractive to Hunter
92 students. I believe that many if not most Hunter students will continue to choose minors just as most if
93 not all THHP students choose disciplinary majors--sometimes two of them!--even though they are not
94 required to do so.

95
96 Part of the reason I believe that our students will continue to choose to minor is because the new
97 resolution puts the minor in control of the minor department, where it resides in virtually all colleges
98 in the nation and where it belongs. This will unleash departments, if they wish, to create tailor minors
99 to intellectual trends or subfields in their disciplines. In my own field of psychology, students might
100 choose to concentrate in subfields as various and exciting as animal behavior and conservation,
101 neuroscience, clinical and abnormal psychology, cognitive science and social identification. It enables
102 minor departments to weigh in on what is worth knowing in their disciplines, to ensure that no one
103 who lists a minor in mathematics, say, doesn't know what an integral or a derivative is. I also believe,
104 as the Mellon committee argues in its white paper, that choosing a minor may empower students to
105 make informed choices and actually specialize in a subarea.

106
107 For nine years, during the 1980s I was the undergraduate adviser in Hunter's Department of
108 Psychology. As some of the longtime professional advisors in this room may recall, I created a lot of

114 minors in that time, and some of them were real beauts. I would combine, say, two German courses
115 with one philosophy and poli sci course, write a little essay about it and argue that it be accepted as a
116 minor. I was usually enabled in this enterprise, and I was able to sleep at night because I was helping
117 psych majors graduate. But I did not feel great about it either, because it was academically
118 indefensible. Now that I am provost, I know that other departments and advisers do the same thing.
119 Even when departments are more stringent, the minor remains an orphan that has almost no oversight,
120 no attention, and no rigor.

121
122 The report by the MC will make clear that other colleges within and beyond CUNY have seen fit to
123 make the minor optional, and all colleges and universities put the minor in the hands of the department
124 that bears its name. It is time for us to do the same. Again, I urge you to support the resolution of the
125 Mellon Committee, and I want to thank the Mellon Committee for their good work.”
126

127 Professor Sakas next presented the following summary of the Committee’s report in a PowerPoint
128 presentation:
129

130 **Possible Functions of a Minor**

- 131 Support a Major in a closely related field
 - 132 Complement a Major in (not so) closely related field
 - 133 Provide breadth in an unrelated field
- 134

135 **Current Minor Requirement**

- 136 All BA students must fulfill the requirements for a minor
 - 137 A minor requirement makes up 12 credits
 - 138 The courses that constitute the 12 credits is determined by a student’s major department
- 139

140 **Recommendations**

- 141 A minor is made *optional* for BA students.
 - 142 The courses needed to fulfill a minor – *the minor course of study* – are determined by the
143 department or program that offers the minor, or in the case of an interdisciplinary minor (e.g.,
144 Public Policy) a committee of faculty members.
 - 145 The creation of a minor course of study would be optional for a department or program.
 - 146 Assessment four years after implementation.
 - 147 ❖ These recommendations have been endorsed by a unanimous vote of the Senate Undergraduate
148 Course of Study Committee
- 149

150 **Rationale: Why make the minor optional for students?**

- 151 Goal of breadth overlaps with Focused Exposure
 - 152 Best Practices
 - 153 CUNY-wide: Only Hunter and Baruch (and to some extent Lehman) require minors
 - 154 21 institutions outside of CUNY: Only Rutgers
 - 155 Empower students’ control over curricular choices
- 156

157 **Rationale: Why give control of the minor to the department or program that teaches the courses?**

- 158 A bewildering array of minor requirements
 - 159 21 out of 34 departments: Any 12 credits
 - 160 4 allow ‘split minors’: 6 + 6
 - 161 Only 5 put constraints: E.g., “One at the 300-level.”
 - 162 Only half supply any info, or recommended minors
 - 163 No coherent academic mission from the faculty concerning the minor
 - 164 Vacuous Minors
 - 165 Split Math/Computer Science Minor: Four 100-level courses, with no computer
166 programming, and no pre-calculus.
 - 167 Music Minor: With little or no technical training (“Where’s middle-C?”)
 - 168 Due to lack of requisite oversight (by design), potentially the minor has little value at Hunter
- 169

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173
174 **Benefits: Giving control of the minor to the department/program that teaches the courses**

- 175 Minors will certify a reasonable level of expertise
176 Increases the value of the minor and strengthens Hunter's educational mission
177 Departments can receive recognition for serving our students with a minor
178 Departments would now easily be able to track # of minors
179 Using DIG, students would be able to track progress towards a minor
180

181 **Rationale: Why allow the creation of a minor to be optional for a department or program?**

- 182 Academic Rigor
183 Departments/Program must be pedagogically and academically committed to their minor.
184

185 **Members of the Mellon Project Special Committee to Review the GER**

186 William Sakas, Department of Computer Science (Committee Chair)

187 Philip Alcabes, School of Health Sciences, Program in Urban Public Health

188 Steven Beard, Department of Political Science (Student)

189 Derrick Brazill, Department of Biology

190 Sandra Clarkson, Department of Mathematics and Statistics

191 Rebecca Connor, Department of English

192 James Gordon, Department of Psychology

193 Michael Steiper, Department of Anthropology

194 Richard Burke, Acting Associate Dean/Associate Provost of General Education (ex-officio)

195 Shirley Clay-Scott, Dean of Arts and Sciences (ex-officio)

196 Vita Rabinowitz, Provost (ex-officio)
197

198 The following resolutions were on the floor:
199

200 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Hunter College Senate approve the following policy regarding a
201 minor requirement at Hunter College:

- 202
 - A minor is made optional for BA students.
 - The courses needed to fulfill a minor – the minor course of study – are determined by the
203 department or program that offers the minor, or in the case of an interdisciplinary minor
204 (e.g., Public Policy) a committee of faculty members.
 - The creation of a minor course of study would be optional for a department or program.
206

207
208 AND,

209 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this new policy be assessed four years after implementation.
210

211 After extensive discussion the question was called and carried.
212

213 Voting by clickers produced the following results: 64 in favor, 10 opposed, and 4 abstentions. The
214 resolutions were approved.
215

216 It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried, and the 500th meeting was adjourned at
217 5:15 PM.
218

219
220
221 Respectfully submitted,

222
223
224
225 Phil Alcabes,
226 Secretary

APPENDIX I

The following members were noted as absent from the meeting:

Faculty

Anthropology	Elizabeth Harmon (A)
Art	Reiner Leist (A)
Chemistry	Pamela Mills
Computer Science	Ioannis Stamos
Health Sciences	Mimi Fahs (A) Jack Caravanos "E"
Nursing	Judith Aponte Elizabeth Simon (A)
Political Science	Jennifer Dwyer "E"
School of Social Work	Lorraine Tempel
Theatre	Joel Bassin
Urban Affairs	Jill Gross "E"

**Lecturers and
Part-Time Faculty**

William Mayer (Classics)
Jeffrey Mongrain (Art)

Administration

Vice Pres. Eija Ayravainen
COO Len Zinnanti
Acting Dean Ken Olden (A)

Ex-Officio

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

Students

Kimberly Maurice (Theatre)
Manuel Andino (Classics)
Sera Yeysides (Econ/Poli Sci)
Scott Powell (Chem)