Minutes of
The Lehman College Senate Meeting
Wednesday, April 29, 2009


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

Minutes Adopted:

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the minutes of the Senate meeting of April 1, 2009. The minutes were unanimously approved with the amendment that Prof. Robert Feinerman did in fact present a short report on the Budget and Long-Range Planning Committee.

Announcements and Communication-

a. President Ricardo R. Fernández-

President Fernández reported that at last Monday’s Board of Trustees meeting, the Chancellor announced that the University would implement the tuition increase that had been
approved by the Trustees in December 2008: $300 a semester, $600 a year. A certain
amount will be given back to the colleges as an investment in CUNY.
The President was pleased to hear that CUNY faculty won six Guggenheim fellowships. One
of our faculty members, Prof. Victoria Sanford from the Department of Anthropology, was
among the recipients. Earlier today, President Fernández attended a session in which Prof.
Sanford discussed her research on the massacres that took place in small towns in Guatemala
in the 1980s. She is working with human rights groups to bring some of those responsible to
justice. There was another distinction for Prof. Patricio Lerzundi, who won an Emmy for his
CUNY TV series *Nueva York*.
In addition, the President mentioned the Research Conference sponsored by Academic
Affairs that was held last week. He expressed his pride in the presentations given by our
students. He congratulated the students who presented and the faculty who worked with them
to develop these projects.
At last Sunday’s Holocaust Remembrance event that was held at Temple Emanuel, Lehman
was represented by Acting Dean Deena Bernstein and some of the students.

b. **Student Conference**

1. Mr. Jason Jeremias, Student Conference Chair, reported on the student elections. Last
night the Conference had a record turnout.
2. Mr. Jeremias registered some concern from students on how late Fall registration is.
Students wondered why this was happening.
3. The Conference is helping to sponsor the “Take Back the Night” series, which is taking
place tomorrow night, beginning with a rally at 6 p.m. in the Old Gym Building and then a
march and a candle-light vigil against domestic violence that takes place on campuses all
over the country.

**REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES**

a. **Committee on Governance**

1. Prof. Duane Tananbaum began with the election of the Senate committees. A full-slate
was distributed with the material for the meeting. He read the list of continuing members on
the committees, the names of the committees and the nominees proposed by the Governance
Committee. Everyone nominated has accepted. Prof. Tananbaum elaborated that nominees
could be added from the floor, or the slate could be approved as a whole. The nominees for the two-year terms were as follows:

**Committee on Academic Freedom:** Prof. Robert Valentine, Department of History; Prof. Margo Dellicarpini, Department of Middle and High School Education; and Prof. Mario Gonzalez-Corzo, Department of Economics and Business. **Committee on Admissions, Evaluations, Academic Standards:** Prof. Anne Rice, Department of African and African American Studies; Prof. Ralph William Boone, Department of English; and Prof. Andrei Jitianu, Department of Chemistry. **Committee on Budget and Long-Range Planning:** Prof. Helene Silverman, Department of Early Childhood and Childhood Education; Prof. John Mineka, Department of Math and Computer Science; Prof. Carmen Saen-de-Casas, Department of Languages and Literature; **Committee on Campus Life and Facilities:** Prof. Janette Tilley, Department of Music, Prof. Patricia Kolb, Department of Social Work; and Prof. Teresita Levy, Department of Latin American and Puerto Rican Studies. **Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum:** Prof. Robert Feinerman, Department of Math and Computer Science; Prof. Banoum Bertrade Ngo-Ngijol, Department of African and African American Studies; and Prof. Valerie Louisy-Louis Larifla, Department of Economics and Business. **Committee on Graduate Studies:** Prof. Sharon Freedberg, Department of Social Work, Prof. Grace Bullaro, Department of English, Prof. Juan J. De La Cruz, Department of Economics and Business. A motion was made for the election of the above and they were approved by voice vote.

2. As for the **Committee on the Library, Technology and Telecommunications**, the Governance Committee presented as nominees: Mr. James Carney, Department of Journalism, Communication and Theatre; Prof. Emine Kayaalp, Department of Economics and Business; Prof. Chuck Woolridge, Department of History. The nomination of Prof. Susan Markens, Department of Sociology, was made from the floor. A ballot vote was taken, with instruction to select three out of the four. Prof. Woolridge, Prof. Markens and Mr. Carney were elected.

