MINUTES
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate
25 February 2015

The 569th meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 3:43 PM in Room W714.

Presiding: Christa Davis Acampora, Chair

Attendance: The elected members of the Senate with the exception of those marked absent in Appendix I.

Alternate Senators were formally seated in accordance with the procedures approved by the Senate, and clickers were distributed to them.

Report by the Administrative Committee:

b) Approved Curriculum Changes

The following curriculum changes as listed in the Report dated 25 February 2015 have been approved as per Senate resolution and are submitted for the Senate’s information. Items:

1. UR-2003 Music (Change in courses) and GR-1034 Music (Change in courses).

b) Reminder: Special Meeting scheduled for May 20, 3:30 p.m. in the Lang Recital Hall

The Chair, Professor Christa Davis Acampora, said the following:

“I wanted to remind you that we have a special meeting scheduled for May 20th. The meeting will be at the usual time but a different room. We are scheduling it for special reasons. The Charter requires the new Senate to meet after May 14th. This normally would not matter because the new Senate can meet in September. However, the Charter is undergoing a review and we will need to finalize the review at that meeting. The Senate officers will also be elected at this meeting. The meeting will take place in the in the Lang Recital Hall, room 424HN.”

Committee Report:

Undergraduate Course of Study Committee:
Professor Eckhard Kuhn-Osius, Chair of the Committee, said the following:

“My first point is that there will be a few motions that will come to the Senate at its next meeting. We have been working on several changes that concern Foreign Languages. One change affects students that are with the office of AccessABILITY. Another change is to give credit for a 101 without 102, only once. This change already applies to students in the Hunter Core Requirement. We want this change to apply to all students, including student that’s who are in the GER.

My second point is regarding Advance Notices. The deadline for Advance Notices has passed. If you have Advance Notices, especially new programmatic proposals that require resources, please send them over. We will, as we can, review these. They do not have to be formal. The committees will give feedback and provide observations that can help as the proposal is further developed.

My third point is about news we received from the FDA. The Governor is proposing requiring experimental learning. It looks like this is referring to internships and study abroad. This makes us consider the faculty rights to the curriculum. This is currently not a concern to the committee, but I thought it would be good to inform the Senate. There are still many questions regarding this matter.”
The Senate Chair added the following remarks:

“The Senate will be hearing from both curriculum committees at its next meeting. They will bring some routine changes to the procedures, and later on a more extensive revision will come back to the Senate. The committees have been working very hard at revising the College curriculum procedures. There is currently a discussion about whether programmatic proposals should have learning outcomes. The Undergraduate Course of Study Committee, in collaboration with the Office of AccessABILITY and foreign language departments, has been working hard on resolving a number of issues and facilitating their progress. On the point about the internships, we distributed a letter at the door. We received this letter from the SUNY University Faculty Senate and the SUNY Faculty Council at Community Colleges, and the CUNY University Faculty Senate. They released this letter to the community. Essentially, this is the Governor’s office adding a graduation requirement. It is presently conceived as mandatory. He is threatening to withhold the budget if it doesn’t pass.”

Committee on Academic Assessment & Evaluation:
Professor Wendy Hayden, Chair of the Committee, presented the report. She said the following:

“This will be a short report. The committee will give a full report later on. The role of this committee is to develop, implement, and review all College policies and procedures related to academic assessment. We also coordinate with other Senate committees on these topics and serve as an advisory board.

We are currently mapping an assessment plan from this academic year until 2019. Our plan stresses assessment as a faculty driven activity and also talks about deepening our existing practices. The Plan’s purpose is to help guide assessment for the next few years, fulfilling our mission, figuring out the strengths and challenges we are facing, and where we might need to recommend policies and advocate for resources.

We hope to work with other committees on assessment and hope to show you a draft soon.”

Nominating Committee:
Professor Jeff Allred, Chair of the Committee, was not able to attend the meeting and has authorized Professor Christa Acampora, Chair of the Senate, to provide the update on behalf of the committee. She said the following:

“The Committee is meeting this Friday. In the meantime, they responded to the Senate’s directive to add a representative from the division of Sciences and Mathematics to the Ad-Hoc Committee to provide Guidance on By-Laws for the School of Arts & Sciences. Prof. Derrick Brazill agreed to serve.”

