

MINUTES
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate
30 November 2005

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2 The 461st meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 4:15 PM in Room W714.

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4 **Presiding:** Joan Tronto, 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 revised agenda was adopted as distributed.

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10 **Minutes:** The Minutes of October 12th and November 2nd were approved as distributed.

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12 **Report by the President:** A summary statement of President Raab's report to the Senate is attached as Appendix II.

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15 **Report by the Administrative Committee:** Report by the Chair
16 A summary statement of Professor Tronto's report is as follows. She said:

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18 "I have two items to report to you.

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20 First, on February 15th, our second meeting of the Spring semester, Robert Ptachik, University Dean for the
21 Executive Office, will be here to speak to us about the Presidential Evaluation that will be conducted
22 during the Spring.

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24 Second, I want to speak to you a little bit about Perez v. CUNY, a decision by the New York State Court of
25 Appeals, the State's highest Court, which was announced on November 17th by Chief Judge Judith Kay.
26 We have put it on the Senate website, and you can also find it on Lexis Nexis.

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28 In Perez v. CUNY two students who had been charged with disciplinary actions, one of them was Hunter
29 College student, took the Hostos Community College Senate to court requiring that that the Senate comply
30 with the State's Open Meeting Law so that the students could attend the Senate meeting, and the Freedom
31 of Information Law so that the students could determine how and who voted to censure them. The immedi-
32 ate questions before the court were whether the Senate could exclude people from attending its meetings
33 and the court ruled that it could not. It is a public body for this purpose and could not exclude attendees. It
34 also considered the question of whether the Senate could vote by secret ballot, and the court said "no." Let
35 me read to you from the opinion:

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37 "Under the Freedom of Information Law voting by the college Senate and the Executive Committee
38 of their Senate may not be conducted by secret ballot."

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40 The court also said, and I think that this is very important news for us:

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42 "In doing so, we affirm the importance of the Senate as a legislative body."

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44 The State's highest court ruled:

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46 "Under CUNY's comprehensive University governance scheme the College Senate is the sole legis-
47 lative body on campus authorized to send proposals to the CUNY Board of Trustees. While the
48 CUNY Board retains the formal power to veto recommendations, that does not in and of itself
49 negate the Senate's policy-making role or render the Senate purely advisory."

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57 So, if you have thought for all these years that in fact we are a legislative body, you would be right accord-
58 ing to the State's highest court.
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60 The Senate Administrative Committee received this ruling a few days after it was announced and began to
61 think about what it means for our practices, because among other things we have in the past used secret
62 ballots. I consulted with Linda Chin, Special Counsel to the President, who advised us that we do not need
63 to do anything at the moment because in fact Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs, Frederick Schaffer, is
64 going to prepare instructions about the meaning of this ruling for our action. It is complicated. Does the
65 fact that we are under the State's Open Meetings Law mean, for example, that we have to follow the
66 quorum rules, which apply to the State Legislature? In fact there is a reference in the opinion to the fact
67 that the Hostos Senate uses Robert's Rules of Orders as its practice, and one would think if they meant to
68 strike that down they would have said, "and they can't do this anymore either, they have to conform
69 completely." We are not really in a position to know what the speculation about quorum rules mean. When
70 it becomes appropriate for us to do so, and if we need to change our practices we shall surely do so. Insofar
71 as we will need to comply with the Freedom of Information Law, and we will need to comply with the fact
72 that we will need to be able to record votes, we need to think about how to proceed. So, here is what we
73 have done.
74

75 First, of all you noticed as we began today that I only asked for unanimous consent to change the agenda,
76 and of course unanimous consent lets us all know how everybody in the room voted, which was "yes".
77 Roll calls would be another way for us to record every vote. We could literally, every time we vote, call
78 out the name of every senator and ask "aye" "nay" or "abstention". But this is the 21st Century, so let us try
79 out a technological solution.
80

81 Here to help us is Gina Cherry who is the Educational Technologist. We are in fact going to create the
82 conditions under which we will be able to cast votes which are recorded. Now, before I go any further I
83 want to just say one more thing about secret ballots. Some of you may be dismayed that we apparently
84 cannot use a secret ballot. There may be times under State Law when we are permitted to use secret ballots,
85 when matters are confidential, when there are issues of personnel that are involved. I think it is perfectly
86 within our right as a body to maintain the secret ballot under those circumstances, and we shall do so. But
87 on another level every member of the Senate is an elected representative. You are either sent here by your
88 department or you were elected by the other students and faculty in the Senate to serve in this body. And as
89 elected representatives, it does not seem to me to be a bad thing for us to have to publicly say what we
90 think about the issues. If we are afraid to express our opinion publicly, then perhaps we ought not to be
91 representatives. As Professor William Sweeney said once, "No one can take our academic freedom from
92 us, but we can surrender it." So, there may be times when we need to use secret ballots, but we should get
93 into the habit of voting in a way that allows people who would like to see how the representatives of a
94 particular department voted on a particular matter.
95

96 To do this we will be using the clickers. The first thing I would do at every meeting is appoint a trained
97 teller who would help us run the technology. Today I am going to ask Professor Mills who uses this tech-
98 nology in her class in this room all the time.
99

100 Professor Tronto then gave instructions to the members of the Senate on how to use the clickers, and the
101 Senate practiced a round of voting using clickers. Each clicker was numbered and the numbers had been
102 recorded on the check-in list. Within seconds voting results were available by computer with each vote
103 having been recorded.
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105 **Approved Curriculum Changes**

106 The following curriculum changes as listed in the Report dated 30 November 2005 were approved as per
107 Senate resolution, and were submitted for the Senate's information: Items GR-660 (Sociology), GR-656
108 (Psychology), GS-650 & GS-652 (Curriculum & Teaching), and GS-651 (Curriculum & Teaching/
109 Educational Foundations/Special Education).

