Meeting of the Governance Council
Tuesday, December 2, 2025, 1:30-3:30 PM
Room 708, Auditorium; Interim Chair: Emma Tsui

Attendance:

The following Voting Members of the Governance Council (GC) attended: Besnik Berisha, Juliana Bol, Nevin Cohen, Spring Cooper, Rosemary Farrell, Sasha Fleary, Lauren Fowler, Lynn Francis, Ann Gaba, Kimberly Garrett, Elizabeth Geltman, Renee Goodwin, Jean Grassman, Christian Grov, Terry Huang, Mustafa Hussein, Glen Johnson, Heidi Jones, Elizabeth Kelvin, Susan Klitzman, Philip Kreniske, Meg Krudysz, Bruce Lee, Matthew Lootens, Pedro Mateu-Gelabert, Chinasa Mbanugo, Suzanne McDermott, Theresa McGovern, Christopher McLaughlin, Victoria Ngo, Sehyun Oh, Christopher Palmedo, Rachael Piltch-Loeb, Scott Ratzan, Lynn Roberts, Diana Romero, Thomas Rouyard, Mary Schooling, James Sherry, Ghada Soliman, Chloe Teasdale, Emma Tsui, Levi Waldron, Katarzyna Wyka

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

The following Non-Voting Members of the Governance Council (GC) attended: Mohit Arora, Mollie Braaten, Louie Cao, Julie D'Aprile, Lea Dias, Ayman El-Mohandes, Alexis Feinberg, Danielle Greene, Sahana Gupta, Seeraj Kadura, Jennifer Keane, Chloe Lecat, Cesar Leon, Maya Lloyd, Jose Mazariego, Emanuel Mejía, Yesenia Mena, Kamrun Nahar, Matt Paczkowski, Kayla Reece, Rachel Thompson, Joanna Warchol, James Warren

Call to Order: Mission Minute and Approval of October 2025 Minutes

Emma Tsui, Interim Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM.

Emma opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending this Governance Council meeting and asked that we please use the microphones when speaking so that everyone present can hear what is being said.

Emma then put forth the October 2025 minutes for approval. Hearing no objections, they stand approved as presented.

For the Mission Minute, Nevin Cohen mentioned a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded project where he and Mustafa Hussein are working with food delivery workers that is about to go into the field. They are researching the health effects on delivery workers of working for a platform rather than for a person. Mustafa added that this project has been an engine for theory and policy and that its contributions will go well beyond New York City.

Dean's Report

Dean Ayman El-Mohandes began by noting that CUNY Central is encouraging individual schools to develop their own AI policies. He suggested CUNY SPH develop policies jointly with the Graduate Center and the other schools that fall under its umbrella – the Schools of Law, Professional Studies, and Labor and Urban Studies.

Ayman shared that AI policies will require legal approval and that CUNY Central has suggested that Microsoft Copilot can be used at the current time.

Ayman noted that the US Department of Education has removed the MPH degree from its classification of professional degrees. This has certain implications, including impacting the ability of students to receive higher levels of federal loans. These loan limitations could have an effect on the more expensive degree programs.

Ayman stated that CUNY SPH continues to seek ways to increase enrollment. The CUNY Board of Trustees has approved a special tuition rate for international students participating in the 4+1 program for the undergraduate part of the degree. He also shared that spring admissions are down about 10% so far this year. Despite this news, it is encouraging to know that the SRJH program is already starting to receive applicants and enrollments.

Ayman also commented that 68% of schools of public health offer an undergraduate program, including 2/3rds of the top 33 ranked schools. That said, only two out of eight schools of public health in the tristate area offer an undergraduate degree, and neither of those are in New York City. With the state making $243 million available for new academic programs, the school may be well situated to receive funding to start an undergraduate degree.

Ayman announced that as part of Giving Tuesday – and in recognition of SPH's 10th anniversary – he would match every donation made by faculty and staff to the school through a shared link up to $5,000 for a total gift of $10,000. He then noted since New York City is embarking on universal childcare, the school needs to think about what our role will be in this and how we can contribute to it becoming a national model.

Ayman concluded his remarks by reminding everyone in attendance that the next Grand Rounds will be virtual and take place on December 10th and that a delegation from Estonia is visiting campus on December 10th and 11th.

