

General Faculty Meeting
Lehman College

The meeting of the general faculty promptly started at 3:30 pm on September 21, 2016 in the Faculty Dining Room with an excellent attendance. Professor Vincent Prohaska, chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed the participants, introduced the agenda and conducted the meeting.

The first item discussed was the results of the spring elections for the Lehman's Executive Committee (EC) and the University Faculty Senate (UFS) representatives. Professor Prohaska introduced the newly elected members and asked them to briefly stand up. Additionally, Professor Prohaska invited all Lehman's faculty to speak with any of the EC or UFS representatives if there is any issue or difficulty that they want to talk about. Professor Danna Ethan was recognized for introducing an electronic election system that resulted in an unprecedented turn out of number of votes.

The meeting proceeded with the acknowledgment of the newly hired faculty that joined Lehman College this semester, who were asked to introduce themselves and briefly speak about their area of scholarship. They received a warm welcome from the Lehman's community. Additionally, the Executive Committee recognized those who received academic accomplishments during the previous academic year such as certificate of continuous employment (CCE), tenure or promotion (from Assistant to Associate and from Associate to Full professors) at Lehman College.

The next business in the agenda was the election of three members (no more than one representative per school) of the Student Evaluation Advisory Committee. This Advisory group was proposed during a previous Senate meeting with the goal of counseling Associate Provost Becker on the student evaluations' form. Members of the Executive Committee distributed and then collected the ballots among the attendees of the general faculty meeting. The results of this election was not available at the end of the meeting and the outcome is expected to be announced soon. FOLLOW-UP: Those elected were Deirdre O'Boy (ENG), Ann Rothstein (ECCE) and Carl Mazza (SWK). Associate Provost Becker suggested that those who volunteered to stand for election but were not elected would collaborate in some extent in the student evaluation review process.

Next in the agenda was Interim Provost Harriet Fayne's report who started her presentation by outlining the academic goals of her office. Some of the actionable items that the Provost office aims to accomplish were described as follows: 1) create work flow procedures to increase accuracy and timeliness in order to reduce redundancy and confusion with the goal of producing reliable information; 2) to close the gaps in pending initiatives that have been delayed during the past academic years including a chair's evaluation form and an online course evaluation form; 3) incentivize collaborative work between the library, deans and academic departments to create action plans for high profile programs and academic units in the short term (within this year) and long term (roadmaps to be accomplished within the next three to five years); 4) create informal communities of practice to enhance teaching and scholarship across academic departments; 5) operationalize some critical institutional needs such as the middle states self-study, ways to fund research, strategic plans for enrollment with emphasis on internationalizing Lehman's student population, etc., and 6) develop a strategic plan for research, including staffing key areas to facilitate the process.

Professor Robert Farrell, Lehman's Chapter Chair of the PSC-CUNY, presented his report. Professor Farrell started discussing issues of when faculty will get the retroactive pay derived from the new contract. He stated that CUNY officials let faculty know that a bonus will be paid in October and that salaries and retroactive pay is forthcoming before January 2017. Information on the new salary scale can be found in the PSC-CUNY website and e-mail communication previously sent. The delay is explained by administrative issues at the NYS Comptroller's Office. The second point discussed was the groundless rumor of tightening retroactive pay to the upcoming budget; Professor Farrell read paragraphs of the new State budget (financial plan), which anticipates new money to fund CUNY's salary increase. A third point was the concern regarding the 2 and 3 year adjunct appointments, a measure addressed by the adjunct's liaison Timothy Marquart across the campus; this policy will be discussed with department chairs soon. Additionally, a new appointment process is scheduled to be discussed in a chapter meeting soon. Professor Farrell made himself available personally, via e-mail or phone to all faculty.

The UFS report was delivered by Professor Anne Rice. She informed us that the previous UFS plenary meeting took place on September 20th, where Chancellor James Milliken highlighted achievements, including the fact that CUNY graduated the highest number of students last year, the need to connect all CUNY campuses among themselves and with the city, the need ~~for more online education, and~~ the increasing demand for more online education, etc. Also, Chancellor Milliken ~~informed~~ that the CUNY master plan will be revised and adopted on an upcoming Board or Trustees meeting. Professor Rice spoke about the report of CUNY's Provost Vita Rabinowitz on remediation and the CUNY task force on remediation in which the algebra requirement will be replaced for those majoring in areas different from STEM. Vice Chancellor Frederick Schaffer addressed revised policies on freedom of expression, ~~which is~~ the result of faculty inputs on this subject. Professor Sandy Cooper presented a resolution to honor former UFS chair Henry H. Wasser. A tribute by (last name??) and Professor Manfred Philipp also appears on the UFS website. Finally, concerns of NYS Comptroller's report on CUNYFirst were mentioned by Professor Rice.

Dean Deirdre Pettipiece presented the Middle States report. She started by defining the role of Middle States, institutional effectiveness studies, aiming to investigate school's practices and policies over time based on an ongoing revision of needs and goals. On a Middle State periodic review report, Lehman College as well as many other academic institutions received two commendations on institutional effectiveness and assessment; however, there are some urgent matters to address in order to comply with requirements by the next visit. Dean Pettipiece made a call to faculty, staff and administration for openness to include recommendations of the assessments suggested for change and expectations. There is a new timeline (8-year cycle with a 4-year cycle assessment) to revise Lehman's practices. However, middle states revisions are still in the 10-year cycle. There is steering committee that met and reviewed the draft of Dean Pettipiece's plan.

In the final part of the general faculty meeting, President Jose Luis Cruz delivered a speech with his vision for Lehman College. He started his presentation by speaking about his research and academic interest, emphasizing his strong interest in higher education policy and practice. President Cruz spoke about his 6 points plan for the upcoming year: 1) clarifying Lehman's vision and solidifying its identity as an urban serving institution; 2) making sure that Lehman complies with the multiple accreditation agencies in order to identify areas of improvement and development; 3) based on the 5 years Provost's report, choosing selectively the most promising areas of improvements in teaching, research and service; 4 and 5) enrollment management as to increase and diversify the student body as well as addressing issues of financial management, while emphasizing importance of graduation rates and narrowing achievement gaps, and 6) diversify and increase revenue streams across the board to invest more resources in faculty performance. In response to a question, President Cruz emphasized the fundamental importance of the classroom and instructor's individual efforts in increasing educational attainments. The definition of urban serving institution was brought up to the discussion and President Cruz spoke about 3 interrelated areas to achieve these goals: a) how to increase the impact, b) how to expand reach and c) how to do it while maintaining excellence.

The next general faculty meeting is scheduled to take place on November 30th, 2016 at the East Dining Room. The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm.