Minutes of
The Lehman College Senate Meeting
Wednesday, October 29, 2008


The meeting was called to order by President Ricardo Fernández at 2:10 p.m.

Minutes Adopted

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the minutes of the Senate meeting of October 29, 2008. The minutes were unanimously approved.

There was a correction that Professors Maryam Bamshad-Alavi and Amod Choudhary were present on September 24, 2008.
Announcements and Communication-

a. President Ricardo R. Fernández-

1. President Ricardo Fernández called attention to copies of the Senate attendance for spring 2008; which was e-mailed to the Senators and copies were available at the meeting. He said he has encouraged the Provost to speak with divisional deans about the importance of departmental representatives being present. He noted that the Court of Appeals has held that there have a certain number of votes for the Senate’s actions to be considered legal. So it is essential that Senate members attend meetings. The President appreciates those who come regularly, but there are some exceptions, and he asked for as much cooperation as possible.

2. From November 10 to December 12 there will be a special exhibit, “When Humanity Fails,” held in cooperation with the Afikim Foundation. Announcements will be posted around the campus.

3. We all read in the newspapers about the dire financial situation of the State. Yesterday, Governor David Paterson held a major press conference and announced that the budget deficit this year is $1.5 billion and will grow exponentially to $12 billion the following year. The Governor estimates that over the next four years the deficit will increase to about $48 billion; which means he’s calling for significant reductions in spending. He has called a special session of the legislature for November 18 to deal with this year’s budget. Lehman College Senators will hear a lot more on this subject at the December and February Senate meetings. It is clear that with these budget deficits there will be major reductions.

b. Student Conference-

1. The report was presented by Mr. Jason Jeremias, Student Conference Chair. The Student Conference invites the campus community to attend a special night for the people of Darfur at 8 p.m. on November 20. The Student Conference will lead a diverse group of faith and socially conscious student clubs in lighting a wreath for peace in Darfur. “The Student Conference considers it essential that, as a campus community, we promote a collective voice in saying ‘No More Violence in Darfur,’” Mr. Jeremias stated.
2. The Student Conference held a monthly forum to obtain student feedback about the college. One issue is the extension of library hours, especially on Friday when the library closes at 5 p.m. A meeting was held with Chief Librarian, Prof. Kenneth Schlesinger, who put together an $11,000 budget for extending weekend library hours on Fridays and Sundays. Another subject concerned student dissatisfaction with the increase in the technology fee; students feel they are getting less for their money since they can no longer make free copies in the library or the Information Technology Center. This is something the Conference wants to look into. Still another subject was the thefts of laptops which is a matter of great concern, given that the students believe replacement laptops will be paid for out of the Student Technology Fee. The Conference wondered if the laptops are covered by insurance and asked for information on the thefts.

3. The Conference voted on an initiative to have “Urban Community” as a minor, a subject which will be discussed with Prof. Donna Kirchheimer from the Department of Political Science. It was felt that a number of Lehman students would benefit from such a program.

4. Students met with the Scholarship office on the subject of tuition increases and how scholarships are disseminated at Lehman.

5. The Conference is working with Media Relations to create a news channel; a pilot program has been developed and will be released next week.

6. Several events are coming up: one is to encourage students to vote.

7. This month the Conference met with the department chairs and thanked Provost Mary Papazian for the opportunity.

President Fernández commented on a couple of points in the report: first of all, scholarships are funded through private sources, not through tuition. Students qualify for financial aid either from the State or the Federal government. Next year it is anticipated it will be even be more difficult due to the financial crisis. On the question of the laptop thefts, our Public Safety Director, Mr. Domenick Laperuta, is working closely with the New York City Police Department in an ongoing investigation. While some of the details are confidential, Vice President Derek Wheeler and Mr. Laperuta would be happy to meet with the Conference. President Fernández then called upon Vice President Wheeler to elaborate on these concerns.
Vice President Wheeler reported that the rash of thefts over the last six months greatly concerns the administration. Some of our current strategies cost money and some do not. One strategy is to prevent theft to the extent we can, and the other is to have a resource to replenish the lost computers. We do not have insurance for the laptops but this is being considered.

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES-

a. Committee on Governance-

1. Prof. Duane Tananbaum reported that the committee met on October 15; re-electing him as chair and Prof. Rosalind Carey as secretary. The first action of the Committee was to take a tally of Senate membership. There seems to be an expansion in the number of administrators in the Senate; a significant factor since student and faculty representation is based on the number of administrators. Since there are now 22 administrative positions in the Senate, there need to be 44 students and 66 faculty members to retain the proper ration of 1/6 administrators, 1/3 students, and 1/2 faculty. This adds up to a total membership in the Senate of 132 Senators, meaning we now need 67 for a quorum. The Student Conference will be holding an election soon to get the number of students up to 44. As to faculty, senators are selected from the list of candidates from the previous election. It’s a question of whether we are reaching the point of diminishing returns, if we’re electing more faculty and students than are really interested in fulfilling this responsibility.

2. There was a vacancy on the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee to which the Committee nominated Prof. Seringue Gnigue of the Department of Middle and High School Education. There were no other nominations and Prof. Gningue was nominated by acclaimation.

