**Draft Minutes for the One Hundred and Thirty-Second Meeting of the College Council Formed on November 14, 2002  
  
Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020, 2:30pm – 3:30pm  
Location: Zoom Meeting**

**Attendance:**George Sanchez (College Council), Mark White, Susan Imberman, Jennifer Borrero (College Council), Robert Wallace, Angelo Bongiorno, Danielle Dimitrov, Andrew Colbeck, Ralf Peetz, Alberto Ballesteros (College Council), Zaghloul Ahmed, Drew Stillman(College Council), Maryann Feola, Juline Robinson (College Council), Momtahina Akter(College Council), Catherine Lavender,  Jessica Stein (College Council), Katie Cumiskey, Michael Parrish, Jonathan Cope, Jason Bishop, Sarah Zelikovitz, Mary Murphy (College Council), Christine Flynn Saulnier, Suzy Shepardson (College Council), Francisco Soto, Bill Fritz, Hope Berte (College Council), Hernan Green (College Council), Cindy Wong, Lee Papa, Deborah De Simone, Asher Abraham (College Council), Shawn Abraham (College Council), Deborah Franzblau, Jane Marcus-Delgado(College Council), John Verzani (College Council), Sarolta Takacs, Alfred Levine, Mark Feuer, John Wing, Jessica Collura (College Council), Simone Wegge, Marcus Tye, Jonathan Peters, Warrick Bell (College Council), Gerry Milligan, Carles Solà Belda, Comfort Asanbe, Alan Benimoff, Cynthia Chris, Thomas Tellefsen, Jessica Stein (College Council), Lucas Marchante-Aragón, Vandana Chaudhry, Alyson Bardsley, Sylvia Kahan, Alan Zimmerman, John Lawrence, Chang-Hui Shen, Natalie Fiscetti, Siona Wilson, Yumei Huo, Emmanuel Esperance (College Council), Carlo Lancelloti, Michael Cavagnero, Ellen Goldner, Wilma Jones, Patricia Khan, Patti Gross, John Arena, Maxwell Velikodny

**Guests**:Susan Massara, Leonardo Pign.., Marrianne Weil.., Cheryl Adolph, Charles Gomes, Beth Livensprerger, Intissar Hasan, Brain ?, Amy Stempler, Kerri Gerson, Jasmine Cardona, Micheal Paris, Jennifer Durando, Ali Elkomy, Genefellner2.., Susan Holak, Christina Hagedorn, Sharon Christian, Miguel A. Aragon, Mel Pipe, Terri Sangiorgio, Tara Mastrorilli, (Sus Phone), Linda John, Veronica DiMeglio, Koby Kohulan, Spozmi Nouri, Florinda Mattia, Christina Tortora, Peter Simpson, Ken Wolpin, Amila Goonawardena, Andrew Lambert, Kenneth gold, (16465354826), (13472915727)

1. Approval of the proposed agenda - *approved*  
     
   II. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting – *approved with updates on attendance*  
     
   III. Election of Executive Committee Membership: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and one At-Large Member; the other At-Large Member seat held by Mary Murphy is not up for election.

J. Verzani, ran unopposed for Chair, secretary cast one vote for him

G. Sanchez ran unopposed for Vice Cahir, secretary cast one vote for him

Cindy Wong ran unopposed for Secretary, secretary cast one vote for her

T. Tellefsen ran unopposed for At-Large Member, secretary cast one vote for him

IV. Executive Committee of College Council Report - J. Verzani

# Notes from the 9/8 College Council Executive Committee meeting with the President and Provost

There were a range of topics discussed in our hour:

## Budget

We had asked:

With the ongoing budget uncertainty, can we review actions taken or planned over the summer to position our selves for the quite possible devestating budget cuts coming our way.

We heard several things

* Currently there is no tax-levy budget from CUNY. (CUNY has not received a clear budget from the state, as of writing, so the holding pattern from June continues. The state is waiting on federal funds, and has been clear about the scale of the cuts -- 10-20% -- should support not come to pass.) Rather, CUNY has been allocating just 80% of last year's monthly average for July, August, and September. Payroll, has been handled centrally (payroll for PS regular and adjunct costs are 87% of CUNY wide tax levy allocation). The state has been witholding 20% from CUNY, as it has with all state agencies.
* The FY20 closeout may need 2-3M of *non* tax-levy resources to close out
* As far as adjustments made: plans were made to adjust: adjunct costs (down, but not as much as planned); non-teach-adjuncts and CAs (CUNY asked colleges to appoint month-to-month); temp services; vacancies (VP Iwama's position was used as an example); transportation expenses; energy expenses; and repurposing overhead funds. The 4.1M structural deficit was reduced to about 2.5M, not accounting for potential cuts.
* Tuition revenue is expected to be about 4-600K more than last year, based on a slight enrollment increase; There is no answer to the question of a tuition increase (which could happen should the board choose). This was anticipated to bring in about 2M in revenue.
* The 7.2M of CARES funding has not yet been released. CUNY is waiting for its budget from the state before deciding to move on its plan, in case the plan needs to be adjusted.
* Some adjuncts that were not reappointed were rehired. Both due to higher than anticipated enrollment and support from a Mellon Foundation grant (10M CUNY wide allowing ~150 adjuncts to be supported CUNY wide)