3. The Governance Committee presented a slate of six nominees for the **Lehman College Association for Campus Activities, Inc.** (2009-2010): Prof. Andrea Boyar, Department of Health Sciences, Prof. Grace Bullaro, Department of English; Prof. Vassilios Gargalas, Department of Economics and Business, Prof. David Manier, Department of Psychology; Prof. Roman Muchnik, Department of Math and Computer Science, and Prof. Amanda Wunder, Department of History. Prof. Maryam Bamshad-Alavi, Department of Biological
Sciences, was then nominated from the floor. A ballot vote was taken and Prof. Maryam Bamshad-Alavi, Prof. Andrea Boyar, Prof. Grace Bullaro, Prof. Vassilios Gargalas, Prof. David Manier, and Prof. Amanda Wunder were elected. The president will appoint three out of the six persons elected.

4. A vote was taken for the Auxiliary Enterprise Corporation (2009-2010). The two nominees presented by the Governance Committee were Prof. Allan Hollander, Department of Music and Prof. Thomas O’Hanlon of the Department of Journalism, Communication and Theatre. The slate was approved. The President will appoint one.

5. The Governance Committee is meeting at 3 p.m. on Friday in the Library’s Tree House Room. Ballots will be tabulated for the 78 people who will be nominated for faculty-at-large and then the appropriate number for other at-large groups as well. Results will go out early next week.

6. Work is continuing on revising the Governance document at the Friday meeting. When finished, it will be presented to CUNY and will then be brought before this body in the fall.

7. The final item was listed under “new business” on the agenda, but it’s part of the Governance Committee’s report. It is a resolution which reads as follows: “Resolved: The Lehman College Senate recommends that the organization and structure of the PSC Award Program not be changed.” Prof. Tananbaum explained the reasons for the resolution. Discussion followed. A motion to table the resolution was approved.

b. Committee on Admissions, Evaluations and Academic Standards-

1. Prof. Kevin Sailor submitted a list of undergraduate and graduate candidates for September 1, 2009 and undergraduate and graduate candidates for May 28, 2009. The lists were approved subject to review by the registrar.

2. Prof. Sailor then discussed grading practices at Lehman. He distributed a table graph that shows the grades in the distribution areas in the General Education Curriculum. The graph shows that 70 percent of the grades are As or Bs, with only 5 percent Ds and 7 percent Fs. A is considered excellent, a B is good, a C is satisfactory, a D is poor, and F is, of course, failing. A vast majority of our students are performing well in their courses. The Committee also took a look at the candidates for graduation this spring. It turns out that in the GPAs earned by these graduates, 35 percent had a 3.4 index or higher, which would qualify them for college honors. So this would indicate that many of our students are performing at high levels. This raises issues such as when you compare the small portion of Ds and Fs. A
number of programs are put into place such as entrance requirements and progression
requirements. What we need to think about, he said, is whether these grade distributions
reflect student performance here. On the other hand, our admission requirements disqualified
half of the applicants in contrast with the former entrance requirements. The central question
is: are these grades what we really think to be true?

c. **Undergraduate Studies** –

1. Prof. Barbara Jacobson presented proposals from six departments and two programs.
They come from: the Department of African and African American Studies; the Department
of History; the Department of Journalism, Communication and Theatre; the Department of
Philosophy; the Department of Political Science; the Department of Psychology; the Program
in Women’s Studies; and the Program in Urban Studies. Prof. Jacobson noted that this new
minor in Urban Community Development from the Program in Urban Studies was initiated
by the Student Conference. The report was approved.

2. The next committee meeting will be on May 13 at 12:30 p.m. in Carman 51.

d. **Committee on Graduate Studies**-

Prof. Timothy Alborn presented eight proposals: (one) from the Department of Music; (one)
from the Department of Art; (two) proposals from the Department of Counseling,
Leadership, Literacy, and Special Education; (two) proposals from the Department of Middle
and High School Education; (one) from the Division of Education; and (one) from the Office
of Graduate Studies. The report was approved.

e. **Committee on Academic Freedom**-

There was no formal report from the podium, but it was announced that the next committee
meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on May 12 in Davis 223.

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

There was no report.

g. **Committee on Campus Life and Facilities**-

1. Prof. Maryam Bamshad-Alavi presented the report. She stated that the Committee has
worked with Public Safety to develop a security policy that addresses electronic equipment.
The policy calls for etching and placing stickers on all equipment, shock alarms on large equipment and a three-tiered approach to recovery software. A CUNY-wide pricing arrangement will enable us to have recovery and protection software for laptops. “Complete” will be installed directly by Dell computers on all new PC laptops by Lehman’s IT department on new Macs. It will provide five years of search and recovery protection at a cost of $90 per year. The Department of Public Safety reports that since the engraving and police ID program has been put into effect, there have been no significant thefts of marked equipment (with the exception of a laptop taken from an office where the door was left open). Part of the policy places responsibility on departments to replace equipment if all of the security recommendations are not in place. This has significantly improved compliance among departments. In some cases, covert cameras are used to deter thieves. The committee also recommends vigilance on the part of students, faculty and staff to keep doors locked and alarms armed. The committee is pleased with the positive results of the policy and will continue to work with Public Safety as required.