Old Business

Update on Remote Attendance Resolution, Emma Tsui and Donna Canfield

Emma began by reminding everyone that a vote to change the Governance Plan for extraordinary circumstances was approved at the October GC meeting. Before any change is implemented, however, approval is required from the CUNY Board of Trustees (BoT).

Emma reviewed the intermediate steps that must be completed before approval is granted and the change can be implemented. These steps include: 1) submitting the Governance Plan Amendment, Draft Resolution, and Draft Procedures to the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs and CUNY Office of General Counsel for their respective reviews; 2) addressing any comments or suggested changes to the submission; 3) submitting the documents to the BoT Education Policy Committee; 4) approval from the BoT Education Committee; 5) approval from the BoT. This process will take several months to complete.

Emma noted that CUNY SPH will also need to complete its own process to amend the bylaws. She has formed an ad hoc committee composed of volunteers from the Steering Committee. This committee will meet to draft language amending the CUNY SPH bylaws in line with required request and approval processes. Finally, once the BoT has approved the Governance Plan amendment, the Governance Council can vote to approve the bylaw amendment. The GC bylaw amendment vote will be the final step in the whole process.

Update on Ad Hoc Committee to Protect Public Health, Danielle Greene

Danielle started by giving an overview of the Committee's mission upon its creation in December 2024, which is to identify and recommend potential actions to protect the mission of CUNY SPH in uncertain times. She thanked the committee members and staff who have volunteered their time to this effort. Danielle highlighted many activities of the committee, including tracking and flagging issues of concern to school leadership, sharing

information and relevant articles within the school's community, and discussing federal policy changes and their impact on public health, universities, and communities at large. The committee also undertook efforts to educate internal and external parties about these policy changes.

Danielle also noted that committee members published pieces in various venues: Rosemary Farrell and Katherine Hartley in *HealthBeat*, Spring Cooper and colleagues at other schools of public health in *AJPH*, and Danielle Greene and Assemblymember John T. McDonald in the Albany *Times Union*.

Danielle noted that, unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, the committee could not publish resources for internal use at the school or for external use. As a result, the committee recommends sunsetting, effective the end of this GC meeting.

Committee Reports

Curriculum Committee, Mary Schooling

MS in Public Health Data Science, Levi Waldron and Nash Rochman:

Levi noted that this conversation is a follow up from the October GC meeting. The goal is to update and modernize the program to meet the interests of current students and align with the direction of the field in terms of AI. The proposed changes will eliminate five low enrollment courses and add two new courses. The MS program is 36 credits and is primarily online with some in-person options available for certain courses.

Levi also commented that the changes build on interests within the EPI-BIOS department and are consistent with student and market demand. For example, there are public health data science programs at Columbia and Weill Cornell, but a suitable option at a public institution in New York City is currently lacking. CUNY SPH offered courses related to the programs for the first time last spring. They are meant to be a complementary offering to what already exists so that students can keep pace with changes happening in AI and related developments. The courses will also fill a need in offering additional skills-based electives to all SPH students.

Susan Klitzman asked about the school's ability to develop and sustain the program. Levi shared that there are indications of demand, including strong enrollment in the courses offered in the spring and that Columbia's Public Health Data Science program is the largest one in their EPI-BIOS department. Susan also suggested including additional administrative resources in the program budget to account for program demand.

Terry Huang asked whether the courses will go into enough depth to be competitive in the market, specifically noted concern if the program may get caught between being a pure biostatistics program and a pure data science program. Levi responded that while the program may not have the level of depth that a pure data science program may have, it will include more software and data analysis experience than students receive in the MPH program. Levi also shared that the program will have access to a niche that a pure data science program will not, and it will provide practical experience that is helpful for data science jobs.

Levi highlighted that the goal is to launch the program beginning in the fall. In order to achieve it, however, the GC will need to approve it at this meeting. He also shared that CUNY BoT approval and program accreditation are required before the school can start advertising it.

Ghada Soliman then made a motion to approve the MS in Public Health Data Science program, which was seconded by Mustafa Hussein. The motion was approved: 35 voting Yes, 2 voting No, and 3 abstentions. Please see the Appendix for a full vote tally.

Levi then noted for the attendees that the Advanced Certificate is 12 credits, requires minimal new resources, and is not co-dependent on the MS program.

