The Chairperson's report of the College Council Executive Committee

## March 3 consultative meeting

We March 3 with the President, Provost, and the President's Chief of Staff. We met in 1S-406, as significant concerns about coronavirus were already present.

We discussed several things, the following is not taken from contemporaneous notes, as these were left on campus.

On March 2, the president sent to the college community an email on "bullying:"

I write to address what I consider a serious issue we face as a campus. I believe that our College has a serious problem of bullying that we must overcome to ensure a civil campus climate and the success of our students. This problem is evidenced by both the Campus Climate Survey done by Rankin and Associates a few years ago and the recent COACHE survey which described bullying, especially faculty on faculty and staff on staff, as a major issue facing the campus.

The Executive Committee had various responses to this. The chair responded as follows:

* he reviewed the written commentary on bullying in the COACHE report and found just 3 items where the wording is mentioned, one was clearly related to an issue a faculty member had with their past deans (plural), one was non specific, and one personal. It was pointed out that these seem like isolated cases. It was also noted that the COACHE results showing our campus having worst performance of all senior campuses in terms of declines from the previous survey might be a more pressing issue. Also pointed out was the total silence certain administrators had when bullying was an issue between the past President and the chair of the College Council.

During the meeting we learned that in addition to the reading of the COACHE survey, this email was in part a response to the perceived tone of the consultative meeting in February.

We discussed the preparations on coronavirus. We had a discussion about facilities, and learned that the installation of all hot water heaters was imminent.

On the agenda we asked again on the desire to have the chairs of the college governance bodies be allowed to have direct email contact to their representative bodies, not just the senators. This was a followup to the February vote at the College Council where due to the size of the member present the vote for this was not passed, despite only ECP members voting in the negative.

We had a discussion about how to improve communication. It was suggested that faculty and staff members could speak to their accomplishments when they are being noted in administrative reports.

## March 30th letter regarding the cabinet

On March 30th, the executive committee sent a letter to the President indicating our good wishes for VP Iwama and concern for how the ECP positions should be arranged going forward. We made two suggestions:

* "we suggest you follow the model used at nearly every other CUNY unit and colleges and universities across the country and search for a VP of Finance and Administration to oversee the bulk of the two portfolios currently assigned." (In lieu of formalizing the position of VP of Facilities.)
* "We suggest holding off on hiring a Dean for the School of Education. We are not in a position to afford this position, at least in the short term."

Our rationale was:

"Now is the time to make these decisions. Though it is a significant change from your plans of a month ago, this next academic year is going to be one of difficult decision making. Before cutting back elsewhere, showing leadership at this point in trimming expenses on your cabinet costs will go a long way to showing that no entity is immune to the budget crisis."

We received a timely response from the president on April 2nd, but he remained committed to the hiring a facilities VP and said it would happen at the next board meeting and he remained committee to carrying out the search for a new dean of education.

## March 30 request for a joint meeting

On March 30th, the Faculty Senate chair wrote to the president requesting a joint meeting:

I am writing on behalf of the Executive Committees of the Faculty Senate and the College Council. We'd like to request that our regular monthly meeting for April with you and Michael be held jointly (with both Executive Committees), and as soon as our schedules permit. There are a number of issues that face all of us, and it would seem to make sense that we all get together online to have a conversation. I recall that you had said that a joint meeting might be possible this semester, and it would be great if we could arrange that.

This was not agreed to, but the president did agree to move up the consultative meeting scheduled for April two weeks to April 3rd.

## April 3rd Consultative Meeting

This meeting had several news items and requests. We were thankful of the willingness to accommodate a moved up meeting on short notice.

We again requested direct email access to the representative bodies for the College Council and Faculty Senate chairs.

At the time the field hospital was a very real possibility and we received an update on this including the likelihood that campus access would be even more severely restricted. We heard at the time the plan was for beds in 150 range with possibly more and that the National Guard had assigned someone to coordinate.

We learned about the complicated notebook distribution program. There was concern expressed that the faculty and staff without access were put behind the queue and that this could have been done in a more timely manner. We learned that the process of delivering such technology was difficult and required many efforts by staff.

We requested a zoom license be purchased for the campus, as has been done at other CUNY units. Anecdotally, several faculty have purchased upgraded versions as an alternative to BB Collaborate. We heard the president had personally requested this of EVC Sapienza as well.

We asked about the budgetary impact of all of this: There was concern expressed about collections, about the state budget, about what would be reimbursed through the hospital, etc. There was some optimism that the federal CARES act would bring relief, as the Pell-based funding model was advantageous for our student demographic.