

UFS Report for Lehman Senate April 2, 2025 meeting.

Lehman reps: Naomi Zack, David Manier, Steve Castellano

Agenda for UFS April 1 meeting**PROPOSED AGENDA**

The 447th Plenary Session
of The University Faculty Senate
of The City University of New York
Rooms 0818/0819

Tuesday, April 1, 2025
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes of February 25, 2025
3. Remarks by Senior Vice Chancellor Serif Soliman – 6:35 – 7:05 p.m.
4. Proposed Revisions to UFS Charter – Martin J. Burke – 7:05 – 7:15 p.m.
5. Proposed Resolution on Converting the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee to a UFS Standing Committee – Kenneth Gold – 7:15 – 7:20 p.m.
6. Nominations for Members-At-Large of the Executive Committee – Matthew J. Cotter 7:20 – 7:30 p.m.
7. Discussion of Recent Events at Hunter College – Sarah Chinn 7:30 – 7:40 p.m.
8. Chair’s Report – John Verzani – 7:40 – 7:50 p.m.
9. New Business – 7:50 – 8:00 p.m.

Social starts at 6:00 p.m. in Rooms 0818/0819

Committee meetings:

Academic Affairs – 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 1179

Academic Freedom – 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 0963

Community Colleges – 4:00 - 5:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 1179

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access – 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 1002

Library and Information Technology – 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 1002
 Status of the Faculty – 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 1102
 Student Affairs – 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 0962

PROPOSED MINUTES of Feb 25, 2025 Meeting

The 446th Plenary Session
 of The University Faculty Senate
 of The City University of New York
 Rooms 0818/0819

Tuesday, February 25, 2025
 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

UFS Chair Verzani called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Plenary was held in Room 818/819 at the Central Office, 205 East 42nd Street. 84 of the 140 voting members were present.

Baruch: Present – D’Souza, Ellis, Grein, Harel, Karama, Lee, Martell and Wine. Absent – Wymbs. Vacancies – 1. **BMCC:** Present – Belknap, Danison, Glaser, Keane, Oram, Wiseman and Alternate Meltzer. Absent – Comeau-Kirschner, Gonzalez-Urbina, Kelley, Littlefield and Lomask. **Bronx CC:** Present – Culkun, David, Fisher, Kaighobadi and Rothenberg. **Brooklyn:** Present – Cohen, Evans and Levy. Absent – Arnow, Bassell, Belyayeva, Kingan and Okome. **CCNY:** Present – Binz-Scharf, Davis, Kornhauser, Li, Mano, Peele and Stemberg. Absent – Jeruzalmi. Vacancies – 1. **CSI:** Present – Gold, Gruber and Verzani. Absent – LaMassa, Vachadze and Yuan. Vacancies – 1. **CUNY Law School:** Absent – Loehr and Sokkar Harker. **Graduate Center:** Present – Burke and Shirazi. Absent – Gorman and Riobó. Vacancies – 1. **Guttman CC:** Present – Medina. Absent – Philipose. **Hostos CC:** Present – August, Griffin, Trachman and Alternate Hasan. Absent – Worrell. **Hunter:** Present – Chinn, Clarkson, Troudt and Young. Absent – Chito-Childs, Dahbour, Dudek, Keating, Kenigsberg, Nicolai and Soyer. Vacancies – 1. **John Jay:** Present – Benton, Grant, Kimora and Narkunas. Absent – Carbonell, Domashevskiy, Kaplowitz and Thompson. **Kingsborough CC:** Present – Acosta, Aranoff, Eaton, Navarro, Segal and Stubin. Absent – Devany. **LaGuardia CC:** Present – Albrecht, Fernandez, Keyes and Klein. Absent – Fess, Mann and Sokolski. **Lehman:** Present – Alexander-Street, Castellano, Johnson, Wang and Zack. Absent – Bell, Manier and Vann. **Medgar Evers:** Present – Barker, Chevalier, Huggins and James. **NYCCT:** Present – Allahverdi, Bennett, Capruso, Coughlin, Zylstra and Alternates Andreescu and

Spellane. Absent – Gelman, Grujicic-Alatrisme and Rodriguez. **Queens:** Present – Naughton, Pagano, Pai and Swedell. Absent – Kumar, Lowry, Newman, Sullivan and Yearwood. Vacancies – 2. **Queensborough CC:** Present – Carroll, Cornick, Srivastava and Tai. Absent – Adair, Akpinar and Puri. **York:** Present – Chirico and Costley. Absent – Abbott, Lipkind and Sheidlower.

