

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Faculty Delegate Assembly
March 18, 2009**

1:10-3:00 PM in room 1203 HE

1. Call to order: FDA President Jason Young called the meeting to order at 1:18.

2. Approval of the minutes: There were no actual FDA minutes from the joint FDA/Senate meeting of February 25. Instead Professor Young distributed notes that Professor Doyle kept of the proceedings.

3. College update: President Jennifer Rabb

* Budget: Things are not too bad. Hunter has taken a \$3 million cut, most of it non-academic.

*There are currently 59 faculty searches.

*Current uncertainty with the state budget: The governor's proposal is for a \$600 tuition increase for undergraduates, more for graduate students. Some of the money will come back to the campuses for investment. The legislature has to approve the increase. There has been no tuition increase for four or five years. Had CUNY had cost of living increases over that time, we wouldn't need a relatively large increase now. If the increase is less than what the governor is asking for, Hunter might not get investment money back from the state.

* Faculty travel grants and the Summer Technology Program: The money is the same for this year as last. It's not clear that as much money will be available next year. The same goes for the Summer Technology Program. That program provides a grant for faculty who want to integrate technology into teaching.

* Departmental annual reports. Every department is required to submit an annual report. The reports address such questions as, What has the department achieved? What resources does it need? These are useful planning documents for the president's office.

* Hunter recently received a single donation of \$1 million.

* The U.S. stimulus package: It contains good news for Hunter. It calls for an increase in the amount of Pell Grants and a broadening of who is eligible.

* Capital projects that are ongoing:

-- The Roosevelt House is restoration in proceeding. The facility should be ready in the fall.

-- New Social Work School: Hunter doesn't own the 79th Street building. We have free rent but also lots of restrictions. We can only use the building work for Social Work functions. We have to keep it in first class condition. This is costly. So the building will be sold. Forty million dollars of the proceeds will go to Hunter and towards the new, \$125 million building in East Harlem. The facility will also include Hunter's new School of Public Health and Centro. The building will open in 2011. The site should be clear by this summer, with groundbreaking to begin in the fall. Now Hunter will have a building to match its vision for the 21st century.

-- The new science building: Hunter has bidders. We're in the final stages of negotiation, and we're still trying to put the deal together. The project will be slower now because of the difficulty getting financing.

The president entertained questions.

* Professor Fisher asked what disciplines the new searches are in.

--The president responded that the searches are spread out across disciplines. The majority are for people who have recently left or are retiring.

* A faculty member raised a question about the science building.

-- The president explained that we are selling the 25th Street location. The buyer will need to build a new building in the current location of the Julia Richman school, will need to save the dorms or rebuild them, and will need to provide a swing space. And Hunter is looking for money on top of this. So it's a complicated negotiation. The scientists want their labs as close to the main campus as possible, and this is a priority. Julia Richmond is the best property available in the neighborhood, since it's relatively close, and we need a big piece of land. We've had three bidders so far.

* Professor Fisher asked about the gentrification implications of the new Social Work building in East Harlem.

-- The president responded that the large stock of public housing in the neighborhood will limit gentrification.

* Professor Gold asked whether the weak economy has affected retention.

-- The president responded that it was actually helping. Hunter is relatively cheap, and with unemployment up more people are going back to school. Hunter's concern is getting aid to students who need and deserve it. The amount of scholarship money that we give has increased continually. If faculty have students that they think could use money, they should get in touch with Eija Ayravainen.

Last year we had 11,000 first choice applicants, an extraordinary number.

* Professor Haft asked whether our students are coming from increasingly well-to-do backgrounds.

-- The president said no. Hunter could seek well off students from outside of the city and state, but it doesn't. Hunter recently received a \$5,000,000 gift for scholarships, \$4,000,000 of it for women and minorities. The college is doing strategic recruiting from New York City high schools. Even the honors programs should resist recruiting out of state students.

* Professor Haft asked about helping illegal immigrants with scholarships,

-- The president responded that, although we can help them, we can't give them jobs.

* Professor Young asked about the prospect of a work furlough at CUNY in the light of the weak economy.

-- The president saw no evidence that this would happen at CUNY. A tuition increase would make furloughs even less likely.