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30 November 2005

Special Election to fill vacant seats on the Senate – Fall 2005

In accordance with Article IV, 2. H. i & ii of the *Charter for a Governance of Hunter College*, the Administrative Committee presented the names of all student nominees received to date:

Dilini Sewvandi Kasturiarachchi (undeclared)
Christipher Kenny (Political Science)
Mikolaj Lis (undeclared)
Ezra Serrar (Philosophy)

It was moved that the nominees be declared elected. The motion carried without dissent.

Resolution Re: University-wide Degree Programs

The Chair informed the Senate that the University Faculty Senate Governance Leaders voted to ask the governance bodies of CUNY colleges to approve the following resolution:

Be it resolved, that no University-wide degree program should go forward unless it is passed by the University Faculty Senate.

The resolution was unanimously approved.

It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Ewen,
Secretary

APPENDIX II Report by the President

The following is a summary statement of President Raab's report to the Senate 11/30/05. She said:

"At Monday's meeting the Board of Trustees approved what has become known as the "CUNY Campus Compact," which is the Chancellor's proposal to get new funding into the CUNY system. Under this proposal about seventy percent of the burden of new funding would come from the State, and the remaining thirty percent would come from a number of sources, including enrollment growth, productivity, an indexed tuition increase, and philanthropy. This proposal, if approved would net Hunter College an additional \$4.5M. It now has to be approved by the State Legislature and the Governor.

The good news within this proposal is that it would allow us at Hunter to do things that have been long on our list, but have been impossible to do, particularly the expansion of new full time faculty. I have had this conversation with so many of you who have enrollments that are growing and wonder where the new lines are. For all CUNY colleges the issue has been that unless a line is shifted through a retirement from one department to another or one school to another, or through the cluster hiring system, there has been no real infusion of lines from 80th Street to the campuses. This new investment would allow us to do some of the hiring we need to do. It would also provide resources in areas where they are desperately needed, particularly for advising in Student Services, the library, and in many of the other places including faculty development.

The unfortunate part of this proposal is that it requires a tuition increase which none of us want to see. From my perspective, though, I want to say that having experienced times within CUNY where tuition has gone for two years with no increase to a year where it was increased by twenty-five percent that had a dramatic impact. I think there is a better argument to be made for an indexed smaller tuition increase. The figures that 80th Street has provided show that in most cases the size of the increase students would bear would be covered by TAP and PELL. We have not had the time and information yet to translate that into how it would affect the Hunter campus, but I do want to reiterate that we are going to continue to be proactive in reaching out to the student body to provide scholarship support, so that no student needs to leave school because of the tuition increase. We are now waiting to see how this plays out in Albany.

I am hoping that we can use this as an opportunity for a serious discussion about how do we continue the discussions on creating priorities within the categories for which CUNY will provide funding. There were two priority areas that emerged uniformly from our discussions with all the constituencies. One was the library and the need for us to continue to invest in the library. I would like to begin the discussion about how to go forward and begin to do some planning in that area. The Acting Provost and I have asked Dean Sherby to think about her needs and to act as an ex officio member on an all campus committee to discuss the library and library needs. We were not able to meet with the Senate Administrative Committee last week and I am hoping to discuss with them at the meeting tomorrow how we can build on the existing Library Committee of the Senate. Barbara Berney is the chair of that committee and I am hoping that she would certainly join this committee and talk to us about bringing in the other members of this committee, and then make sure that we have representation from all of the campuses and all the various groups who are library users at the 68th Street campus and the other campuses. The other committee that the Provost is going to be actively creating is on faculty development, building on her very extensive experience with the gender equity project where so much of our faculty development has come from in the last few years, and then begin to map out how we can invest and support this area. So, I hope to get ideas and thoughts during the next few weeks, and create a campus Committee on Library Planning. We are lucky to have two sources of money that would come to Hunter. One source is the money coming from the increase of graduate tuition. We are planning to spend a portion of this money on resources for graduate programs and their libraries. We have also just received a \$100,000 donation, where the donor asked me to do something to improve student space. Having met with many students during these discussions and hearing that they often go to the Baruch Library, I have asked Louise to use this money for creating substantially improved study space in the Library.

That is what I wanted to report on the Compact. I hope to come back and we will continue to talk about that, and also acknowledge that a few weeks ago the Senate passed a resolution asking us to think about a way to work more productively with the Senate Budget Committee, and what other committee composition would allow a discussion to go forward about budget priorities. This is on the agenda for us to talk about with the Administrative Committee tomorrow, and I am looking forward to a productive discussion.

