Meeting Minutes of the Governance Council

Wednesday, September 7, 2022; 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Via Zoom

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

Brian Pavilonis, Interim Governance Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:35 pm, and a motion was made to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2022, Governance Council Meeting.

Approval for the minutes of the May 22, 2022, Governance Council meeting was seconded, and the September 7, 2022, Governance Council meeting began.

Brian welcomed two new student representatives (Amanda, Doris), and the new Parliamentarian, Professor Mary Schooling, who is replacing Professor Ilias Kavouras for the next two (2) years, to the Governance Council Meeting.

Brian then initiated the vote for a Governance Council nominated alternate to replace Professor Levi Waldron on the Appointments, Promotions, and Tenure (A.P.T.) Committee, for a one-year period.

The candidate placed before the Committee was Professor Suzanne McDermott.

Suzanne introduced herself to the Committee and outlined her experience at the University of North Carolina, where she was a member and Chair of the Tenure and Promotions Committee, and stated she would be happy to serve as a replacement for Levi.

After voting mishaps, a quorum was reached and Suzanne was awarded the alternate position, replacing Levi for one-year.

Brain thanked the Committee for their vote and turned the floor over to the Dean.

1. **Dean’s Report**

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

Dean El-Mohandes welcomed everyone back for the upcoming semester, and wished all a successful year. Dean El-Mohandes also welcomed the new student members and introduced Dr. Nasim Sabounchi in her new tenure-track, faculty position.

Dean El-Mohandes went further to announce and congratulate those faculty members who were tenured and promoted since the Governance Committee last met in May:

Early Tenure was awarded to:

Ghada Soliman, Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental, Occupational, Geospatial and Health Sciences, who serves as the departmental Doctoral Director, received the Dean’s 2019 Award for Teaching, and participates in the CUNY Advanced Science Research Center and is chair of the GC Admissions Committee

Early Tenure and Promotion was awarded to:

Karen Florez, Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental, Occupational, Geospatial and Health Sciences, who serves as the Deputy Director of the Center for Systems and Community Design and this year received the Dean's Award for Research. Karen is also chair of the GC Budget Committee.

Tenure and Promotion was awarded to:

Meredith Manze, Associate Professor in the Department of Community Health and Social Sciences, who is the co-lead for the school’s Antiracist Teaching Collaborative and this year received the Dean's Award for Teaching.

Promotion was awarded to:

Diana Romero, Professor in the Department of Community Health and Social Sciences, who is Director of the Maternal, Child, Reproductive, and Sexual Health Specialization, our Ombudsperson, and a recipient of the Dean's 2019 Award for Mentorship.

The Dean shifted his conversation to Dr. Susan Klitzman, Sr. Associate Dean for Business and Administration and thanked her and her team for a smooth fall opening.

The Dean continued his report stating that CUNY Central is pushing for 70% of staff CUNY-wide should be reporting to the campus. CUNY SPH will maintain a Monday through Thursday schedule, with employees reporting to work three days per week. The campus will be closed on Fridays, with all staff working from home.

70% of classes are to be taught in person; and it is plausible that we will transition to 100% capacity in the spring, with more faculty reporting to campus at least two times per week. It will be interesting to see what will eventually happen.

More in-person meetings will be scheduled, with November initiating in-person Dean meetings as we move to normalize campus operations.

8th Floor construction will be completed in the coming weeks and the conference room is state-of-the art.

The Search for a new Senior Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs is continues and the Committee, under Terry’s leadership, will meet next week to review applications and soon schedule first round interviews. We are hoping to hire the new Senior Dean as soon as possible, perhaps in January or February of the New Year.

We hope you join us for the return to campus event on Monday, 9/12 from 4-5:30, which Lynn has organized with her team.

We are beginning to plan for our upcoming self-study and this is also a priority for this year as we continue to work on the strategic plan and link the two activities (impact measures etc.). We will discuss this planning and work in various venues and meetings throughout the year.

The Dean turned his report to student enrollment and budgeting, stating SPH received a "large bump" in enrollment during the 2020 -2021 academic year, but no major changes are expected in the coming years, and we do not have any increases in tuition planned. This could lead to a 5% reduction in tuition collection.

Lower admissions are being seen all over, especially among schools of public health. The best we can do this year is to go back to our 2019 baseline, with 5% to 10% increases in enrollment per year.

The lower admissions rate will impact our budget in a couple of years and this highlights the importance of the certificate programs, the 4+1 programs with the community and senior colleges, that is now under Brian’s leadership, as additional sources of income.

We are also looking at new ways to market our programs—this is a priority for Sergio and he is launching various activities to increase enrollment.

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

One of our highlights again last year was our research productivity. Congratulations to all on our research efforts that brought in $20 million in grants. 10% of in-directs will be returned to Departments to invest in research for faculty and students.

There is a strong initiative to return to on-campus learning.

The city budget could be in jeopardy as the market has taken a downturn and federal government support during COVID has been reduced, but this should not impact 4-year schools and senior schools as we are funded by state government.

The Dean closed his report, thanking all for their participation and wishing all continued success...

