

september 12, 2024

**Meeting of the Governance Council**Thursday, September 12, 2024, 1:30-3:30 PMRoom 708, Auditorium; Chair: Sean Haley

**Attendance:**

The following Voting Members of the Governance Council (GC) attended: Marilyn Auerbach, Luisa Borrell, Muniyat Choudhury, Nevin Cohen, Spring Cooper, Sasha Fleary, Karen Florez, Lauren Fowler, Ann Gaba, Elizabeth Geltman, Renee Goodwin, Christian Grov, Sean Haley, Terry Huang, Mustafa Hussein, Glen Johnson, Julie Katz, Elizabeth Kelvin, Michele Kiely, Susan Klitzman, Philip Kreniske, Meg Krudysz, Paulo Léllis, Meredith Manze, Pedro Mateu-Gelabert, Suzanne McDermott, Terry McGovern, Christopher McLaughlin, Denis Nash, Victoria Ngo, Sehyun Oh, Christopher Palmedo, Brian Pavilonis, Daniella Pierre, Rachael Piltch-Loeb, Lynn Roberts, Nash Rochman, Diana Romero, Thomas Rouyard, Nasim Sabounchi, Ramla Sahibdin, Mary Schooling, Zachary Shahn, Ghada Soliman, Chloe Teasdale, Rachel Thompson, Emma Tsui, Yaddy Valerio, Levi Waldron, Katarzyna Wyka, Constantin Yiannoutsos

The following Alternate Members of the Governance Council (GC) attended: Robyn Gertner, Sapphire Howard, Irene Kyei

The following Non-Voting Members of the Governance Council (GC) attended: Amina Alam, Mohit Arora, Atif Baig, Besnik Berisha, Mollie Braaten, Vincent Cabrera, Donna Canfield, Sumana Chandra, Julie Daprile, Sabrina Das, Lea Dias, Adam Doyno, Ayman El-Mohandes, Rosemary Farrell, Alexis Feinberg, Elisabeth Figueroa, Cara Flynn, Jason Gaines, Sahana Gupta, Rositsa Ilieva, Ingrid Kalemi, Jennifer Keane, Patti Lamberson, Brianna Lee, Maya Lloyd, Matthew Lootens, Denise Maldonado-Marino, Arthur McHugh, Yesenia Mena, Kamrun Nahar, Matt Paczkowski, Akilah Phillip Salmon, Minosky Pichardo, Lauren Rauh, Jeffrey Rene, Carlos Rivera, Jeanette Rodriguez, Doris Suarez, Roxanne Towler, Joanna Warchol, James Warren

**Call to Order: Approval of May 2024 Minutes, Mission Minute, Robert’s Rules of Order**

Sean Haley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:34 PM. He began the meeting by explaining changes that are being implemented for meetings, including using QR codes in Qualtrics to sign in for meeting attendance and to cast votes. Additional changes include the use of a central microphone during discussions – which helps with speaking order under Robert’s Rules – and the use of a timer for each speaker, which is part of a commitment made to be conscious about how we spend our time together.

Sean noted that we will test a number of things out and asked the attendees to trust this process while hoping for the best. He noted that the goal is to improve with each meeting.

Sean then requested and received approval by general consent of the minutes from the May 9, 2024, meeting.

Sean mentioned the content of the GC meetings, specifically around why we are here at CUNY SPH. Leaning on his own experience and the school’s expressed commitment to social justice in its mission statement, Sean asked for volunteers to give examples of how something is better as a result of their work. For example, is there a student who is better because of something we’ve done so far this semester, or is there a community, a population, or a group that is better as a result of what we’ve done? The goal is to get us to think about our impact.

Vicky Ngo shared her recent work in Vietnam scaling up services for depression care in 36 of the most underserved communities, including mental health task sharing with community health workers and nurses. The midterm evaluation indicated that they have screened over 15,000 people, served nearly 2,000, and trained 400 providers and community health workers. These are remarkable results given that the project lost all its partners prior to COVID and had to find new partners to carry out its work.

Liz Geltman mentioned work her team is doing on healthcare pricing transparency. They are getting pricing information from hospitals so that people can see where they can go to receive services and budget for the services they need, with the goal of reducing medical bankruptcies.

With the agreement of the members in attendance, the Mission Minute will continue at the next GC meeting.

Sean then introduced how Robert’s Rules of Order will be used during GC meetings going forward, noting that the governance document requires their use and that we will make successive approximations to follow them more closely.

Sean began an overview of Robert’s Rules of Order, including the Main Motion. Please see Slides 4-9 in the attached presentation for the information that was covered.

