

LEHMAN COLLEGE

The City University of New York Minutes of the Stated Meeting of the General Faculty Wednesday, 6 May 2009

CALL TO ORDER: Professor Manfred Philipp, chair of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the meeting of February 18, 2009 were submitted and approved.

2. Agenda for Meeting: The agenda for the meeting was submitted and approved.

A. President's Report:

1. Strategic Planning: In looking back on the academic year, President Fernández found it to be a busy one. Important progress was made on the whole question of strategic direction. For the last several months, a group appointed by the President has been meeting every couple of weeks and are now meeting even more frequently. The discussions have been on the general direction that the institution should be considering as it looks to the next ten years. We just completed 40 years and the idea is to look to Lehman at 50 years and even beyond that. A report will be shared with the faculty. No action is expected in the short run. There will be an opportunity to think about it over the summer, revise it, and in the fall to gain input. It will not be a strategic plan; it will be a report that outlines general directions for our strategic planning.

2. New Borough President: For the first time, the new borough president is a Lehman alumnus. President Fernández had a conversation with him recently. The new Borough President is eager to discuss issues of mutual interest.

3. Budget: A preliminary allocation for next year is expected to be received by the end of this month. The budget for fiscal 2010 will be a stable one. The tuition increases that will go into effect allow us not only to fill the gaps from the Governor's cuts on the University and our share, but also provide a certain margin for investment, faculty, and other needs. It is not what we need, but it is a move in the right direction. Fiscal 2011 is not determined. We will have to see how the economic picture for the nation and the state evolves over the next year.

4. Distinguished Professors: In the spring, the college will send in the nomination of one particular member of the faculty, Professor Laird Bergad from the Department of Latin American and Puerto Rican Studies. Prof. Bergad has been recommended and will be appointed at the June meeting of the Trustees.

5. Enrollment: This year, higher admission standards were instituted that are going into effect in the fall, and so far we are holding our own. Students who would have normally qualified for admission and are not able to come to Lehman will first go to a community college. When they finish their associate degrees, they will be able to transfer over to Lehman. The application numbers are high, and it's a tribute to our enrollment management and the work of the faculty in this area.

B. Report of Provost Mary Papazian:

1. Enrollment: Though we are still waiting on the actual acceptances, the number of first-choice applicants has gone up significantly. More students are choosing us as their first-choice institution. In the comparison of 2008 to 2009 numbers, there is an increase of almost a thousand. Those who wish more

information on the headcount should contact Mr. Troy. **2. New Deans:** The Provost was grateful for all that the interim Deans had done; we were well led last year. In the Natural and Social Sciences, a search was led by Eric Delson, and in Arts and Humanities by Kenneth Schlesinger. We are fortunate to have Edward Jarroll as an incoming dean for Natural and Social Sciences and Timothy Alborn from our own History Department as dean of Arts and Humanities. **3. Research Conference:** Provost Papazian thanked the students and faculty for their creative efforts. Students either presented posters or spoke. Suggestions have been made as to how we can do even better next year. The Provost said that suggestions should be directed to Liesl Jones, the chair of the committee. **4. Policy:** The Provost advised the faculty to follow the final exam policy. It is important that we give the students the full semester for learning. It is also significant that students can schedule their finals at the time they're supposed to be scheduled so they can plan appropriately. She understands there are exceptional situations, but this means they occur rarely. The web grading deadline is May 28, about 13 days after classes. She asked the faculty to honor that deadline as well. **5. Middle-States Visit:** One of the areas where we made progress was in assessment: standard 14. We still have much more to do there. It has to be in the hands of the faculty because it is about what students learn and how we improve. At the end of the fall 2009 semester, we expect to have students learning outcome objectives for all programs. In the spring of 2010 at the end of the semester, a fully functioning assessment cycle is expected to be in place. In the fall of 2011, the first cycle of assessment will be taken to the next level. **6. Stimulus Funding:** A number of faculty have been considering stimulus funding which is expected to be there for about two years. The Provost encouraged faculty to come up with proposals. These are competitive cycles because everybody in the country is applying for the money. The Provost suggests submitting the proposal, recognizing that few people get funded the first time around. **7. Faculty Reporting System:** This is called Digital Measures. The idea is to provide a mechanism by which all the information that goes on a CV is put on one data base. We need to get everybody on line first and then it's just a matter of annual reporting. Prof. Robert Whittaker will be in charge. **8. Prof. Whittaker** was called to the podium by the Provost for an update on Blackboard. He reported that we are up and still running in what is now the interim state. But the process of moving the entire software to the servers of Blackboard itself, the so-called Environment, is just about completed. Absolute stability is expected. Prof. Whittaker has been in touch with those giving on-line courses. Because of the accumulated downtimes, they have lost perhaps as much as a week. The period between the end of classes and the deadline for web rating is 13 days. So he's working with instructors of totally on-line classes to see if they find it necessary to extend the deadline. They should be able to do so in a manner that maintains the integrity of the courses and at the same time meet the deadline. **9. Motion on grades:** A motion from the floor was made by Professor Silverman that a statement indicating that there was a problem with Blackboard 8 be attached to the final reports of students enrolled in on-line courses. This will make clear there was no dereliction on their part.

