

NATIONAL CENTER

for the **Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions**

HUNTER

The City University of New York

53rd Annual National Conference *Uniting for Workplace and Political Democracy*

March 22-24, 2026

Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at
Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate Center

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Conference Schedule

Sunday, March 22, 2026	
Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute of Hunter College, CUNY 47-49 E. 65th St, New York, NY, 10065 (between Park and Madison Avenues)	
12:00 pm pm ET	Beverage Service and Light Refreshments
12:30 pm ET Auditorium	Welcoming Remarks William A. Herbert, Executive Director, National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, Hunter College, CUNY Manoj Pardasani, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success, Hunter College, CUNY Kenneth Godiner, Senior Vice Chancellor for Budget, Finance and Labor Relations and CFO, CUNY Milly Silva, Executive Director, Professional Staff Congress-CUNY JCBA Announcement Karen R. Stubaus, Labor Relations Strategist & Special Advisor, University of Michigan, and JCBA Co-editor Gary Rhoades, Professor and Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education, University of Arizona, JCBA Co-editor

	Jacob Apkarian, Associate Professor, Sociology, York College, CUNY, National Center Affiliated Researcher, and JCBA Co-editor
1:00 - 2:30 pm ET Auditorium	Plenary: Alliance for Higher Education Michael Gavin, President and CEO, Alliance for Higher Education Paulette Granberry Russell, President, National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education Christopher M. Reber, President, Hudson County Community College Todd Wolfson, President, AAUP Alexandra (Sascha) Matish, Associate Vice Provost, Academic and Faculty Affairs and Senior Director, Academic Human Resources, University of Michigan, Moderator
2:30 - 3:00 pm ET	Break
3:00 - 4:30 pm ET Auditorium	Research Panel: Report on Negotiated Academic Freedom Clauses in Collective Bargaining Agreements Timothy Reese Cain, Associate Director and Professor, Higher Education, University of Georgia Anita Levy, Senior Program Officer, AAUP Erin Ward, PhD Student, Sociology, CUNY Graduate Center Kathryn Ritchie, M.A. Candidate, Hunter College Rana Jaleel, Chair, Committee A, AAUP and Associate Professor, University of California-Davis, Commentator Nicholas DiGiovanni, Morgan, Brown & Joy, LLP, Commentator Risa L. Lieberwitz, Professor, Labor and Employment Law, Cornell University ILR, Moderator
	Break
4:30 - 6:00 pm ET Auditorium	Panel: Book Discussion: <i>Academic Freedom From Professional Norm to First Amendment Right</i> (Harvard University Press, 2024) David M. Rabban, Chair and Professor, University of Texas School of Law, and author, <i>Academic Freedom From Professional Norm to First Amendment Right</i> Nadine Strossen, New York Law School Professor Emerita and Senior Fellow, FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression), Commentator Frederick P. Schaffer, former General Counsel, CUNY, Commentator and Moderator
6:00 – 7:30 pm ET Four Freedoms Room	Light Reception and Book Signing with David M. Rabban
Monday, March 23, 2026	
CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (Entrance on Fifth Avenue between 34th and 35th Street)	

8:00 – 9:00 am ET	Continental Breakfast
9:00 am ET Proshansky Auditorium	Welcome Nancy Cantor, President, Hunter College, CUNY William A. Herbert, Executive Director, National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions, Hunter College, CUNY
9:10 – 10:30 am ET Proshansky Auditorium	Keynote Presentation: Academic Freedom Depends on the Ecosystem of Freedoms Michael S. Roth, President, Wesleyan University
10:30 - 11:00 am ET	Break
	Concurrent Sessions
11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET Proshansky Auditorium	Panel: Status of Litigation in Defense of Democracy (CLE)* David D. Cole, Professor in Law and Public Policy, Georgetown Law School and former National Legal Director, ACLU Will Creeley, Legal Director, FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression) Alex Abdo, Litigation Director, Knight First Amendment Institute at Columbia University Rabia Muqaddam, Chief Counsel for Federal Initiatives, Office of the New York State Attorney, Moderator
11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET C201-202	Panel: Union Leaders of Color Transforming Higher Education and Centering Democracy María del Mar Rosa Rodríguez, Professor, Universidad de Puerto Rico, President, Asociación Puertorriqueña de Profesores Universitarios (APPU) Charles Toombs, Professor, San Diego State University, Immediate Past President, CFA Michelle Ramos Pellicia, Professor, California State University, San Marcos, VP, CFA Tracey Salisbury, Associate Professor, California State University, Bakersfield, Associate VP, South, CFA Margarita Berta-Avila, Professor, Sacramento State University, President, CFA, Moderator
11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET C198	Research Panel: Postdocs, Sexual Harassment, and Collective Bargaining: Intersections and Issues Kait Spear, Program Officer, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Andrea Joseph, Assistant Professor, Biomedical and Chemical Engineering, Syracuse University Anna Yoney, Associate Research Scientist, Department of Genetics & Development, Columbia University Karen R. Stubaus, Labor Relations Strategist & Special Advisor, University of Michigan, Moderator
11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET C204-205	Panel: Bargaining over AI at 4-year Institutions Thomas H. Riley, Jr., Executive Director of Labor and Special Counsel, University of Illinois System Meredith Kahn, Librarian, University of Michigan