Michele Kiley then motioned to *change the traditional Robert’s Rules of Order allocation of a ten (10) minute discussion maximum per speaker to three (3) minutes per speaker, effective for the duration of the 2024-2025 CUNY academic year*. This motion was seconded by Terry Huang. The motion proceeded to a vote. The vote total was forty-five (45) “Yes” votes in favor of the motion and two (2) “No” votes opposing the motion. *As a result of this vote, the GC has approved the motion*.

Sean then explained the remaining key Motions that are part of Robert’s Rules of Order. Please see Slides 10-13 in the attached presentation for the information that was covered.

Following this presentation, Sean led the GC in a Jeopardy-style quiz on Robert’s Rules of Order.

After the quiz, Sean mentioned that there was subsequent discussion after the Steering Committee meeting that suggested postponing the last item on the agenda to the first GC meeting after the election. Hearing no objections, a vote of affirmation – a voice vote – was taken on the motion to *postpone the discussion about future changes to public health until after the 2024 election*. *No objections were voiced, and the GC approved the motion*.

**Dean’s Report**

Dean Ayman El-Mohandes opened by noting the strong meeting attendance and suggesting that we host a lunch preceding future GC meetings. He thanked Sean as new GC Chair for his energy in taking on this position and for creating a seamless transition to the new meeting procedures.

Ayman then welcomed and recognized CUNY SPH’s new hires since Spring 2024:

* Constantin Yiannoutsos: Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics
* McKaylee Robertson: Research Associate Professor in the Institute for Implementation Science in Population Health
* Sabrina Das: Harkness Fellow, supported by the Commonwealth Fund
* Besnik Berisha: Interim Marketing Director
* Mollie Braaten: Academic Program Manager
* Vincent Cabrera: Helpdesk Technician
* Cameron Campbell: Campus Security Assistant
* Julie Daprile: Communications Electronic Media Manager
* Jason Gaines: Associate Director of Human Resources
* Minosky Pichardo: Academic Program Specialist in the Department of Environmental, Occupational, and Geospatial Health Sciences
* Carlos Rivera: Custodial Assistant

Turning to the budget, Ayman noted that the budget situation at CUNY overall has been looking much better. The stringent controls over expenditures, especially for schools and colleges with a large structural deficit, has reduced the deficit from $250 million around $80 million dollars.

Ayman stated that negotiations with the PSC continue, and it is uncertain when they will be completed. Some important matters related to adjunct faculty are still being negotiated. The contract itself is a significant concern because the hope is that once an agreement is reached, the State will step forward and cover the gap between the salaries currently administered through CUNY and those that take affect under the new contract. However, there is no guarantee that the State will be in a position to cover this difference at any point in the year.

The Department of Education recently adopted changes to regulations of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI requires colleges and universities receiving federal financial assistance provide all students with a school environment free from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. Ayman commended everyone for how they peacefully handled critical moments of tension. Nonetheless, we need to continue to be aware that our environment should always be seen as a safe environment for all faculty, staff, and students in our school.

It is noted that Title VI protects students who experience harassment or discrimination based upon: (i) actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; or (ii) citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. CUNY also has a responsibility to address discrimination against students involving: racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes; skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions; and where a student came from or is perceived to have come from, including discrimination based on a student’s foreign accent, foreign name, or a student speaking a foreign language.

In June, CUNY and the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights (OCR) reached a settlement agreement, resolving nine pending national origin/ancestry complaints against CUNY, the CUNY Central Office, Hunter College, CUNY School of Law, Brooklyn College, Queens College, and Baruch College. Ayman noted that as a smaller community, we are much less likely to experience such incidents, especially considering the fact that a large number of our students receive online education.

The complaints alleged that (1) CUNY had failed to respond promptly or effectively to alleged discrimination and antisemitic harassment of employees and students, and that (2) CUNY had discriminated against students on the basis of their actual or perceived national origin, including shared Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and/or South Asian ancestry.

As part of the agreement, CUNY has committed to:

* Reopen or initiate investigations of complaints and reports alleging discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of national origin.
* For each investigation, provide OCR with the results of the investigation and report to OCR any remedial action to be taken by CUNY, including actions to remedy the effects of the environment and prevent recurrence.
* Provide training to employees responsible for investigating complaints and other reports of discrimination.
* Provide training for campus peace officers on CUNY’s Title VI obligations not to discriminate based on national origin, including shared ancestry, how to engage effectively with CUNY students and the campus community, and how to ensure accurate collection and reporting of complaints.
* Administer on each of CUNY’s 25 constituent colleges and schools at least one climate survey to students no later than September 30, 2024. This survey may be delayed slightly at SPH due to the reaccreditation taking place in October.
* Continue the third-party reviews currently being conducted of CUNY’s nondiscrimination and antisemitism policies, at the direction and request of New York State Governor Kathy Hochul, and the other by an advocacy group.

