

May 5, 2009

From: Edward Volchok, QCC Member, UFS

To: Devin McKay, Secretary, QCC Senate Steering Committee
Emily Tai, Chairperson, QCC Steering Committee

Report on the 345th UFS Plenary Session of CUNY, May 5, 2009

UFS Chair Manfred Phillippp called the meeting to order at approximately 6:33 pm. in Room 9204/05 at the CUNY Graduate School and University Center.

I. Approval of the Agenda for May 5, 2009

The agenda was approved by voice vote.

II. Approval of the Minutes of March 31, 2008

Minutes were approved as distributed by voice vote.

III. Reports

A. Chair (Written Only, due to the evening's tight schedule)

Key topics in the Chair report include:

- **Blackboard 8 Outages:** The Blackboard Corporation, in hopes of remedying the on-going problems with Blackboard 8, will soon host Blackboard. The UFS is establishing a committee to discuss the “inadequate connection between CUNY’s IT Steering Committee and each of the campus faculty governance groups.” This new committee will discuss these issues with Vice Chancellor Allan Dobrin and CIO Brian Cohen.
- **Presidential searches:** Searches continue at Brooklyn College and Medgar Evers College.
- **Interim Vice Chancellor Lexa Logue** has been confirmed as Executive Vice Chancellor
- **The UFS Spring Conference:** The conference will take place on May 8th at the Graduate Center. Topic: “Access to Higher Education in the Health Sciences.”
- **The UFS Faculty Experience Survey** has been funded and will be conducted this fall.
- **PSC-CUNY Research Awards Program:** Vice Chancellor Gillian Small’s Task Force is scheduled for October. Many campuses voted in support of the UFS resolution opposing this task force’s position on the PSC-CUNY Research Awards Program.

B. Vice Chancellor Jay Hershenson (Oral)

Vice Chancellor Hershenson began his report with a tribute to State Senator John Markey.

Vice Chancellor Hershenson reported that the New York State budget has been adopted, but the New York City budget not yet been adopted. Problems still loom, and there is a great deal of behind-the-scenes work being done on behalf of CUNY. Notable successes: The mayor restored scholarship to last year’s level and there may be additional support for community colleges.

But there is still work to do. One big issue: \$160 million in NYS funding for capital needs of community colleges requires matching funds from NYC. CUNY is aggressively seeking these funds.

Vice Chancellor Hershenson presented a video entitled “Summertime in the City.” He noted that the website for this program has significantly more hits this year than last year.

Vice Chancellor Hershenson noted other programs:

- **Success Express:** Community College students who complete Bachelors and move on to CUNY graduate programs.

- Student honors and awards: High number of Truman Scholars, Rhodes Scholars, and Guggenheim Fellowships (tied with Princeton University and Johns Hopkins University).
- CUNY TV won 2 Emmy's.
- Calendar Project with the *New York Times*. Investing in the Future, Public Higher Education in America. In addition to the *New York Times*, sponsors include JPMorgan Chase, and TIAA-CREF.
- CUNY in the suburb: Example, fund raising events in Nassau County conducted among CUNY alumni.

C. Representatives of the Board Committees

Prof. Campbell Daghish, Chair of the Status on Faculty Committee (SOFC) presented a video presentation on a propose CUNY Institute for Renewal. This institute would exist as “an escrow account with the University Faculty Senate acting as the fiscal sponsor for funds received from donors....

IV. Nominations & Elections of Members-At-Large of the Executive Committee

No new nominations were received. The UFS elected five Members-At-Large of the Executive Committee. The winning candidates are:

Candidate	Institution
Philipp Pecorino	Queensborough Community College
Sandy Cooper	College of Staten Island
Terrence Martell	Baruch College
Ann Friedman	Borough Of Manhattan Community College
Stefan Baumrin	CUNY Graduate Center
Michael Barnhart	Kingsborough Community College

V. New Business

A. Resolution on Filtering and Blocking of Websites

The BOT has a Computer Use Policy that prohibits filtering and blocking of websites due to content. Several campuses, however, violate this policy.

A resolution was put forward demanding the Officers of the University enforce this policy against filtering and blocking of websites to ensure that faculty and students have access to information networks around the world.

- Motion approved unanimously.

B. Resolution in Support of Part-Time Study Opportunities

A resolution was put forward against the prohibition of part-time study and affirming the value of higher education even for students who can only attend part-time.

- Motion approved unanimously.

C. Resolution on Term Limits for Department Chairs

The Chancellor has proposed an amendment to Bylaw Section 9.1. This amendment will set term limits for department chairs. The term limits would restrict department chairs to two three-year terms. The rationale for this amendment is that it would give the faculty more opportunity to serve as chairs.

Chair Phillips summarized a letter he just received from Barbara Bowen and Steve London, President and First Vice President respectively of the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY. This letter states that the union is opposed to this amendment. This letter was distributed to the Senators later in the meeting.

Resolution opposing term limits for department chairs was presented. The reasons for this resolution are:

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1. This amendment to Bylaw Section 9.1 is an attack on faculty governance.
2. Mechanisms already exist to remove department chairs who are not performing adequately.
3. Bylaws require department chair elections every three years, which ensures all eligible members of the faculty the opportunity to run for this office.
4. The job of chair is increasingly complex, and acquiring the necessary expertise takes time.
5. The proposed maximum 6-year term is not consistent with the 7-year tenure clock and the chairs' function of mentoring junior faculty.
6. The proposed amendment lacks proper consultation with the governing bodies of the faculty.
 - Motion approved unanimously.

During the discussions, a proposal was made for the new UFS Executive Committee to investigate setting term limits for the college presidents.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.