Minutes of
The Lehman College Senate Meeting
Wednesday, December 9, 2009


The meeting was called to order by President Ricardo R. Fernandez at 3:40 p.m.

Minutes Adopted-

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the minutes of the Senate meeting of November 18, 2009. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Announcements and Communication-

a. President Ricardo R. Fernández-

1. President Fernandez briefly discussed the New York State Budget. The assumption is
that the Governor will not be presenting an early budget—as he did last year on December 15. There are still many unresolved budget elements, as has been made clear in the media, and the president said that he expected the budget to be presented on January 15.

2. The Board of Trustees met to approve a number of measures included in CUNY’s budget request, which amounts to approximately $1.8 billion. We will be looking in mid-January to see what the actual State Budget contains. President Fernández was pleased to confirm that the request for Phase II of the Lehman Science facility was included in the budget draft; he was very hopeful that this item would be approved. Typically, he noted, in times of budget difficulties, capital projects provide work, and the State tends to look more favorably upon them.

3. The Provost’s Holiday Celebration is scheduled for December 16 at 4:00 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center lobby, and the usual campus holiday celebration will take place on December 18 in the afternoon.

4. On Tuesday, December 15, Governor David Paterson will be holding an Open Forum in the Lovinger Theater. It is open to the community. The Governor has been holding these public meetings in every borough. They enable residents to share their concerns and questions and hear what the Governor has to say.

5. The President wished student members success in their final examinations and projects. To everyone else, he hoped for a very happy and healthy holiday and New Year.

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**Student Conference**

1. Ms. Hyacinth Bouzalakos, Student Conference Chair, reported that the special elections went well. The Student Conference now stands at 30 members; seven new senators were elected. We started out with eight members and are now up to 30. Ms. Bouzalakos thanked everyone who helped make the first semester so productive.

2. Ms. Bouzalakos reported that a meeting was held last week to discuss the Student Government Association documents, including the bylaws; hopefully, by next semester, the issues will be resolved.
REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES

a. Committee on Governance

1. Prof. Duane Tananbaum noted that the committee has been quite busy since the last Senate meeting.

2. Members of the committee met today with the Provost and two members of the Department of Health Sciences to discuss the draft governance document for the new School of Public Health that CUNY is creating. It was a productive meeting and covered many substantive points—as well as providing suggestions for revisions. The Governance Committee also met today and resolved to bring the final governance document of the School of Public Health to the Senate for its information. We also believe that if the Senate votes its approval of the document, it will strengthen Lehman’s participation in the program.

3. Last month, members of the committee met with Prof. Ira Bloom, the chair of the Strategic Planning Council, to convey some of our concerns about the School of Public Health governance document. We expressed our hope that a clause or article be added stating explicitly that the report’s recommendations would be implemented in accordance with the existing governance plan and structure of Lehman College.

4. In November, we met with the Provost, and the chairs of the undergraduate curriculum—as well as the graduate studies committees—to discuss the roles of the divisional curriculum committees. It is our impression that the only group currently functioning is the one in the Arts and Humanities. The Provost provided us with her rationale for establishing divisional curriculum committees. All the committee chairs provided information on how the process is working, and it was agreed to reexamine the issue in February to determine the progress that has been made in the fall semester.

5. In February, the Governance Committee will be scheduling meetings with all of the chairs of the Senate’s Standing Committees. A number of these individuals are new to their roles, and we want to ensure that all committee chairs are aware of issues under their jurisdictions, as well as some of the prerogatives of the Senate and of their particular committees. Committee chairs will receive an e-mail in early February to set up a mutually convenient time to meet.
6. Concerning the revisions in the governance documents that were presented in some
detail at the last meeting: there are changes in the language covering “vacancies.” We
want to make it clear that “vacancies” refer to an individual who is no longer employed
or matriculated at Lehman College.

7. Another issue that came up at the last meeting was the requirement that four members
of department Personnel and Budget Committees be tenured. We left that provision as is;
the wording mirrors the current statement on the subject in the CUNY By-Laws. So we
brought our document into accord with those provisions: four of the five members of
department P&B Committees should be tenured, unless there are fewer than four tenured
members in the department. We recognize that special circumstances can arise; for
example, if a tenured department member is unwilling to sit on the committee. However,
since the CUNY By-Laws did not cite such an occurrence, it did not make sense for our
by-laws to deal with it either. If need be, this situation may be examined in more detail
and possibly dealt with through the use of a separate amendment. It is my understanding
that CUNY currently handles this situation through separate memoranda issued by
CUNY’s General Counsel.