Regarding Title IX, CUNY’s Board of Trustees adopted the Policy on Sex-Based Misconduct, effective August 1, 2024. It is based on newly revised Title IX regulations issued by the United States Department of Education.

Key revisions in this policy include:

* Sex-Based Misconduct now includes discrimination based on gender identity; past, present, or potential pregnancy or related conditions; sex characteristics; sex stereotypes; and sexual orientation.
* Expanding the definition of Mandatory Reporters – formerly known as Responsible Employees. Mandatory Reporters have been expanded to include, in addition to non-confidential employees who have the authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of CUNY, all employees who have a responsibility for administrative leadership, teaching (this is new), or advising within CUNY.
* Addressing specific actions an employee (new to include all faculty and staff) must take if a student informs them that they are pregnant, which is that they must promptly provide the student with the Title IX Coordinator’s contact information who will coordinate reasonable accommodations.
* Explicitly detailing the accommodations available to students and employees who are seeking an accommodation due to pregnancy or a related condition.
* Informing supervisory employees who engage in an intimate relationship with an employee they supervise that they now have the option to notify their supervisor, the head of Human Resources for their school, college, or unit, or the Labor Designee for their school, college, or unit.
* Procedures for handling complaints, hearings, and adjudication have been clarified and outlined in the Policy.

Turning to admissions, the fall cycle was lengthy but robust, resulting in tuition revenues that are exceeding predictions. Ayman thanked and applauded everyone who took part in this process. Because of the strong budget, we were able to return to our previous policy of providing a TA for faculty with 30 or more students in a class, rather than the current policy of 35 students.

Ayman noted that this fall’s enrollment exceeded last fall’s by over 20 students, and our applications exceeded the pool during the pandemic—which is amazing because many schools have seen a drop in their applicant pools. This allows the school to select the top-tier applicants. Indeed, the average GPA for new master’s students is 3.32 and for PhD students it is 3.58. The school continues to promote diversity in our student body, with over 70% of the incoming class constituting underrepresented categories and 34% of the class coming from a CUNY college. The school continues to contribute significantly toward merit-based fellowships and scholarships both at the masters and doctoral levels, totaling about $750,000 this year. Over 40% of this year’s students accepted our scholarship offer. Additional detail is available in the admissions report.

Ayman recognized Brian Pavilonis, Robyn Gertner, and Meg Krudysz for their commitment to recruitment and developing the culture to support the 4+1 program. This growth is important to the school, as the number of certificate students has started to decline.

In other events, Ayman reminded everyone that SPH is hosting a blood drive with the New York Blood Center in our Ground Floor space until 6:00 PM today. He thanked everyone who has already donated and encourages others to participate if they are able.

Additionally, the school’s CEPH accreditation site visit is from October 21-23, and the 2025 Commencement date has been secured for June 3 at the Apollo Theater.

Finally, Ayman asks that everyone remember that we want to be an example to the rest of the university in every way that we can, especially in our sense of support for each other and for the communities and students we serve.

**Governance Council Elections**

Sean Haley continued the meeting and the following nominations were made and accepted for three (3) open positions on the Governance Council:

* Committee on Equity and Inclusion (CEI) Faculty Member: Onur Baser, Sehyun Oh
* Committee on Equity and Inclusion (CEI) Staff Member: Besnik Berisha
* Ombudsperson: Diana Romero

Being that there were no competing nominations, *Besnik Berisha was elected as CEI Staff Member* and *Diana Romero was elected as Ombudsperson* by acclimation.

A vote was then held for the CEI Faculty Member position, and *Sehyun Oh was elected as CEI Faculty Member*.

**Associate Deans’ Reports**

*Susan Klitzman, Senior Associate Dean of Administration*

Susan Klitzman noted that all the information she will cover was shared prior to the meeting. She highlighted that there is a new organizational structure with the main change being the creation of a new Marketing Department that will be under Administration. The Communications Department will remain in Academic Affairs. The Department of Online Learning will also be in Academic Affairs and will report to Robyn Gertner.

Susan stated that the draft of the financial plan was submitted to the university in July. It is a five-year financial plan, which covers Fiscal Year 2024 through Fiscal Year 2028. We have yet to receive feedback from the university, which is a positive indication. Susan commented that the plan is already out of date, as the plan only predicted a 5.5% increase in tuition and enrollment, whereas tuition has increased by 13% over last fall and enrollment has increased by more than 10%.

