March 17, 2022

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Report

I am pleased to submit this report on behalf of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. As we head into spring, we are optimistic that CSI is emerging from the COVID pandemic and we are rebuilding our community. We recognize the important strides that President Lynch has made in improving communication on campus and his work to ensure stronger ties of shared governance and transparent leadership. At the same time, this hopeful perspective is clouded by the atrocities of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and we stand in solidarity with the victims of this aggression. We are grateful for the expertise of our faculty members, particularly Professors Susan Smith-Peter and Anat Niv Solomon, who have provided us with important analysis of this devastating conflict. I can’t help but take the opportunity to emphasize the critical role of scholarly research among our faculty, as our professors’ work enriches and informs our lives.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee met with the provost, the deans and the associate provosts on March 8. We were pleased to learn that the College has restored some of its funding for faculty members’ research travel and plans to continue to seek additional support. Despite its ongoing budgetary shortfalls and severe drop in enrollment, CSI will continue to honor its obligations to faculty in areas such as sabbaticals, and will also pursue the hiring of additional faculty. Although CUNY has implemented a large initiative in hiring full time lecturers, we urge CSI and CUNY to hire faculty members on tenure tracks with greater possibilities for professional advancement. Tenure track faculty provide the intellectual lifeblood of the institution and we cannot attract and retain students – or provide them with a first-quality education – without a solid corps of academic scholars.

The provost informed us that a survey on course modalities was recently sent to students. We are looking forward to the results of the survey and continue to have discussions about the future of online and remote instruction. We will be working with the Administration to discuss the assessment of student success in online learning, and we are aware that these conversations are also taking place at the university level. We encourage all faculty and staff that are interested in weighing in on their online experiences to engage in this discussion by contacting us with your thoughts.

We have also been addressing concerns about the existence of ad hoc committees and task forces created by the previous presidency that continue to function in parallel with our established bodies of shared governance. We urge the president and provost to incorporate such groups into existing structures to increase transparency, support reporting mechanisms, and eliminate redundancies.

We raised the issues of office and classroom cleanliness and maintenance with the provost, especially the problem of mice. We have been assured that the College is working to hire more cleaning staff, and we’ve been asked to report problems in this area to Vice President Hope Berte, who is in charge of facilities. We also noted the ubiquitous presence of geese on campus.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the hard work of everyone who has pulled together to complete CSI’s Middle States process. It has truly been a herculean effort and an exemplary model of shared governance, and we are grateful for your excellent work on behalf of all of us.

Happy St. Patrick’s Day!

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Marcus-Delgado

Chair