Meeting Minutes of the Governance Council

Wednesday, February 23, 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 then called to order, and a motion was made to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2021, Governance Council Meeting.

Approval for the minutes of the December 8, 2021, Governance Council meeting was seconded, and the February 23, 2021, Governance Council meeting began.

A vote on the following suggested bylaw amendment was proposed and discussions commenced:

1. Academic Appeals Committee - Section 4.5

Duties: The Academic Appeals Committee shall hear cases of student academic appeals, including grade appeals and program dismissal, gather additional evidence when needed, and render a final decision on the appeal. The Academic Appeals Committee oversees training of students and faculty on academic integrity.

The Academic Integrity Subcommittee, a subcommittee of the Academic Appeals Committee, composed by the five members as described above and established under Section 15 of the CUNY Board of Trustees bylaws, shall hear cases of student appeals of academic integrity infractions for which the Academic Integrity Officer determined that only academic sanctions may be applicable.

In discussing the amendment, faculty member raised questions/concerns:

* Mary Schooling brought up the context of the academic appeal, and the need for clarification.
* Nick Freudenberg suggested that the integrity of the appeal should be separate from the grading, and should be removed/changed to the Student Academic Appeals Committee, and the language is directed towards students not faculty.
* Mary Schooling, Nick Freudenberg and Ilias Kavouras all agreed that adding the phrase/title "student academic integrity" made the paragraph cleared**.**
* Dean El-Mohandes added the he wanted clarification of the clause, to encompass both faculty and alumni, pursued in greater depth with Legal Counsel for a greater understanding on how it relates to the integrity issue.

Glen made note to bring these issue up to Legal Counsel, Pat Stein.

A vote was put forth to adopted the appendix, and the voted achieved the quorum required for adoption.

Paulo Lellis, was given the opportunity to provide an update on the Governance Council Committee Matrix (GCCM) document.

The reference document outlines all Committees, membership roles, and appointed and elected positions.

Paulo commented that the GCCM document is still being finalized, but would be completed by the next Governance Council meeting and would be housed on the Governance Council SharePoint website.

1. **Dean’s Report**

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

Dean El-Mohandes welcomed all back for the spring semester and discussed the following accomplishments of the CUNY SPH faculty and staff:

* The Dean congratulated Bruce Lee (HPAM) and his team on the largest NIH grant ever received at CUNY, $14.4 million.
* Congratulated Sean Haley (HPAM) and is proud of his effort and leadership in attaining a HERSA award, in collaboration with numerous other organizations.
* Mentioned CUNY SPH's progress on the Pandemic Response Institute (PRI), commending the work of Susan Klitzman, Doris Suarez, Bruce Lee, Ashish Joshi, Barbara Aaron, Diana Romero, Scott Ratzan and Chris Palmedo. The Director of the PRI, and City and State Initiatives, Ms. Danielle Greene, is joining our School mid-March.
* Congratulated Deborah Levine (Director, Harlem Health Initiative) who was recognized by Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine for her work and accomplishments.

The Dean closed this section of his report stating that he is proud to see our School's name mentioned so frequently.

Reporting on CUNY's return to campus on February 28, 2022, the Dean discussed that staff are expected to return to campus three (3) days per week, and thanked Susan and her team for their efforts and providing a safe return to campus for all, and that CUNY's new vaccine policy rules and implementation are in progress.

Commencement is scheduled to be held June 2, 2022, and we are hoping to have it at the Apollo.

* CUNY Central Requirements for in person commencements: Proof of vaccination; negative test 72 hours prior to the event; masking; no physical distancing etc.
* A plan is due to CUNY Central prior to the event. Lynn and a Subcommittee are working on this now.
* We plan to hold a live event and livestream for online graduates with recognition for them in the ceremony.
* Honorands are scheduled to be Dr. Vivek Murthy and Dr. Dave Chokshi.

Overall, SPH’s budget is very strong and we expect a positive fiscal situation for the next two years.

CUNY has donated $800k to assist with the functions of the Pandemic Response Institute.

The Dean mentioned the following issue pertaining to our School's enrollment:

The Dean thanked Lynn and her team for the spring enrollment (901 this spring as opposed to 906 last spring). Our School has been able to keep similar enrollment numbers whereas other graduate Schools have seen a 5.8% drop in enrollment. The Dean also thanked Molly for the data she provides, typically on short notice, and credited the "4 + 1" initiatives developed with other CUNY Schools and institutions for helping maintain our Schools enrollment.

* The Dean expressed his hopes that full time graduate levels would remain at an 18% -20% range, or higher, adding that we will continue to accommodate all part-time students.
* Spring admissions have stabilized . Last year was a "boom" year with a 40% increase in enrollment that came with a scheduled increase in tuition. This year things have normalized.
* Fall number are concerning and we will need an infusion of incoming students to sustain enrollment numbers and graduation rates. An increase in "4 + 1" students from sister CUNY Schools will help.
* GRE requirements are being dropped at many schools of public health including at SPH except for the EPI/BIO Department. The department is considering an experiment without the GRE for the coming academic year to evaluate if it makes a difference. This is tied to the need to maintain and enhance enrollments.