Governance Leaders present were: Barker (Medgar Evers), Burke (Graduate Center), Chinn (Hunter), Chirico (York), Cornick (Queensborough), Gold (CSI), Grein (Baruch) and Ialongo (Hostos). Guests Participating via Zoom were James Davis, President, Professional Staff Conference, Keith Landa, President, SUNY Faculty Senate and Candice Vacin, President, SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges. Members observing via Zoom were Akpinar (Queensborough), Belcher (John Jay), Carbonell (John Jay), Cohen (Brooklyn), Kaplowitz (John Jay), Kingan (Brooklyn), LaMassa (CSI), Loehr (CUNY Law), Sheidlower (York), Sokolski (LaGuardia), Soyer (Hunter), Sullivan (Queens) and Traver (Queensborough). FGL observing via Zoom is Toland (LaGuardia). Guests present were Eric Barenboim (Doctoral and Graduate Students' Council), Jonathan Hanon (John Jay), Linda Paradiso (School of Professional Studies) and Daniel Oscar, President & CEO of the Center for Supportive Schools. Guests observing via Zoom were Teresa Gray (Hostos), Renata Budny (NYCCT), Jody Clark Vaisman (CUNY BA) and Sandra Cheng (NYCCT). Executive Director Cotter, Administrative Assistant Pasela and Secretary Blanchard were also present.

1. Approval of the Agenda – After a minor adjustment by Chair Verzani (switching items 6 and 7), the Agenda was adopted as proposed.
2. Approval of the Minutes of December 3, 2024 – Adopted as Proposed
3. Remarks by Professional Staff Congress President James Davis – 6:35 – 6:50 p.m. – President Davis updated the body on the status of the CUNY contract, the Governor's proposed Executive Budget and its implications for CUNY, and a slate of recent deliberations and actions by the Professional Staff Congress related to academic freedom and freedom of speech and assembly; the current political climate in higher education and its relationship to various unsettling decisions emanating from Washington D.C.; and the Union's collaborative efforts with CUNY

students for greater operational aid for the University. With no time for questions or comments, he encouraged the UFS to email him directly.

4. Report by SUNY University Faculty Senate President Keith Landa – 6:50 – 7:00 p.m. – President Landa provided an overview of SUNY’s recent collaboration with CUNY on the Public Good U conference and its reception within the academic community. He also conveyed his concerns regarding recent distressing decisions out of Washington D.C. and their potential repercussions for SUNY in particular and higher education in general.

5. Report by SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges President Candice Vacin – 7:00 – 7:10 p.m. – After introducing herself, President Vacin gave a presentation on best leadership practices in the current political climate in America. She then gave an overview of the FCCC and her recent visits to SUNY’s many community colleges – all of which were geared towards strengthening shared governance.

6. Chair’s Report – John Verzani – 7:10 – 7:20 p.m. – Chair Verzani noted several administrative searches were either ongoing, immanent, or in the process of wrapping up and shall be announced shortly. He observed that there is UFS representation on the University Dean for Academic Affairs search and announced the likely departure of Assistant Vice Chancellor Kim Siegenthaler as well. He then announced that Prof. Barker will represent the UFS in conversations related to faculty promotion and tenure emanating from the recent COACHE survey and encouraged the body to reach out to her with any questions or concerns. He also noted several developments in research funding, capital investments, emergency funds, the rollout of CUNY’s new transfer initiative, and suggested some ways in which communication might be improved within the organization. He then outlined some of the recent and troubling decisions of the federal government and their potential impact on CUNY campuses, especially as they relate to student access, safety and success, and noted some of the anticipatory responses of the University to date. He also noted the potential harm to faculty and graduate student research by either cancelling federal grants or reducing their overhead/indirect costs, and observed some of the consequences of federal student aid considering D.C.’s recent fiscal decisions. He closed by conjoining potential federal decisions to reduce or eliminate several social welfare initiatives and the potential connections between

them and higher education in New York State, let alone the country. He then took questions.

