

MINUTES
Meeting of the Hunter College Senate
1 March 2006

The 464th meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 4:10 PM in Room W714.

Presiding: Joan Tronto, Chair

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

Agenda: The revised agenda was adopted by unanimous consent.

Discussion with the University Dean for the Executive Office

Dean Robert A. Ptachik, University Dean for the Executive Office presented a summary of the process for the evaluation of President Raab. He said:

“I am here today to talk about the process by which the evaluation of President Raab will take place later this Spring. I cannot and will not get involved in any discussion of performance or the sense of the campus, but I am willing to make a brief presentation on the outline of the process. President Raab is in her fifth year as a President. As the Board guidelines call for evaluations by an external team approximately every five years, this is an appropriate time for that review to be done. The external review should also be seen in the context of a system of annual performance reviews. Currently each President at each College submits a set of goals and objectives in specified areas that that are discussed with the College. The College is evaluated on how closely they achieve those objectives. The President meets with the Chancellor every year to go over how she has done on those objectives and set objectives for the next year. So this external review is in addition to the annual reviews that every President goes through.

In terms of this particular review a team of four reviewers was selected based on nominations from the University Faculty Senate, from the Hunter College Senate, from the President, and from others at the Central Administration. The names of those four individuals will be made public by the President's office about seven or ten days before the visit actually takes place. The visit is scheduled for April 30th through May 2nd. The reason the names are not made public is that we have agreed with the people who will do these reviews that we will respect their privacy until an appropriate time. We do not want them to have to think about and be involved with this process until very soon before they actually come and do the review. The names will be made available to you in mid- to late April.

What the team will receive prior to the review is the following. First and probably the most important document they receive is a self-assessment written by the President. The self-assessment consists of three parts. The opening section is essentially a State-of-the-College, where the President believes the College is now, or a brief review of the last four or five years. The second section is an opportunity for the President to address the four major areas that the evaluation team will look at. Those four areas are the following: academic leadership, administrative leadership, the President's relationship with the college community, and the President's role outside of the college. In helping the President to respond to those four areas of concern the University's Vice-Chancellors have come up with a set of questions about specific issues that they would like the President to address under one of these four categories. That is the bulk of the self-assessment document. The last part is a vision for the next several years. Again, it is a general review of the State-of-the-College, a self-assessment of performance in four specific areas responding to targeted questions and a view forward. The team will receive that self-assessment in addition to other public documents that are pertinent to describing the College. They will receive your most recent Middle States Report, any strategic planning reports or other public reports, a

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set of budget information that the Central Office provides for people who need to understand the fiscal state of Hunter College.

The team will be in New York for two and a half days. The visit starts on a Sunday afternoon and will go through Monday and most of Tuesday. Besides a set of meetings here at the College, the team will meet with the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellors, and the representatives of the Hunter College community. The President will send to my office several weeks before the visit a suggested schedule for the team's visit. There will be meetings with faculty. The faculty is defined normally as department chairs and other elected faculty leadership. Each college has a different system of determining the elected faculty leadership, and I am sure that Hunter has a very clear system of identifying them. There will also be meetings with a group of students who will be the elected student leaders, a group of senior administrators, a group of middle managers who are essentially the higher education officers, the representatives of the classified staff, representatives of the building trades if that is appropriate, and finally people representing the alumni, the community, and, I guess in Hunter's case people who represent the Foundation Board. My office will send to the College, and the College will distribute to the general community a memo outlining this process. We will do that probably in early April so that you will know what the process should be.

When the team leaves we will ask them to write a report that they send to us within about two weeks of their reactions to the visit, again speaking about the four areas that I mentioned earlier – academic leadership, administrative leadership relations, the president's relationship with the college community, and relationship outside the college. That report will be made available to the President for her comments. She will write a letter reacting to that report. The report along with the President's letter will go to the Chancellor for his review. He will then distribute that report, the self-assessment, and the President's comments to the members of the Board of Trustees. The report will also be distributed to three other Vice-Chancellors, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the General Counsel, and the Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations. At the next appropriate board meeting, which in this case I am guessing will be the June meeting, the Chancellor will meet with the full Board of Trustees in Executive Session to discuss the report. So in essence that is the process that is followed in these reviews."

The floor was open for questions.

Professor Tamara Green asked the following question. She said:

"I wanted to know when we here at the College would see this report."

Dean Ptachik responded that the College would not see the report because it is a confidential document.

Professor Manfred Kuechler asked the following question. He said:

"You mentioned a set of questions that are put to the President for the President to answer in her self-assessment, which we also won't get, right?"

Dean Ptachik affirmed this.

Professor Kuechler made the following statement. He said:

"Are the questions available so that we at least know what these four areas are, how they are conceived? Let me be little bit more specific. I remember Chancellor Goldstein talking at various occasions very strongly about the importance of fundraising and I remember an article in the New York Times five or six years ago in which he was quoted as saying, maybe misquoted that, "fundraising is now the most important job of a College President." Where does fundraising come in and especially in view of the fact that we have a capital campaign going on which started, if I am not mistaken, about a year and a half ago? All colleges were supposed to submit a case statement at the latest by the end of last academic year, so how important is that fundraising in the whole business?"