The updated membership slate was distributed and is below.

MEMBERSHIP SLATE FOR AD-HOC COMMITTEE TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON BY-LAWS FOR THE SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES

- Prof. Tom DeGloma, Sociology: Representative of the Senate Departmental Governance Committee, acting as Chair
- Prof. Laura Keating, Philosophy: Representative of the Senate Administrative Committee or designee
- Prof. John Wallach, Political Science: Representative of the Charter Review committee
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Prof. Sarah Chinn, English
Representative of the Faculty of School of Arts &
Sciences

Dean Andrew Polsky
Representative of the Office of the Dean of Arts
& Sciences or other administrator

Abdul Rad, THHP and MHC Student
Representative At Large to be selected from
among student senators

Derrick Brazill, Biology
Representative from Sciences and Mathematics

General Education Requirements Appeals Committee:
Professor Jennifer Gaboury, Chair of the Committee, presented the report below.

REPORT BY THE GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS APPEALS COMMITTEE

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Total Appeals = 163

Total Appeals = 34
Report by the Committee on Charter Review:

Professor John Wallach, Chair of the Committee, presented the report *A Guide for Dealing with Upcoming, Proposed Amendments to the Charter for the Governance of Hunter College.* Below is what he said.

“Shortly after today’s Senate meeting, February 25, 2015, the Committee on Charter Review, which I chair, shall be presenting for your deliberation and decision the first of two sets of proposed amendments to the Charter for the Governance of Hunter College. Our committee has met regularly over the last three semesters to update the Charter and amend it so as to improve the operation of the Senate—the authoritative legislative body of the College.

Before providing you with particular recommendations, I would like to comment briefly on the nature of the Charter and how to read it. You need to read it in order to assess the merits of our proposed amendments and decide whether and how they should become part of the Charter. With regard to reading the Charter, I want to make four points: one about the Charter in general; one about Senate representation; one about Senate committees; and one about the Senate’s rules for dealing with proposed amendments to the Charter.

**First.** The Charter is a document that presupposes the significance of shared governance at Hunter College—that is, a power- and authority-sharing arrangement involving the faculty, the administration, students, and staff. It holds that nothing done by each of these groups can be done well without the engagement and voluntary cooperation of the other groups. Everything that we propose is designed to enhance the power, authority, and workings of the Senate as an entity dedicated to shared governance. Now if we always, already knew what “shared governance” meant and collectively and unanimously agreed on what that meant, the Committee on Charter Review merely would act as a house-keeping group. But we don’t have such a consensus; nor do we want such. Thus, we will be recommending changes that probably will not be cheered by all. But that’s fine (sort of). Our task in the Committee has been to identify changes that warrant passage and deserve your attention. The rest is up to you. But this does mean that we don’t want you to act ignorantly. You need to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the structure, substance, and fine points of the Charter—a document of approximately eleven pages that can be found on the Hunter College Senate’s website and on the table at the entrance to this lecture hall.