	Jocelyn Krause, Director, Collective Bargaining, Journalism Department, Writers Guild of America East Alex Bernstein, University Executive Director of Instructional Staff Labor Relations, CUNY Office of Labor Relations Arthur Pearlstein, Arbitrator and Mediator, Moderator
11:00 am – 12:30 pm ET C197	Community College Meet-up and Brainstorming Session
12:30 - 1:30 pm ET Concourse	Lunch: Food Service
	Concurrent Sessions
1:30 - 3:00 pm ET Proshansky	Panel: Litigation Landscape Affecting Higher Education and Administrative Remedies in Defense of Federal Research Funding (CLE)* Amanda Fuchs Miller, President, Seventh Street Strategies Rachel Homer, Director of Democracy 2025 & Senior Attorney, Democracy Forward Adelaide Pagano, Assistant Attorney General, Consumer Protection Division, Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Jessica Alvarez, General Counsel, Hunter College, CUNY, Moderator
1:30 - 3:00 pm ET C198	Research Panel: Equity at Work? Gender, Parenthood, and Benefits in Higher Education Rhiannon M. Maton, Associate Professor, SUNY Cortland, Affiliated Researcher, National Center Carrie Rohman, Professor, Lafayette College, Editor, SUNY Press (2025) Eve Weinbaum, Professor, UMass Amherst, President, MSP/MTA Melissa Sortman, Assistant Provost, Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs, Michigan State University Elza Rechtman, Postdoctoral Researcher, Mount Sinai, Bargaining Committee, SPOC-UAW Shirley Lin, Associate Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School, Moderator
1:30 - 3:00 pm ET C201-202	Interactive Workshop: Negotiating over Academic Freedom Clauses Bethany Gizzi, President, Monroe Community College Faculty Association Joseph McConnell, Morgan, Brown & Joy LLP Timothy S. Taylor, Arbitrator & Mediator Kathy Sheffield, Director, Representation and Bargaining, CFA, Moderator
1:30 - 3:00 pm ET C204-205	Panel: Community College Perspectives on AI Policy and Codified Teaching Practice: Faculty and Administrator views, Liability Implications, and Impacts at the Bargaining Table Andre' L. Poplar, Vice Chancellor, Human Resources, Oakland Community College Cameron Redden, Chief Administrative Officer, Brunswick University Center, Cuyahoga Community College Deborah H. Williams, Professor, Johnson County Community College, Former JCCC Faculty Association President/Lead Negotiator

