

LEHMAN COLLEGE

The City University of New York Minutes of the Stated Meeting of the General Faculty Wednesday, February 21, 2007

CALL TO ORDER: Professor Robert Feinerman, chair of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, called the meeting to order at 2:20 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of November 15, 2006 were submitted and approved.

(Changes were made in the order of presentations, depending on when people were available.)

2. Communications:

A. Associate Provost Troy: 1. Undergraduate Spring Enrollment: The Associate Provost said that new first-time freshman enrollments (as indicated on the handout) suggest that, in terms of the undergraduate population, we're up slightly with four additional students in comparison with Spring '06 or 106 students as against 102. (In most colleges, there is little new enrollment in the spring.) However, with our new advanced standing transfers, transfer students were at 445 new full-time students and 340 part-time. In looking at the ratio of part-time to full-time; we've actually increased the part-time but had a decrease in our full-time. We're not sure why, but we're looking into it. Possibly, full-time students in mid-term could not find enough courses for a full schedule. For continuing undergraduate full-time students, we have an increase of eight percent, up to 4,820, and 2,974 part-time students, representing a decrease of 2.6 percent. On the latter, we are working on converting more part-time students to full-time. Our total undergraduate headcount is 8,685, which is an increase of 3.5 percent. **2. Graduate Spring Enrollment:** The graduate numbers are of concern throughout CUNY. For new graduate students, we're doing fairly well. We've had a slight increase of 10 students, from 167 to 177. For degree graduate students, we're also up for full-time and that is because of new programs put in place this year; part-time graduate enrollment dropped slightly to one percent. Our total population for degree graduate students is 1,722 which is an increase of 2.7 percent from last spring. When we get to the non-degree graduate students, we take a big hit, going from 558 part-time students to 402. The total headcount for graduate students is 2,130 while last year it was 2,238, so we showed a decrease of about 5 percent or 100 students. Our total credit hours for graduate students are up, about 2.6 percent. **3. Total population:** The summary flash enrollment for our total population shows: Undergraduate: 8,685 or an increase of 3.5 percent; Graduate: a decrease of 4.8 percent; Total headcount: 10,815 or a 1.7 percent increase. Mr. Troy indicated that the drop graduate population has caused that number not to be as high as we would like, since we look for a two to three percent increase each semester. However, our total credit hours are up six percent and the FTES population is also up six percent. The emphasis

now is to look at our graduate population to find out how to bolster it, and for our undergraduates, we are also looking at the number of our transfer students.

B. University Faculty Senate: In the absence of Prof. Manfred Philipp, Prof. John Mineka stepped in with the disclaimer that he had not attended the last committee meeting and consequently was unable to provide first-hand information. However, he was familiar with the major issues before the University Senate and presented an impromptu summary. Prof. Mineka said there are initiatives that the central administration has taken such as the new policy on the Student Complaint Procedure, a new policy on the use of computers, another on multiple positions, and a new budget situation. All these are under scrutiny. The policy on Multiple Positions is a radical departure because it puts no limits on how many multiple positions a faculty member can have. It appears that the administration wants to encourage faculty to work in the new School for Professional Studies to cover the on-line courses. In this way, full-time people would be involved without hiring new faculty. The faculty representative on the Board Committee argued strongly against it. It now looks as if there will be a liberalization of the policy. For instance, instead of teaching one course per semester for extra remuneration, it would be possible to teach two courses or something similar. This new practice might be used by Central Administration to refute faculty claims that we are overburdened with contractual teaching duties.

C. Middle States Report: Professor Robin Kunstler said that this is the body that credits the college every ten years. Every five years, there is a periodic review, which we completed three years ago. Lehman will present a document in two years to a visitation team. To that end, we have 14 standards that Middle States covers including everything about the college from the mission to related activities. We have divided the 14 standards established by Middle States into seven work groups, and each group has one or two or three standards, and there are co-chairs, one for the faculty and one for the administration. An e-mail, requesting volunteers, has been distributed with the purpose of having everyone involved over the next two years. The group has an office in the APEX.

D. CUNY's New Student Complaint Procedure: Prof. Liesl Jones presented an overview of this new policy, which has been put in place, starting this semester. Currently it is to deal with issues that are not covered by any of the policies extant. If students object to something in the classroom or are uncomfortable with the professor, they have the right to register a complaint. The first step is to go to the department chair or, the program director, both of whom are called fact-finders, who determine what happened by talking to the students and the relevant faculty member. The faculty is not told who the students are to avoid retaliation. The purpose of the fact-finder is to determine whether the complaint is covered within faculty rights and academic freedom. If the issue goes beyond this point, then the chair can make a determination as to what resolution can be made between students and the faculty. As an option, the chair can request an informal resolution., with the faculty member and student brought together in