Chloe Teasdale made a motion to approve the Advanced Certificate in Public Health Data Science, which was seconded by Heidi Jones. The motion was approved: 36 voting Yes, 3 voting No, and 1 abstention. Please see the Appendix for a full vote tally.

SRJ Course Revisions:

The revisions under consideration are for changing the pre/co-requisites to CHSS 632, CHSS 633, and CHSS 634 to allow for an appropriately ordered full-time, two-year sequence.

There being no questions, Mustafa Hussein made a motion to approve the revisions, which was seconded by Ghada Soliman. The motion was approved: 32 voting Yes, 0 voting No, and 1 abstention. Please see the Appendix for a full vote tally.

Transfer Policy Revision:

Robyn Gertner shared that the transfer policy revisions are very small changes which affect only a small number of students. She noted that it primarily applies to non-degree courses.

Ayman El-Mohandes suggested that the language in the policy should state that "if the course is at the same degree level or higher" and Robyn said that this language could be added to the policy. She also stated that there are no restrictions pertaining to Advanced Certificates under this policy.

Glen Johnson made a motion to approve the policy, which was seconded by Besnik Berisha. The motion was approved: 38 voting Yes, 0 voting No, and 2 abstentions. Please see the Appendix for a full vote tally

Associate Deans' Reports

Terry McGovern, Senior Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs

Terry began by thanking Mollie Braaten, Naana Dei, and Sumana Chandra for their tremendous efforts in helping to pull off the Launch Event for the Byllye Avery Endowed Professorship. Over 160 people attended.

Some changes are anticipated in the core curriculum courses. A total of 19 new core competencies have been proposed for PUBH 610-614. Additionally, PUBH 601 would shift from 12 modules to 13 concepts that would be obtained in coursework.

In terms of updates for CUNY Online Learning, some courses have already been completed, while PUBH 612, 613, and 614 are still in progress. Relatedly, the Curriculum Committee approved creating a sub-committee for Online Learning, which will include one faculty member per department.

Susan Klitzman, Senior Associate Dean for Administration

Susan reminded the attendees of the upcoming Holiday Potluck and Day of Performances on December 17th. She also announced that there are improvements being made in automating the Multiple Position Form, however faculty must submit it prior to the start of next semester.

Susan shared that any remaining over-the-cap balances from the end of August must be used by the end of December. Additionally, CUNYfirst will be transitioning to Workday in January 2027.

Lynn Roberts, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Alumni Relations

Lynn graciously yielded her time in an effort to ensure that the meeting would end as scheduled at 3:30 PM.

Elizabeth Kelvin, Interim Associate Dean for Research

Elizabeth shared that Alexis Feinberg has found a solution to the research section in Watermark so that faculty can go into the section and update it per the faculty member's preference. She asked anyone to email her if they noticed any issues with their CV.

New Business

Possibility of Moving Final GC Meeting to May

Emma Tsui shared with the Governance Council that the Steering Committee had expressed an interest in moving the date of this meeting to May 6th or May 12th. Their rationale was that it would be closer to the end of the academic year and allow various committees that may benefit from it to have more time to finalize key items.

Elizabeth Geltman asked whether this suggestion was merely an idea or was a definite change. Emma responded that the goal was to get input from the GC members and to allow attendees to voice any possible concerns they have with changing the date. Emma further welcomed anyone to contact her directly if that was their preference.

Update on AI Policy

Mohit Arora noted that currently there is not an AI policy but there is a cloud computing policy. Until such a time that an AI policy exists, the cloud computing policy will apply. Mohit said that the Microsoft suite is approved in most situations, however tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and others are not approved and must go through Legal's approval process. Please see the attached slides for a full explanation of the approval status of various tools and services with each classification of data.

Mollie Braaten asked whether an option other than Copilot or Zoom transcription may be possible. Mohit replied that while other integrated tools have not been approved for use, if there is a business or use case for another tool, he is willing to speak with CUNY Central IT about the possibility.

Lynn Roberts shared that classroom transcripts may be requested by students on Zoom during remote classes, and it is a very complex issue. She suggested caution as it pertains to this item.