	<p>Eric Rader, Higher Ed Policy and Program Council and AI Task Force, AFT, President, Henry Ford Community College AFT</p> <p>Martin Balinsky, Professor, Florida-Tallahassee State College, President, UFF-FTSC, Moderator</p>
<p>1:30 - 3:00 pm ET C197</p>	<p>Panel: Turnover the Other Cheek: Challenges of Collective Bargaining for Graduate Assistants</p> <p>Cassandra “Cassie” Urbenz, President, Graduate Assistants United and NEA Graduate Committee, University of Florida</p> <p>Tessa Barber, President, Graduate Assistants United, NEA Graduate Committee, University of South Florida and VP, United Faculty of Florida, GAU Bargaining Council</p> <p>Michael Eagen, Vice Provost, Academic Human Resources, University of Massachusetts, Amherst</p> <p>Joshua D. Nadreau, Fisher & Phillips LLP</p> <p>Rebecca S. Natow, Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy, Hofstra University, Moderator</p>
<p>3:00 - 3:30 pm ET</p>	<p>Break</p>
	<p>Concurrent Sessions</p>
<p>3:30 - 5:00 pm ET Proshansky Auditorium</p>	<p>Panel: Massachusetts DRIVE Initiative: State Funding for Higher Education Research</p> <p>Quentin Palfrey, Massachusetts Director of Federal Funds and Infrastructure, Office of Governor Maura Healey</p> <p>Max Page, President, Massachusetts Teachers Association</p> <p>Viviann Anguiano, Managing Director, Higher Education Policy, Center for American Progress</p> <p>Frederick G. Floss, Professor and Co-Director, Center for Economic Education, Buffalo State University, Moderator</p>
<p>3:30 - 5:00</p>	<p>Panel: Book Discussion: Library Workers as Defenders of Democracy: Organize Your Library! Developing the Collective Power of Library Workers (Critical Cultural Information Studies series), ALA Editions, 2025</p> <p>Emily Drabinski, Associate Professor, School of Information Studies, Queens College, CUNY</p> <p>Kelly McElroy, Librarian and Associate Professor, Oregon State University</p> <p>Angelo Moreno, Union Organizer, Chicago</p> <p>Maura Smale, Executive Chief Librarian, CUNY Graduate Center</p> <p>Meredith Kahn, Librarian, University of Michigan, Moderator</p>
<p>3:30 - 5:00 pm ET C201-202</p>	<p>Panel: Florida-Fighting to Defend Collective Bargaining and Democracy in a Red State</p> <p>Adam Bellotti, Bredhoff & Kaiser P.L.L.C.</p> <p>Allison Clarke, Service Unit Director, United Faculty of Florida</p> <p>Alex Ledgerwood, Service Unit Director, United Faculty of Florida</p> <p>Adela Ghadimi, Executive Director, United Faculty of Florida, Moderator</p>

<p>3:30 - 5:00 pm ET C204-205</p>	<p>Panel: Creative Responses to Persistent Inequities of Contingent Labor in Community Colleges Christine Mangino, President, Queensborough Community College, CUNY Jennifer Shanoski, Faculty, Merritt College Wendy Brill-Wynkoop, Past President, Faculty Association of the California Community Colleges Colena Sesanker, Chair, Faculty Advisory Committee, Board of Regents for Higher Education, Connecticut State Community Colleges Robin G. Isserles, Faculty, BMCC, CUNY, Discussant and Moderator</p>
<p>3:30 - 5:00 pm ET C197</p>	<p>Interactive Workshop: Stop the War on Immigrants: Strategies to Support Undocumented and International Students, Faculty, and Staff Diego N. Sánchez, Vice President of Policy and Strategy, Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration Stacy Hickox, Staff Counsel, National Education Association Andrea Vásquez, Secretary, Professional Staff Congress-CUNY Cassandra “Cassie” Urbenz, President, Graduate Assistants United and NEA Graduate Committee, University of Florida Ashwini Sukthankar, Affiliated Researcher, National Center, Moderator</p>
<p>Tuesday, March 24, 2026</p>	
<p>CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016 (Entrance on Fifth Avenue between 34th and 35th Street)</p>	
<p>8:00 – 9:00 am ET Concourse</p>	<p>Continental Breakfast</p>
	<p>Concurrent Sessions</p>
<p>9:00 – 10:30 am ET C198</p>	<p>Panel: Just Cause: Practical Issues in Pursuing and Defending Disciplinary Charges Dana E. Lossia, Levy Ratner, P.C. Nicholas L. Collins, ArentFox Schiff LLP Chris Meade, Senior Director, Employee and Labor Relations, University of Oregon Patrick McDermott, Arbitrator and Professor, Management and Legal Studies, Franklin P. Perdue School of Business, Salisbury University, Moderator</p>
<p>9:00 – 10:30 am ET C197</p>	<p>Panel: Retrenchment and Layoff Procedures: Negotiating and Arbitrating Peter A. Jones, Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC David Kinsella, Vice President, Collective Bargaining, PSU-AAUP and Professor, Political Science, Portland State University Gary Rhoades, Professor and Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education, University of Arizona Adrienne Lu, Senior Reporter, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Moderator</p>