116 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

117 "I don't know how to comment on that except to say that I believe fundraising would fit into one of
118 these four categories and would be addressed by the evaluation team."
119

120 Mr. Brian Gaun asked the following question. He asked:

121 "Does the evaluation team decide what is important to look at or is it something that is prescribed to
122 them?"
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124 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

125 "The evaluation team will be reviewing the President's performance in the four areas that I outlined, so
126 within those parameters the evaluation team will make assessments of the President's performance in
127 those four areas, but they are given a prescribed role in the process. It's not an open-ended review."
128

129 The following question was raised:

130 "I was just wondering what happens if the team finds that it is just not up to par as far as what they are
131 looking for. What happens then?"
132

133 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

134 "Essentially the team report is forwarded to the Chancellor, as I said. The Chancellor considers what
135 the team tells him and then enters into a discussion with the Trustees about the President's
136 performance. That is the way in which the information that the team gathers is forwarded to the
137 Chancellor and then eventually to the Board of Trustees."
138

139 Ms. Shira Hon asked: "How did they pick the evaluation members?"
140

141 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

142 "We invite nominations from various groups and we received a large number of nominations. The
143 guidelines that we use for selecting members of the evaluation team in my view come down to an abil-
144 ity to make a judgment as to the performance of a President. And in this case that gets translated into
145 someone who is or has been a campus executive, somebody who has essentially dealt with the same
146 kinds of issues as the President of Hunter, or LaGuardia, or City College, or Borough of Manhattan
147 Community College. Those are the four College Presidents who are being evaluated this year. Some-
148 one who can understand the issues, understand the reactions to the issues and understand how the
149 President has carried out his or her job. But the Chancellor makes the determination of the team. We
150 have four people who come in. The team can split up the work if necessary, split up the writing of the
151 report. Again, I cannot reveal the names, but four experienced university administrators will come to
152 this campus."
153

154 Professor Ines Miyares asked the following question. She said:

155 "I find it interesting that this is the parallel of self study and yet self studies are public documents,
156 middle states? And yet here is essentially a self study of a member of the community paralleling what
157 a department would do and yet we see no version of it as part of the college community. Why is that?"
158

159 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

160 "I would respectfully say it's not parallel to a self study; it's more parallel to a personnel review and
161 personnel reviews are more normally kept confidential."
162

163 Ms. Andrea Callard asked the following question. She said:

164 "Who writes the questions in the four specific areas and how do they flow towards the team?"
165

166 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

167 "The questions come essentially from the Vice Chancellors at the City University. There are Vice
168 Chancellors in seven or eight functional areas: Academic Affairs, Facilities, Budget and Finance, Legal

169 Affairs, Faculty and Staff Relations and so on. Each of those submit questions that address the issues
170 that those folks believe are most pertinent to the President of each individual college. The evaluation
171 team does not see the questions, the answers to the questions appear not in Q and A form but the
172 answers to the questions are addressed in the document that the President prepares that goes to the
173 team.”

174
175 Professor Roslyn Petchesky asked the following question. She said:
176 “I wanted to know in what ways members of our community, students, faculty, and staff are going to
177 have access to the committee and given that there has been a whole long and difficult debate about a
178 climate of intimidation in the college, what is going to guarantee that people will feel comfortable to
179 speak openly and truthfully? Will that be done in confidence, will that be done in a spirit of
180 reassurance - that there will be not be any kind of reprisals for speaking?

181
182 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:
183 “I can answer that in two ways. One is that some of the views of the members of the community will
184 be made known through their elected ah leaders or their representatives. On every review that I have
185 done there are members of the community who feel that they have a different message that needs to be
186 conveyed to the evaluation team. Evaluation teams have different ways of accepting this information;
187 this will be up to the team leader and the team members but people have invited emails, people have
188 invited letters, some evaluation teams have said that they want a period of an hour for people to drop
189 in and speak to them - that’s something that will essentially be up to the evaluation team. I can tell you
190 from reading evaluation reports confidentiality is maintained. The evaluation report will describe basic
191 findings; they will not attribute statements to anyone. They will not say that the Chair of the English
192 department conveyed the following. Again, these are people who have been on both sides of the issue.
193 These are people who are Presidents or have been Presidents and I think really respect the position of
194 the President and the position of the members of the community who want to express their views
195 confidentially.”

196
197 Mr. Brian Gaun made the following statement. He said:
198 “You said students would be involved in this process? Which students and how would they be
199 selected?

200
201 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:
202 “I don’t know the structure of the student government here but presumably there are elected student
203 leaders and I think that would be the first place that I would expect the students to come from. I don’t
204 know enough about Hunter College to know whether there are enough elected leaders or whether there
205 are other major student clubs or groups but they should be student representatives. They shouldn’t be
206 random students.”

207
208 Professor Manfred Kuechler asked the following question. He said:
209 “Who decides who the students are who will be talking to the team? Are you making the decision or is
210 the President making this decision?”

