

Minutes of the One Hundred and Sixty-Fourth Meeting of the College Council
Formed on November 14, 2002

Date: Thursday, May 16, 2024, 2:30pm – 3:25pm

Location: 1P-119 & Zoom Meeting

CC Members in Attendance

Zaghloul Ahmed, Comfort Asanbe, Warrick Bell, Alan Benimoff, Jason Bishop, Vandana Chaudhry, Cynthia Chris, Andrew Colbeck, Danna Curcio, David Curcio, Deborah DeSimone, Glenn Garbe Sheehan, Christine Flynn Saulnier, Valerie Forrestal, Kenneth Gold, Hernan Green, Patti Gross, Roshen Hendrickson, Michel Hodge, Susan Holak, Burnett Joiner, Wilma Jones, Patricia Kahn, Catherine Lavender, Alfred Levine, Michael Levitas, Timothy Lynch, Lisa Manne, Mary Murphy, Michael Paris, Lee Papa, Ralf Peetz, Jonathan Peters, Greg Philips, Sarah Pollack, Alex Scott, Don Selby, Suzy Shepardson, Susan Smith-Peter, Carles Solà Belda, Michael Steiper, Thomas Tellefsen, John Verzani, Robert Wallace, Simone Wegge, Siona Wilson, John Wing, Mark Zdziarski, Sarah Zelikovitz.

CC Members Via Zoom

Thomas Chen, Clarissa Domingo, Gene Fellner, Yumei Huo, Mark Aaron Polger, Mark White, Cindy Wong.

Guests In-Person

Cheryl Adolph, Michael Anderson, Karen Arca-Contreras, Maria Bellamy, Jennifer Calvra, Sharon Christian, Jessica Collura, Brian Cortijo, Lynne Curbelo, Rafael de la Dehesa, Nina Del Gatto, Michael Dreher, Aleks Dudek, Valkiria Duran-Naruki, Jennifer Durando, Emmanuel Esperance, Katrina Fama, Stephen Ferst, Linda Goffin, Neila Green, Danielle Hunton, Steven James, Marianne Jeffreys, Anna Lambert, Jacqueline Lamberti, Michael Lederhandler, Mark Lewental, Carey Manifold, Susan Massara, Tara Mastrorilli, Magalie Pantermarakis, Laxmi Ramasubramanian, Terri Sangiorgio, Donna Scimeca, Jessica Stein, Amy Stempler, Rosemary Vitale.

Guests via Zoom

Anjail Ameen-Rice, Marta Cabral, Barbara Cohen, Linda Conte, Cheryl Craddock, Celeste del Maestro, Catherine Ferrara, Stephanie Gonzalez Allen, Doriann Hyland, Michele Karpeles, Jane Kisto, Koby Kohulan, Lisa Korchma, Lynne Lacomis, Thomas Lauria, Marie Levine, David Maxon, Ananya Mukherjea, Edward Patri, David Pizzuto, Angelina Raio, Anna Romano, Janine Scotto, Joyce Taylor, Brenda Valentin.

- I. **Approval of the proposed agenda** – approved with no changes
- II. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting** – approved with no changes
- III. **Executive Committee of College Council Report – Kenneth Gold**

The Executive Committee met with President Lynch, Provost Steiper, and Chief of Staff Collura on May 7 for its monthly consultation.

Our conversations about commencement continued to be satisfactory. The week before, President Lynch met with Susan Smith Peter, Jason Bishop and me to discuss some potential precautionary measures for commencement day in light of the disruptions occurring elsewhere. I would characterize these measures as either banning certain actions or scaling back on the commencement plans and to be fair, President Lynch was engaging in due diligence rather than advocating for any particular steps. Susan, Jason and I were in agreement that no restrictions were worth enacting since they were likely to impinge on freedom of expression and would be impossible to enforce without considerable disruption. At our subsequent consultation with the president, he indicated that he was not planning on taking any of the steps we had discussed with him. I commend President Lynch for both engaging in meaningful consultation with faculty and for reaching reasonable conclusions. We did encourage him to have public safety game out potential scenarios that might arise and prepare in advance a plan of response, including under what hopefully very limited circumstances the NYPD would be called in.

We sought clarity on the ID carrying policy and learned that this was already in place and that as a best practice, CUNY had advised reminding campus communities of the policy's existence.

We encouraged President Lynch to consider undertaking important communication to the College community regarding commencement, the defunding of the shuttle, and the appointment of a Provost.

Based on reports we had heard from some department chairs; we inquired about changes to course modalities made unilaterally in 1A. The Provost assured us that no such practices took place, which leaves us with the summer task of better understanding this discrepancy on the matter. The Provost also informed us that 75% of fall courses are in person, and we noted that final decisions about running a section should consider modality since often online enrollments are stronger, but such sections do not serve other interests of the College.