The executive committe pointed out that several faculty, notably part-time faculty, were asked to shoulder overtallies beyond what it typical, and that such approvals may be harder to find in the spring.

## Reopening

We asked

The reopening plan for research was quite delayed, as compared to other CUNY peers, this caused concern amongst the faculty "researchers" who were eager to begin work in their labs. A review of why things took as long as they did (have?) would be welcome.

We heard that some bench-scientists were back in their labs along with some graduate students, as of the week of the 31st. We heard that 6S is the only space currently suitable for usage, though a space for PT students is coming online. As 6S is the space, discussion about relocating other lab scientists to 6S have been held

We heard that spring may be very similar to fall. A guess of 3-600 students maximum on campus was suggested.

We heard the residence hall is open for a limited number of students (~50% of capacity).

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We heard that Spring may be very similar to fall. A guess of 3-600 students maximum on campus was suggested

We heard the residence hall is open for a limited number of students (~50% of capacity). We heard there have been no reported COVID-19 cases. We haerd that 100 identified cases would call for a shutdown.

We asked

When is it anticipated that non-bench-scientists will be allowed to conduct their research, be it in the library or their department office?

The answer seems to be this is unlikely this academic year

We suggested (and had a short discussion) that

Moreover, numerous other faculty researchers found the exclusionary language used by CUNY and others to be off putting. We suggest that the artificial distinction between "research" (for the bench scientists) and "scholarship" (for non-bench scientists) be mothballed.

We asked

Despite no clear statement that this will be the case, there is concern amongst some employees that there will be a mandated return to work. Can the college's/CUNY's position on this be clearly stated, so that we can relay it forward?

It was made clear that very few people would be coming to work for the foreseeable future

## Teaching

We asked

While buoyed to see enrollment did not decline, our likely tuition revenue should rise slightly, and our course efficiencies did rise significantly from last fall, we are concerned that class size issues will be a major discussion area as we map out spring offerings, indeed some in the community are already arguing for "soft strikes" based on class size. Where will the conversation be held, and will faculty be involved in any changes related to class size?

We heard that enrollment held with a 1% overall increase, a welcome relief from mid-summer estimations of a decline on par with the CUNY average (~4%).

In response to the class size question we heard that the college potentially has too few small sections and too few big sections, as compared to a large state school.

We heard that the Middle States accrediation process is ongoing, despite the pandemic.

We heard that the Middle states exemption for allowing all courses to be held online through 12/20 is likely to have have an extension (through 6/21) requested.

## Communication

We had asked

The executive committee has heard complaints that members of the community were late to be notified of significant changes. For example, the student government president was concerned that just a few weeks before classes the students had not been notified of their class statuses. Can we review the college's communication plan?

In response, we heard that bi-weekly communications have been going out and with a consistent message.

We had asked

Any update on the evaluation process from last spring of both the president and provost

We were told that the President thought the process went well; that these personnel discussions are private; and that the campus should not expect any details of the evaluation.

V. Professional Staff Congress (PSC) Report – G. Sanchez

Gave updates on how the Central Union is advocating for faculty and staff with health concerns around the university.

VI. President’s Report – W. Fritz

Good afternoon and welcome back to the start of a new academic year. I trust everyone had a productive summer and had at least a little time to relax. I know this is not the start of the academic year that any of us wanted or anticipated even six months ago.

This Fall semester we are working and learning mostly online and are preparing for the possibility that we may be doing so for the rest of the academic year. We have been slowly moving forward with the implementation of our re-opening plan with safety first as our guiding principle. We are currently accommodating a very small number of students in face to face classes (less than 25 per day) on campus in courses that require in person instruction.

Researchers have been submitting research safety plans and we have approved some to come back to campus consistent with the plan. More classes and researchers will be accommodated only when it is safe to do so.

Thankfully, we have not had any confirmed cases of COVID-19 on campus since reopening and I hope that it will stay that way. Currently, NYS mandates that if there are more than 100 reported cases, we will have to shut down for a period of time. This is another reason why we are not in a rush to move everyone back on the campus. Our goal is to keep everyone safe, and to follow the plans that we have put into place.