1. **GC Committee Matters**

**A.P.T Committee**

Dr. Christian Grov, the A.P.T. Chair took the floor posed a vote on Governance Plan Amendment regarding School-Wide APT members ability to serve on the School-Wide APT while on sabbatical (Appendix 2).

The reason for this vote is because it has long been specified that faculty on sabbatical could not serve on the A.P.T. Committee, but this has not been a consistent practice; and this vote should be held to allow faculty on sabbatical to retain their seat.

Allowing faculty to vote while on sabbatical will prevent disruption of the A.P.T. Committee moving forward.

Dr. Luisa Borrell mentioned the distinction of duties by faculty and chair and moved to postpone the vote until the October 19th Governance Council Meeting.

Christian referred the motion to the Parliamentarian, Mary, and Mary agreed that Luisa was allowed to request a postponement.

Numerous attendees voiced comments:

* The Dean said the rule should be put up for discussion.
* Christian reiterated that several layers of approval are need on the A.P.T. Committee and this needs to be done for continuity.
* Legal Counsel Pat Stein mentioned it could take 2 to 3 months to receive all approvals.
* Professor Heidi Jones noted there was an urgency but this was an important decision and seconded Luisa’s motion to postpone.
* Professor Ghada Soliman mentioned the lack of votes hampers the process.
* Professor Diana Romero added that it should not be a requirement but an option as consistency is important. It doesn’t make sense to wait six weeks to vote, it is more productive to vote now.
* Professor Ilias Kavouras agreed with Diana, emphasizing the need for consistency and mentioned that you can serve on your department A.P.T. Committee, but cannot serve on the school-wide A.P.T. Committee during sabbaticals.
* Governance Interim Chair Brain Pavilonis stressed that this is optional and there is nothing to gain by waiting six weeks to vote.
* Professor Levi Waldron said this sounds like a “why not” proposal, and wanted to hear more reasoning as to why it could be harmful.
* Professor Renee Goodwin sought clarification asking is a faculty member could resume their place on the Committee after their sabbatical ends. The answer was Yes, they would resume their position once they returned from sabbatical.
* Christian stated he was surprised by the rule and this was only pointed out to him last spring.
* Mary Schooling mentioned that all important decisions are made in the fall, and the spring is a good opportunity for others to get APT experience without affecting what happens in the fall and that the vote should be postponed.
* Renee Goodwin agreed with Mary and said we should delay the vote, and consider the guidelines carefully, which were written for a reason.
* The Dean stated that we need to vote on this motion today and end the discussion.

A vote was taken to delay, or not delay, the decision to allow School-Wide A.P.T. members on sabbatical to serve on the School-Wide A.P.T. Committee.

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the voting members voted not to postpone the vote until the October 19th meeting.

When the vote was taken, fifty-nine percent (59%) voted “yes”, to allow faculty members on sabbatical to remain on the School-Wide A.P.T. Committee while on sabbatical.

A motion was made inquiring who was able to vote on this issue.

The Chair of the A.P.T. Committee agreed to reschedule/postpone the vote on this issue until the October 19, 2022, Governance Council meeting given all the issues surrounding who could vote, and whether or not the faculty member had to be in attendance to vote.

Christian then surrendered the floor.

**Admissions Committee**

Dr. Ghada Soliman, Admissions Committee Chair, took the floor and gave a presentation on Admissions.

The Admission Committee has been refigured, and student enrollment is returning to pre-pandemic levels of enrollment.

The deadline for spring enrollment is coming in December, and the Admissions Department first Open House is scheduled to be held October 12, 2022. All are welcomed to attend.

Ghada then surrendered the floor.

**Curriculum Committee**

Curriculum Committee Chair, Dr. Sean Haley was given the floor, and he proposed a vote to on the conversion of EOHS 6XX: Climate change, human health, and policiescourse from temporary status to permanent status (Appendix 3), with the course appearing on the syllabus as Climate Change in the Environmental, Occupational and Geospatial Health Sciences (EOGHS) Department.

Sean mentioned that a discussion was being held with the Health Policy and Management (HPAM) Department as to how course were performing and he hoped to discuss this at our next meeting.

Sean thanked all in attendance and relinquished the floor.

**Assessment Committee**

Dr. Ilias Kavouras, Assessment Committee Chair, took the floor.

Ilias stated there was a change in Committee, and the Assessment Committee would assist Ms. Roby Gertner, Executive Director of Academic Strategy and Operations, in the accreditation process.

The Committee is continuing to process data collected through course evaluations to understand and process learning experiences from students, with the new Assessment Committee taking it from there.

Ilias then surrendered the floor.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**

Ms. Himani Sharma, and Dr. Sasha Fleary, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (D.E.I.) Co-Chairs, were given the floor.

Both mentioned that the D.E.I. website was now “live”, and the form approved last semester was available to use.

Lastly, a vendor has been approved to complete an Employee Climate Survey. More will follow…

**Budget Committee**

Dr. Karen Florez, Chair of the Budget Committee, took the floor and thanked Dean El-Mohandes, Dr. Susan Klitzman, sr. Associate Dean for Business and Administration, and Ms. Theresa Matis, Executive Director of Business Services and Finance, for helping the Committee understand how the budget works, and how both the city and state influence our School budget.