We spoke of some enrollment trends regarding E-permits, graduate student numbers, and competition from online programs. We learned that the drop in E-permit requests may be a trend of just certain departments such as Economics. I encourage you to look at the Enrollment dashboard, which shows that overall we are at a slightly slower pace than last spring, primarily in the registration of new and not continuing students.

Finally, we broached the possibility of obtaining some resources for faculty governance after learning that it was the norm for most other CUNY campuses. Knowing the budget situation and the zero-sum nature of any allocation, we did so hesitantly and mostly to bring attention to a matter that is not immediate but is worth considering in the long run.

I want to close by noting a couple of things. Number one, and I just learned that Neila Green is retiring, and the word is that she has been here since the 1970's. We cannot imagine the impact Neila has had in the many areas in which she has worked, most notably in her time at the registrar's office, including as the Registrar. She has always been a pleasure to work with, a valued colleague, and I know I will miss you, Neila. We wish you the best in your retirement.

Secondly, today almost marks the end of my term on the College Council Executive Committee, along with Cynthia Chris, Simone Wegge, and Wilma Jones. I want to thank them, along with Mary Murphy and Susan Smith Peter whose terms continue for another year, for the service they have performed on the College's behalf. We will hold elections at the September meeting in the Fall of 2024. Until then, I hope to see you at commencement and wish you a wonderful summer.

IV. President's Report – Timothy Lynch

President Timothy Lynch began his report by announcing that the provost will be presenting 2,040 candidates for conferral of degrees for the Faculty Senate's approval. He emphasized that over 2,000 students would not have made it across the stage, metaphorically, without the assistance of everyone in the room, including many who were not here. For this he extended gratitude to all for getting 2,000 more students to become a College of Staten Island and CUNY alumni, acknowledging the hard work placed into making sure students realized their potential and their dreams.

Next, President Lynch mentioned several activities that he will be attending to celebrate various subgroups of the graduating class of 2024. These included the Lavender celebration; student veterans' commencement; hooding ceremony for Physical Therapy students; and a pinning ceremony for nurses much later in the year. He noted that all of these had added much excitement to his May calendar schedule.

On budget matters, President Lynch stated that we were in the 4th quarter of the fiscal year and that CSI continues to be on a positive trajectory. He noted that we were well on our way to meeting our savings target and anticipated ending the fiscal year in a position 40% better than we had anticipated. At the start of the fiscal year, we were projected to end with a budget deficit of \$8 million. We are right now projecting to end the year with a budget deficit of \$5 million. He expressed his thanks, again, to everyone for all their hard work in contributing to the reduction of the deficit; with much of this work being seen in the increased enrollment and increased student retention numbers.

President Lynch also provided an update of surveys that had been conducted. He mentioned that the provost and his team held several town halls regarding the COACHE faculty satisfaction survey. The analysis of the staff satisfaction survey, which included adjunct teaching faculty, conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) had recently concluded. A pair of town halls will be scheduled in June to share results and recommendations of the task force.

Last, but not least, President Lynch mentioned several projects that will take place in summer 2024. They included: the renovation of a dozen teaching labs with new technology; the redesign of the CSI website, which will include a chat bot feature; the renovation of two dozen student lounges in the academic buildings; updating of water filter stations to have new water filtration systems, including water coolers and water fountains (thanks to Student Government Association); the repaving of parking lots; and more. He was certain that we would find a much more attractive and enhanced teaching and learning environment upon our return to campus in August. He added that despite a sizable budget deficit, austerity is nowhere to be seen on this campus as we were making investments in our teaching and learning environments, in our students, and in ourselves.

President Lynch concluded his remarks by saying that he had appreciated everyone's suggestions and contributions to making this academic year successful and, more importantly, to getting 2,000 students across the stage.

Q&A

A question was asked about the status of the Provost search. President Lynch stated that the CUNY Board of Trustees was to meet on May 20, 2024, at which meeting he anticipated that they would approve the appointment of Dr. Michael Steiper as the permanent Provost and Senior Vice President for

Academic Affairs. He added thanks to both Interim Vice President Hodge and Professor Smith-Peter for their work in co-chairing the committee that reviewed a pool of applicants from a national search.

Another question raised was whether CSI could present CUNY with a 4-year budget plan which would help distribute savings (from budget cuts) over the years, and thus persuade CUNY to ease up a bit. President Lynch responded that they have been engaged in conversations with CUNY to do something similar.

Another question was asked about the status of the strategic plan. President Lynch stated that each of the working groups had submitted their drafts. Over the summer, he, along with other vice presidents, would be reviewing and finalizing the document which he expects to be brought to this body for a vote in the fall.