At the moment, we still do not have an approved budget and are existing on monthly allocations from CUNY to cover our basic operating costs, mostly in facilities. The $6.3M in CARES Act money allocated to students has already been distributed. However, there still remains $7.3M in institutional CARES money, but we have no spending authority to use these funds at the present time. Guidelines on how we can access these funds is anticipated once we receive our budget allocation.

In the spring, NYS reported a revenue shortfall of $-13.3B which has now grown to $-14.5B and the governor has publicly mentioned potential cuts to state agencies ranging from 14% to 20%. However, the State is likely waiting on federal stimulus money before passing a budget and our board sees no sense in passing a budget with this much uncertainty.

The State enacted budget, effective April 1st, while reported to be a flat budget compared to the previous year, was equivalent to a 3% cut to the Senior colleges or $-3.7M to CSI, due to rising mandatory costs. It’s important to note that this cut was on top of our previously reported $-4.1M structural deficit. In response to this news, we worked with P&B over the summer on a strategy to close an estimated budget challenge of $-11.8M based on the State enacted budget cut equivalent to $-3.7M, a $-4.1M structural deficit, and an anticipated 5% decline in enrollment valued at $-4.0M.

Saving strategies included: reductions in temp services & overtime, reduction of transportation services, administrative efficiencies, energy savings, and holding positions vacant due to the CUNY hiring freeze. In addition, we targeted use of more RF overhead funds. This strategy still left us with a $-2.4M shortfall.

Although we generated considerable savings from our strategy, we did not meet all targets which would have increased the $-2.4M shortfall if not for an unexpected last-minute surge in enrollment. Put together, our plan mostly balanced out with about the same $-2.4M gap still remaining. It is important to note that any additional cuts we may face, will be on top of this $-2.4M shortfall.

The slight increase (0.5 to 1%) in enrollment compared to last Fall really helped ($400k to $800k) and is due to the hard work of our faculty, the registrar’s office and the enrollment management and advisement teams. In addition, our retention numbers are exceptional this year and I think that is a reflection of the efforts made by our faculty in transitioning to remote learning, as well as the outreach efforts made by Advisement.

We are happy to announce that we will be having a virtual commencement in late October or Early November. We had hoped we would be able to have a traditional ceremony this year, however, it became clear as we got closer to the Fall that it wasn’t going to be possible, but we promise to keep as many traditions as we can in the virtual program.

I wish to congratulate the members of our faculty who have received prestigious grants and awards for exemplary academic research and will be recognized by the Provost.

The College continues to receive national recognition as U.S. News & World Report recently ranked CSI as one of the 2021 Best Regional Universities North; our Masters of Nursing program was included in its Top 100 Best Nursing Schools (Master’s) list; and our Engineering Program ranked as one of the Best undergraduate engineering programs. CSI was also ranked and noted as: Top performers in social mobility; and as a Top public school.

Business Insider also named CSI one of 24 Colleges with the Best Return on Investment. Even though there is debate on the methodology of these rankings, it always helps our enrollment when we are reported in a positive light.

Looking into the future, I would like to challenge the campus to start thinking about how our work and instruction might look post COVID.

Perhaps online learning is a way to grow enrollment and solve overcrowding and space problems that had been a growing problem. Many employees benefit from eliminating long commutes and working remotely on a permanent basis for some employees may be an option to consider.

I know there has been concern over a slight increase in average section size. My view is that we offer too few large sections and too few small sections. Now is the time to talk about which classes we can make larger so that we can offer more smaller classes, as appropriate for the pedagogy.

I believe that we can use these unfortunate times as an opportunity for positive change. This kind of forward thinking can benefit us as a College and I don’t think we should let that opportunity pass us by.

Thank you.

William J. Fritz President

VII. Reports from the Administration – H. Berte

Gave updates on the college’s re-opening committee

“Today I would like to give an update on the work of the Campus Reentry Committee and the division’s implementation efforts.

Over the summer the Campus Reentry Committee was charged with contributing to a comprehensive campus reentry plan. The Provost and I worked together as co-chairs to ensure that the written plan followed NYS and CUNY Mandatory and Recommended best practices.  The committee was broken down into several subcommittees with each co-chaired by a faculty member and an administrator. The committee charges and membership as well as our reentry plan can be found [here](https://www.csi.cuny.edu/about-csi/president-leadership/office-president/presidential-communications/coronavirus-message).

