

Report for Lehman Senate meeting of February 5, 2025-- UFS Dec. 5, 2024 Plenary Meeting and Minutes of USF Oct. 22 Plenary, as posted. Submitted by Lehman USF reps: Naomi Zack, David Manier, and Stephen Castellano.

The 439th Plenary Session
of The University Faculty Senate
of The City University of New York
Rooms 0818/0819
Tuesday, December 5, 2023
6:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda Approval of the Minutes of October 24, 2023
2. Remarks by Senior Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance and Chief Financial Officer Sherif Soliman – 6:35 – 7:05 p.m.
3. Discussion of Proposed Letter to the Chancellor regarding Freedom of Expression Policy – 7:05 – 7:25 p.m.
4. Discussion of Budget Advisory Committee Resolution – Ned Benton 7:25 – 7:30 p.m.
5. Update on CUNY Transfer Initiative – Lubie Alatraste – 7:30 – 7:35 p.m.
6. Chair’s Report – John Verzani – 7:35 – 7:45 p.m.
7. New Business – 7:45 – 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., Room 1835

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

Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Access – 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., 42nd Street, Room 1072

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 962

Minutes

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. 64 of the 139 voting members were present.

Baruch: Present – D’Souza, Harel, Lee and Wine. Absent – Ellis, Frank, Martell and Wymbs. Vacancies – 1. **BMCC:** Present – Comeau-Kirschner, Glaser, McCarthy, Oram, Rose and Wiseman. Absent – Belknap, Danison, Gonzalez-Urbina, Lomask and Matarese. **Bronx CC:** Present – Fisher and Rothenberg. Absent – Ayikoye and Kaighobadi. Vacancies – 2. **Brooklyn:** Present – Evans, Levy and Alternate Klein. Absent – Arnow, Bassell, Belyayeva, Cohen, Hainline and Okome. Vacancies – 1. **CCNY:** Present – Binz-Scharf, Jeruzalmi, Kornhauser and Li. Absent – Peele and Stemberg. Vacancies – 3. **CSI:** Present – Gold and Verzani. Absent – Feola, Gruber, Vachadze, Wong and Yuan. **CUNY Law School:** Present – Sokkar Harker. Absent – Capulong. **Graduate Center:** Present – Burke, Shirazi and Alternates Gardner and Peters. Absent – Gorman, Riobó and Tournaki. **Guttman CC:** Present – Medina. Absent – Tesser. **Hostos CC:** Present – August, Trachman and Alternate Muñoz. Absent – Griffin and Worrell. **Hunter:** Present – Keating. Absent – Chinn, Chito-Childs, Dahbour, Dudek, Kenigsberg, Kuhn-Osius, Lazreg, Nicolai, Soyer and Young. **John Jay:** Present – Benton, Carbonell, Kimora and Narkunas. Absent – DeLorenzi, Grant, Kaplowitz and Thompson. **Kingsborough CC:** Present – Eaton, Navarro, Stubin and Alternate Segal. Absent – Acosta, Aranoff, Corby and Mattia. **LaGuardia CC:** Present – Albrecht, Fernandez, Klein and Sokolski. Absent – Feldman, Fess and Mann. **Lehman:** Present – Campeanu, Castellano and Zack. Absent – Alexander-Street, Castillo-Planas, Johnson and Vann. **Medgar Evers:** Present – Barker, Chevalier, Huggins and Toure. **NYCCT:** Present – Coughlin, Grujicic-Alatriste and Rodriguez. Absent – Bennett and Gelman. Vacancies – 3. **Queens:** Present – Naughton and Yearwood. Absent – Lowry, McElwaine and Pai. Vacancies – 6. **Queensborough CC:** Present – Adair, Akpinar, Cornick, Puri, Srivastava and Tai. Absent – Anderst, and Kuszai. **York:** Present – Barnes, Chirico and Costley. Absent – Abbott.

Governance Leaders present were: Barker (Medgar Evers), Burke (GC), Chirico (York), Gold (CSI), Grein (Baruch), Jeruzalmi (City) and Peters (GC). Guests present were: Sherif Soliman, Senior Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance and Chief Financial Officer, Jonathan Hanon (Doctoral and Graduate Students’ Council) and Dana Fenton (Lehman). Senators observing via Zoom were Abbott (York), Alexander-Street (Lehman), Anderst (Queensborough), Arnow (Brooklyn), Ayikoye (Bronx), Belknap (BMCC), Castillo (Lehman), Cohen (Brooklyn), Danison (BMCC), Gelman(NYCCT), Gonzalez Urbina (BMCC), Grant (John Jay), Gruber (CSI), Gulli (Kingsborough), Hainline (Brooklyn), Johnson (Lehman), Kaplowitz (John Jay), Kingan (Brooklyn), Martell (Baruch), Thompson (John Jay), Vachadze (CSI), and Yuan (CSI). Guests Observing via Zoom were Karen Bonsignore (NYCCT), Renata

Budny (NYCCT), Sebastien Buttet (Guttman), Beth Counihan (Queensborough), Randall Hannum (NYCCT), Valerie Esposito Kubanick (York), Marissa Moran (NYCCT), Linda Paradiso (SPS), Lesley Rennis (BMCC), Fabiola Salek (York), Rupam Saran (Medgar Evers) and Delia W. Gunpot (NYCCT). Executive Director Cotter, Administrative Assistant Pasela, and Secretary Blanchard were also present.

