

**Plenary Meeting of the Doctoral Student's Council
Minutes--Unapproved**

Date: Friday, November 14, 2003
Time: Meeting called to order 6:15pm
Chair: Sheryl Gordon
Minutes: Celia Braxton
Quorum Present

I. Approval of Agenda

Item V.B., University Student Senate was stricken from the agenda.

The approval of the Agenda was moved, seconded, and passed without objection.

II. Approval of October minutes

Paul McBreen requested a change in paragraph V. E. The sentence, “It was announced that the health center is having a budget crisis and that the Student Affairs office threatened to shut it down if we don’t raise student fees” is incorrect information. The minutes should read “There is a budget crisis and the Student Affairs office threatened to cease to pay the Nurse Practitioner if we don’t raise student fees.”

The change was moved and seconded as amended, without objection.

Jose Zambrana requested a change in the same paragraph. His statement reads “one third of our student fees currently go towards the medical center.” It should read, “one third of our fees support the Wellness Center and test subsidies.”

The change was moved and seconded without objection.

Paul McBreen moved that an additional statement made by President Horowitz be included in the minutes, as follows: “President Horowitz states that SUNY has a line item in the State budget for tuition remission.” The addition was moved and seconded.

III. Old Business

A. Chartered Organizations

1. Culture Club. Carrie Fisher stated that major revisions in the constitution are: (a) Tickets supported by DSC funding subsidies will be available only to students of the Graduate Center. (b) No faculty advisor is necessary.

Moira Egan moved that the charter of the Culture Club be accepted. Tina Lee seconded. The motion was put to a vote, and passed with 33 in favor, no objections, and one abstention.

2. Women of Color Network. Stephanie Campos, from the Women of Color Network, spoke. She stated there was one minor change to the constitution. Pete Mauro brought up the fact that there is no provision for election of officers in the charter. Carrie Fisher clarified that according to the DSC constitution, this is not required for a charter organization.

Jamie Bianco moved the charter for the Women of Color Network be accepted. Carrie Fisher seconded. The motion was put to a vote and passed unanimously.

3. Feminist Studies Group. Jamie Bianco, from the Feminist Studies Group, stated there were no revisions to the constitution at all. Pete Mauro asked if this was the same group that had recently been de-chartered. Jamie stated it is a re-chartering of the group for the same purposes. Moira Egan stated that the group had been a chartered organization in the past, and that the listserv had been very helpful and provided a forum for discussion. Jamie pointed out that the constitution provided to the plenary was the original draft, and revisions had been made to that draft since. Carrie Fisher apologized to the plenary for including the wrong draft. She noted that the major difference in the original draft vs. the amended constitution was that the group could still be composed of both matriculated and non-matriculated students, but that as amended, only matriculated students could vote.

Jose Zambrana moved that the charter for the Feminist Studies Group be accepted. Tina Lee seconded. The motion was put to a vote and passed unanimously.

B. Budget Revisions

Jose Zambrana explained the revisions as follows: Information provided to him at the beginning of the year indicated the total amount in the By-Laws accounts was \$62,734. However, when the Business Office transferred accounts to a new bank, the total actual cash in the By-Laws accounts was reported as half of that--\$31,367. The Business Office indicated that this error was due to the actual number being mistakenly doubled when the information was sought. According to a previous co-chair, the DSC had been in compliance during FY 00' – '01. José thinks the mistake probably happened during the changeover from 2001 to 2002, because at this point, there is a sudden increase in the cash account. He thinks the money from the By-Laws account was mistakenly transferred to the Cash account. Until the recent transfer to new bank accounts, everything was "virtual." Now all accounts at the GC are treated on a cash basis.

The By-Laws require that ten percent of DSC income be held in the Capital Expenditures Fund of the By-Laws accounts each year – amounting to approximately \$24,000 for 2003-04. Further, the By-Laws accounts should be broken into two separate accounts, the Reserve Fund, and the Capital Expenditures Fund. This has not been done. Since the DSC this fall now has its own separate banking accounts administered by the Business Office, a separate Money Market account will be opened for each of the Reserve Fund and Capital Expenditures.