Another question sought to know when the 4-day work week would commence for HEOs and other staff members. President Lynch responded that, to date, he had yet to receive yet to any information about this from the university. He was certain that the information would be shared via HR as soon as it was confirmed.

Another question raised had to do with the language at the end of the email from the Office of Public Safety on 4/30/24 which stated that:

Action may be taken against any and all persons who have no legitimate reasons for their presence on any campus within the university/college, or whose presence on any such campus obstructs and/or forcibly prevents others from the exercise of their rights or interferes with the institution's educational processes or facilities, or the rights of those who wish to avail themselves of any of the institution's instructional, personal, administrative, recreational and community services.

The member asking the question stated that such a policy gives the college a great deal of power to consider whatever is "obstruction" is, whatever is exercise of right, with the understanding that the exercise of right of the 1st amendment is also an exercise of right. How can one challenge this policy that is so broad?

President Lynch responded that this language was from the Henderson Rules (Code of Conduct). He also added that Chairperson Gold had addressed this earlier. This message was a reminder of the existing policy [Henderson Rules] and it was shared as best practice that individuals who are utilizing the resources of the campus should have their CSI or CUNY IDs on them. This was in the wake of campus protests at both City College and elsewhere. And there has been to my knowledge no time when any public safety officer on this campus has requested such documentation, but we are just asking that you have it available for your own.

Chairperson, Kenneth Gold, added that he was aware that the University Faculty Senate (UFS) might have a perspective on this issue. Gold acknowledged John Verzani from the floor, who shared that the UFS had just passed a resolution seeking help from the Chancellor and Board of Trustees to work on a Freedom of Expression policy that would require a rewrite of the Henderson Rules. There was an attempt to do so in 2016, but the resolution was not accepted then.

V. Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report – Jason Bishop

As part of our contract campaign, a protest has been organized for Monday, May 20th at 4pm outside of CUNY Central (205 E. 42nd St.), where a CUNY Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled to take place.

And related to our contract struggle, I want to point out that, at yesterday's bargaining session, the PSC demanded that CUNY include their proposed changes to the bylaws as part of negotiations. This comes, in part, as the result of all the organizing around this issue done by faculty and staff across CUNY (including here at CSI) and especially by our governance leaders (including here at CSI). As a reminder, CUNY is proposing changes that would undermine the roles currently played by department chairs and faculty governance. This includes limiting faculty leadership's decision-making power with respect to scheduling, to academic hiring, to reappointments, and to appointments—i.e., decisions about tenure and promotion. The PSC sees these proposed changes to the bylaws to achieve what they have previously tried to achieve by bargaining for the removal of department chairs from PSC representation altogether—to weaken the role played by the faculty in our strong shared governance system. If you are a department chair, you should have received an email about this and other issues from the PSC leadership yesterday.

I also want to congratulate the whole campus on a successful, lively, and inspiring Undergraduate Conference on Research, Scholarship, and the Arts. Congratulations also goes to Assoc. Provost Laxmi Ramasubramanian, whose office is responsible for organizing that event.

Finally, I want to highlight the contributions of two long-time and valued PSC members. The first is our Director of Academic Advisement, Jennifer Durando, who plays a critical role in helping our students find their way to the classes they need to be in, and therefore helping us bounce back from our enrollment and retention crises. And I also want to thank Lynne Lacomis, who does many things for this college, but I want to highlight especially the important role she just played in that very successful undergraduate conference I just mentioned—thank you for your work, Lynne!

On behalf of the chapter leadership, I look forward to seeing you all at Commencement. And, of course, I wish you all a restful and productive summer!

VI. Report from the Administration – Cheryl Adolph, Interim Executive Director of Institutional Advancement and of the CSI Foundation

Cheryl Adolph's report, on behalf of Institutional Advancement and the CSI Foundation, focused on fundraising and alumni outreach efforts over the past year. These efforts include: the Annual benefit that raises unrestricted operating support for the college (raised \$100,000.00); CUNY Giving Tuesday Campaign that transitioned into the Season of Giving (raised \$189,893.00, 5th in CUNY); Class gifts (raised \$3700, to date); and the soon-to-be-launched End of Fiscal Year campaign.

She reported on the CSI Foundation's endowment, which stood at \$22 million, to date (a \$4 million increase over last year's amount). Over the last four years, the Foundation's board has voted annually to award \$484,000.00 for scholarships and \$250,000.00 for College Support.

Institutional Advancement was also successful in attracting support from Northfield Bank, Amazon, National Grid, ConEdison, and several endowed scholarships. Alumni Relations has also been successful in increasing connections between CSI and its alums through events such as the CSI Pathfinder

Mentorship Program, Alumni mixers, the CUNY-wide Virtual Career Networking, and the CSI Friends and Family Day.

