# Minutes of the 169th Meeting of the Faculty Senate

Thursday, December 14th, 2023 from 3:30 to 4:30 pm in person & virtually.

**Faculty Senate (FS) Members in Attendance**:

Neo Antoniades, Comfort Asanbe, Alan Benimoff, Heidi Bertels, Cynthia Chris, David Curcio, Christine Flynn Saulnier, Valerie Forrestal, Rosane Gertner, Kenneth Gold, Orit Gruber, Susan Holak, Yumei Huo, Burnett Joiner, Wilma Jones, Sylvia Kahan, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Timothy Lynch, Lisa Manne, Natalia Pankratova, Lee Papa, Michael Paris, Jonathan Peters, Greg Philips, Sarah Pollack, Susan Smith-Peter, Carles Solà Belda, Michael Steiper, Sarolta Takács, Thomas Tellefsen, George Vachadze, Mikael Vejdemo-Johansson, John Verzani, George Wang, Simone Wegge, Siona Wilson, John Wing, Mark Zdziarski.

**FS Members Via Zoom:**

Zaghloul Ahmed, Jason Bishop, Vandana Chaudhry, Soon Chun, Sharon Loverde, Don Selby, Sarah Zelikovitz.

**Guests In-Person:**

Chandan Acharya, Cheryl Adolph, Warrick Bell, Jessica Collura, Brian Cortijo, Andrew Diaz, Aleks Dudek, Emmanuel Esperance, Stephen Ferst, Hernan Green, Neila Green, Anusha Harris, Patricia Kahn, Luke Katz, Joseph Lacerra, Jackie Lamberti, Georgia Landrum, Michael Lederhandler, Maria Levine, Mark Lewental, Chase Licata, Susan Massara, Simon Reader, Tara Mastrorilli, Keith Pisons, Angelina Raio, Lisa Roe, Joanne Sagherian, Terri Sangiorgio, Donna Scimeca, Alex Scott, Carlos Serrano, Glenn Garbe Sheehan, Suzy Shepardson, Jessica Stein, Amy Stempler, Rosemary Vitale.

**Guests via Zoom:**

Manuela Alongi, Winsome Alston, Michael Anderson, Cesar Arena-Mena, Maria Bellamy, Sharon Cammarano, Thomas Chen, Barbara Cohen, Christine Cohen, Cheryl Craddock, Celeste Del Maestro, Veronica DiMeglio, Danielle Dimitrov, Clarissa Domingo, Jennifer Durando, Catherine Ferrera, Stephanie Gardiner, Julie Guerrero, Sheila Harris, Michael Hodge, Dalia Kandiyoti, Michele Karpeles, Jane Kisto, Koby Kohulan, Lisa Korchma, Lynne Lacomis, Tara Mastrangelo, Mary Murphy, Lillian Nicassio, David Pizzuto, Mary Quezada, Daphne Rene, Janine Scotto, Byron Taylor, Joyce Taylor, Brenda Valentin

Meeting called to order at 3:29pm by Chair Susan Smith-Peter.

I. Approval of the agenda.
   Motion from body to move voting on the Consent Agenda to Before the Executive Committee Report
   *Motion seconded, and passed. Amended agenda approved.*

II. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Senate of November 16th, 2023.
   *Moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*

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**Consent Agenda for December 14th, 2023**

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## A. DEGREE CHANGES
### Undergraduate
1. Department of Marketing
   a. Change in degree requirements: Business BS: Marketing
2. Information Systems and Informatics Program
   a. Change in existing degree: Information Systems and Informatics BS
3. Department of Management
   a. Change in existing minor: Entrepreneurship
   b. Change in existing certificate: Entrepreneurship
   c. Change in existing degree: Business AAS: Management
   d. Change in existing degree: Business BS: Management
### Graduate
4. Neuroscience Program
   a. Double Counting Policy

## B. NEW COURSES
### Undergraduate
5. Department of Media Culture
   a. Experimental Course: COM 3XX  Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Creativity
6. Department of Management
   a. New course: MGT 3XX Decision-Making and Negotiation
7. Information Systems and Informatics Program
   a. New course: ISI 3XX AI and Business Innovations
8. Department of Nursing
   a. Experimental Course: NRS 4XX Perioperative Nursing Care

## C. CHANGES IN EXISTING COURSES
### Undergraduate
9. Department of Management
   a. Change in existing course: MGT 110 Organizational Theory & Management
   b. Change in existing course: MGT 321 Production Management

    c.   Change in existing course: MGT 410 Business Policy
    d.   Change in existing course: EPR 201 Entrepreneurial Thinking and Practice I
    e.   Change in existing course: EPR 301 Entrepreneurial Thinking and Practice II

10. Department of Computer Science
    a.   Change in existing course: CSC 126 Introduction to Computer Science
    b.   Change in existing course: CSC 270 Introduction to Scientific Computing

## D. PROGRAM MODALITY CHANGES
### Graduate

11. School of Business: Department of Management | Program in Healthcare Management
    a.   Application for Distance Education: Healthcare Management MS

*Consent agenda moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.*

Point of order about allowing time for discussion, noted by the Chair.

