

## LEHMAN COLLEGE

### The City University of New York Minutes of the Stated Meeting of the General Faculty Wednesday, May 9, 2007

CALL TO ORDER: Professor Robert Feinerman, chair of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

**1. Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the meetings of February 21, 2007 were submitted and approved.

#### **2. Communications:**

**A. President's Report:**

**1. Masterplan:** President Fernandez said that the document would be widely distributed to get input from all the CUNY campuses in the fall when the finishing touches will be applied. Everyone is invited to participate.

**2. Commission on Higher Education:** Governor Spitzer is planning to create this commission. Initially, the plan was to concentrate on public higher education but that has changed to include higher education in general. This is logical since in New York State the private sector plays a significant role. A number of representatives, presidents from CUNY and the private sector, the CUNY Chancellor and at least one CUNY representative will be included in the commission. Ideally, the last would be from a community college that often are overlooked.

**3. Data Book:** President Fernandez distributed a chart described as "Changing Characteristic of Lehman College Students, Faculty and Programs." A data book is sent out every year, and a copy is available in the library. Today he presented a handout that showed a span of ten years, comparing Fall 1997 with Fall 2006, based on data from the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment. Obviously, our enrollment has gone up, he said, along with the ratio of full-time students; male and female ratios are essentially the same. We have increased significantly the full-time faculty, and, even more significantly, the number of adjuncts. Students from the Bronx have gone down a little but a nine percent drop only represents 80 students. There are more foreign students, and more students are being drawn from Rockland, Orange, Putnam, Westchester, and Manhattan. The number of majors has shuffled a bit, with the difference of Business Administration as a popular new offering. President Fernandez suggested that the faculty look at the data book from time to time to follow the trends.

**4. New Provost:** With great pleasure, President Fernandez introduced the new provost designate and senior vice president for academic affairs, Mary Papazian, who comes to us from the Montclair State University. The president described her as a person of vision, energy and commitment, and said he is looking forward to working with her. Dr. Papazian, who will come on board July 15, realizes that many of the professors will be away, but those who are around and who return are invited to stop in her office to introduce themselves. She is interested in what the faculty would like to see happen and what some of the obstacles might be, adding, "that makes it easier for me." The new Provost concluded by saying, she "never felt more welcome."

**B. Senate University Faculty Report:**

- 1. New Policies:** Prof. Manfred Phillip said the University has been pushing a great number of new policies in the current academic year. As we are winding down, these include new policies on student complaints, acceptable use of computer resources, and the Multiple Position Policy that has been passed. What will come up on the Board Committee meeting on June 4 is the proposed Research Misconduct Policy. There will be changes in that document, but the University Senate has not seen them, and we worry that we will see them a day before the Board meeting, in which case we might ask for a delay. The proposed Conflict of Interest Policy will come to the Board in the fall. In terms of the University and Intellectual Property Committee, it turns out it hasn't met in a year, a situation which should soon be corrected. Anyone who would like to be on that committee should contact Prof. Phillip who is accepting nominations.
- 2. Online business B.S. degree:** The School of Professional Studies, in sending a letter of intent to the campuses, is coming up with a new online business program. This is the first program the school will have that competes with the colleges. The understanding is that the school is forbidden to compete with the campuses, and this would have to be altered if the program is to pass. The reason they are doing this, the Chancellery claims, is that the CUNY colleges have not stepped up to the plate in providing online college education.
- 3. Quantitative skills:** The Chancery has recently held a meeting on quantitative skills as part of the general education curriculum. It is clear they are talking about general education, and that is going to have an impact on college senates.

