Meeting Minutes of the Governance Council

Wednesday, May 4th, 2022, 2022; 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Via Zoom

1. **Call to Order, Approval of the Minutes and Vote**

Glen Johnson, Chair, conducted an attendance poll for the official role of attendance, at 2:35 pm. The meeting was called to order, and a motion was made to approve the minutes of the March 30, 2022, Governance Council Meeting.

Approval for the minutes of the March 30, 2022, Governance Council meeting was seconded, and the May 4, 2022, Governance Council meeting began.

Glen welcomed our Research Faculty representatives, Nasim Sabounchi, and alternate Marie Sillice, with their respective terms beginning August 25, 2022.

Ilias Kavouras asked for a count of attendees to decide issues that needed to be voted on. A total of sixty-five (65) people were counted.

Ilias also asked for clarification on whether faculty currently on sabbatical were able to vote in todays' proceedings, and it was declared that faculty on sabbatical are not able to vote on issues presented at the Governance Council.

* The first proposed vote was for the approval of the Ombudsman position description. The position description passed with sixty-two percent (62%) of attendees approving of the description.

(Yes votes – 39; Non-voting members – 22; Abstentions – 2)

* The second vote taken was for the At-Large Faculty Member of the Student Academic Appeals Committee. Both candidates, Dr. Jean Grassman and Dr. Karmen Williams, gave short bios of themselves and discussed why each wanted the position. A vote was taken and Dr. Karmen Williams won, with thirty-four percent (34%) of the attendees voting for her.

(Karmen Williams - 23 votes; Jean Grassman – 15 votes, Non-voting members – 25; Abstentions – 4)

* The third vote to take place was to elect an Interim Chair of the Governance Council, to serve while current Chair, Dr. Glen Johnson is on sabbatical.

Glen introduce Dr. Brain Pavilonis as a candidate for the position. Brian gave a short bio, stressing service to our School, and explaining that this was a great opportunity for him.

A vote was taken, and because only full-time faculty can vote, there was a re-poll. The re-polled vote elected Brian the Interim Chair, with fifty percent (50%) of the attendees approving of his selection.

(Yes votes – 31; Non-voting members – 31; Abstentions – 1)

Glen thanked everyone for their participation.

1. **Dean’s Report**

The Dean, Dr. Ayman El-Mohandes, was given the floor for his report to the School:

Dean El-Mohandes welcomed and thanked all for a wonderful year, and discussed the following points:

* This has been one of the most important years in SPH's history. Recognition of our School has led to us having our own campus, and we continue to function and thrive. The eighth (8th) floor will be developed and dedicated for research, and it will lead to at least $20 million in research funding garnered for SPH. No other entity in CUNY can say that it has quadrupled its research compliment.
* Recognizing more than twenty-five (25) doctoral candidates during Commencement moves SPH to another level of success.
* This being the end of our sixth (6th) year, we have had unprecedented and remarkable success.
* New York City agencies continue to reach out to SPH for our expertise, counsel and collaboration, with new contracts from $5 to $10 million, making SPH "THE" School of Public Health for New York City.

The Dean mentioned that Dr. Susan Klitzman, Sr. Dean for Business and Administration, will speak to the upcoming summer session, and continued with his report:

* The fall 2022 semester is a place of uncertainty, especially since recent COVID ratings have gone from "green" to "orange"; stressing an effort to retain normalcy as much as possible, and CUNY is giving schools more leverage to self-govern and communicate.
* SPH’s budget is very strong and we expect a positive fiscal situation for the next two years, but the 40% increase in enrollment experienced in 2020 cannot be maintained, and over time we will have to normalize to more realistic expectations.
* Competition has taken note of us and are competing for students. This is evidenced by N.Y.U. now accepting certificate students at a tuition rate similar to ours and other schools of public health have been forced to decrease costs and serve New Yorkers.
* We need new ways to attract students. The "4 + 1" agreements introduced by Ashish have helped as we currently have approximately thirty (30) students in "4 + 1" programs, and we hope to have upwards of one hundred (100) students or more soon. Brian Pavilonis will take over for Ashish as the liaison/program director, working with our CUNY partners, with assistance from Lynn and Meg.
* The Dean offered congratulations to Dr. Christian Grov on his recent grant from the NIH on substance abuse and HIV, in conjunction with the University of Miami; and mentioned that our School is getting grants that we have not received in the past.
* The World Health Organization (WHO) has sub-contracted with the Center for Refugee and Global Heath to support them with our expertise. This recognition as a "major player' has had an impact on our School and has created new opportunities, infusing funds to our Institutes and our School.