an attempt to solve the problem. Or the fact-finder can determine there is no complaint, and the professor is well within the rights of academic freedom; thus, the complaint will be dismissed. That ends the process under the complaint policy. However, if the students are unhappy, they will be allowed to appeal the fact-finder's decision. That appeal then goes to a well balanced appeals committee, consisting of two students, two faculty members, the students' affairs officer, and one administrator. Their job is to review the complaint and the fact-finder and to decide whether to overturn the decision. Relatively minor complaints are decided at the chair level. If it's a major complaint, it can go right through the process, and action can be taken against a faculty member under the contract if the offense is deemed to be significant. The policy will be reviewed in 2009 to see if it is working, and if it is not, how to change the policy. The Academic Freedom Committee has gone through many drafts of this policy. Beginning this semester, it plans to instruct the faculty on what academic freedom is and how it works.

E. Vice President Wheeler's Report. 1. The Budget: Mr. Wheeler characterized the budget for the year 2007, the current fiscal year which began on July 1 and ends on June 30, as a "relatively comfortable budget year." It is attributable to a number of factors; chief among them being the success of the CUNY Compact, the funding package that the University has undertaken with the support of the state legislature and the governor; and also the extremely strong enrollment. On the budget snapshot sheet, (which was distributed) the first line shows last year's 2006 base budget allocation of \$46,088,800, and the next line shows an operating increase of \$2,780,000 that was added to the base, which gave us a base budget of \$49,680,000. Skipping down to the grand total operating budget allocation, it comes to \$65,942,432 which will probably end up as \$66 or \$67 million. While this may sound good, we need look at the expenditures on the other side of the ledger. We project our expenditures for this year at \$72.2 million for the full-time faculty and staff, adjuncts, temp services, and OTPS (estimated). From this total, there is a \$6.2 million shortfall, but there are tools and agreements that can reduce that number. Mr. Wheeler described the numbers as a "painless budget." However, this is not to say everything is perfect. We're living with the impact of two or three years of successive reductions, so we're trying to play catch-up to staff-up but there are still holes in the staffing, and we're trying to do maintenance and to cover other items that have been deferred for many years. But the fact is, we're off to a good start this year. **2. Fiscal Year 2008:** The governor released the executive budget a couple of weeks ago. CUNY regards it as a satisfactory initial proposal. Notably, tuitions will not be raised, and it funds a number of mandatory costs such as cost of living increases which previously CUNY has had difficulty obtaining. Finally, a sense of optimism pervades the Central Office as the budget proceeds through the legislature. **3. High school students on Campus:** Regarding the conduct of some of these students and previous complaints, Mr. Wheeler met with the principals of the high schools to come up with some strategies to better control the demeanor of the students. As we went through our public safety records, it became clear that there were two types of issues. With the High School of American Studies, which meets in the Reservoir Building, the issue is not so much behavior as to how the students descend on the cafeteria, coming about 200 at a time. To ease the pressure, the high school will now phase their students between 11 a.m. and 12 noon, and will send them in groups no larger than 30 or 40, as against 100 or 200. The concern with the High School

of Music is more a matter of behavior not appropriate on a college campus; the students make noise and have playful fights, all of which is disruptive. Public Safety, in looking at the records, found that they centered on the Lehman cafeteria, so the high school agreed their students will no longer be allowed in the cafeteria. In the last couple of weeks, complaints have dropped markedly.

F. Presidents' Report:

- 1.** Last Saturday, the President attended a luncheon sponsored by CUNY, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the SEEK program. The Chancellor made a number of statements concerning the investments that CUNY is asking the legislature to make, along the lines of the COMPACT. CUNY is preparing a Masterplan that has to be submitted to the state Board of Regents by law every four years; the current Masterplan runs through '08, and the new one is being prepared now. Over the next 18 months, input will be solicited from the campuses. A number of categories are familiar, though new ones will be added, and there will be ample time to make comments. Significantly, the governor proposed in his message to appoint a Commission on Higher Education, primarily dealing with CUNY and SUNY. President Fernandez thinks there will be weighty recommendations especially on whether there can be a rational tuition policy in the public sector.
- 2.** The President and Provost Tramontano just returned from a meeting on the restructuring of the Ph.Ds in the sciences. As to the version on the table, he President and the Provost regarded it as a narrow definition, since it only includes some of the natural sciences and such disciplines as chemistry, physics, biology, and maybe biochemistry. The two administrators believe this is only phase one which will have to be expanded to include other disciplines.
- 3. Macaulay Honors College:** As chair on the Committee on Academic Affairs of the Council of Presidents, President Fernandez recently heard a presentation from the Dean of the Macaulay Honors College, Ann Krishner, who is focusing on the second year of the college. A building, donated to the University on 67th and Park, is now called the Macaulay Honors College of CUNY. The dean is interested in drawing some faculty to come there and spend some time. Some of the Presidents believe contracting a faculty member for a year would perhaps be too onerous while a semester would be feasible. Dean Krishner is committed to a dual identity, the students being identified with the Macaulay Honors College and with their home campuses. Most of these students meet high standards of admission; these are students who likely would have left the city or would have gone to private institutions if it were not for the college. The entire concept has brought favorable publicity to CUNY.
- 4. Middle States:** President Fernandez, in supplementing Prof. Kushner's remarks, emphasized that this is an exercise that comes every ten years and is, to some extent, a burden, but also is a precious opportunity for a community to enter into a dialogue and to look at ourselves, since we normally do not stop to do so. Its forces us every ten years to take stock of what we do, how we do it, what we do well, what's good, what's needed, what has changed, what we do for our students so they come out of Lehman better prepared and demonstrate the quality of this institution. He encouraged the faculty to participate in this process in some capacity.
- 5. National and international issues:** President Fernandez pointed to some of the main issues he recently heard on higher education at a conference of the American Council on Education in Washington. Significantly, today and likely to be a burning issue this year and into next year, as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and the policy debate in Washington, is

