

MINUTES
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate
14 May 1997

1 The 347th meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 4:30 PM in Room W714.
2
3 **Presiding:** Barbara L. Hampton, 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 **Agenda:** The agenda was adopted as presented with the Draft Self-Study Report *127 Years of Teaching,*
8 *Research, and Service at Hunter College* for the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle
9 States Association being the sole item on the agenda.
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11 “Highlights” of the Draft Self-Study Report were distributed and are attached as Appendix II.
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13 The Chair recommended that the Senate go into a committee of the whole with Professor Peter
14 Basquin, Co-Chair of the Middle States Steering Committee, presiding.
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16 It was so moved. The motion carried and the Senate dissolved into a committee of the whole at
17 4:25 P.M.
18
19 The Senate reconvened in formal session at 5:30 P.M. without recommendations.
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21 It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at
22 5:30 P.M.
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Respectfully submitted,



Ken Sherrill, *rm*
Secretary

MINUTES
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate
19 May 1997

1 The 348th meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 3:35 PM in Room
2 W714.
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4 **Presiding:** Barbara L. Hampton, Chair
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6 **Attendance:** The elected members of the Senate, with the exception of those listed in Appendix I.
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8 **Agenda:** The agenda was adopted as presented with the report by the Provost's Arts & Science
9 Transitional Committee being the sole item on the agenda. The report is attached as
10 Appendix II.
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12 The Chair recommended that the Senate go into a committee of the whole for the purpose
13 of discussion.
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15 It was so moved. The motion carried and the Senate dissolved into a committee of the
16 whole with President Caputo presiding.
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18 The Senate reconvened in formal session at 5:55 P.M.
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20 It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried and the meeting
21 adjourned at 5:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Ken Sherrill, *tm*
Secretary

May 5, 1997

To: David A. Caputo, President
David A. Caputo
From: Arts and Sciences Transition Committee
Laura S. Schor, Provost and Chair

Elizabeth Beaujour Dr. Elizabeth Beaujour, Dept. of Classics
Martin Fine Dr. Martin Fine, Div. of Social Sciences
Victor Goldsmith Dr. Victor Goldsmith, Dept. of Geography
Michael Griffel Dr. L. Michael Griffel, Dept. of Music
Greg Johnson Dr. Greg Johnson, Dept. of Anthropology
Peter Lipke Dr. Peter Lipke, Dept. of Biology
Eugenie Birch Dr. Eugenie Birch, Dept. of Urban Affairs
James Freeman Dr. James Freeman, Dept. of Philosophy
Sherryl Graves Dr. Sherryl Graves, Dept. of Educational Foundations
Joann Irvy Dr. Joann Irvy, School of Social Work
Paul Kurzman Dr. Paul Kurzman, School of Social Work
Stuart Zimble Mr. Stuart Zimble, graduate student in Anthropology

RE: Response to Charge of November 27, 1996

In response to your charge (see below), the Committee has met eleven times, for a total of 28 hours. The Committee discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the current administrative structure and three alternative plans outlined in the attached organizational charts. Each of these plans has advantages and disadvantages. It is our hope that these plans will be the basis for extensive and general College-wide discussions about the nature of liberal arts education and the best way to deliver it in a public urban university.

CHARGE

1. What is the best way to preserve and strengthen departmental and discipline-based strengths in the new unit?
2. What is the best way to continue as well as develop new multi- and interdisciplinary communication in the new unit?
3. How should the FP&B of the new unit be structured?
4. Recommendations for the process to be used in the Dean's search should be proposed.
5. Recommendations regarding how the new unit should relate to the programs in Education, Health Sciences, Nursing, and Social Work should be developed.

I. Current Administrative Structure

The Transition Committee sees both advantages and disadvantages to the proposed restructuring of the three liberal arts Divisions into a single School of Arts and Sciences. The Committee investigated and debated several structures, both theoretical and existing at other institutions. The members have struggled to reconcile divergent approaches.

Some members argued that the current structure does not facilitate solutions to College-wide problems since the Deans of Divisions function primarily as advocates for their areas. In particular, the Deans of the three liberal arts areas, where all undergraduate students must take the College distribution requirements, do not focus on general problems facing undergraduate students. These problems include a high failure rate in some introductory courses, a disproportionate number of 100-level courses, an imbalance of T.A.'s such that some large lecture classes have several and others none, a lack of sequencing in some commonly-taught courses (e.g. statistics), a lack of availability of some courses required by students pursuing degrees in other divisions, a lack of placement tests in some areas, etc.

The argument for the existing structure

Despite the problems in the existing structure, arguments to preserve it are strongly felt. The Arts and Sciences Chairs have expressed near unanimity in favor of retention of the current Divisional arrangements or a similar structure. The most frequently articulated concern is that a change in structure will make essential resources inaccessible to Chairs and faculty, in that the Dean would have too many responsibilities to allow personal interactions. Most faculty in Arts and Sciences are convinced that programmatic success is dependent on Chair and faculty access to Deans who have discretionary funds, decision power, and intimate knowledge of their departments and faculty. This is especially true in fine arts, the performing arts, and the experimental sciences-- capital-intensive disciplines that are now areas of strength at Hunter. A Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences would necessarily have oversight over 23 departments, 10 interdepartmental programs, and about 350 faculty (70% of the total). Few faculty feel that access to such a Dean will be possible in a meaningful and timely manner. The liberal arts faculty also value the intellectual collegiality of intra-divisional curricular discussion.

Many argue that the Deans' first-hand knowledge of a defined area--its concerns and its needs--strengthens each unit individually and that strong Divisional units contribute to the value of the College as a whole. Almost all Chairs and former Chairs feel that most of the substantive work and ranking for promotion and tenure happens at the Departmental and Divisional levels. If the existing structure were to continue, a Dean's search would be necessary in the Division of Social Sciences. Relationships among the Divisions should also be more sensitive to College-wide needs and initiatives than at present. Deans' retreats may be useful as a planning mechanism in this regard, since lack of progress in this area is one of the problems noted in the current Divisional system.