

**Queensborough Community College  
Academic Senate**

To: Kathleen Villani, Secretary, Steering Committee  
From: Dr. Rosemary Iconis, UFS representative, for QCC  
Date: 27 September 2006

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**The 321<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the University Faculty Senate  
The City University of New York  
Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2006, 6:30 p.m.**

The membership was welcomed by the President of the Graduate Center, Dr. William Kelly.

**Chancellor's Report.**

Chancellor Goldstein elected to conduct a Q & A in lieu of making a statement. Topics of the Q & A included:

1. The replacement of the President of CSI
2. The potential dissolution of the 2 yr. program at John Jay College
3. The reduction in the number of African-American students at certain 4 yr. CUNY colleges (Hunter, Baruch & CCNY)
4. The Collegiate Learning Assessment Test – the degree of involvement of central administration and the benefit to CUNY
5. The case for re-introducing remedial courses at the senior colleges
6. The expectations of faculty working under the 7 yr. tenure clock versus the 5 yr. tenure clock
7. Freedom of faculty to express views opposing those of the administration without fear of retaliation
8. Subjective standards used by P & Bs when judging un-tenured faculty

**Report of PSC President**

1. President Bowen briefly addressed implementation of the contract
2. Reassigned time and sabbaticals
3. Improving the dental plan
4. Policy issues (Academic Freedom, Use of Computer Resources)

President Bowen took questions from the body regarding:

1. Implementation of sabbaticals
2. Quantifiable criteria for tenure track faculty

**Approval of the Minutes**

**Chair's Report** (given in written form as follows)

## **The UFS Chair's Report for the 332nd Plenary Session of the University Faculty Senate 9-26-06**

### *Natural Science Doctoral Programs*

Last year the Chancellor commissioned a report on the science doctoral programs, headed by Robert J. Silbey, the dean of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's School of Science and a Brooklyn College alumnus. The doctoral programs of interest include Chemistry, Biochemistry, Biology, and Physics. This document, the Report of the External Committee on Doctoral Education in the Sciences at The City University of New York, is posted at <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/chemistry/reports>.

The preliminary discussions that followed it have generated a response, called a "Report of the Meeting of some members of the Council of Research Deans, Executive Officers in the Sciences, and Co-Chair of the Discipline Council in Biochemistry, Biology, Chemistry and Physics" on June 2, 2006, which is posted at <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/chemistry/reports>. One item in that response is the request that the science doctoral program EO's be invited to take part in the deliberations of the Task Force that is described below.

Chancellor Goldstein and Executive Vice Chancellor Botman convened a Task Force to recommend ways to implement a restructuring of the natural science doctoral programs. That Task Force, assisted by University Dean of Research Gillian Small, has met twice and has formed subcommittees to examine various parts of the proposed restructuring. The Task Force contains one Executive Officer (Lesley Davenport of Biochemistry), science faculty members, and various administrators, including Graduate Center President Bill Kelly and is attended by Lehman President Ricardo Fernandez. One goal is to provide a high level of support to 80 incoming doctoral students each year. In the new model, "programs at specific campuses will be given joint degree status so that students who graduate from a specific college would get a joint degree (for example, a degree in Biology from Hunter College and the Graduate School of CUNY)." A model discussed was for college presidents to commit to supporting these students after their first year in the program.

Proposals that come out of this Task Force are to be presented to the Graduate Council (which is the faculty senate of the Graduate Center). I will expect that the proposals will also be presented to the Senates of the affected colleges and the UFS. In this context, you may recall that the Council of Faculty Governance Leaders last year passed a resolution naming the UFS as the appropriate body to consider university-wide curricular matters. This resolution cannot impinge on the role of the college senates in such a restructuring.

### *Privacy, Student Complaints, Research Misconduct, Conflicts of Interest, and Nepotism.*

The university has said that it intends to propose new policies on privacy, student complaints, research misconduct, conflicts of interest, and nepotism. The UFS has received drafts of the proposed policy on Student Complaints about Faculty Conduct and a draft of a proposed policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Resources from Vice Chancellor Schaffer. Those policies are now open for comment.

### *Collegiate Learning Assessment*

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is said to be "designed to test for reasoning and communications skills that most agree should be one outcome of a college education (see [http://www.cae.org/content/pro\\_collegiate.htm](http://www.cae.org/content/pro_collegiate.htm))."

The CLA is an on-line testing instrument sold by the CAE, the nonprofit Council for Aid to Education. According to the web site of that organization, the chairman of its Board of Directors is Benno Schmidt, who is also chair of the CUNY Board of Trustees. In addition, one CUNY college president is a member of the CAE Board of Directors. While there are unconfirmed reports that at least some CUNY Colleges (and perhaps all) have not had to pay the over \$6,000 examination fee, it is clear that the issue of conflict of interest will be raised, no matter what the financial arrangements between the university and the CAE, and between university officials and the CAE, turn out to be.