**Second.** When reading the Charter, note how it is structured. The first seven Articles concern the manner in which the Senate seeks to represent Hunter College as a whole. For example, it distributes membership according to percentages allotted to faculty, students, staff, and the administration. It designates terms of office for Senators and Senate leadership; it stipulates the role of Alternates in relation to regular Senators. We have reviewed this aspect of the Charter with an eye to making the Senate more representative of the current character of Hunter College. We will be suggesting some minor changes in the structure of representation. But these recommendations are likely to be controversial, as they directly concern the makeup of the Senate—who gets to be in and who not. For examples of the difficulties we need to address, note the following: graduate students comprise a larger proportion of Hunter, but they tend not to come to Senate meetings. Undergraduate students are well represented in the structure of the Senate, but their attendance of Senate meetings also is low. The effect of these realities may inhibit the Senate’s ability to act. Because of the inevitably controversial character of whatever our committee decides to recommend on the issue of representation, we plan to place our recommendations on the issue in our second set of amendments.
Third. Article VIII is the longest article in the Charter. It describes the makeup and functions of the Senate’s Committees. Since the Charter was last revised, in 2006, several new committees have become Standing committees of the Senate but do not appear in the Charter. Currently, the Senate has 18 Standing committees and 4 Select or Special committees. These committees have the responsibility to involve the Senate in college admissions policy; college budgeting; college planning, etc. While the leaders and members of these committees have all done their jobs well, committee functions have not always been exercised to their full potential. In our first set of recommendations, we aim to include the new committees in the Charter, remove those that have virtually disappeared, and enhance the operation of all the committees – without presuming to step on the actual work of the committees, which is best done by the committees themselves. After today’s meeting, we shall distribute recommendations that address the parts of the Charter devoted to committees, along with some technical changes designed to align Charter language with the actual institutional composition of Hunter College. Not long after, these recommended amendments will be made public and available to every segment of the college in what is called the “first reading” of any proposed amendment to the Charter.

Fourth. This leads to my fourth and final point, which concerns the stipulated procedures for adopting changes to the Charter. The Charter is very specific about how amendments to it may be made. ANY amendment requires THREE readings. What is the timetable for these readings? FOURTEEN DAYS BEFORE the FIRST READING of any proposed amendment, that amendment must be distributed in writing to all Senators. Thus, you will receive our first set of amendments by tomorrow mid-day, so their FIRST READING can occur at the Senate meeting of March 11. On March 11, we would like there to be discussion of any proposed amendment, but there will be no vote on any amendment. TWENTY-SEVEN days then must pass before the SECOND READING of any amendment. So any amendment initially presented on March 11 may have its SECOND READING on April 15, at which time the amendments can be amended and whatever is accepted as voteworthy is then voted upon. An amendment passes the second reading, according to the current Charter, ONLY IF 3/4 of the Senators present and voting approve the amendment. We plan to introduce a second set of amendments for their first reading on March 25 and a second reading on April 29. A THIRD READING is necessary for any amendment to become official, and it must take place in an initial meeting of the newly convened Senate— which typically is after May 14. This year, however, the first meeting of the new Senate is scheduled for May 13, so the Administrative Committee has called for a special Senate meeting on May 20. Then, whatever amendments in Set #1 and Set #2 have passed the Second Reading will be finally voted on for actual adoption. Approval of amendments at that meeting occurs if 3/4 of those present approve them by written ballots. Although the Committee on Charter Review has met regularly and worked diligently, the amendments presented in two batches this semester do not necessarily exhaust the amending process that we began about one year ago. The process is ongoing.

The Committee on Charter Review has tried to compose its recommendations in the leanest, clearest format. Obviously, anything we recommend to the Senate is something we would like the Senate to pass, and pass this semester. But what the Senate does with what we recommend is up to you. Thank you for your time and attention.”

Report regarding the response to the Periodic Review Report:

President Raab said the following:

“We received an excellent response from the accreditors for the Middle States Commission for Higher Education. This was the 5 year, mid-point review. I want to thank so many of you here and throughout the College who worked very hard for this report. This was an incredibly productive process, and was effective in representing the wonderful progress we have made in the last five years.
The respondents gave supportive feedback on the two major recommendations they made five years ago.

The first was that we had a strategic plan. They commended us on the quality of the plan and the way we had begun to implement it and used it to inform our decisions. They pointed to a number of examples: we created a research culture, we created interdisciplinary opportunities, we are working on partnerships to support College endeavors, and we are working together to support faculty research and student opportunities. We have been doing this while facing a number of challenges, including Hurricane Sandy. At the same time, we have been implementing CUNYFirst and the new Hunter Core Requirement.