The Dean shifted his conversation to issues of the Appointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee (A.P.T.), stating that the A.P.T. needs to be stable and consistent with comparable actions, and reaching this goal is impossible with a forty percent (40%) change in membership from year to year.

He is considering action to address the issues that foster instability, and with have to go the Board of Trustees (BoT) for their approval.

Dr. Christian Grov, Chair of the A.P.T., added that the Committee has been operating by "swapping seats" when members go on sabbatical.

Dr. Glen Johnson, Governance Chair, stated that there may have to be a call for a brief meeting on this issue to present to the BoT.

The Dean reiterated that this defies consistency and again said there is a need for uniformity.

Christian mentioned that in order for there to be a change in A.P.T. governance, two-thirds (2/3rds) of the Committee must vote for any changes to pass.

With this, the Dean closed his report.

1. **GC Committee Matters**

**Curriculum Committee**

Curriculum Committee Chair, Dr. Sean Haley was given the floor, and he proposed a vote to make course, PUBH 700 M.S. in Health Communication for Social Change, a permanent course.

A vote was taken and the motion to make PUBH 700 a permanent class passes, with sixty-three percent (63%) of attendees voting to make PUBH 700 a permanent class.

(Yes votes – 42; Non-voting members – 24; Abstentions – 1)

Sean thanked all in attendance and relinquished the floor.

**A.P.T Committee**

Dr. Christian Grov, the A.P.T. Chair took the floor and began to discuss two (2) points of interest:

The first topic was the A.P.T. calendar. Christian asked the Committee to check the calendar for dates regarding upcoming events.

In September, a “drop-in” session is being held to answer questions about the A.P.T. process to enhance transparency.

The second topic concerned Dr. Emma Tsui, Associate Professor in CHaSS, and committee member of an A.P.T. sub-committee working on diversity, equity and inclusion in the A.P.T. process.

Emma was granted the floor and presented a presentation of what the sub-committee is addressing. The issues being addressed were:

* The impact of the pandemic on equity in the A.P.T. process and broader concerns about equity in the overall A.P.T. process.

With an approach to develop a better understanding of the process and mechanisms, the goal of the A.P.T. sub-committee is to develop ideas for what could be changed based on faculty understanding and experiences regarding the process, to ensure that all faculty have access to resources and mentoring to enhance the A.P.T. process.

Emma welcomed any input going forward.

**Assessment Committee**

Dr. Ilias Kavouras, Assessment Committee Chair, took the floor and welcomed Dr, Scott Ratzan as a member of the Assessment Committee.

Ilias presented data focusing on student experiences during fall 2021 semester, and said there during the semester we had “strengths” and “…items to work on.”

Preliminary indicators are: (1) students enrolled in on-campus courses did not change over time; (2) student to faculty ratio is high for online courses and can lead to negative learning experiences; (3) students actively engage in online modalities, and (4) performance in online courses is improving.

Results for the spring 2022 semester will be worked on during the summer with feedback to follow.

Another survey will be done to address student concerns regarding safety, COVID and more data will be presented in future meetings.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**

Ms. Himani Sharma**,** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (D.E.I.) Co-Chair, was given the floor.

Dr. Sasha Fleary, Associate Professor in CHaSS, and member of the Committee for Equity and Inclusion (C.E.I.) gave an update of what has happened in the last year, illustrated in the Committee’s annual report.

Sasha reviewed the constituency, guidelines, mission, history, and their goals (6C) as part of our Schools’ Strategic Initiative and Framework.

Sasha stated that a survey is going to be sent out to the SPH community to determine if goals align. The purpose of this survey is to (1) provide a tool that is safe and supportive for our community to express their diversity, equity and inclusion concerns without retaliation or embarrassment; (2) connect the C.E.I. with the SPH community, and (3) build a repository to show any patterns of diversity, equity and inclusion issues.