C. Report of Prof. Helene Silverman, PSC: 1. Election: The entire slate of the new caucus won the election. It can be looked up on the web. It is not exactly the current group but is essentially so. **2. Resolution:** A petition was presented "for an Expedited Settlement for the Collective Bargaining Agreement Covering PSC Employees at CUNY Educational Opportunity Centers." Apparently by accident they were left out of the contract and didn't get their increases. So the objective of the resolution is to make sure

they get the same increases the faculty received. The signed petitions will be brought down to the union. **3. Adjunct Insurance:** A bill is coming out of Albany to support this unemployment insurance. It's close to being passed. Prof. Silverman urged Lehman Senators to contact their local legislators to boost this bill. **4. Parental Leave:** If anyone is trying to claim back parental leave from the July settlement, you have until May 20 to submit your forms. The forms are directly sent to the PSC. In the future it will be handled through Human Resources.

D. Report of Prof. Manfred Philipp, UFS:

1. Blackboard: A new committee has been appointed to study issues surrounding Blackboard and other educational software. Blackboard 6 did not have the problems of Blackboard 8 this semester. We were told that many campuses had requested Blackboard 8, even though it had not been tested on the campuses and not stress-tested for the type of load the University put on it. Blackboard certified that it could deal with the stress that it would encounter—that, of course, didn't occur. Prof. Philipp viewed the committee as not operating in the critical and analytical way it should have. It is, in fact, more centrally directed. College presidents have been advised to encourage their faculty to make every accommodation for students so as not to penalize students for a situation not of their making. **2. The UFS Faculty Experience Survey** created by Kathleen Barker and Dean Savage is complete, and the funding package needed to execute it was provided by Vice Chancellor Lexa Logue. The survey will be conducted by Votenet. The UFS extends its sincere thank to Vice Chancellor Logue for her support on this project. The survey will be conducted in the fall. **3. Part-time Studies:** Last night at the Senate, a number of resolutions were passed. One was in favor of part-time study opportunities. There has been a movement to restrict evening courses and part-time students. This resolution voted against any such restrictions. **4. Blocking Web Sites:** Another resolution was passed on the practice of filtering and blocking web sites. Some campuses block all videos, for example. This causes great pain to the libraries. On some campuses it's a problem of system requirements. Therefore, it was resolved "that faculty and students have access to the information networks of the world." **5. Department Chair Terms:** Last is the question of a proposed limitation on the term of department chairs. This has resulted in an extraordinary outpouring of opposition. The Council of Faculty Governance Leaders voted unanimously to oppose it. The University Faculty Senate also voted unanimously to oppose it. This was to be brought to the Board of Trustees in June, but the date has been changed to September 29, giving campus governance bodies time to comment on the proposal. The position of the Chancellery is not clear.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalind Carey,
Executive Committee