Minutes of
The Lehman College Senate Meeting
Wednesday, March 4, 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 February 4, 2009. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Announcements and Communication-

a. President Ricardo R. Fernández-

1. President Fernández reported that the situation with the budget was “fluid.” He understands that a real effort is being made to complete the budget by the end of this month. It’s supposed to be adopted by April 1. Lehman College’s budget year is July 1 through June
30. And we have a Federal budget on October 1. So we have all kinds of variables in the mix. People are still trying to sort out what the “stimulus package” means for each of the states. It is something we are closely watching, along with the University. In the beginning of April, a conference, “Somos El Futuro,” will be held in Albany and will be attended by staff and student representatives.

2. The President discussed the issue of the college being closed on Monday due to the snow storm. It didn’t turn out to be what the weather bureau predicted. Normally, we try to get the information out earlier. The alert was posted on the college website around 7 a.m.; it should have been there no later than 6:30 a.m. President Fernández apologized for any inconvenience it caused. He assured the Senate that in any future emergency the notice will go out sooner.

b. Student Conference-

1. Mr. Jason Jeremias, Student Conference Chair, reported that the Conference will hold a special election on Wednesday. He called on the faculty to encourage students to participate; intention forms are available at Student Life.

2. He presented a report from an Ad Hoc committee that was studying the student government structure at Lehman College. It raises the question of the governing body (bodies) of the Conference. In his comments, Mr. Jeremias raised questions concerning the structure of student governance in having both the Student Conference and CASA. The third body he addressed was the Judicial Board, an independent board that is referenced in the CASA Constitution. Its members are directly elected by the student body for two-year terms. The Judicial Board is charged with adjudication, a governmental function and meets the criterion for a governmental body. Mr. Jeremias asked, “What does all this mean? The student government structure has been misconstrued and improperly represented to students for years.” He pointed out that this is exemplified by the current state of the Judicial Board which has not functioned for years. He concluded by saying it is not any one person’s fault that things are not working, but he added that by working together changes can be made for the better. A motion was made to present the documentation to the Senate Governance Committee for their study. The Senate Chair ruled that the motion was out of order, since this is the first time the issue has been presented to the Senate. He recommended that the subject
could be on a future agenda, after documentation was distributed to Senate members who could then come prepared to discuss it.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES-

1. Committee on Governance-

Prof. Duane Tananbaum reported that the committee met on February 24 with President Fernández to discuss various aspects of the governance documents, especially the need to reduce the size of the committee to a more manageable number. When the documents were last revised a few years ago, a formula was adopted in which administrators would be 1/6th of the body, students would be ⅓ and faculty would be ½. What has happened since then, and was not anticipated, is that there has been an increase in the number of administrators. This means for each administrator added, two additional students and three additional faculty members are required. So we have grown in the three or four years since the document was amended from a body of 108 members to a body of 132 members. That makes it difficult to get a quorum. By the end of the last committee meeting, we came to a consensus that a formal amendment will be written that will freeze the body at 102 members; while still keeping the stipulated proportions.

2. The Committee is also working on a few other amendments. One is that the Governance Committee itself can have the right to propose amendments (which is not in the current document). The Committee wants to give administrative representatives on committees the right to vote, not just to serve as ex officio members. This will make it easier to have a quorum when committees meet, and there are a few other things in language that need to be cleared up.

3. As to the student documents, some of which were just heard, the Committee believes it has the authority to look into this whole matter. If the students do bring forward a formal resolution to the next meeting, the Governance Committee would review it.

4. Students have pointed out that the Governance Documents also stipulate that departmental personnel and budget committees are supposed to include students in an advisory capacity, and all other departmental committees are supposed to include students as voting members. We are not clear how many departments are honoring these provisions. We thought the best way to go about it would be first to gather information. Therefore, the deans have sent out a
communication to all department chairs, reminding them of these provisions in the Governance document and asking how their departments currently comply.

5. The Committee is trying to get accurate lists of faculty so we can hold the election for at-large senators. Unfortunately, our current list has numerous errors. People who have been adjuncts for many years and are teaching six credits or more are not listed and full-time lecturers are not listed. Putting this list together has delayed us in sending out the material for the nomination round of election for at-large senators. We will also be also sending out forms for nominations to Senate committees. One half of faculty members on each committee are up for election each year. So we will ask for nominations and will send with that request a list of current members on committees and when their terms expire.