The Governor has reinstated the "Tap Gap" (difference between federal government grants and the amount paid for tuition), and reimbursement of $50 million to CUNY schools for fringe benefits based on recent contractual raises. This could mean as much as $100 million being returned back to CUNY.

CUNY is seeking to hire 500+ full time faculty positions to replace Adjuncts with permanent positions. This will help improve the part time to full time faculty ratio.

The Dean thanked all for the past fall semester and closed adding the tremendous growth in the School's research portfolio, which now stands at $18 million.

Before his session ended, two questions were posed to the Dean:

1. Esther Cortorreal, Bursar, asked if we will see an increase in staff positions to match the School's growth?

The Dean responded that the answer to the question is an internal one. We are trying to catch up with growth the best way we can, and we are filling positions now. We need to look at our current and projected budgets to optimize our ability to hire staff in the coming months.

1. Ilias Kavouras, EOGHS, asked if raises could be tied to performance positions.

The Dean stated we are trying our best to support programs with the largest number of students. There are always programs that are more popular, and this is not a punitive action against smaller programs. We will work with faculty to assist the Assistant Dean of Marketing position to make a positive difference.

The ended the Dean's Report for the Governance Council Meeting.

1. **GC Committee Matters**

**Admissions Committee**

Admissions Chair, Dr. Ghada Soliman (EOGHS) was given the floor.

Ghada discussed that the review of applications was moving from acceptance to enrollment, and early decisions work better for the School.

Admission numbers for the School were given, and all virtual recruiting measures and "open houses" have been well attended.

Admission "mixers", and social media recruiting on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, as well as information sessions were on-going and the dates for these activities were online, or could be received from Meg, Director of Admissions. All information sessions are being recorded and are on the SPH website.

**Budget Committee**

Budget Chair, Dr. Karen Florez (EOGHS) was given the floor.

Karen discussed that the Committee had its initial meeting. The Budget Committee's duty is to work with SPH Departments and other Governance Council Committees, and to review the School's annual budget reporting its finding to the Governance Council.

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

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

Susan took the floor and mentioned a fact she learned in a recent meeting where the attention span for ZOOM meeting averages 7 seconds, and hoped that our standard deviation was higher than the mean.

Susan thanked everyone for their adaptability to the constant change we have endured.

Campus Facilities will do its best to accommodate all meeting and student requests as they come in.

As per the vaccine mandate put forth by CUNY, all PSC members and ECP staff need to be vaccinated, and uploaded to CUNYFirst. Religious and medical exemption requests will be reviewed.

* For Student Vaccine issues, please contact either Lynn and Robyn, in Student Affairs.
* For Employee Vaccine issues, please contact Arthur, in Human Resources

For our return to campus, scheduled for February 28, 2022, our campus will be open Monday through Thursday, from 8:00 am until 8:00 pm., with the campus closed on Fridays, and all staff working from home.

RF staff will follow campus directives, and social distancing will not be an issue as staff and faculty have agreed to donate their space for use if not in the office.

SPH is seeking to replace 7 staff members; we are in the midst of conducting 4 searches, with plans for a third Administrative Assistant, a replacement for the SPH Foundation and a second programmer for I.T.

With ongoing concern regarding neighborhood safety, Susan encouraged everyone to speak about their travel routes to and from our School, designate meeting places and walk together, use street savvy (don't wear headsets and remain aware. All were informed that Public Safety can perform escorts when requested.

Susan closed stating we will convene the Safety Group that met last year to seek a safer environment for our students and employees.

After Susan closed, the Dean requested additional time to recognize Ann Gaba (EOGHS) for receiving an award for excellence in teaching, with an apology for not mentioning Ann earlier during his report.

Elizabeth Kelvin, Department Chair for EPI/BIO, also took the opportunity to informally introduce Zach Shahn, the new Biostatistician hired in EPI/BIO. A more formal introduction will be done at our next meeting.

Glen Johnson pointed out the SPaR report Michele Kiely (Associate Dean for Research) left with him for review. Given a recent resignation, and an employee on leave, SPaR will need additional lead time for grant submission.

**Other Business**

Spring Cooper (CHaSS) - provided an update on the Antiracist Teaching Collaborative.

A syllabus is being developed , and suggestions are being taken. It is a frame work for courses and values in action. The template document for faculty is on their website for review, and it includes resources for social justice.

Meredith Manze (CHaSS) has given the template to Directors for review and faculty updates have also been included for review.

The Collaborative meets every other Friday, from 2 to 4 pm, and all are welcome. The next meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2022.

Emma Tsui (CHaSS) mentioned an April 15, 2022, training on Public Health given by Hopkins/Bloomberg. Staff can reach out to Meredith Manze for the email list/Outlook invite.

Paulo Lellis closed the "Other Business" session stating that there will be a vote on the Ombudsman during the next Governance Council meeting.

**VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair of the Governance Committee, Glen Johnson Adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Arthur McHugh.