The deficit shown in the amended budget he does not believe will come to pass because not every department uses its departmental allocation. If it does happen, the Steering Committee can move to use the Special Allocations Fund of \$5,000. If the deficit were to go beyond that, the DSC Plenary would have to consider voting to cover the expenditures from the Capital Expenditures Fund.

He has not yet discussed what happened with the previous Co-Chair for Business who served during the year the error most likely occurred.

Jose moved the amended 2003-04 budget be accepted. Carrie Fisher seconded. As there were no objections, the motion was passed.

- C. Bookstore Feedback from Reps: Carrie Fisher asked that department representatives with feedback on the bookstore speak to her after the meeting.

IV. New Business

- A. College Association Elections. Carrie Fisher reported the three co-chairs had just found out there is something called the College Association. This is a body at the Graduate Center that approves the DSC budget. The three co-chairs sit on this committee plus three other students. Therefore elections for the three other students must be held. The meeting is tentatively set for the beginning of December, probably a Tuesday. Moira Egan asked if there was any flexibility in the time of the meeting, as Tuesday mid-day is difficult for GC students. Carrie stated it might be possible to move it back to 4:00 pm. Sheryl Gordon, Tina Lee, and Auggie Quiros volunteered to stand for the committee. As there were no objections, they were elected by popular acclaim.
- B. Curriculum Committee. Celia Braxton reported that the Curriculum Committee, which had originally been meeting on Thursday afternoons, seems to have changed to Tuesday mornings, which she cannot attend. Therefore, a new student representative may be needed, as Alternates are not allowed. It is possible, however, that this may be a temporary scheduling problem. Jose Zambrana volunteered to be the Curriculum Committee representative if the meeting time has been changed.
- C. Coffee Hour. The coffee hour has been scheduled for Wednesday, December 10th, from 3:00pm to 6:00pm in room 5414 or possibly next door. The Adjunct Project is holding an evening party in 5414 and may need that time to set up. Coffee and teas will be provided by Java Stop on West 35th Street. A suggestion was made from the floor that the name of the event be changed to make it seem more open to everyone, as many people don't drink coffee and may not come because they think that's all that's served. Two alternative suggestions were "Open House" and "Social Hour." Moira will make up the flyer.

Moira stated also that we need DSC members to commit to half an hour during that day to be part of a Welcoming Committee for people as they come in the door. She will arrange this by email.

- D. Wellness Center Committee. A questionnaire is going to be sent around from Matt Schoengood's office regarding health insurance preferences. It is going to be emailed, but it was not made clear to which list – departments or the entire Graduate Center community. The questionnaire has only five questions on it, with no questions about use of the Wellness Center or interest in dental insurance. The next meeting is on November 25th at 10:00 am. Student representatives are needed. Jose Zambrana volunteered to be at the meeting on November 25th, as did Lisa Smith. Francois de Paul Silatchom Fouyou volunteered to be at future meetings, although he cannot attend the meeting on November 25th.

A question from the floor: Is the Wellness Center still under attack? Paul McBreen answered that it was not the Wellness Center *per se*, but the Nurse Practitioner, that was in jeopardy, as she has been paid through funds that were not originally allocated for that purpose.

Carrie Fisher suggested Sheryl send an update to the DSC list after the November 25th meeting.

- E. Representatives for Graduate Center Committees: Carrie Fisher stated that the administration is constantly coming to the DSC for representatives on Graduate Center committees. Student representatives are required on many GC committees. The DSC needs to spread this responsibility to the rest of the student body, and get a large pool of interested students who are not on the DSC. Carrie has prepared a letter and questionnaire to go out in the Registration packets for the spring semester. She asks that DSC reps tell people in their department to fill out the questionnaire and return it. She will make available materials for a questionnaire return folder for each department. Committee membership is currently for a period of two years. She is trying to get this shortened to a one-year period. She is trying to address the problem of proxies, currently not allowed, for committee meetings and the Graduate Council.