The second major part of the feedback was on the progress we have made in assessment. There are two kinds of assessments that Middle States is focusing on: institutional effectiveness and assessment of student learning. Middle States recognized our progress in both areas. This was a culture change for Hunter College. We have all had to understand the challenges of assessment and accountability. We have embraced this and begun to implement it in many levels. There is still a lot of work to do, but we took a giant leap forward. The reviewers mentioned a few other things. Our enrollments and finances are strong. That is not the case in our sister schools. They found evidence that we are using our budget process to connect with our strategic priorities. They recognized the importance of private fundraising and our success in that area. They could see our priorities clearly and that we have backed them with the financial support needed to move ahead. This is an interesting change for Middle States because they had not talked about philanthropy and private funding before.

This alignment between planning and budgeting, focusing on student success, focusing on research, and our desire to be a community that communicates and includes many voices was recognized throughout the report.

We came through this challenging period with a report that reflects the sound condition that we are in. I thank all of you and invite you to give a round of applause to the person that made this all possible, Provost Vita Rabinowitz."

Provost Vita Rabinowitz presented her report. Below is a summary of what she said.

“I want to thank the community because this was, indeed, a community-wide effort.

We are delighted to be fully re-accredited, and that we don’t have to write progress or monitoring reports and to have a reprieve before our next evaluation, which is scheduled in 2018-2019. But as President Raab said before, there is still much work to be done.

I do hope you take the time to read the Periodic Review Report (PRR) and to look through the responses we received. I want to focus our attention on a few critical areas. We must get to work right now to achieve what we need to achieve and to get where we want to go. If we start now, we can do this right.

There are three recommendations in the commission’s response to Hunter College. In the world of Middle States, recommendations are not suggestions or observations - they are commands that we must respond to in our next Middle States action.

1. That we design and implement a College-wide assessment plan with input and support from Hunter College Senate and faculty, including adjuncts. The Senate Committee on Academic Assessment and Evaluation is considering such a plan. They are designing one. It will be presented for the body’s approval and there will be consultations. We have not had a fully approved, College-wide assessment plan in our history. The work there is ongoing. We need the support of faculty, adjuncts, and the Hunter College Senate.
2. We must demonstrate achievement of programmatic learning outcomes. We are all familiar with course learning outcomes. We now have to specify learning outcomes for all of our academic programs, whether they be majors, minors, and certificates, undergraduate and graduate, accredited programs and non-accredited programs. We need to specify the learning goals and specify where in the curriculum such goals are being addressed, and how we are going to assess our achievement of those goals.

3. Demonstrate the use of assessment information to improve teaching and learning. It is not enough that we make assessment. The question is what we do with the results when we have them. We can only hope we make needed reforms. Colleagues, many of us have been doing assessment for many years. No one is looking to interfere and punish or reward with this information. We hope you ask the questions and decide what to do amongst yourselves when you get the answers. This is what faculty driven assessment is, this is what Middle States calls for and this is what we support.

Design an implementation plan, demonstrate achievement of programmatic learning outcomes, and demonstrate the use of assessment information to improve teaching and learning.

In the meantime, Middle States has also issued new standards of excellence. No longer will we be held accountable for the 14 existing standards of excellence. Now there are 7 standards. But they have raised the bar on what assessment means and what assessment must take place. I will put out a spotlight on standard 5. Standard 5 Education Effectiveness Assessment says:

“Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution’s students have accomplished educational goals with their program study, degree level, the institution’s mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.”

Then the first Criterion says:

“Clearly stated educational goals at the institution and degree/program levels, which are interrelated with one another, with relevant educational experience, and with the institution’s missions.”

This is the first time that Middle States has called explicitly for institution and program level goals. As President Raab said, this compels us to begin an important conversation that many of you are already having. What are the goals of a Hunter College undergraduate education? What do we expect Hunter graduates to be able to do? What competencies, abilities, skills, knowledge do we expect Hunter graduates to have? We achieve these goals through general education, majors, minors, college options, elective credits, and the experience of being at Hunter College. We have the luxury of time to formulate these goals. We also have a lot of guidance because many great institutions are already busy with this work. We need to start now if an institution like Hunter wants to do this right and if we want to be successful in four years, when we write our next report.