Our reentry plan was completed and submitted in early August and approved for implementation by CUNY and the State in mid- August. I would like to thank everyone who participated on the Reentry Committee. The co-chairs and the committee members put together a comprehensive plan, which was approved during the first round and did not require any significant rewrites.  Since the approval, the Facility and Operation teams have been working non-stop to implement the components. I would be remiss if I did not recognize the continuous efforts and support provided by members of my division -Public Safety, Facilities, Campus Planning, Operations, and EH&S staff have worked under extreme and most times intense conditions in order to ensure the campus and the community have been and continue to be safe. We all owe them our gratitude and appreciation.

Based on the staged reopening section of our plan, we are in phase 1. Phase 1 limits campus access to a select group of researchers, a small number of students and increased presence of facilities and operations staff. The campus planning team have provided modified social distanced floor plans for each lab, for the in-person Physical Therapy and Anatomy classes, and building-wide floor plans which specify the signage installation and access points for the three buildings in phase 1. Our facilities teams are using these plans as a guide as we navigate through phase 1 set up. The Central Plant and EH&S are monitoring the air quality in 6S daily and keep me informed if any issues arise. We have temporarily relocated PT courses to 6S, using both exterior and interior spaces. After consultation with the Provost and Deans we worked out a plan that ensures these students meet their degree requirements and remain on track to graduate.  In addition to 6S there is limited access to the anatomy lab in 5N. This space was recently outfitted with new exhaust systems and includes access to exterior doors which bring in fresh air. The Division has received a limited amount of funds for supplies and materials needed to move through the phase 1 priorities.

Recently, the University implemented a Daily Health Screening process which is required by every person who is authorized to enter campus. The screening is conducted via the Everbridge app. Instructions for download and use can be found [here](https://www.csi.cuny.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/everbridge-health-checker). If you are unable to use the app and you have an authorized campus visit, Public Safety Supervisory personnel and EMTs have been trained to provide in person Health Screenings.  The in-person screening is set up in the lobby of 1R and includes a temperature check and requires your responses to several questions. Based on your temperature and your responses to the questions the Officer will either approve or deny campus access.

On Monday, the University Environmental Health & Safety Director conducted a campus audit to ensure that we are following our reentry plan.  We received an overall good rating with several recommendations that must be in place prior to their next audit. The recommendations include adding more signage to 6S, 1M, 1C Cafeteria, and the Bookstore; visibly display cleaning and disinfecting logs in each research lab, and ensure everyone is using the Everbridge Health Screening App.

In closing, I thank you all for your support and understanding during these extraordinary circumstances.”

VIII. Reports of the Committees of the College Council

a. Committee on Organization – W. Bell

Certain committees of the Council are down a few members, including the Committee on Organization.

Please nominate or self-nominate.

b. By-Law Committee - J. Verzani

Minor change to the CSI governance will come before the body soon.  
  
c. Administrative Review Committee – J. Verzani

Professor D. Hill is the new chair

d. Institutional Planning Committee – *no report*  
e. Budget Committee – *no report*  
f. Facilities Committee – *no report*  
  
IX. Student Government Report – M. Velikodny

Since the beginning of June, the new Student Government has been consistently working with the administration and faculty through college committees and subcommittees to facilitate remote learning for the Fall and a potential campus reopening. I am grateful I had the opportunity to be on some of these committees and sincerely appreciate the college’s approach in securing a safe and careful reopening. I am sure this choice was ultimately the best given what we are seeing now in other colleges.

Student Government has appointed all of its commissioners and most committee representatives and scheduled its meeting dates for the semester. However, we only have fifteen senators, which means we are stretched thin—like everyone else—and forced to take on more roles than we usually would have if we had a larger Student Government.

We will have campus-wide elections soon and are currently accepting nominations. We have four Freshman Seats, Four Sophomore Seats, One Senior Seat, and One Graduate Seat open. I ask that faculty share this with students, given the difficulty in communicating and advertising this opportunity to students.

Furthermore, Student Government is working with the administration and VP Borrero towards a compromise regarding the Transportation Fee. Since the administration can no longer pay for their portion of the fee, they asked us to reconsider the expenses and potentially cut aspects of the service out. Our Student Government recommends that we suspend the transportation fee for the time being and reorganize closer to the end of the semester. I have not yet met with the administration so we cannot comment further on what their stance on the matter is.

Student Government is also working with the University Student Senate and the CUNY Council of Presidents to ensure CUNY schools and CSI do not use intrusive software in curbing potential academic dishonesty, even in good faith, as it could result in a direct violation of student’s privacy. The program we a particularly apprehensive about is the McGraw Hill Publishing’s Proctario service. CUNY students already have over 25,000 signatures on a petition against using this software.