Elizabeth Geltman asked to clarify whether AI tools other than Microsoft Copilot can be used in completing an assignment. Mohit replied that only approved tools should be used, but he could ask the appropriate IT parties about getting additional tools approved. Seeking such an approval would require documenting an appropriate use case that merits approval.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Emma Tsui adjourned the meeting at 3:30 PM.

Minutes submitted by Christopher McLaughlin

Appendix: Meeting Vote Results

Creation of MS in Public Health Data Science Degree:

Yes (35): Besnik Berisha, Juliana Bol, Nevin Cohen, Anthony Devito, Rosemary Farrell, Lauren Fowler, Lynn Francis, Ann Gaba, Kimberly Garrett, Renee Goodwin, Jean Grassman, Christian Grov, Terry Huang, Mustafa Hussein, Glen Johnson, Heidi Jones, Elizabeth Kelvin, Philip Kreniske, Bruce Lee, Matthew Lootens, Pedro Mateu-Gelabert, Chinasa Mbanugo, Suzanne McDermott, Theresa McGovern, Victoria Ngo, Sehyun Oh, Christopher Palmedo, Rachael Piltch-Loeb, Scott Ratzan, Thomas Rouyard, James Sherry, Ghada Soliman, Chloe Teasdale, Levi Waldron, Katarzyna Wyka

No (2): Meg Krudysz, Diana Romero

Abstain (3): Spring Cooper, Sasha Fleary, Lynn Roberts

Creation of Advanced Certificate in Public Health Data Science:

Yes (36): Besnik Berisha, Juliana Bol, Nevin Cohen, Spring Cooper, Rosemary Farrell, Sasha Fleary, Lynn Francis, Ann Gaba, Kimberly Garrett, Elizabeth Geltman, Renee Goodwin, Jean Grassman, Christian Grov, Terry Huang, Mustafa Hussein, Glen Johnson, Heidi Jones, Susan Klitzman, Philip Kreniske, Meg Krudysz, Matthew Lootens, Pedro Mateu-Gelabert, Chinasa Mbanugo, Theresa McGovern, Christopher McLaughlin, Victoria Ngo, Christopher Palmedo, Rachael Piltch-Loeb, Scott Ratzan, Lynn Roberts, Diana Romero, Thomas Rouyard, James Sherry, Chloe Teasdale, Levi Waldron, Katarzyna Wyka

No (3): Lauren Fowler, Suzanne McDermott, Ghada Soliman

Abstain (1): Bruce Lee

SRJ Course Revisions:

Yes (38): Ann Gaba, Spring Cooper, Theresa McGovern, Rachael Piltch-Loeb, Glen Johnson, Susan Klitzman, Kimberly Garrett, Lauren Fowler, Besnik Berisha, Scott Ratzan, Pedro Mateu-Gelabert, Bruce Lee, Sehyun Oh, Thomas Rouyard, Jean Grassman, Chloe Teasdale, Rosemary Farrell, Heidi Jones, Victoria Ngo, Lynn Francis, Nevin Cohen, Suzanne McDermott, Elizabeth Geltman, Sasha Fleary, Mustafa Hussein, Christopher Palmedo, Matthew Lootens, Juliana Bol, James Sherry, Ghada Soliman, Christian Grov, Katarzyna Wyka, Elizabeth Kelvin, Lynn Roberts, Christopher McLaughlin, Diana Romero, Meg Krudysz, Levi Waldron

No (0): None

Abstain (2): Renee Goodwin, Chinasa Mbanugo

<u>Transfer of Credit Policy Changes</u>:

<u>Yes (32)</u>: Rosemary Farrell, Nevin Cohen, Theresa McGovern, Lynn Francis, Glen Johnson, Terry Huang, Rachael Piltch-Loeb, Heidi Jones, Ann Gaba, Bruce Lee, Juliana Bol, Susan Klitzman, Philip Kreniske, Sasha Fleary, Matthew Lootens, Mustafa Hussein, Besnik Berisha, Suzanne McDermott, Jean Grassman, Elizabeth Kelvin, James Sherry, Thomas Rouyard, Katarzyna Wyka, Kimberly Garrett, Chloe Teasdale, Lynn Roberts, Christopher Palmedo, Ghada Soliman, Sehyun Oh, Chinasa Mbanugo, Christopher McLaughlin, Diana Romero

<u>No (0)</u>: None

<u>Abstain (1)</u>: Renee Goodwin