

## Report to QCC Academic Senate re: UFS Plenary Meeting

**The 393<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Session  
of The University Faculty Senate  
of The City University Of New York  
Eighth Floor, Room 0818, 205 E. 42<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Tuesday, September 20, 2016  
6:30 p.m.**

UFS Chair Katherine Conway called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m.

### **I. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved by voice vote.

### **II. Approval of the Minutes for May 17, 2016**

The agenda was approved by voice vote.

### **III. Invited Guests**

#### **A. Invited Guest: Chancellor James B. Milliken**

Chancellor Milliken remarked on the following:

- The launch of the CUNY Cultural Corp, which will provide paid 85 internships at 32 NYC cultural centers.
- McCauley Honors received highest rating as an honors college.
- Guttman Community College named #1 in the state for online degrees and #11 nationally after 4 years.
- The planned expansion of ASAP to reach 25,000 students by 2018.
- The Master Plan approval is anticipated at the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting and the Strategic Plan is currently being drafted.
- The payment for new union contracts has been discussed and is forthcoming. We are the 8<sup>th</sup> contract the City has to settle.
- CUNY will be a leader in online education. The expansion of online programs will help us draw adult learners. We will participate in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) Education Compact, a multi-state effort to have similar standards for online courses. To help develop a coherent brand across all colleges, CUNY has hired Siegelvision, and the firm is in the process of doing interviews with various CUNY constituents
- His initiation of drafting an Expressive Policy that will provide consistency across the university.
- The Chancellor acknowledged the significant contributions of the late Professor Henry Wasser.

After the presentation, a number of questions came up, including:

- What is the process for the Strategic Plan?

Response: Draft not completed yet. Not very different from Master Plan. Will focus on completion, student success, higher graduation rates; building and sustaining strong faculty; embracing CUNY commitment to broad access, building connections with DOE and other city institutions, employers for our students, institutions abroad, and emerging economic model for public higher education which will require us to attract private funds and have administrative efficiency. CUNY has hired McKinsey to examine operating efficiencies/processes on the admin side (not academic programs).

- A statement was made that many college students are struggling. The state is underfunding CUNY and pressure should be put on them. We should fight for freezing tuition now.
- A statement was made that the NYS Comptroller has issued an audit which included a suggestion that CUNY survey CUNYFirst users. The speaker suggested this wasn't necessary as CUNYFirst is not liked.

Response: An enterprise system is a necessity and CUNY will continue to improve CUNYFirst.

- The Chancellor was asked to define the value of education.

Response: He desires for students to be gainfully employed when they graduate. While they can choose employment or higher education, students should persist at higher rates than they have. The more we can help our students to attend and acquire credits in greater number, the more money we can save them and they can move on to earning a living. Part of what we offer is a chance to improve their economic opportunities. There is a tremendous generational benefit to that as well.

- The Chancellor was asked about the disparities among campuses and their abilities to raise philanthropic funds, and to recognize that most donors provide restricted funds thus limiting the university's ability to direct that money to hiring adjuncts etc.

## **B. Invited Guests: Vice Chancellor and Provost Vita Rabinowitz**

Vice Chancellor Rabinowitz remarked on the following activities of the Task Force on Developmental Education:

- Math, particularly elementary algebra, is the most significant obstacle to graduation. CUNY wants to make a non-algebra path available to any student whose major doesn't require algebra and put less reliance on high stakes testing.
- Statistics provided included: 60% of freshmen need remediation, 75% need remediation in math
- Investments of funds and time has yielded little return. Traditional remediation policy contributes to achievement gaps.
- Task force convened 1 year ago and explores questions such as: How should we place students in remediation and how should we measure exit? Which instructional formats are best? How can new policy inform us? How can we implement at scale?
- Findings forwarded to Chancellor Milliken include but are not limited to:
  - Assignment to remediation has unintended consequences. 20% of those assigned don't even enroll; 41% who succeed fail to enroll in subsequent math classes; More students give up than fail
  - Placement tests are poor predictors of success in other courses.
  - Problem is most acute with adult students.
  - The structure of developmental education and prerequisites lead to attrition.
  - Traditional remediation methods are not beneficial for our students.
  - Students who struggle with algebra can succeed in stats and other courses that are not algebra based.
  - Applied math is becoming more important.
- The following plan/action areas were identified:
  1. Placement – Work closely with DOE to identify students who are not ready for college math. Offer additional support to students based on their individual needs. Address placement for adult students differently.
  2. Improve developmental coursework through additional support, co-requisite models, algebra alternatives, and modified academic advising.
  3. Exit from remediation - reduce high stakes tests from remediation as this is out of step with the mainstream; modify final exam content, testing strategies, and calculator use.

- Other tests have recently changed, regents, SAT, etc. Many of our associate degree students can succeed in college if given the opportunity. This is expensive however, our commitment is to solving a problem at CUNY.

After the presentation, a number of questions came up, including:

- The composition of the Task Force committee was questioned (no one on the committee has taught developmental math; administrators outnumbered faculty).  
Response: Task force had qualified members.
- Is the plan to reduce the number of students needing remediation? Some systems, like European system, do not have remediation.  
Response: We hope to reduce the number of students needing remediation. We will work with DOE as they are working on this as well. Not by manipulating cut scores but by giving students a chance to succeed.
- What about those who take a non-algebra route? Can students bridge back if they want to pursue a major that needs algebra?  
Response: Yes students can bridge to STEM.
- A speaker noted the disconnect between a need for more qualified teachers in the DOE and CUNY's failure to offer financial support, particularly at the graduate level.  
Response: NYC is trying to hire more teachers and diversify. We do need more fellowships.
- Why is ESL included as developmental?  
Response: ESL was included at the request of the discipline council but I agree that ESL is not developmental.
- It was stated that a student's biggest resource is faculty access and we should focus on smaller class sizes.  
Response: The literature suggests that the changes we will make will work. We have a lot to do.
- It was stated that there should be less emphasis on standardized tests that use a multiple choice format.  
Response: Poor outcomes are difficult to interpret. We do need to change our tests.
- Our curriculums are getting more rigorous. How will someone do remediation and the program?  
Response: This is a big question. We want to help students take fewer courses that don't count. We want all of their course work to count toward their degree.

### C. Invited Guests: Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs Frederick Schaffer

Vice Chancellor Schaffer remarked on the Expressive Activities Policy and amendments to the Conflict of Interest Policy. The proposed Expressive Activities Policy will go to the Board of Trustees in October.

VC Schaffer's remarks on the Expressive Activities Policy included the following:

- CUNY has no policy on freedom of expression. We need a policy that indicates the primacy of freedom of expression on campus. We found the University of Chicago statement favorable and drafted a policy that is consistent with first amendment.

After the presentation, a number of questions and comments came up, including:

- Clarification that student input was included.
- Clarification on the need for a policy to indicate that college regulations are consistent with the First Amendment. Although there has not been an issue at any college, it is necessary for the University to have a policy.

VC Schaffer's remarks on the Conflict of Interest Policy indicated the policy mostly applies to situations of contracts. If there are not royalties, then the policy does not apply.

#### **IV. New Business**

Resolution in Recognition of Henry H. Wasser (1919 – 2016) was offered by Sandy Cooper.

#### **V. Reports**

The Chair made some brief announcements including:

- Faculty governance should be engaged with their administration regarding the financial plans which are due at this time of year to Central.
- Information regarding the reapportionment of senators and the reassigned time provided to the Executive Committee and chairs of standing committees was shared.
- Information on UFS expenditures was shared.
- There will be a Budget Workshop on Nov. 18th.
- The spring conference, April 28, 2017, will be on Governance.
- Members were urged people to join standing committees.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Wendy Ford**