On the graduate investment program and the \$700,000 that were allocated to Hunter, we had to present a plan to spend that money this year. I am pleased to report that the plan we submitted was approved. In that plan we provided some broad categories of how we intend to spend that money this year.

The first category and perhaps the largest we are calling “The re-engineering of the admissions process.” Under that are all of the points that so many of you have brought up in terms of how to support the application process, graduate department web sites, brochures, recruiting, and support, and also a re-engineering of the process within Hunter so that we can more efficiently support the departments who do the individual recruiting of applications, decisions on applications, and the admission process. I just want to take a moment to acknowledge Bill Zlata who has done such an amazing job in dealing with both undergraduate admissions and graduate admissions, and we are hoping that with these funds we will be able to find a way to give him the support he needs so he can work more effectively with the departments on their admissions processes.

The second category is instructional initiatives that will give us the flexibility to spend money this year that would cover research and teaching support. Specifically, many departments have asked for research assistants. We would be able to use this money to support graduate research assistants for some of the departments who have requested them. This may be done on a rotating basis, but it is a continuing request. It would also support visiting scholars, artists, distinguished lecturers that so many of the graduate programs have asked for, and other programmatic initiatives.

A third category is lab, studio and classroom support and equipment. This was a very large request, particularly from the arts and media programs. The Art department has for years been doing with less than adequate support in all of their studios, and this is something that we can address with this money, as well as the needs that so many of you have for lab and studio support.

The fourth category is technology to work with graduate laboratories, computer, more smart classrooms.

The fifth category was the library, including books, facilities and electronic resources.

Those are the areas where we are looking to expeditiously allocate the \$700,000. Within Arts & Sciences we have started with a major initiative in the urban planning department to do a new GIS lab, which we have partially paid for with this money, and partially with private and other funds. We are talking to the Anthropology department about repairing the graduate lab that is in great need. We are working with Film & Media and Creative Writing on equipment and lecture series. We have been working with the Schools of Health Professions on library resources. Education is interested in launching a program in video taping as part of their teacher training, and we will be using monies to support that. In Social Work the requests for money are for the library. So, that is the initial work we have been able to do in this very short time period, and I am hoping to come back to talk about that a little more.

I want to acknowledge that Mike Escott is undertaking a very exciting new initiative, a campus-wide Conference on Diversity that came out of our talks with students last year about some of the tensions between our various groups on campus. It will address how to best foster a more conducive atmosphere to learning in an extracurricular context that will obviously have an impact on the classroom. We have joined together with a group called CAUSE New York which stands for “Creating Awareness and Understanding through Service and Education.” They do a lot of neighborhood mediation work with ethnic and racial groups to promote discussion. I am going to be writing to Joan Tronto, Jason Young, and Barbara Barone to ask all the groups to work closely with the Undergraduate Student Government and the Graduate Student Government under Mike’s able leadership to pull this conference together this spring. It is our goal to have a proactive discussion about differences and communication and working together, and not wait for some incident to occur that has us all scrambling to try to understand why we were not working better together.

The final point is about the issue of a winter session and whether we have ever had one, and what this new discussion on campus is all about. As far as anyone that I know can remember there have been classes in January on this campus for years. Certainly the School of Education has been giving them for years, and many of the other schools have as well. Two major changes occurred this year. First (and this may have been introduced in the plan that we presented a few weeks ago), it has been part of the Chancellor's goals particularly for this year to increase the number of opportunities for students to take classes to support retention and graduation on weekends and in a summer and a January session. Part of the desire for more January courses is to give students more options to get credits towards graduation. A second change that has occurred is that CUNY has decided to change the accounting measure of the January session. In previous years January classes were paid for by spring tuition. Students will now be required to pay for the January classes. This has a very significant impact on students. I really urge all students who can work January courses into their schedule to file an application through the STARS system, and talk to people in Student Services. We will help anyone who cannot afford to take these courses by providing scholarship money for this purpose. There is also a change for faculty. January classes used to be part of the teaching load for the spring. That can still occur, but it has to be done through special permission and requests to the Dean and the Provost. Alternatively, faculty who teach in the winter session can have additional compensation. It is up to the faculty member and then the Dean and the Provost. This is a very significant change, and it has led us to talk more as a campus about this winter session, but it has not yet created a dramatic impact on how many classes we are offering. There will be some new offerings, and some in the School of Arts and Science. Yesterday we spoke about this idea of recognizing a winter term with the full FP&B, and we asked Shirley Raps if she would take this up with the Senate's Calendar Committee, as well as a proposal for the summer session to allow an option for two-day classes as well as well as four-day classes.

Again, for your own protection I would ask faculty members who have been teaching classes in January to work with your Dean to make sure that you are covered one way or the other in terms of compensation for these classes. I truly urge students to increase progress towards graduation. Please spread the word, and please have people come and request support for this so that nobody is penalized for not having the money to pay for it."

President Raab concluded her report by answering questions from the floor. In response to a question she stated that the CUNY Winter Session policy had been received only two weeks ago.