CUNY has stated that professors should not be locking browsers or utilizing software to monitor computers, but some CUNYs have not been compliant. Moreover, Baruch’s Provost already announced that he has chosen not to support remote proctoring at this time, as well. We request that CSI also communicate their stance on the matter with faculty and students to quell the apprehension and confusion. Our Student Government ardently believes a reasonable program is necessary but must not be too intrusive to CSI students.

Finally, the Student Government is considering creating its own website to increase student accessibility, advertise events and initiatives, and better communicate with the student body. Other CUNY Student Governments have a website already, so this is not unprecedented. Nevertheless, we are only at the beginning stages and may not implement it until later in the year.

Thank you for your time, and if you have any questions, please ask.

X. Higher Education Officer Steering Committee Report – M. Murphy

The HEO Steering Committee held its first meeting of the 2020-2021 academic year on Monday, September 14.  Mary Murphy and Suzy Shepardson were unanimously elected to continue as co-chairs of the group.

Suzy Shepardson gave an update about the activities of the By-Laws Committee, reviewing the draft document and proposed timetable for its consideration by the campus constituencies and (ultimately) the referendum vote.  Mary Murphy provided an update on recent Executive Committee activities, including their meeting last week: there remains a great deal of concern about the budget, enrollment, workload issues, and communications to the College community at large regarding re-entry to the campus, plans for Spring 2021, and funding.

There is currently no funding available (yet) for the CSI Professional Development Fund, so the application form has been removed from the College website at this time.  Please share this information with your colleagues and staff members who normally would be eligible to apply for these funds, and ask them to stay tuned for updates as they become available.

HEOs are allowed to accrue a maximum of 45 annual days, and normally must bring themselves to (or under) that figure by August 31 each year, or they lose any annual days over that amount.  Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HEOs have been granted an extension through *December 31, 2020*to utilize those excess/unused annual days.  We are very pleased to have received this unprecedented extension, and look to the supervisors/managers of HEO personnel to ensure that their HEOs are able to take those rolled-over annual days before the new deadline.

Given the remote learning and work-from-home circumstances of the spring and summer, and now the fall term, concerns are coming up regarding workload, vacation time, budgetary constraints, changes of assignment, office/departmental/divisional reorganization, and reporting structures.  While these are issues that affect all members of the College community, the HEO Steering Committee asks this body to let the HEOs in their areas know that our committee members are here to assist, provide support, and share information about resources and next steps.

Report from Office of Student Affairs on the CARES Act Funding – Jennifer Borrero

* 8000 students have received in excess of 5.4 million dollars in CUNY
* On this campus, $830,000 has been distributed to 819 students, an additional $300,000 have been raised from different sources – Petrie, other emergency funds from Institutional Advancement and Student Government – has gone to students.

XI. Auxiliary Services Corporation Report – R. Wallace

This will be a challenging year for the Auxiliary. As a result of the pandemic, we our significantly limited in our ability to offer most of our revenue generating services. Areas that are providing services are doing so in a limited capacity.

A prime example of this is Dolphin Cove, which typically would have 440 residents. We’re currently operating with 230 students, well below the 85% mark we need to break even. Though we are operating at just over 50%, we’re in a better position than many other dorms, and hope the safety measures we have taken, will lead to an increase in students in the spring semester.

Dining Services is also open, with reduced hours, a more limited menu, and no indoor dining. Besides eliminating indoor dining, we have implemented several safety measures to help reduce the potential for transmission of germs. Like most businesses you have visited, we have placed markers to maintain spacing of customers and installed plexiglass partitions throughout the food service area. Additionally, we have purchased an app which will allow customers to place and pay for their order through the app, further reducing contact points, and will allow for better service and a delivery option when we return to more routine operations.

Parking services is operating remotely, limited to providing services to dorm students who have a car. We are also in the midst of providing refunds to those students, faculty, and staff who will not be returning to the college; all others will receive a credit for their parking fees for when we return to campus.

To help address the revenue loss to the Auxiliary, we’ve cut 24 positions which will save $730k. Additionally, we have suspended the search for Auxiliary Services Director position, and Jasmine Cardona is assuming responsibility for the director’s duties. Unfortunately, these measures fall short of covering the approximately $1M in housing refunds and nearly $800k in dining revenue losses.

Though these are troubling times, we will work this year to find ways to improve our existing operations - like the dining service app - and develop new revenue services so that we will be in the best possible position for when we return to something resembling normalcy and continue to provide support to the college community.

XII. Old Business - *none*  
  
XIII. New Business - *none*  
  
XIV. Adjournment – 3:45pm

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Wong, Secretary for the College Council