

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 500<sup>th</sup> 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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53  
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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172  
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 500<sup>th</sup> 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)