6. The next meeting of the Governance Committee is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. on March 25 in Shuster 179.

**Committee on Admissions, Evaluations and Academic Standards**

There was no report.

c. **Undergraduate Studies** –

1. Prof. Barbara Jacobson submitted proposals from the Department of Biological Sciences, the Department of History, the Department of Latin American and Puerto Rican Studies and a new interdisciplinary minor in Middle Eastern studies which will be housed in the History Department. The proposals were unanimously approved.

2. The next meeting will be held March 18 at 12:15 p.m. in Carman 221.

d. **Committee on Graduate Studies**

1. Prof. Timothy Alborn reported on two proposals: One is a new course from Environmental, Geographic and Geological Sciences, and a proposal for a Master of Science, in a Family Nurse Practitioner program offered by that department. The proposals were unanimously approved.

2. The next meeting will be on Monday, March 16 at 2 p.m., place to be determined.

e. **Committee on Academic Freedom**

There was no report.
f. Committee on the Library, Technology and Telecommunications-
There was no report.
The next meeting is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. next Tuesday in the Library Conference Room.

h. Committee on Campus Life and Facilities-
There was no report.

i. Committee on Budget and Long-Range Planning-
1. Prof. Robert Feinerman reported that Senate & FP&B Joint Budget Sub-Committee met last Thursday, February 26. At the meeting, Provost Mary Papazian discussed the allocation of lines starting in fall 2009 based upon the budgetary constraints. This included faculty and staff lines. She also presented data about adjunct expenditures for this year, and there was a discussion on class sizes.

2. Also at the meeting, Vice President Derek Wheeler presented a four-year budgetary analysis of Lehman College's Auxiliary Enterprise.

3. The Committee will next meet when budget information is received from Albany.

j. University Faculty Senate-
1. Professor Manfred Philipp reported that yesterday at the University Faculty Senate Plenary Interim Executive Vice Chancellor Alexandra Logue addressed the group, stressing some of the issues that surrounding enrollment. CUNY enrollment is booming and, at the same time, some of the colleges are full. This obviously creates issues such as how to admit students under such circumstances. Every high school graduate has the right to go to a community college. At the same time we are getting applicants from outside the city. The discussion hinged on whether we should concentrate on applicants from the city or on an equal basis from the surrounding areas. What happens if we have an increase the number of students in the community colleges? Will there then be seats for them in the senior colleges? None of that is very clear, there is no ready solution.

2. In terms of the storm issues, the University Faculty Senate noted that CUNY does not tell which colleges are open and which are closed. Approximately half of the colleges were closed. While some of the colleges that stayed open informed students to that effect, others
did not. As a result, according to Prof. Philipp, this created vast confusion, not to mention
that websites for two of the colleges were down.
3. The Chancellor has announced that the School of Pharmacy will go forward. Over the
last few years we have asked for this, and we are optimistic that it is now materializing.
4. A conference on Access to Higher Education in the Health Sciences will be held on April
24. More information will be subsequently available.
5. The new community college being proposed for Manhattan continues to move forward.
A $280,000 matching grant has been received from the Gates Foundation to do some
planning.
6. Dr. Gillian Small, vice chancellor for research, has set up a task force to discuss the PSC
CUNY Awards Program. The group has come up with a draft recommendation that will turn
the PSC process completely on its head. Under the new rules all evaluations would be done
on the colleges’ own campuses which up to now had not been the practice across CUNY.
Under the new method the colleges would put together a faculty committee that would
evaluate the recommendations, which will then be forwarded to the college provost.
The Council for Faculty Governance Leaders met last Friday and voted its disapproval of
this draft. Due to several complications, the University Faculty Senate is working on getting
a different chair for the Awards Program.
7. The Council for Faculty Governance Leaders has also been looking at some of the
college books of the Research Foundation (not including Lehman). Listed on the books are
employees of the Foundation who are also employees of the University, which struck many
people as interesting.
8. At a meeting on March 2 at the School for Professional Studies Governing Board, it was
revealed that the school will not be moving to Brooklyn because the building will not be
available to CUNY. As a result of the financial crisis, the school will stay at the Graduate
Center, where it occupies considerable space.

OLD BUSINESS
There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS
There was no new business
ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther M. Fernandez