9:00 – 10:30 am ET C201-202	Panel: Best Practices in Establishing or Opposing Past Practices in Labor Arbitration Shinika Hunter, Labor Relations Specialist, NYSUT Kevin Pollitt, Regional Staff Director, NYSUT John Gross, Guercio and Guercio LLP Christopher Mestecky, Guercio and Guercio LLP Katie Rosen, Arbitrator and Mediator, Moderator
9:00 – 10:30 am ET C204	Panel: Discrimination Issues on Unionized Campuses Katherine H. Hansen, Gladstein, Reif & Meginniss Steven J. Porzio, Partner, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP Shannon Buffum, Senior Associate General Counsel, Cornell University Courtney Bither, Servicing Representative, UAW Region 9A Ana Avendaño, Visiting Assistant Professor of Law, CUNY School of Law, Moderator
9:00 – 10:30 am ET C205	Panel: Key Labor Issues Involving Nursing Claire Tuck, Director, Legal Department, New York State Nurses Association Jonathan Wangel, Senior Assistant Vice President/Deputy Counsel, NYC Health + Hospitals Sophia Alonso, Assistant Vice President, Labor Relations, Montefiore Medical Center Amy Lee Pacholk, Critical Care Nurse, SUNY Stony Brook, Executive Board, PEF Ann Marie Mauro, Dean and Professor, Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, Hunter College, CUNY, Moderator
10:30 – 11:00 am ET	Break
	Concurrent Sessions
11:00 am - 12:30 pm ET Proshansky Auditorium	Panel: Annual Legal Update (CLE)* Damien DiGiovanni, Morgan, Brown & Joy, LLP Amy L. Rosenberger, Willig, Williams & Davidson Aaron Nisenson, Senior Legal Counsel, AAUP Brian Selchick, Cullen and Dykman LLP Ayanna T. Blake, Director Labor Relations, Weill Cornell Medicine, Moderator
11:00 am - 12:30 pm ET C198	Panel: The Crisis of Collegiate Black Male Athlete Identity: Education, Work, and Democracy Pops Mensah-Bonsu, President, NBA G League Operations, New York Knicks; President, SEED Academy Ghana Rob Knox, Award-Winning Communications Leader; SI HBCU Legend; NCAA Champion of Diversity Honoree Rolando Shannon, Doctoral Candidate and Interim Assistant Athletic Director, Student Development, Tennessee State University Ajah Hawley-Alexander, Clinical Lecturer, Iona University, Doctoral Candidate, University of Southern Mississippi, Moderator

<p>11:00 am - 12:30 pm ET C201-202</p>	<p>Panel: When Democracy and Equity Collide: Responses that Promote Institutional Learning Elizabethada Wright, Professor, University of Minnesota Duluth, UEA Contract Administrator Josué Arredondo, Adjunct Professor, Southwestern College/San Diego Miramar College and Delegate, CTA State Council Michael Buchler, Professor, Florida State University and Co-Chief negotiator, United Faculty of Florida–FSU Geoffery Johnson, Adjunct Professor, San Diego Mesa/Southwestern Colleges and President, AFT National Adjunct Contingent Caucus John L. Hoffman, President, Bemidji State University, Commentator Christina Gallup, Associate Professor, University of Minnesota Duluth, Moderator</p>
<p>11:00 am - 12:30 pm ET C204</p>	<p>Panel: Staff Labor Issues in Higher Education Roberta Elins, Immediate Past President, United College Employees/AFT Local 3457, FIT, SUNY Ashley C. Pope, General Counsel, Suffolk County Community College Christine O’Connell, President, Union of Rutgers Administrators-AFT Local #1766 Dominick Fanelli, Director, Labor Relations, Staff Human Resources, University of Michigan William Conley, Director of Conciliation, NYS Public Employment Relations Board, Moderator</p>
<p>11:00 am - 12:30 pm ET C205</p>	<p>Panel: Creating Shop Culture in Higher Ed Unions Sunshine Alvarez de Silva, M.A. Student, University of Vermont-Graduate Student Union-UAW 2322 Sara V. Speller, PhD Candidate, Harvard University, Graduate Student Union-UAW 5118 Lily Luo, PhD Candidate, University of Connecticut, Graduate Employees Union-UAW 6950 Matthew M. Bodah, Labor Arbitrator & Mediator and Professor Emeritus, University of Rhode Island, Moderator</p>
<p>12:30 - 1:30 pm ET Concourse</p>	<p>Lunch: Food Service</p>
<p>12:45 – 1:30 pm ET Concourse</p>	<p>Luncheon Presentation: Book Discussion: <i>Why Fascists Fear Teachers: Public Education and the Future of Democracy</i> (Random House, 2025) Introduction: James Davis, President, Professional Staff Congress/CUNY Speaker: Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers</p>

***CLE Credits are provided by the Community Legal Resource Network at CUNY School of Law:**

This CLE program is approved for both experienced and newly admitted attorneys. Consistent with NY State regulations, CLE credit will be offered only to those attorneys completing the entire session; attorneys attending only part of a session are not eligible for partial credit. Attorneys arriving late are welcome to attend the program but will not be eligible for credit.