1. Approval of the Agenda – Adopted as Proposed
2. Approval of the Minutes of October 24, 2023 – Adopted as Proposed
3. Remarks by Senior Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance and Chief Financial Officer Sherif Soliman – 6:35 – 7:05 p.m. – SVC Soliman provided an overview of the University’s financial position based on its first quarter performance. He then outlined for the body the sources of CUNY’s considerable fiscal challenges and the various ways the administration proposes to address them, especially regarding campus-specific savings targets over the next few years. He also outlined a series of anticipated city and state budget cuts and how the University plans to absorb them and how it anticipates soliciting additional resources from Albany and the city itself. He then took questions and agreed to conduct a budget workshop for the Senate in the spring.
4. Discussion of Freedom of Expression Within the University – 7:05 – 7:25 p.m. – After providing some historical context, Prof. Chevalier presented the draft of a letter to the Chancellor requesting that CUNY act to strengthen the freedom of expression and academic freedom throughout the University, and to do so via the adoption, in the future, of a formal policy protecting them. A discussion ensued regarding potential modifications to the letter’s language and best practices moving forward.
5. Discussion of Budget Advisory Committee Resolution – Ned Benton 7:25 – 7:30 p.m. – Prof. Benton presented a joint resolution between our colleagues in the SUNY Faculty Senate and Faculty Council of Community Colleges calling on Governor Kathy Hochul to fully fund both systems. There being no quorum the body could not formally vote on the resolution.
6. Update on CUNY Transfer Initiative – Lubie Alatrisme – 7:30 – 7:35 p.m. – Prof. Alatrisme delivered a presentation on the progress of CUNY’s transfer initiative for faculty and administrators, and discussed some of the details regarding the initiative’s success and some of the challenges that remain. She also noted some of the proposed majors that will be affected by the new policy, and encouraged the body to visit the website for further details. She then took questions.

7. Chair's Report – John Verzani – 7:35 – 7:45 p.m. – Chair Verzani thanked the UFS staff and Profs. Stemberg and D'Souza for organizing a recent conference on Artificial Intelligence .He directed the body to the UFS blog and to reach out to Ms. Pasela should they be inclined to prepare one in the future.
8. New Business – 7:45 – 8:00 p.m. – There was no new business raised.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew J. Cotter

Resolution Urging Governor Hochul to Make New York State a National Leader in College Affordability

The Budget Advisory Committee of the UFS presented this resolution for discussion. The resolution was adopted as a sense of the body, unanimously, by the 64 members present.

WHEREAS Governor Kathy Hochul has already demonstrated how well she understands that in fulfilling their core academic missions, the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY) advance the public good by transforming students' lives and life chances and serving New York State and City as anchors of community, foundations for democracy, platforms for civic engagement, engines of economic development, pathways to the middle class and beyond, magnets for population growth and private investment, generators of creativity and innovation, and seedbeds for health and human flourishing; and

WHEREAS Governor Hochul has a historic opportunity in her SFY25 Executive Budget to make New York State and City national leaders in college affordability and in sustainably and equitably supporting and advancing SUNY and CUNY's missions; and

WHEREAS SUNY UFS has worked closely for many years with the SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges (SUNY FCCC) and the CUNY University Faculty Senate (CUNY UFS), and in alliance with the SUNY Student Assembly (SUNY SA), United University Professions (UUP), and the CUNY Professional Staff Congress (PSC-CUNY) in advocating for NYS to become a national leader in investing direct state aid in SUNY and CUNY's core operating budgets¹;

WHEREAS CUNY institutions have been making sincere efforts to fulfill their missions despite the mismatch between their resources and their obligations; and

RESOLUTION:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that CUNY UFS urges Chancellor Matos Rodriguez to work with Governor Hochul to craft an SFY25 Executive Budget that makes New York State and City national leaders in college affordability and in sustainably and equitably supporting and advancing SUNY and CUNY’s missions through the following means:

Direct State Aid

- putting an end to the era of annual real-dollar operating budget cuts to SUNY and CUNY;
- fully funding all negotiated contractual increases and other mandatory operating cost increases for all CUNY institutions;
- beginning to make each CUNY institution whole from the cuts in direct state aid to their operating budgets since the Great Recession

Indirect State Aid

- fully funding fringe benefits for all CUNY institutions,
- expanding financial aid eligibility and amounts for New Yorkers;

Capital Funding

- providing a multi-year capital plan to make each SUNY institution a safer, healthier, greener, and more accessible and engaging place to teach, research, live, learn, and work; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that CUNY UFS calls on all CUNY campus governance bodies, along with all friends and all other good-faith partners of SUNY and CUNY, to speedily pass resolutions aligned with ours, and in those resolutions to encourage their constituencies, in their capacity as citizens or residents of New York and/or supporters of public higher education, to urge Governor Hochul to make New York State a national leader in college affordability and in sustainably and equitably supporting and advancing SUNY and CUNY’s missions.

[¹ note: SUNY UFS Resolution [“195-02-1 New York State Fiscal Year 2025 Executive Budget Resolution](#)]