Susan also mentioned that there is a summary of the draft plan for SPARC Kips Bay that will host CUNY SPH, Hunter College’s Health Sciences, and BMCC’s Associates in Nursing program. The facility is not scheduled for occupancy until Fall 2030. CUNY SPH has access to 66,000 square feet in its current space, whereas at SPARC Kips Bay, it will have 71,000 square feet of school-specific space and an additional 88,000 square feet of shared space, such as classrooms and meeting rooms. Susan would like to extend her thanks to Chris Palmedo, Ghada Soliman, and Louie Cao, who are admirably serving on the committee to help plan the SPARC Kips Bay space.

Mary Schooling asked a question regarding space utilization and why CUNY SPH will be getting more space in the new location. Susan stated that she would like to have some future discussions about what everyone foresees as the future of SPH and what the needs will be for in-person space and virtual space. Ayman El-Mohandes also noted that the school hopes to expand to undergraduate education, which would require additional space, and that the school currently lacks large labs at its current location. This space deficit stifles our ability to recruit faculty who do lab-based research in environmental health, nutrition, and other fields.

*Lynn Roberts, Associate Dean of Student Affairs & Alumni Relations*

Lynn Roberts introduced everyone to Muniyat Choudhury, who is serving as GSGA President for this academic year. Lynn noted that they have already begun their work for the year and thanked Yaddy Valerio, Daniella Pierre, and Irene Kyei for also making time to join today’s meeting.

Lynn reminded the Council that we are seeking a faculty member to Chair the Faculty and Student Disciplinary Committee, which oversees any concerns about misconduct that is in violation of the Henderson Rules.

Lynn noted that all the information she is covering is in the report that was distributed and also highlighted that her office will share additional get out the vote campaigns this fall to enhance civic participation in our community. Additionally, next Tuesday, we will be hosting an on-demand special event to highlight Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day.

Lynn closed by promoting the CUNY SPH Alumni event taking place on Sunday, September 22, at the Chinese Scholars Garden in Staten Island. All students, faculty, and staff, along with their family members and partners, are welcome to join.

*Terry McGovern, Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs*

Terry McGovern opened by thanking Robyn Gertner for her work in preparation for the CEPH site visit taking place from October 21st through 23rd. Terry requested that all faculty and staff please prioritize the sessions that they have been invited to attend on their schedules. If you absolutely cannot attend, please contact Robyn as soon as possible. All faculty and staff are welcome to join the exit briefing following the site visit at 1:00 PM on October 23 in Room 717.

Terry mentioned that the Marketing, Communications, and Online Learning Departments are being reorganized to better fit the growth of the school. Online Learning is moving over to Academic Affairs and reporting to Robyn. We will be hiring an Academic Technology Manager and that job is currently being posted.

Terry noted that we will be hiring an Instructional Designer, and Nicholas Chiofalo, the Videographer, will be remaining. Marketing will be reporting to Susan, with Besnik Berisha as Interim Director. We will also be hiring a Digital Marketing Manager and part-time positions in Lead Engagement and Content Creation.

Terry stated that some meetings have taken place to figure out who should be doing what and how to streamline some current inefficiencies. She noted that we are going through a process to identify missing pieces and figuring out how we can meet some of those demands.

Terry announced that the transition to Brightspace has been put off for the spring. We will be doing trainings and transitioning after that time. As part of this process, we are trying to improve how our online courses look, create some templates, and give everyone more assistance in recording.

Ayman recognized Terry for her effort toward creating an Endowed Professorship in Sexual and Reproductive Justice, with the assistance of a committee at the school. A fundraising event recently raised almost $100,000 toward the Endowed Professorship position. This position will add to the incredible efforts of our existing faculty in this domain and will help further increase the school’s visibility and credibility.

**Committee Reports**

There were no Committee Reports presented at the meeting. All relevant reports were shared with the Governance Council prior to this meeting.

**New Business**

Sean mentioned that for the next GC meeting, there will be at least two topics that will brought to the Steering Committee for its consideration.

The first, per the motion passed earlier in this meeting, is the conversation about preparing for the impacts of a new administration on public health.

The second, per discussion earlier in this GC meeting, is how we think about how we will utilize our space.

Sean closed by thanking Paulo Léllis, Doris Suarez, Mohit Arora, and Christopher McLaughlin for their work in facilitating the GC meeting changes and making them as seamless as possible.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Sean adjourned the meeting at 2:49 PM.

Minutes submitted by Christopher McLaughlin