3. The Food Services Sub-Committee has met several times and is working toward making a final recommendation within the next two weeks on a new food vendor. The committee will also be looking into the food offered in vending machines since students raised concerns about more healthful foods.

4. A resolution was presented to the committee concerning the placement of smoking areas on campus. Studies showing the health risk posed by second-hand smoke inspired a coalition of faculty and students to do an intensive study of this issue on campus. The resolution, which the committee endorses, calls for the creation of official smoking areas on campus placed at least 20 feet away from all doors and air-intake vents. The policy would be enacted through signage, the movement of ashtrays away from doors to smoking areas, and friendly, non-punitive reminders for smokers to avoid doors and vents. The policy will go into effect on January 1, 2010 after a public awareness campaign during the Fall 2009 semester. (Complete research material, rationale, proposed smoking areas, and petitions are available from the committee).

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

i. **University Faculty Senate**
   1. The March 31 plenary featured Executive Vice Chancellor Allan H. Dobrin and University Information Officer Brian Cohen, who discussed the problem with Blackboard. It
became apparent that there is an inadequate connection between CUNY’s IT Steering Committee, which contains administrative representatives from each campus, and each of the campus faculty governance groups. Vice Chancellor Dobrin had been under the impression that campus faculty governance had requested the update to Blackboard 8 from Blackboard 6, since the administrative representatives from most of the campuses had (apparently) advocated such a change. This was given as the reason why Blackboard 8 was not first tested on a smaller number of campuses before being made the standard for all but three campuses. Since CUNY has been unable to get Black Board 8 to run reliably, CUNY’s implementation of the system is being moved to the Blackboard Corporation’s own corporate servers.

2. The University Faculty Senate Plenary has conducted nominations for the five at-large positions on the University Faculty Senate Executive Committee. All of the incumbents: Prof. Stefan Baumrin, (Graduate Center), Prof. Sandi Cooper (College of Staten Island), Prof. Anne Friedman (Borough of Manhattan Community College), Prof. Leslie Jacobson (Brooklyn College), and Prof. Philip Pecorino, (Queensborough Community College), were re-nominated. Prof. Michael Barnhart (Kingsborough Community College), Prof. Terrence Martell (Baruch College), and Rishi Raj (City College of New York), were also nominated. The nomination period remains open until the election takes place at the May 5 plenary. At-large members of the University Faculty Senate have generally received released time allotment for their services, which include mandatory participation in certain Board of Trustees meetings, acting as liaison to University Faculty Senate committees, and other duties.

3. The plenary heard reports on presidential searches at Brooklyn College, Hostos Community College, and Medgar Evers College. These reports were delivered by faculty members at those campuses. Meanwhile, the new Hostos president is Dr. Felix Matos Rodriguez, Associate Professor at Hunter and the Graduate Center, Director of the Center of Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter and Cabinet Secretary for the Department of the Family in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Also, interim Vice Chancellor Alexandra Logue has been confirmed as Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and University Provost.

4. For the third successive plenary, a discussion was held on the PSC-CUNY awards process. This time the panel consisted of Prof. Kathryn Richardson, (New York City College of Technology), chair of the University Faculty Senate Research Committee, and Jim Gordon (Hunter). The panel was introduced by Professor Friedman. A resolution endorsing the Joint Resolution of the University Committee on Research Awards (UCRA) and the University
Faculty Senate Research Committee was introduced by Professor Pecorino. The resolution passed unanimously.

5. The University has requested $560,000 from the Gates Foundation for planning a new community college. This does not include a required $280,000 match. The new community college (NCC) steering committee has added one faculty member from each existing community college, who, in each case, is the person recommended by the college’s faculty governance leadership. This is in addition to the University Faculty Senate memberships.

6. The University Faculty Senate Faculty Experience Survey created by Prof. Kathleen Barker and Prof. Dean Savage is complete and the funding package needed to execute it was provided by Executive Vice Chancellor Lexa Logue. The survey will be conducted in the fall.

7. The Chemistry, Biology, Biochemistry, and Physics Discipline Council resolved that the CUNY Advanced Science Research Facility, located on the City College of New York campus, establish a governance body that includes elected faculty representatives. The Council also resolved that senior colleges that engage in curricular changes hold community college transfer students who are in the pipeline, harmless to those changes. Curricular changes should apply only well after the community college departments are notified of the changes and have an opportunity to adjust their own curricula.

OLD BUSINESS
There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS
There was no new business

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Esdras Tulier