8. To restate the main changes the Governance Committee has proposed: the
committee’s size will be cut down to 102 members comprised of 51 faculty members; 17
administrators or non-teaching instructional staff; and 34 students. Faculty members will
represent each department; the additional faculty required will be elected at-large. Also,
administrative members were provided with the right to vote in their committees.

9. The changes proposed were approved unanimously.

b. **Committee on Admissions, Evaluations, and Academic Standards**-

There was no report.

c. **Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum**-

1. Professor Barbara Jacobson presented proposals from the Departments of Biological
Sciences; Economics and Business; Environmental, Geographic, & Geological Sciences;
Health Sciences; and the interdisciplinary program in Linguistics. She also presented two
informational items relating to experimental courses in the Departments of Biological
2. Professor Jacobson also read a correction concerning required courses for a proposed new Interdisciplinary Minor, Business for the Liberal Arts, that should read as “Three credits in Communication or Ethics (Communications 300 or Philosophy 330),” instead of 3 - 4 in Communication. She noted in response to a question that this language change has been through several revisions since the prior Senate meeting. She described the Senate discussion as very helpful; the committee considered the points raised quite carefully.

3. In regard to a comment urging a description of all the changes that had been made to the proposal which the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee had distributed to the Senate in November, Professor Jacobson described these updates: in regard to a new interdisciplinary minor in the Department of Economics and Business, the number of credits required has changed from 12-18 credits to 12-17; the program name has been altered to Business for the Liberal Arts (instead of Business and the Liberal Arts); in terms of required courses, the number of 100-level courses has been diminished; the requirements for the 12-credit minor now include one 100-level course, one 200-level course, and two 300-level courses. The 12-credit minor itself is a new proposal. If students achieve a 3.0 grade point average, they can then proceed on to take a five-credit Humanities course. That course, “Humanities Internship (HUM 470),” also received a new proposal and course description. There was discussion regarding these changes. The specified program changes were unanimously approved.

4. Two additional changes in the description of Business for the Liberal Arts were also unanimously approved by the Senate: Prof. Orhan Kayaalp, Chair of the Department of Economics and Business, was designated as Program Director (replacing Ms. Michelle Carr, of Institutional Advancement, who is the program administrator). Dance was added to the List of Approved Liberal Arts Majors.

d. **Committee on Graduate Studies**

1. Professor Janet DeSimone described three proposals: from the Office of Graduate Studies; the Department of Environmental, Geographic, & Geological Sciences; and the
2. All three proposals were approved unanimously.

e. **Committee on Academic Freedom**

1. Professor Jessica Shiller introduced herself: she is the newly elected chair of the Academic Freedom Committee and is an assistant professor of education in the Department of Middle and High School Education.

2. The Academic Freedom Committee at Lehman College has been essentially inactive for a few years. We plan to change that and become quite active with our first task being an examination of the College’s Academic Freedom Statement. We had a great meeting last month with 12 attendees—both students and faculty members—and we began to consider the statement. We want to bring the issues of academic freedom to the college community and make people aware that we exist. If any of you discover issues of academic freedom that need addressing, please contact me or one of the members of the committee. We hope to increase the presence of the committee on the campus.

f. **Committee on Library, Technology, and Telecommunications**

1. Mr. James Carney informed the Senate that there had not been a full committee hearing, but rather a fruitful sub-committee meeting (with student participation).

2. He reminded Senate members that a detailed e-mail had been distributed on December 8 describing the new printing system. Additional information, for example on web applications, will be provided as the system is phased in.

3. The annual CUNY Information Technology conference was held last week. There was a new item presented: “The CUNY Academic Commons,” which might be described as “Facebook for Faculty.” It allows faculty to set up work groups and to conduct conversations—both on-campus and system wide—and will be a very useful tool. To access it, go to the CUNY website and search for the CUNY Academic Commons.

4. A request was submitted to the Provost's Office for a presentation on the implementation of the CUNY FIRST system on the Lehman campus.
Committee on Campus Life and Facilities -

1. Professor Janet Tilley opened by noting that the Initiative to Reduce Second-Hand Smoke on Campus goes into effect January 1, 2010. At the start of the Initiative, there will be friendly reminders to smokers that smoking is prohibited within 20 feet of a building entrance or air intake area. Actual enforcement of the Initiative will begin with the fall 2010 semester.

2. The Food Services Sub-Committee has met a number of times to monitor the new vendor, who is still getting used to Lehman; there may be more changes over the break as they remodel and institute some new practices. In addition, there will be another Food Services Survey. The Sub-Committee wants to thank the college community for participating so consistently and thoroughly in the prior survey: it was most helpful. We are hoping to receive good feedback from the student body and other campus constituencies. We expect the survey to be distributed at the beginning of the spring term—the end of January or early February—so we can use the spring semester to examine everyone’s input.

