Minutes of
The Lehman College Senate Meeting
Wednesday, March 2, 2011
Senate Meeting


The meeting was called to order by President Ricardo R. Fernández at 3:42 p.m.

President Fernández announced that due to absence of a quorum during the December 15th and February 2nd meetings, those minutes could not be approved and would have to be deferred until the next Senate meeting.

Announcements and Communications—

a. 1. The President reported that yesterday he headed a delegation from the CUNY Bronx schools to Albany. The students and others who traveled to Albany had an opportunity to
talk to state legislators. They addressed some of the significant issues pertaining to the Bronx. One of these is the proposed budget reduction for the community colleges. This is very significant because every dollar they lose from the state, they lose from the city. The delegation also met with staff of several senators. As for the budget, it is expected to be on time. However, the Senate is now controlled by Republicans and there is very little negotiating so far.

2. Finally, the President noted that this has been a very different year compared to others, with so many demands placed on Albany because of the reductions. He urged everyone to go to SupportCUNY.org and post messages to legislators about what CUNY means for the State of New York. Over 5,000 messages have been posted but more are needed. We need to tell the legislature that although this has been a difficult year, public higher education must continue to be funded. It is problematic because we know we are facing major reductions. Already $205 million was cut last year, and $95 million this year. We’ve just received information that CUNY colleges cannot replace individuals who took early retirement because of budget restrictions.

b. Student Conference–

1. Mr. Marvin Bennett reported that petitioning for the Student Government Association Constitution is underway. Student Conference is collecting signatures.

2. Next week, March 9th, a meeting of the Student Conference will be held to fill vacant positions.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES–

c. Committee on Graduate Studies–

Professor Janet DeSimone had one item to present, a new course from the Department of History (HIW726.) Due to absence of a quorum, the item was presented as an informational item. The next meeting is March 9th at 11 a.m.

d. Governance Committee–

1. Professor Duane Tananbaum presented the nominees to serve on the Senate Committees:

   **Committee on Admissions, Evaluation and Academic Standards:** Prof. Alyshia Galvez,
Department of Latin American and Puerto Rican Studies, until May 2012; **Campus Life and Facilities:** Prof. Carol Gross, Department of Early Childhood and Childhood Education, until May 2011; and **Budget and Long Range Planning:** Prof. Manfred Philipp, Department of Chemistry, until May 2011. He suggested that the chairs of the above committees include the future nominees in notifications of meetings.

2. He also reported that emails will be sent to everyone for nominations for senators at large. This is the first election that will be conducted under the new governance document. One of the changes made is to cut down the size of the Senate body from 140 members to 102. The same proportions will be retained. Starting in September, with a more compact body, the senate will be more able to achieve a quorum. He reported that the Committee will compile a ballot from the nominees.

3. The Committee will also be sending out solicitations for nominations for Senate committees. Half of the faculty members’ terms expire each year; therefore, there will be vacant seats for one half of the faculty.

4. Prof. Tananbaum urged the committee chairs to send the approved minutes of their meetings to the Office of the Special Counsel, as we need to have a permanent record.

5. He then reported that Committee on Structure activities have been put on hold because a number of that committee’s members have been very much involved in working up a response to CUNY’s proposal regarding general education and transfer. The Board of Trustees wants to deal with this issue by changing the General Education requirements at all campuses. The Board is proposing a task force charged with improving the transfer process by requiring uniform General Education requirements. Specifically, here at Lehman, we would be limited to a 36 requirement. Lehman currently has 50 credit requirements for lower division students; therefore, our students would be taking 14 credits fewer in General Education. As Assemblywoman Deborah Glick recently wrote in the Albany Times Union, the main mission of SUNY and CUNY is “honoring critical thinking and exposing students to new areas of study and interest.” Prof. Tananbaum said that we accomplish this through General Education and through distribution requirements. It’s important that students receive a maximum exposure to liberal arts. He added that Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has spent the last 15 years improving academic quality and standard of Lehman. The
purpose of this is so that a CUNY degree will mean something. Lessening General Education requirements will devalue a Lehman degree. Discussion followed.

e. **Committee on Admissions, Evaluations and Academic Standards**–
Professor Anne Rice reported that their committee met for the first time yesterday. At this meeting, Ms. Lisa Moalam, the retention and articulation specialist at Lehman, presented the proposed modifications to the probation policy, which will be brought before the Senate for a vote at the next meeting. They have been following very closely the efforts to formulate a response to the pathways initiative.

f. **Undergraduate Curriculum**–
1. Professor Barbara Jacobson presented informational items. There were two items from the last Senate meeting from the Department of English and the Interdisciplinary Program in Linguistics. This month, there are informational items from the Department of Anthropology, the Department of History, the Department of Psychology and from the Macauley Honors College. Discussion followed.
2. The next meeting of the Curriculum Committee will meet March 16th in Carman Hall, room 263.

g. **Academic Freedom**–There was no report.

h. **Library, Technology and Telecommunications**–
1. Mr. James Carney announced that there was no report but announced that the tech fee requests should be in the dean’s office at this point and that process is moving along fairly well. A clarification of the phone use policy was sent to all departments. He encouraged everyone to read it. He spoke briefly of data security of faculty and staff regarding phasing out the use of social security numbers on SIMS, and this also seems to moving very smoothly. Discussion followed.
2. Their next meeting is March 7th in Carman Hall, room 263.
3. **Campus Life and Facilities**–There was no report.
4. **Budget and Long Range Planning**–There was no report.

5. **University Faculty Senate**–See attached report.

**Old Business**–

Due to absence of a quorum, the resolution: Amendments to Governance Documents and bylaws changing “Student Conference” to “Student Government Assembly” was tabled until the next Senate meeting.

**New Business**–

There was none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Fernández adjourned the meeting at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Esdras Tulier