We are still waiting for our final budget allocation numbers and it should result in a health allocation of funds for our School.

Karen thanked Brian and Dr. Lynn Roberts, Associate Dean for Student and Alumni Affairs, for the student representation recommendations.

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, and provider the following reminders and update to the Governance Council regarding COVID and returning to the campus for the fall semester.

* Students, Faculty, ECP and staff members governed by the PSC contract must be vaccinated; all other staff, if not vaccinated must test weekly.
* Random Testing, with 10% of the CUNY population selected weekly for testing, will continue.
* Public Safety will continue to check all staff in our systems for campus access, so please remain patient.
* We recommend that all Staff remain masked on campus, and if you are sick, please stay home. Incidents of serious COVID cases are decreased when you are vaccinated.
* If you are exposed to COVID, please wear a well-fitting mask and monitor your condition for ten (10) days.
* If you are living with someone who has COVID, please contact either Robyn (students), or Arthur, (faculty and staff).
* Distancing protocols have been relaxed; and we have had many requests for in-person meeting. Please keep in mind that Tuesdays are our busiest days. You can contact Campus Facilities to schedule a meeting on campus.
* CUNY SPH is following current CUNY policy and allowing remote work through December. Please complete the Remote Work Agreement, if you have not done so already.

An ad-hoc Sustainability Committee has made recommendations for improvements in source separations and composting. This will lead to removing individual trash bins from office and having common areas to sources and dispose of trash.

The 8th floor is basically completed, we are still waiting for several items for I.T. to finish the work being done. When work is completed, Centers will move into the space and we will begin the process to backfill those offices that have been vacated. Please contact Louie Cao, Campus Facilities Manager, if you have any spacing issues.

Please be patient with our I.T Department. We have had 3 I.T. staff members leave, and Michelle and Mohit are on overdrive. If you have any urgent request, please specify when contact I.T.

Heidi Jones mentioned that she was curious when reported COVID numbers aren’t showing up in SPH’s numbers.

It was explained to Heidi that if an employee is not tested at a CUNY site, the employee must self-report, and if an employee tests positive for COVID and has been on campus, we actively contact trace the employee, and alert anyone who has had close contact to self-monitor for symptoms and get tested.

Diana Romero asked if all CUNY schools were required to go along or can individual schools decide for a higher level of enforcement against COVID.

The Dean responded and said “no”, we cannot reverse CUNY requirements, which are a direct reflection of CDC requirements, and we cannot institute policies not in-line with the University.

Dr. Denis Nash verified that CUNY’s isolation policy is following the CDCs revised policy on isolation where an employee can return to work five (5) days after having COVID, and wear a mask for ten (10) days.

Susan again encourage all staff to wear a mask while on campus.

Arthur McHugh, Director of Human Resources, added that for any employee to return to campus after having COVID, he/she must provide a health care provider supervised negative COVID test.

Professor Jean Grassman added that the CDC recommend wearing a mask when transmission rates are high. What can the School do for compliance? How can we promote? It was again explained that we must follow CUNY’s policies and procedures, but as a School we can lead by example, and strongly suggest mask wearing.

With this, Susan extend her report and surrendered the floor.

**Dr. Michele Kiely, Associate Dean for Research**

Michele was granted the floor and proceeded to give her presentation.

Michele told the Committee she was excited that the Sponsored Programs and Research (SPaR) Department was fully staffed, and all faculty will see service improve.

Michele began to go over her report and stated it was shared with faculty to assess their needs and questions regarding SPaR.

There was a 69% response rate from faculty; and the survey addressed:

* Pre-award and post-award satisfaction
* Services used
* Training for faculty on grants
* Grants Management
* Post –award requests
* Collaborations and Partnerships
* Mentorship

Professor Andrew Maroko asked Michele what she planning to do with the information gathered? Michele replied that she would use the information to improve service.

Diana stated that a large proportion of faculty are dissatisfied or neutral regarding SPaR, and Michele replied that, with the extra staff, SPaR will be able to assist in funding opportunities, and will discuss with her staff to prioritize time lines with an emphasis on customer service.

Ilias asked what an acceptable benchmark would be for the survey. Michele replied 100%, and the School has hired more staff the address faculty needs and the growing grants requests of the School.

Dean El-Mohandes added that we need to benchmark our services, and the response from the survey will improve in time given the significant budget response we have added to SPaR to meet faculty needs.

The Dean took the opportunity to mention that SPH will hire four new Assistant Professor faculty lines one for each department with some funding from CUNY Central, utilizing a joint search process, and a “cluster posting” to maximize efficiency.

Brian added that Dean Marilyn Auerbach was having technical problems and her session would be deferred to the October 19, 2022, Governance Council Meeting.

Also Paulo and Doris would go over voting member numbers and procedures to clarify processes for the next meeting.

**VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Interim Chair of the Governance Committee, Brian Pavilonis adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m., twenty (20) 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.