5. Brief discussion of University Faculty Senate issues.

CUNY is proposing changing the way that PSC-CUNY grants are given out. CUNY is looking to streamline the program. Rather than have reviews take place within disciplines, the proposal is to have them done on the campuses. Each campus would be allocated a certain amount of money. Last year \$77,000 went to pay reviewers from outside of CUNY. If the reviewing were all done on the campuses, CUNY could save this money, and it could go directly to grants instead. The chancellor favors the proposal.

University Faculty Senate members are generally opposed to the possible changes. The objection is that many of the research proposals are specialized, and finding fully qualified reviewers sometimes means going beyond an applicant's campus, if

not CUNY. A second objection is that a campus or CUNY reviewer will be more likely to know the applicant than someone from outside of CUNY. Hence there is less chance of bias among non-CUNY reviewers. A third problem with conducting the reviews on the campuses is that provosts will be responsible for assembling the selection committees. This increases the possibility that the process will be politicized.

Chancellor Goldstein would like to increase the amount per award but reduce the number of awards accordingly. However, fewer, if larger, awards could mean more money for the sciences at the expense of the humanities and social sciences. The UFS generally opposes this proposal, fearing that the provost could mingle the PSC funds with other funds and that the PSC CUNY grant would lose its purpose as a seed grant for research.

The community colleges are concerned that they are not getting their fair share under the current arrangement. They think that they would benefit if awards were granted by campus.

- * Professor Haft asked how would anyone know that a proposal has come from the community colleges, since the reviews are supposed to be blind.

 - Professor Young said that faculty from the community colleges have less time to work on their proposals than those at the senior colleges and that this gives the latter an edge.

- * Professor Welter observed that department chairs now have no knowledge of the alleged release time implied by the grants. Chairs need to know this beforehand, so they can make provisions. Also, PSC grants play an important role in recruiting faculty.

- * Professor Young pointed out that in the humanities and social sciences people don't need huge amounts of money. It's only in the sciences where larger grants are sought. Here CUNY is addressing a problem that doesn't really exist. The concern for faculty is that more grants are needed, not necessarily larger grants.

The UFS has been steadfastly against this proposal. Two UFS members are on the relevant committee. The chancellor supports the change. He's trying to make CUNY look like a high profile research institution. As states provide less and less for higher education, there comes to be a greater emphasis on research, since research brings in money. Hence the greater emphasis on research here and at the California State Universities, for instance.

6. Faculty Forum: How We Get Our Research Done: The Challenges of Balancing Research, Teaching, and Other Duties.

Two years ago CUNY Central required faculty to submit a report on research productivity. Today we'd like to talk about the strategies that people have that work regarding getting their research done. How do you balance teaching and other responsibilities with research? Faculty should be aware that they need to negotiate with their chairs for a lower teaching load. What are the critical areas of research that need support? The FDA will take note of your concerns.

* Professor Welter observed that release time is getting harder and harder to defend. CUNY central is trying to impose a two tiered system in which those who aren't as obviously productive won't get release time. The reports of scholarly activity can be misleading because historical research, for instance, can be slow. Some things are beyond researchers' control. For instance they might be in a disorganized archive, working in two languages.

* Professor Foner observed that it takes a lot longer to produce in book-oriented fields like history than in article-oriented fields like the sciences. One size does not fit all.

* Professor Young suggested that we might have different standards for each discipline. And we might compare our output with a school that's like Hunter in many regards, for instance, Cal State Fullerton.

* Professor Rolando Perez talked about the lag between the time that an article is accepted and when it actually comes out. Before you send an article off to a journal you should make sure that it has an electronic counterpart, since your articles are more likely to be cited if they're available electronically. Also, although it's good to have articles published in upper tier journals, open source journals are a plausible alternative. One should try to strike a balance between publishing some articles in highly competitive journals and some in less competitive journals.

Professor Perez also talked about a new trend in scholarly publishing in which authors are asked to defray some of the costs of publishing. The expectation among publishers is that there will be grant money on campuses available for this.

* Professor Young talked about conferences. Which ones should you target? The big ones aren't always the best.

* Professor Foner pointed out that expectations are greater for new hires than they used to be and that publishing is changing as well.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:59.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Doyle
FDA Secretary