cost. When we talk about tuition, he said, that is really not the cost, not the real cost. Lehman charges \$4,000. Is that the cost of educating a student at CUNY? No. The cost is probably closer to \$10,000 and that's just the instructional part. Add on books, fees, transportation, and so on, and the total cost is more like \$17,000. A private college is closer to \$27,000 or \$28,000. Now, this is more of a problem for private institutions than it is for public institutions. Whatever discounts we get, come from the state or from the local government. In private colleges, the tuition represents more than the actual cost, although there is significant discounting, which is not possible in the public sector. We do provide some financial aid as do the private schools. The President did not want to get into the details but wanted the faculty to be aware of this issue, because the faculty will be asked many questions about cost. The second point is the whole questions of demographics, growth and diversity. This is less of a question on the east coast, certainly in New York and so on. But It is an issue everywhere. States like California, Florida, and Texas changing and growing, have huge populations in the public schools. By 2015, for example, California will have 500,000 new college-bound students meaning there is no way the state can absorb that number. The supposed students will go elsewhere or will not go at all. This will have a far-reaching impact on the economy and our competition with the rest of the world. That the competition is global is modern reality we must take seriously as do leaders of major international corporations and institutions. At Lehman, we focus on our state, because that's where the funds come from. Also, we focus on our country. But it's time we should look beyond, because that. "beyond" will soon come here and affect us directly. **6. Assessment:** Here is another critical element, raising such questions as: in what way does our curriculum work, in what way does it not work and how do we understand it so we can assist students. We want to help students in areas where "they are not getting it." This is not to take students to task. Sometimes they just can't figure it out. Sometimes it's their fault because they don't spend enough time. Sometimes it's our fault because we don't explain it the right way. This is not placing blame on anybody. We need to learn the process of teaching and learning in a little better way. The Middle States preparation gives us an opportunity to talk about these subjects in depth. Finally, the pressure on efficiency is on all of us, and in that sense it's the same type of pressure major corporations have lived with forever and ever. To turn a profit, business has had to learn to do things more efficiently and at less cost, which is the challenge we face, though we are not here to make money. President Fernandez promised updates in the future.

G. Provost's Report: 1. Commendation: Provost Tramontano paid tribute to President Fernandez' new role on the American Council of Education, not only enhancing his own visibility as an educator but also for putting Lehman on the map in the CUNY system, a sentiment visibly endorsed by the Faculty. **2. Facilities:** Saying some subjects have already been covered, Provost Tramontano moved on to the Multimedia Center and the Science Building. Funds are being sought from the federal government and the private sector. Ground breaking for the Science Building is planned for later in 2007 or early in 2008, considering in the meantime who will move into the building. On the academic programmatic side, the CUNY School of Public Health, including the doctorate and the overall school is also being considered. It is hoped that CUNY will be admitting its first students.. Even though the school will be on the Hunter Campus, we have been assured

that both Lehman and Brooklyn colleges will be major players. **3. Anniversaries:** Next year will be the 25th anniversary of our undergraduate program in social work and the beginning of our fully accredited master's program, not to mention that 2008 is also the 40th anniversary of Lehman College. For these large events, planning is underway. **4. Faculty work load:** The Chancellery recently sent a letter, claiming that even with a number of new faculty the percent of instruction of full-time faculty keeps going down. One possible reason is we have an increased load of students. Our new faculty members are coming in with 24 hour reassigned time. We have an idea the Central Office has a hard time counting what a real work load is. The Provost is asking the deans to take a look at how the work load is calculated. The number of grants and contracts has increased tremendously, leaving the faculty with a 48 percent workload. The fact is we may not be counting correctly. The Provost asked the Lehman deans to make sure our standards of reporting workloads are consistent, and to check how these standards work at other CUNY colleges.

New Business

There was none.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting will begin with a reception at 1:30 p.m. with the meeting starting at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Russo Bullaro
Executive Committee