3. Prof. Tananbaum reminded everyone, especially newcomers, that voting members of the Senate should be seated in the middle section and the section on his far left. The section on the right is for observers who are not voting members. He also reminded Senators to sign the attendance sheets at the entrance to the auditorium; if arriving late, contact Ms. Esther Fernandez, assistant to Mr. Esdras Tulier, before leaving. This is important since we are legally bound by New York State law to have a quorum, at least 67 members present for every meeting, and the attendance sheets provide proof. Also, Committee chairs should also send copies of their meeting minutes to Mr. Tulier’s office.
4. The next Governance meeting will be held at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5, in Room 179 in Shuster Hall.

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

There was no report.

c. **Undergraduate Studies**

1. Prof. Barbara Jacobson presented proposals from the Departments of Biology, Chemistry, Health Sciences, and Language and Literatures. There was one item of information from the Department of Languages and Literatures. Though some of these proposals are routine, they also include a new 53-credit major in biology for those planning to teach in Middle and High School Education and four new minors: Youth Services, Exercise Science, Public Health, and Irish Language and Literature. The report was approved unanimously.

2. The next meeting will be at 12 noon on Wednesday, November 5, in Carman Hall, room 221.

d. **Committee on Graduate Studies**

1. Prof. Timothy Alborn reported that the Committee recommends proposals from five departments: from the Office of Graduate Studies: a change in the Academic Probation policy; from the Department of Social Work: a change in Probation and Continuation Criteria; from the Department of Physics, a new experimental course, Physics for Teachers; from the Department of History: two changes in courses, two new courses, a change in the description of degree requirements for the M.A. in History, and a new M.A. Program in History for Secondary School Teachers of Social Studies; and from the Department of Environmental, Geographic and Geological Sciences, a letter of intent for a Master’s program in Geographic Information Science. The report was approved unanimously.

2. The next meeting will be in the next week or two, depending upon new business.
e. **Committee on Academic Freedom** -

There was no report. The next meeting will be in Davis Hall, room 223 on November 12 at 2 p.m.

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

Floor rights were granted to Mr. James Carney.

1. A student technology survey has been collected and results will be reviewed at the next Committee meeting on November 18.

2. A faculty survey will be developed for Spring 2009. The Committee will continue to monitor such issues as research information literacy both in the Education Department as well as in the General Education area to try and monitor technology literacy as well as students as they go forward.

3. Committee members have been asked to put together their own concepts as to what the priorities for the Committee should be.

4. The next meeting will be at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 18, in the Multimedia Center Conference Room in Carman Hall, room B-75.

**Committee on Campus Life and Facilities** -

There was no report.

h. **Committee on Budget and Long-Range Planning** -

There was no report.

i. **University Faculty Senate** -

In the absence of Prof. Manfred Philipp, the report was given by Prof. John Mineka.

1. Vice Chancellor for Research, Dr. Gillian Small, has convened a committee to examine the review process for the PSC-CUNY awards. Profs. Kathryn Richardson of City Tech and Thomas Bird of Queens College are the University Faculty Senate committee representatives. Prof. Philipp had earlier noted the problem in getting faculty members to coordinate grant reviews.
2. The CUNY Council Faculty Governance Leaders will meet with Mr. Daniel Doktori, director of Higher Education, in Governor David Paterson’s office on November 7. The topic is state funding for CUNY.

3. The University Faculty Senate will hold its Fall Conference on Friday, November 14 at John Jay College. The topic is “Becoming a Faculty Member at CUNY.” Those who were hired in the last three years are given preferential access to the conference; others will be admitted on a space-available basis. Please RSVP by calling 212-794-5538.

4. Senior University Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. John Mogulescu, will soon deliver a report to the Chancellor on a possible new CUNY Community College in Manhattan.

5. The expected announcement of new University goals for the CUNY Capital campaign, originally scheduled for this month, has been delayed.

6. The University Faculty Senate has initiated a discussion and examination for the application of the CUNY Student Complaint Procedure.

7. The University Faculty Senate has named Prof. Phil Pecorino of Queens Borough Community College and Dr. Roberta Brody of Queens College to the new CUNY Academic Technology Committee.

8. The University Faculty Senate is beginning to have discussions with Vice Chancellor Frederick Schaffer about changes to the structure of the CUNY Intellectual Property Committee.

9. The leadership of both the City University of New York and the State University of New York University Faculty Senates, and the Faculty Council for the Community Colleges of SUNY will meet on December 5 at SUNY’s College at New Paltz to discuss state funding for both universities. Funding for the two universities is linked. The testimony of Vice Chancellor Ernesto Malavé, Jr. at the University Faculty Senate Plenary last night indicated that the disarray at SUNY may not help CUNY get a suitable budget. Vice Chancellor Malavé added that the university will successfully weather the current budget cuts, but may have problems with future cuts. He said that there is no intention or need to solve budget problems by resorting to faculty retrenchment. He directly criticized the way CUNY handled such cuts in the past, when retrenchment was one of the first tools used to reduce costs. He said that other past state fiscal crises had a larger percent impact on the State budget. They were successfully handled without faculty retrenchment, and he expected this one to be no different.
OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Esdras Tulier