Sasha closed her session with telling everyone that the C.E.I. Initiatives website has been established, and a vote will be held on a proposed form in todays’ meeting.

Himani added that the form is to promote discussion and feedback. The form’s purpose is for suggestions, not a place to address Title IX concerns or discrimination complaints, and presented a flowchart for how the anonymously submitted Qualtrics form, with five (5) questions, will be handled.

Once the form is place up for vote on its format and content, if approved, it will be forwarded to the Dean for his approval, and placed on the website, provided the Dean grants his approval.

A vote was taken on the C.E.I. form and the vote passed.

(Yes votes – 37; Non-voting members – 21; Abstentions – 6)

The Dean took this opportunity, as the last Governance Committee meeting of the academic year, to thank Dr. Ashish Joshi, Sr. Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Alumni Relations, for his tireless effort and many contributions to SPH, as he has accepted a position to become the Dean of the Public School of Health at the University of Memphis.

The Dean wished Ashish “Godspeed”, with nothing but well wishes for his future endeavor. The Dean added that Dr. Naomi Zewde, Assistant Professor in Health Policy and Management (HPAM) Department has accepted a position at U.C.L.A, and he wished her the best in her future endeavors as well.

Dr. Christian grove also added that Dr. Drew Westmoreland, Research Assistant Professor in CHaSS, has accepted a tenure-track position with the University of Florida, and he wished her the best.

With this, the GC Committee Matters session closed.

**IV.**  **Associate Deans' Reports**

**Dr. Susan Klitzman, Sr. Associate Dean for Business and Administration**

Susan took the floor, congratulated Naomi and Drew on their appointments and seconded the Dean’s sentiments regarding Ashish’s departure from SPH, stating Ashish’s “…legacy will remain with SPH forever…”

Susan updated all in attendance on the following items:

* Construction on the eighth (8th) floor will begin this month and everyone will be moved when it is completed. Research will be given priority for space on the eighth (8th) floor, with a survey being circulated to address needs and concerns.
* Department Chairs need to provide information on Summer Chair positions.
* No in-person classes will be held over the summer session, with the School being open Monday-Thursday, from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. All staff will continue to work from home on Fridays, with Summer Fridays continuing from June 13, 2022 – August 12, 2022.
* The deadline for uploading your vaccine into CUNYFirst is May 27, 2022; and the deadline to request an exception the CUNY vaccine mandate in place is May 18, 2022.
* Annual inventory will start again soon.
* Email transition from Outlook to Microsoft will begin the second week in June, with detailed instruction forthcoming.

Susan closed her session wishing all a good summer, and to “… rest, recharge and be safe!”

**Dr. Ashish Joshi, Senior Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs**

Ashish addressed the attendees, stating he was “overwhelmed” by all of the feelings he had at this time.

He thanked all of his team members and said that as of August 24, 2022, he will have been in the United Stated for twenty (20) years, with “…most of that time being around Ayman…”

Ashish appreciated all of the support he has received from his colleagues and his time with SPH was a “…great learning experience.”

Ashish thanked everyone who has helped “…make me who I am”.

Glen chimed in, telling all that this is going to be a “tough goodbye.”

**Other Business**

Dr. Sean Haley and Dr. Danielle Greene, SPH Executive Director of State and Local Public Health Initiatives, discussed obtained funding for public health scholarships, with an emphasis on building and training the workforce.

SPH is looking for the funding to bring more students to the School, with fieldwork placements a part of program, and offering more “full ride” scholarships to attract superior students to SPH

Given the lack of time available, Sean mentioned that questions should be added to the chat and he would “circle back” with responses.

Glen inquired about the time line and Danielle responded that the deadline for applications was June 1, 2022.

Jean Grassman inquired about the number of scholarships and Danielle responded that the total amount of funding available was $430k, which would be split between full scholarships and helping students “… get over the finish line.”

Other business concluded.

**VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair of the Governance Committee, Dr. Glen Johnson adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m., fifteen (15) minutes past our allotted time, thanking everyone for their time and participation, and for all of the work accomplished today.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Arthur McHugh.