    III.  Executive Committee Report: Appendix A.

    IV.  Provost's Report:

- Reminder to watch for end-of-semester emails from Susan Massara's office about grading, grading policies, and due dates. This is very important for re-enrollment.
- Re-enrollment up 9% (target was 3%)
- Thank you to faculty and staff for this success
- Graduate enrollment is lagging by about 9-10%
- Announcements about faculty accomplishments
- Danna Curcio was elected and has agreed to serve as interim chair of the Nursing department
- Dr. Carey Manifold has joined the school as Assistant Provost for Student Success (with a thank you and applause for Ralf Peetz's hard work in this role)

- Question about HERI survey: results will be released in March 2024
- Question about budget, with ensuing discussion on budget and enrollment.
- Request for guidance from Provost's office with tips for faculty encouraging enrollment, with ensuing discussion on student communication and logistical issues with registration.

    V.  Reports of the Committees of the Faculty Senate:
        a.   Academic Freedom Committee (Prof. Ashley Dawson): Appendix B

- Point of information from body about in-person exams possibly being allowed in asynchronous courses according to University Provost Wendy Hensel
- Discussion on academic integrity in online courses and the need for policies to address this

o Chair Susan Smith-Peter has asked the curriculum committees to create an ad hoc committee to work on developing guidelines for asynchronous teaching and they have agreed
- Discussion on CUNY Online and e-permits; CUNY has done a gap analysis to try to avoid campuses cannibalizing each other's programs

VI. University Faculty Senate Report (Prof. John Verzani) –

- Budget updates
- Need for freedom of expression policy
- CUNY IT conference presentation on AI vs Academic Integrity, along with a well-attended zoom workshop on AI in college and faculty governance

VII. Old Business –

VIII. New Business –

IX. Adjournment. Motion made, seconded, and passed unanimously at 4:29 pm

The issue of asynchronous pedagogy is an important one before the college now. At times it can seem that this is being presented as a modality that is basically the same as others, but it has its own challenges as well as strengths. The good thing about this is that scholars have done research on this modality and we can learn from that work, as well as the experiences of other colleges and universities in order to provide the highest quality education for our students, regardless of the modality. This may require new resources, such as a video lab for faculty to create their lectures. Hopefully this will be something the college will be able to support if it is found to be necessary.

Earlier in this month, Provost Steiper reached out to Ken Gold and me with a request to allow the liberal arts AA to be put forward to the state as an online program. This is in the usual sense of the term, meaning 50 percent or more online. The provost emphasized that this would not mean a difference in how it is delivered. We agreed on this basis, although having looked at research on asynchronous teaching and how less-prepared students struggle in it, I think it is important to continue to foreground other modalities. New college students need to learn how to be in college, and in person and synchronous online classes have been found to better serve these students in terms of retention and graduation.

As you have seen in the documents put forth for the meeting today, in the Academic Freedom Committee report is a call for creating guidelines for asynchronous classes. This is an exciting moment where we can learn from other scholars and peer institutions to create guidelines to make the best possible use of the asynchronous modality in terms of learning outcomes, rather than for other reasons.

At the meeting of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee with the provost and deans on December 6, we talked about these issues, as well as the need for curriculum matters to go through a governance process so that all interests can be considered.

We discussed the implications of the CUNY Online asynchronous-only program led by Wendy Hensel on intellectual property policy. Business Dean Susan Holak made clear that no separate contract was signed in the creation of the healthcare administration program and that it was under the auspices of the CUNY intellectual property policy. Based on what legal experts told me about the policy, it seems that CUNY faculty will retain their intellectual property in this case. This has also been explicitly affirmed by the School of Business in a memo that was included with the documents sent out for this meeting of Faculty Senate.

The provost outlined a new process for the awarding of honorary degrees, one that will involve input from the campus community as well as faculty governance. We agreed to this and welcomed the awarding of honorary degrees at commencement.

There was a discussion of what would happen when the new associate provost dealing with research takes up their job. At that time, a decision will be made about the redistribution of indirect funds.