7. Brief Reports from UFS Standing and Advisory Committee Chairs – 7:20 – 7:45 p.m. – Each of the chairs reported on their activities and deliberations thus far into the academic year, some of the administrative challenges they have faced, and some of their accomplishments. Some of chairs noted that they intend to follow up with the body in writing for publication on the UFS website. Prof. Burke brought before the body a couple of proposed changes to the UFS Charter for discussion.

8. New Business – 7:45 – 8:00 p.m. – Prof. Chinn expressed her concerns over student safety in the event of external law enforcement agencies appearing on campuses and hoped that CUNY’s senior administration might be more forthcoming in communicating protocols. Prof. Binz-Scharf observed some of the instructional challenges associated with the University’s protocols related to class scheduling, and Prof. Tai clarified for the body why this was the case, especially that CUNY’s scheduling reflects the New York City Department of Education. Prof. Fernandez updated the body on some of the recent discussions of the UFS Faculty Council to the Research Foundation.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew J. Cotter



CUNYUFS

<http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/cunyufs>

John Verzani | Chair

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February 27, 2025

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

William C. Thompson, Jr.
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
The City University of New York

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez
Chancellor, The City University of New York
205 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Governor Hochul, CUNY Board Chairman Thompson, and CUNY Chancellor Matos-Rodriguez:

We write to express concerns with the hasty process employed in evaluating the posted job offers for faculty recruitment at Hunter College. In what seemed like a New York minute, the story turned from a job posting, to outrage over its wording by some quick-to-criticize members of the public, to a rapid and unusual intervention by the Governor's office, to a statement of strong support of the Governor's actions by the University's Board Chair and Chancellor.

These developments resulted in two demands: that the job ad be pulled, which it was, and an investigation be launched into antisemitism in the Hunter College curriculum.

We believe the college leadership when it states, "Our current and future faculty are expected to be well-versed in all scholarship so they can dissect and debunk theories, not promote them."

The University Faculty Senate supports the AAUP in its characterization, "Academic freedom is the freedom of a teacher or researcher in higher education to investigate and discuss the issues in his or her academic field, and to teach and publish findings without interference from administrators, boards of trustees, political figures, donors, or other entities." The Board of Trustees has long-stated Policy 1.02, affirming its commitment to Academic Freedom as set out by the AAUP. It is our view that the removal of the position based on content area is a major breach of Academic Freedom.

The Honorable Judge Jonathan Lippman spent ten months searching for instances of antisemitism throughout the City University of New York. He found no systemic antisemitism at CUNY, though a one-off occasion of Zoom bombing at Hunter was noted. The Judge writes that faculty fell short in some disconnected incidents but made no claim that the curriculum throughout CUNY was troubling to him.

In particular, the Judge notes the need for experts in areas such as Palestinian Studies:

"As experts in areas such as history and political science, some faculty are perfectly equipped to conduct informative and peaceful discussions or debates with other faculty who express opposing views, and in the process model for students the value of communication and listening."

We place a great deal of weight on the Judge's conclusion: "that exposure to unknown and potentially uncomfortable ideas is a critical part of a fulsome education that students should hope to get at CUNY."

Sincerely,

Prof. John Verzani, Chair, University Faculty Senate
Prof. Victoria A. Chevalier, Vice Chair, University Faculty Senate

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate

Prof. Kathleen Barker
Prof. Wallace "Ned" Benton
Prof. Kerin Coughlin
Prof. Douglas Alberto Medina
Prof. Enid Stubin
Prof. Cynthia Wiseman
Prof. Jason Young

Chairs, Academic Freedom Committee of the University Faculty Senate

Prof. Beth Evans
Prof. Hollis Glaser