A question from the floor: can a collection point be set up for each undergraduate campus? Answer: yes.

- F. Logo Contest: Paul McBreen stated we are looking into the legalities of logo copyright and use.
- G. DSC Constitutional Convention: Adrienne Robek stated the Constitutional committee met on October 24th and broke into two groups. They found a "lost" by-law that had never been added to the Constitution regarding grade appeals. There is supposed to be one academic appeals officer per program. The next meeting of the committee will be on December 1st. Their goal is to present the new constitution for review to the full plenary at the beginning of the spring semester.

V. Announcements/Updates

A. Tuition Remission Update

Carrie Fisher reported she has reviewed the ATF fellowships to be phased in over the next six years. The material does not discuss tuition remission for current teachers, GTFs, and adjuncts. At the Board of Trustees meeting last month, she was told by Louise Mirrer, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, that at the end of the phase-in period, all people who are teaching will be getting tuition remission. However, there is no documentation on this. She has brought this to the attention of Provost Bill Kelly and President Horowitz, who have told her that details of the plan are not yet in place. They are working on it. They have stated all students will benefit “at some level.”

B. Adjunct Project/PSC Update: Heather Gautney, Adjunct Project coordinator, was not present.

C. Focus Group—Professional Development: Paul McBreen reported that Linda Edwards, Vice Provost, wants students to help her on workshop development. What do students want or think are important subject areas? What is necessary? She is looking for five students for feedback. Tina Lee suggested this be opened up to all departments, and that DSC reps should send this request out to their departments.

D. Information Resources: Pete Mauro reported that per the IR petition of October, 2002, which made recommendations for changes in IR at the Graduate Center, there has been some improvement, particularly in communications. However, particular problems remaining are:

1. The DSC link on the main page has not been working.
2. Outlook Web does not open certain types of documents. James Haggard hasn't responded to these questions at all. Tina Lee suggested we “bombard him with emails and phone calls so he understands” that this is a problem.

In response to a question from the floor, Pete summarized the highlights of the petition: generally, better communication with IR and the Help desk was needed; greater transparency and accountability; faster responses from the Help desk; and greater responsibility for breakdowns, shutdowns and other problems.

A question from the floor: Can you “cc” Provost Kelly and President Horowitz each time you send a complaint to James Haggard?

Tina Lee suggested information be sent out to all students on how to communicate with James Haggard. She also suggested log sheets be available for each computer so users can document problems, calls to the Help Desk, and work order numbers. These log sheets, or a suggestion box, should be DSC-administered.

Jose Zambrana suggested we invite Gloria Barlow to the DSC to speak about DSC procedures.

Pete reported that within the IR committee, the hot issue at present is student web pages.

- E. DSC Awareness Week Recap: Celia Braxton reported that the “popcorn week” at the Graduate Center had been a great success, due in very large part to Paul McBreen, and Camille Tipton, who filled in all day on the Monday, along with other volunteers on Wednesday and Thursday. One thousand plastic cups of popcorn were distributed over three days, along with information about the DSC.

Celia stated the next project will be to bring DSC-sponsored discount movie tickets to students in the outer borough campuses.

- F. Party Recap: Tina Lee reported that the party had been a great success. Even though the food and drink disappeared within the first forty-five minutes, people stayed to dance until 11:00pm.
- G. Miguel Malo update: Paul McBreen reported that on November 24th, Malo would be making his twenty-sixth (26th) court appearance since his arrest at Hostos Community College, where he was protesting cuts in bilingual education courses. He provided a flyer, requesting attendance and demonstration, for reps to place in their departments.
- H. “No Record of Progress” grade: The NRP grade has been instituted for students at Level III. Steve Brier and Linda Edwards are looking for one further place for a benchmark of progress while students are at Level II.

A motion to adjourn was made by Moira Egan, and seconded by Tina Lee. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.