- Susan Smith-Peter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair

Appendix B - Faculty Senate Draft Executive Summary Memo on CUNY Online (1 Dec 2023)

**Context:**

CUNY Online is an ambitious plan to develop more than a hundred new, fully asynchronous programs offering roughly 1,000 new courses over the next five years. Reasoning that fully asynchronous courses provide students with maximum flexibility, CUNY Online has identified time-constrained adult learners as the target audience for the large investment of funds driving the initiative. The goal is to fill the post-pandemic enrollment gap. CUNY Online promises not only on-demand courses but also significant support for students who take these classes, including financial aid, professional development and career services, mental health counseling, and one-on-one, around-the-clock advising. The initiative is directed by the Office of Academic Affairs at CUNY Central; this same office is also overseeing the university's transition to a new learning management system (LMS). All CUNY Online courses will use the new LMS. Plans for CUNY Online have been developed by external consulting firms like UPCEA and Alchemy, which are not accountable to CUNY students, faculty, or staff. CUNY Online has been funded with federal pandemic relief funds and with one-time funds from the state budget.

The Academic Freedom Committee plans to issue a longer report at the beginning of next semester. What follows are some key concerns we have identified in the research that we have undertaken.

**Concerns:**

- Student support:

    o The university has not yet made any evident investment to back up its promises of 24/7 support for students taking online courses.

    o There is thus far no consistent plan for students taking online courses to complete CUNY's General Education requirements. CUNY Online currently has no plan for cross-campus solutions to degree programs.

    o CUNY Online aims to recruit new students but has no declared plan for how to recruit back some of the tens of thousands of students who dropped out of CUNY during the pandemic.

- Pedagogical impact:

    o While asynchronous learning can be effective when done right, recent research has shown that being enrolled exclusively in online degree programs is associated with a significantly lower likelihood of finishing a bachelor's degree.

- There is little incentive for course developers to update materials created for asynchronous classes, leading to the danger that courses will quickly become outmoded.

- CUNY Online's massive investment in and promotion of asynchronous courses as the primary mode of online learning may impact how we serve the students we already have. These potential impacts are broad, and include workload definitions, the role of academic support units, the configuration of the new LMS, and access to library resources, among others, each of which will have to be redesigned to serve a potential influx of students whose primary reason for enrollment is guaranteed flexibility.

- The committee asks for the creation of guidelines for the best use of asynchronous teaching that incorporate research and experience. There should be participation from CSI's curricular committees on this matter.

- Intellectual Property and Academic Freedom:

  - At present, CUNY faculty benefit from extremely strong rights to Intellectual Property created through their research. These rights are enshrined in CUNY's Intellectual Property Policy and in Appendix M of the Contract.

  - It is not yet clear how CUNY Online will affect these rights. Who will own the materials created for CUNY Online? Who will have access to these materials for teaching? Who will be able to revise the materials?

  - In the current context of clampdowns on Academic Freedom, how will the right of faculty to teach materials in their area of expertise – no matter how controversial - be safeguarded in CUNY Online programs?

- Working Conditions:

  - CUNY Central has been developing CUNY Online at maximum speed and with little consultation and transparency. This contravenes expectations of collective bargaining in each of the pillars of university labor.

  - CUNY Online will undoubtedly impact policies and expectations around working conditions, including workload, academic governance, academic support, continuing faculty oversight over the curriculum, resource allocation, and the freedom to teach. Nonetheless, there has been little communication from CUNY Central about the sweeping impact of CUNY Online.

- o Who will teach and update CUNY Online courses? What is to prevent CUNY Online from leading to a vertiginous increase in the number of precarious instructors at CUNY?

- CSI-specific concerns:

  - o The CUNY Online website lists some CSI programs which predate the initiative, and which are synchronous. It is difficult to tell these apart from the newer, fully asynchronous programs.

  - o How many courses at CSI are currently being taught as fully asynchronous? How are decisions made about the scope of that modality? Can (and should) departments make that decision on their own?

  - o What are our existing retention rates, and is there a way of comparing retention for online/async vs face-to-face? What are success rates for students in fully asynchronous classes at CSI? The AF committee requests that Tara Mastrorilli be instructed to gather information comparing synchronous and asynch retention rates.

  - o What kind of funding is CUNY Central providing, and how long will it last? Is this program expected to be self-funded from tuition dollars? CUNY Central has a tendency to set up programs, and let the campuses support them. CSI gets much less support, so who will be paying for CUNY Online in future years?

  - o Nationally, the proportion of college students enrolled in exclusively online degree programs increased from [6.3% in 2012](#) to [23.4% in 2020](#). This obviously puts pressure on CUNY to compete in providing an online option. Nonetheless, we must not forget that our competitive advantage is our location, our proximity, and our human relationship to the community.

Sources:

- CUNY's [Intellectual Property Policy](#)

- [Appendix M of the Contract](#) ("Payment for Defined Projects through Stipends")

- *Clarion* articles concerning CUNY Online: [Penny Lewis](#) & [Luke Waltzer](#)

- University Faculty Senate blog posts by John Verzani from [May 2023](#) & [Nov 2022](#)

- Carnegie Foundation [report on CUNY community colleges](#)

- [Scholarly article on creativity](#) in asynchronous online discussions