3. We are contemplating another feasibility study in regard to food services. The units now are without kitchens, and yet we need much more robust food services available on campus.

4. The committee was provided with an update on the status of the Student Housing Feasibility Studies. There have been a number of studies undertaken to assess such issues as demand, unit layout, and pricing. But the current economic situation is not conducive to building at this time. It is however, something we are examining, and it is likely that Lehman will build something down the road.

5. The committee received an update on the “Swing Space Study.” When Phase II construction begins on the Science Building, we will need to demolish the “T-3” building. That means that all the programs housed in that facility will need to put somewhere else. Should they be housed off-campus or on-campus? This is just one of the questions that are being addressed. Phase One construction is underway; Phase Two of the Science Building will begin in the not-so-distant future.

6. More generally, our space needs on campus are dire. Enrollment is up 42% over the last seven years, and is slated to rise an additional 21% by 2016. Another study was
undertaken to examine the College’s general space requirements. Some of the proposals in this forthcoming study include: adding on to Phase II construction of the Science Building (incorporating a tower in one corner); building an extension to Davis Hall; the possibility of some off-campus siting for certain departments (they have been apprised of this possibility). All of these suggestions are now in discussion, and we are examining how these proposals affect the campus.

7. The Sustainability Council met and is in the final stages of creating a ten-year Sustainability Plan, which encompasses a wide variety of topics ranging from waste management to energy procurement to the curriculum. Faculty should be aware that double-sided printing is going into effect at all Information Technology labs, and is now the default. A memo went out yesterday explaining how to print on both sides of a sheet. The Sustainability Council urges faculty members to accept double-sided papers from students—if they are still accepting paper (rather than pdfs.)

h. Committee on Budget and Long Range Planning-
There was no report.

i. Committee on the University Faculty Senate-
1. Professor Manfred Philipp alerted the Senate to the cancellation of the December 11 conference; the primary speaker, Vice Chancellor Ernesto Malave, passed away while in Puerto Rico attending another meeting.

2. A meeting planned for December 15 was also cancelled. The primary speakers were all unable to attend.

3. The Faculty Experience Survey is now complete, and we are now going to evaluate the results over the next month. We had a very good response rate—a little less from part-time faculty, and a little more from full-time—and we thank all of you who participated.

4. At the last Board of Trustees meeting, one of the items discussed was the budget. In this area, there were two items of salient interest.

The Chancellor’s salary, according to public document, rose by $40,000 to $490,000 and achieved parity with SUNY’s chancellor. Professor Philipp explained that this is a competitive salary—although much higher than the governor and other State officials.
There is a concern on the Board that when the current chancellor leaves, one needs to attract a topflight person for the position and thus this high salary is required. At the same time, tuition was raised by $90 per academic year for the senior colleges and $60 per year for the community colleges. We believe this requires confirmation by the State. This is still below the TAP limit, so that students who are eligible for TAP will still be covered entirely. Professor Philipp pointed out that SUNY is much closer to the TAP limit—within $5 or $10—so they cannot raise tuition without exposing TAP students to financial pain. When the Board voted on whether to increase tuition costs, the delegate from the University Student Senate abstained. Most of the funds gained through this increase will go to Albany and not the University—although this is not always the case. In time, increasing proportions of the increase will remain with the University.

5. The Task Force on the PSC-CUNY Awards Programs will meet later this month. The Faculty Senate met with the Professional Staff Congress’ (PSC) central officers. The PSC has decided to take this issue to the negotiation process with the management side to get a resolution. They will ask that the PSC-CUNY Awards not be altered while these negotiations are in process.

6. The University Faculty Senate has issued a call for liaisons—as it does every year. Volunteers are needed to serve on the University Committee on Research Awards; that service essentially makes them chairs of the committee for their disciplines. There are liaisons in every discipline. The University Faculty Senate proposes three names in each discipline to the Chancellor, and he picks among those three. The PSC-CUNY contract does not include this procedure; this is a process specified by the University Committee on Research Awards bylaws. The contract itself says that the Chancellor appoints the University Committee on Research Awards (UCRA). There are indications that some members of the Chancellery are going to advocate that the Chancellor do that without reference to the University Faculty Senate so as to more rapidly restructure the program. If there were indications that this was going to happen, I would report that to you.

7. The discussions on the State Budget are continuing. We expect to see the proposed Executive Budget early next year and are hoping for the best. As of now, we have done fairly well given the current state of affairs.

8. In response to a question, Professor Philipp commented on a promise Mayor Michael
Bloomberg made during the mayoral election campaign. He vowed to provide an extra $50 million for the community colleges, but we have not seen that money yet.

OLD BUSINESS-
There was no new business.

NEW BUSINESS-
There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT-
The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Esdras Tulier