211
212 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:
213 “The President will transmit to us sometime before the visit the schedule for the team and I would
214 expect the makeup of the groups. If, for example, the middle managers don not agree that there is
215 appropriate representation in the middle manager group, they are free to let me know, and I will take a
216 look at it. But you know that 80th Street is not going to appoint the College representatives to meet
217 with the team. We cannot do that, and wouldn’t want to do it.”

218
219 Professor Claus Mueller asked the following question. He asked:
220 “Can you clarify that point? Are you telling us that the President can choose who makes up the present
221 elected students?”

222
223 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:
224 “I am saying that there should be a rationale. Normally, the rationale is that there are elected student
225 leaders who should meet with the team. What I am also saying is that I don’t know enough about the
226 Hunter student government. There may be a graduate student government, a day and an evening
227 government, for example, and each of those student governments have a President and two Vice Presi-

228 dents. In that case it may be appropriate for those nine students to meet with the team. I just don't
229 know enough about the structure at Hunter College."

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235 Professor Mueller then asked: "What if the President chose to disregard this structure?"

236

237 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

238 "Then I assume I will hear about it, and we will try to come to some rational solution. I am not assum-
239 ing that the structure is going to be disregarded."

240

241 Professor Sandy Clarkson asked the following question. She asked:

242 "I was interested to know if the committee is going to ask the faculty and other people that are discuss-
243 ing things about their view of the President's academic leadership, administrative leadership, relation-
244 ship with the college, role outside the college, and are they going to have any opportunity to comment
245 on her vision of what the College is? Or is that totally hers, and no one else is going to comment on
246 those areas?"

247

248 Dean Ptachik replied by saying:

249 "It is a little hard for me to answer that because at some point there are going to be the four members
250 of the evaluation team and a group of faculty, and they will go into a room and close the door and they
251 will be the only people there. Except when I was at Baruch College as a member of the
252 Administration, and I participated in the review of the President, I have never been in a meeting with
253 evaluators. Again these are experienced savvy people who will want to get as much information as
254 they can about what is going on at the college. I don't believe that they are going to have a fixed rigid
255 structure. I would think they would want to have a conversation and elicit as much information as they
256 can. But again I cannot speak for the individual team and how they will carry out the meetings."

257

258 Professor Bill Sweeney asked the following question. He said:

259 "With regard to the composition of the groups that will be involved in the review, I gather that the col-
260 lege community will get some report of what those groups are before the visit. In other words, if the
261 students don not feel they are represented appropriately, they will know what the student
262 representation is?"

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264 Dean Ptachik replied by saying: "I believe that is normally the case - that you would know."

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266 The Chair then thanked Dean Ptachik for his report, and the Senate expressed its appreciation by acclama-
267 tion.

268

269 **Minutes:** The Minutes of February 15th were approved by unanimous consent with the following corrections:

270

271 Lines 162-163 should read: "...true in the forum of elected chairs...and is chaired by President
272 Raab..."

273

274 Line 179 should read: "...rate and graduation rate..."

275

276 Lines 180-181 should read: "...students, recruiting and retaining...number of half-year full-pay
277 faculty sabbaticals..."

278

279 **Report by the** Professor Tronto presented the report as follows:

280 **Administrative**

281 **Committee:** Special Election to fill vacant seats on the Senate

282 In accordance with Article IV, 2. H. i & ii of the *Charter for a Governance of Hunter College*, the Admin-
283 istrative Committee presented the names of all nominees received:

284

285 Students: (23 vacant seats)

286 Michael Sternfeld (Undergraduate)

287 Ann Tran (Undergraduate)
288 Norie Manigault (Undergraduate)

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294 Sonia Parrales (Psychology)
295 Danilda Abrea (Sociology)
296 Shira Hon (Psychology/Sociology)
297 Linda Gao (ELA)
298 Jian Jiu Ren (Sociology)
299 Adina Davis (Undergraduate)
300 Joseph Crea (Undergraduate)
301 Lawrence James (Chemistry)
302 Ahmed Tigani (Theatre)

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304 **Faculty:** (9 vacant seats)
305 Lawrence Kowerski (Classical & Oriental Studies)
306 David Hodges (Anthropology)
307 Richard Stapleford (Art)
308 Trudy Smoke (English)
309

310 It was moved that the student nominees be declared elected. The motion was approved by voice vote with
311 one opposed..

312
313 It was moved that the faculty nominees be declared elected. The motion was approved by voice vote with-
314 out dissent.

315
316 Clickers were distributed to the newly elected senators.

317
318 **Report by the Charter Review Committee**

319 Professor Richard Stapleford, Chair of the Committee, presented the report dated 1 March 2006 for the
320 First Reading of the Proposed Amendments to the Charter for a Governance of Hunter College. The report
321 is attached as Appendix II.

322
323 The floor was open for discussion.

324
325 After discussion it was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote, and the
326 meeting adjourned at 5:25 PM.

327
328
329 Respectfully submitted,

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333 Stuart Ewen
334 Secretary