She thanked members of her team for helping her pull this report together, including Jacqueline Lamberti, Deserie Bebe, and Michelle Calahan. The slide presentation of this report is attached.

VII. Reports of the committees of the College Council

a. Committee on Organization – Warrick Bell

Warrick Bell gave a report on committees that have received very few nominations, as well as departmental representatives that are expiring. He will send out the nomination forms by the end of the week for committees that remain with vacant seats.

b. By-Laws Committee – Kenneth Gold

Kenneth Gold briefly stated that members of the college council should have received an email with a link to the referendum on the By-Laws. The changes to the By-laws were minor cosmetic but symbolic and have been presented to this body twice over the past year. We have a threshold of 30% of votes for the referendum to pass.

c. Administrative Review Committee – No report

d. Institutional Planning Committee – Timothy Lynch

President Lynch mentioned that the IPC committee met on April 19, 2024. Among the items discussed were: a review of and approval of a bachelor's degree in nursing; a discussion of an associate's degree in human services; an update on the strategic planning process; a lengthy conversation on college plans for the ferry shuttle; and plans for the CSI St. George campus.

e. Budget Committee – No report

f. Facilities Committee – No report

VIII. Student Government Report – No report

IX. Higher Education Officer Steering Committee Report - Suzy Shepardson

Thank you to everyone for all the collaborative efforts that were undertaken this year to make it a success!

- Make sure to submit your nomination forms for the governance committee vacancies—the official deadline is 5pm on 5/17/24. Participation matters, whether as regular members or alternates, as that keeps the business of the College moving forward.
- Please vote in the by-law referendum as well: the proposed updates have been in the works for a few years now, and the committee is interested and invested in moving forward with the next round of potential revisions.

- The HEOSC was excited to see the resumption of school visits to the Center for the Arts, summer camps for sports and academics, and other activities that had to stop during the pandemic and the mandatory restrictions on group events. We were interested in learning more about the loss of income and budgetary impact due to these closures (especially the inability to rent out space in 1P) and welcome the chance to collaborate in conversations about rental expansion opportunities to generate revenue.
- While we are taking the summer off from our regular meetings, we are still around to assist with HEO questions and concerns. If you need a HEO, you can always find one!

On behalf of the HEO Steering Committee, I wish everyone a summer of rest, renewal, research, and success with enrollment activities!

X. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – Robert Wallace

Robert Wallace reported on new projects by Auxiliary Services to raise revenue for the College. Departments in the School of Health Sciences have been the first to take advantage of the Pop-Up Store which offers personalized CSI gear to show your pride. To date over 160 have been sold. Anna Lambert of Dolphin Services is ready to work with any department who is interested. General CSI t-shirts and sweatshirts remain available in 3A, where students were picking up their caps and gowns. Second, Dining services will be reviewing their menu and will be sending out a survey to students. Jodi, the Director of Dining Services, takes the results seriously and will consider all suggestions. Third, parking lots will be repaved this summer (1A, 2A, and Lot 7). Robert Wallace took the opportunity to respond to Suzy Shepardson’s mention about 1P in her report stating that the income revenue for the Center for the Arts (1P) was routed through Auxiliary and he promised to include that information in a presentation later in the year.

Q&A.

A member asked whether the pile of dirt by 1N which has been there for a long time, will be removed by September. Rob Wallace responded that it was part of the sidewalk construction, and it should be gone by September.

Another member asked about the arrival date of the School of Health Sciences’ apparel. Rob Wallace mentioned that the consignment had just arrived that morning, and he again displayed a t-shirt from Physical Therapy that he had in hand.

XI. Old Business - None

XII. New Business

Cynthia Chris, co-curator of the Art Gallery, announced today’s opening of new exhibition, “Threaded Connections: Unraveling the Internal.” This is a group exhibition that featured the BFA Senior Projects of the Performing and Creative Arts Department at the College of Staten Island/CUNY. The exhibition will remain open through May 23, 2024.

Wilma Jones, Director of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development, gave a brief update on the transition to Brightspace. Highlights included: a) Blackboard courses from the past two years have already been migrated to Brightspace accounts for all faculty; b) Brightspace will be launched on January 2, 2025; c) Lights out for Blackboard on December 31, 2025 (giving everyone a whole year to resolve grade issues and other matters); d) Schedules of trainings by CUNY on Brightspace will be offered in summer 2024 and throughout the fall; and e) CSI will provide informational sessions in October 2024, to be followed by drop-in and virtual sessions in November 2024 and onwards. Additional sessions in the evenings and weekends will be offered in February and March 2025.

Respectfully submitted by Wilma Jones
Secretary, Executive Council of the College Council