I would like to give you a little more guidance on the skills and competencies Middle States is expecting us to be responsive to. They would like us to set goals with respect to oral and written competencies, oral and written communications, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competencies, and information literacy. Again, what goals we specify is up to us. That we specify the goals, that we suggest how we reach those goals within our curricula, and that we continually assess and improve our teaching to improve our student learning are non-negotiable. We will be talking about this for years to come. Middle States also requires, as an undergraduate liberal arts institution, we feature a curriculum that is of sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual inquiry, to
expand cultural awareness, global awareness, and global competency, and that we help our students make more reasoned judgments about the world.

We will begin this journey together. We can only move forward together. We will need the full partnership of the Hunter College Administration, The Hunter College Senate, academic departments and disciplines, and other units, such as the Office of Assessment and ACERT.

I will end by saying that while we did well in all the ways that matter, the state of institutional assessment and effectiveness is not where we want it to be. In 2009 when Middle States visited us, less than 20% of our departments had programmatic learning goals and were doing assessment. Five years late, in 2013, between 35% and 40% had programmatic learning goals and were doing some assessment. That is less than half. While professional schools are far head, they also need improvement.

We have a lot of work to do in the department and program level, and also as a college. Most of us are here because we treasure Hunter College. There are resources available. Let us learn together. We welcome your participation.”

Old Business: Report by the Ombudsman is in Appendix II.

New Business: Greetings from William Lim, President of the Alumni Association at Hunter College

“The Alumni Association has an ex-officio seat at the Senate. Some years we have been able to attend the Senate, and on some other years not. It is interesting to be able to come and see what’s going on in terms of governance. Going back to Middle States and assessment, I can say that college education is a prestige that students work very hard to earn. Enhancements to the curriculum and to student affairs that are deiced upon here have a direct impact on the alumni. Greater student satisfaction leads to happy alumni. Also, better educational outcomes, as relates to Middle States, have a direct impact on the perceived value of a Hunter College degree and its work force. On behalf of the Alumni Association, this work is valuable and is appreciated.

I also wanted to invite you to the Alumni Association luncheon, which is on May 16th. This is a Saturday. All faculty members are welcome to attend. This year, we will invite President Raab. We hope that she will attend.”

Due to the late hour, it was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Manu Bhagavan
Secretary
## APPENDIX I

The following attendance was noted from the meeting

(A)=Alternate, A=Attended, X=Absent, E=Excused

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Minutes  
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate  
25 February 2015

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<td>President, CLT Council</td>
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APPENDIX II

OMBUSDPERSON REPORT FOR FALL 2014

Concerns mostly centered around 5 main issues:

1. Academic Freedom, both from faculty and students
2. Grading Issues
3. Financial Aid Issues
4. Mistreatment of one sort or another, disrespect, miscommunication, breach of contract, bullying
5. Student Rights in Hearings

Contact methods: email, phone, walk-in.
Return visits: about ½ came back or communicated more than once.

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What I found:

Senior Auditors are NOT considered students. Most auditors do not know this until they have a problem. Only then is it clear that Student Rights do not apply to them although Student Responsibilities do.

Students are unclear about their Rights when it comes to charges of Plagiarism. They are, of course, given clear information AFTER they meet with the school’s Discipline Officer; but, going in, they are anxious and unsure.

Grade Appeals: Students are more knowledgeable about their rights when it has to do with Grade Appeals but they are afraid to file appeals if they are majoring in a particular discipline and the faculty member they will file against is in that discipline.

Mistreatment: Students often believe they are being treated unfairly by some faculty. This treatment, they believe, is based on race, gender or sexual orientation. Students are often not aware of their rights in relation to this.

Academic Freedom: Issues mostly have to do with governance or free speech issues.

Based on this small sample and my knowledge of how Hunter ‘works,’ I have discussed with the Administrative Committee the idea of reviving an earlier Council: Ombudsman’s Advisory Council (existed in 1977). I have asked Prof. Roseanne Flores in Psychology to head that Council. We will look at the general issues and make decisions that may result in referrals to certain standing Senate committees or informational links on an Ombudsman website. We would like to make Hunter a more user-friendly place for all community members.

Respectfully submitted,

Prof. Sandra Clarkson
College Ombudsman