The CLA is supposedly not meant to test students individually, but is said to assess the "value added" by the institution. This assessment has been, according to CAE officials, applied at well over 100 other colleges. The CLA has been administered to students at City College & Lehman College, and perhaps at one other senior college. A central office meeting was held recently to discuss the modalities of CLA administration at several community colleges. The instrument to be used at CUNY community colleges would be the CCLA, the Community College Learning Assessment. The assessments would be scored by CAE staff, with the assistance of psychometricians at the RAND Corporation, and the results given to the college provosts. The results are not made public by the CAE.

The CLA is described by central office officials as a college activity, not directed or mandated by the central office. There is considerable central office involvement, however, in facilitating the adoption of the CLA/CCLA by college administrations that choose to do so.

### *Spellings Commission Report*

US Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings has convened a task force to examine U.S. higher education. The pre-report entitled "A Test of Leadership, Charging the Future of US Higher Education," discusses issues with the Value of Higher Education, as well as Access, Affordability, Financial Aid, Learning, the Quality of Student Learning, Transparency and Accountability, and Barriers to Educational Innovation.

The Draft Report, using its own words, proposes:

1. an "unprecedented" effort to expand higher education access and success by improving student preparation and persistence, addressing non academic barriers and providing significant increases in aid to low-income students
2. to restructure the student financial aid system so that, among other things, public providers of student financial aid should commit to meeting the needs of students from low-income families.
3. that education change from a system primarily based on reputation to one based on performance. The CLA (see above) is explicitly used as one model for this.

4. that colleges and universities embrace a culture of continuous innovation and quality improvement by developing new pedagogies, curricula, and technologies to improve learning, particularly in the area of science and mathematical literacy.
5. a national strategy for lifelong learning that "helps all citizens understand the importance of preparing for and participating in higher education throughout their lives."

The UFS will hold a conference on the Spellings Commission Process on or about November 3, the date being dependent on the availability of the possible speakers.

### *School of Professional Studies*

The SoPS Governing Committee Board has voted new courses in Disability Studies, A (Mass) Transit Certificate Program, and a masters-level Certificate Program for Labor Studies. The evaluation of these courses and programs was made much more difficult since the standard CUNY format for the Preparation new Academic Programs was not followed, meaning that important information necessary for program evaluation was simply missing. Faculty and administrators responsible for other CUNY Labor Studies Programs were not consulted, and on being informed of this proposal, the director of the Labor Studies program at Queens College issued strong written criticisms of the quality of the proposed SPS Labor Studies Program. After being apprised of these problems, administrators declined to delay the vote on any of these agenda items.

At the SoPS Governing Board meeting it was proposed, for consideration at future meetings, that SoPS, which now cannot offer degree programs in competition with college programs, be allowed to do so.

### *Board of Trustees*

Most Board of Trustees actions are covered by the Board Committee reports delivered by UFS representatives to those committees and are not covered here. However, last night the full Board of Trustees voted to increase presidential and central office executive salaries, including that of the chancellor. The increase for presidents was said to be determined according to the presidential evaluation process (handouts are available for this) which includes the UFS Faculty Experience Survey. The level of the overall increases (aside from that of the chancellor) is said to be similar the increases built into the new PSC contract (when including step increases in the contract.) This is more than the increases seen by senior members of the faculty, who no longer experience step increases. Your representative on the Board of Trustees vigorously decried this disparity.

Manfred Philipp  
Chair, University Faculty Senate

### **New Business**

1. Acceptable Use of Computer Resources – Discussion led by Dr. Philip Pecorino

- Dr. Pecorino said that while absolute privacy is impossible to guarantee, the policy drafted by the task force (The City University of NY Policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Resources) strives to insure that the faculty receive as much protection as possible.
  - General Counsel for the University, Richard Schaffer, delivered a message. He stated that the newly drafted policy is similar to those which have been adopted at many other universities. While he is unaware of any violations to date, there is still a need for a policy because if there is a policy, then disciplinary action can be taken if the need arises.
  - Questions/Discussion on the issue of confidentiality and its many ramifications
2. Recommended Procedures for Handling Student Complaints About Faculty Conduct in Academic Settings – Discussion led by Dr. Stefan Baumrin

Written procedures have been drafted and were distributed to the membership. The policy, as presented by Dr. Stefan Baumrin and Richard Schaffer is designed to be fair and efficient, protect academic freedom, and protect students' rights. It is intended to cover informal complaints.

Questions/Concerns were addressed including:

- The necessity of the policy or lack thereof
  - A possible conflict with the newly drafted policy with procedures which may already exist at some CUNY colleges
  - Concerns about unsubstantiated complaints being brought to the administration; the desire to provide affected faculty with union representation
3. The Collegiate Learning Assessment Test – to be administered at QCC and LaGuardia Community College this fall.

Lenore Beaky urged the membership to find out more about the status of the CLA on their individual campuses. A concern was raised that this may be a violation of governance procedures in not having faculty or the governing body involved in the decisions concerning this instrument.

Meeting was adjourned 8:55pm