**C. College Security in Light of Virginia Tech Tragedy:**

- 1. Vice President Wheeler** reflected on the Virginia Tech tragedy, the state of preparedness at Lehman and additional steps that will be taken. He saw the Virginia event as “absolutely the worst nightmare for American higher education than anyone could imagine.” He cited the emergency measures that have to be taken to keep us on the alert. Our first line of defense is our Public Safety Department, which does a fine job in protecting individuals, our campuses and making people feel secure. One of our vulnerabilities is in replacing public service lines that become vacant, which became apparent about two years ago when we needed replacements. Over a year ago, the University started paying attention to the standards that have to be met by public safety officers. We'll find out how this works this summer when we attempt to hire another half dozen safety officers.
- 2. Communications on Campus:** Over a year ago, we installed and tested an emergency telephone system. Components of that system include both the green light phones that are outside on campus and the red button phones that are in each of our buildings. In addition, we display flyers, posters and announcements. That phone system should give us the capacity to conduct emergency communications to keep students and staff safe from harm. Our objective is to connect the campus to public safety with an emphasis on two-way communications. (In Virginia, public safety police could not effectively notify the college community that a serious danger had broken out.) In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech incident, we looked again at what the emergency telephone system brought us. We were pleased to find, while we had not been emphasizing two-way capability, that the current system can be adapted. Over the next few months, the system will be enhanced and a loudspeaker added so messages can be sent to areas of concern.
- 3. State funds:** The state legislature is looking into ways to help colleges and universities in New York State

with their safety measures. We're hoping that will mean additional funds to Lehman, and we are preparing for that possibility. 4. To a question that was asked from the floor regarding faculty safety in a building or walking alone at night on campus, Vice President Wheeler replied that Public Safety can immediately respond to a building situation, and can readily provide an escort in potentiality dangerous circumstances, noting that we practice "zero tolerance" when it comes to disrespectful and threatening behavior.

**D. Counseling Report of Vice President Magdaleno and Dr. Baez: 1. Mental health issues:** Vice President Magdaleno said that even before the Virginia Tech tragedy, there had been an increase in the number of students seeking assistance on mental health issues at a time when our enrollment has grown in the last four years by 4,000 students. The vast majority of students who come to us need assistance with on-going adjustment issues. Many of the faculty have seen such behavioral patterns and recognize them as a critical issue. For many years at Lehman, we did not have a counseling center until one was established in 1999. Since then, our Counseling Center has been hard at work to meet the complex needs of our student body and to make the campus community aware of the wide variety of services available. However, our ability to prevent situations like those that occurred at Virginia Tech is highly difficult to deal with. Yet the communications capabilities at Lehman have been vastly improved. Of course, the issues that students bring to the Counseling Center range from the relatively minor to the severe. So the question is: what to do in what type of circumstance? Do you or a student feel imminently threatened? Call Public Safety which is the first responder. There are situations when students are indeed, disruptive or lack civility, though the circumstances are not life threatening. The response is to call Vice President Magdaleno's office. In other cases, students confide personal problems such as difficulties with a lesson or with another student, or an act of violence, or depression, but there is no immediate threat. Still, there could be indications of a suicide inclination--that would require an immediate call to Public Safety. Especially important, we record every call we receive regarding disruptive behavior and threats and follow up on every report. **2. Remarks from Dr. Baez: 1. Background material:** Dr. Baez provided literature on everything that Counseling and Personal Development Center offers and another background piece from Paper Clip Communications, all of which was made available at the faculty meeting. The Center, she said, will hold workshops once a month throughout the summer on how to deal with students in distress, and in the fall, more of this will be done. The experience is that students in distress are coming to the Center with greater frequency, and the staff tries to create a private and sensitive protocol. Professors are encouraged to be on the alert in the classroom when they see a change in student behavior. Some professors walk the students to the Center if they see someone acutely distressed such as crying or showing evidence of a suicidal impulse. In other situations, students who are stressed out often deal with their problem by taking a leave of absence from college. A list of workshops is available from the office, and an interactive workshop is available on line.

**E. Election of Faculty Election Committee: 1. Election Committee: 1.** Chairman Feinerman opened the election of the Faculty Election Committee. With no additional nominees from the floor, those elected for a two-year term to fill four vacancies are:

Professors Jim Carney (L&L), Christy Folsum (ECCE), Yves Jean (M&CS) and Anne Rice (AAAS).

**F. Budget Update: 1. Excellent Results:** Vice President Wheeler was happy to report a healthy budget this year. He distributed a snapshot on the fiscal year 2006-07 budget, which from a budget perspective, has been an exceptional year for CUNY and for Lehman as well. **2. Next fiscal year:** No numbers have been received yet for fiscal year '08. But we are told two things by Central Office: one is that CUNY COMPACT 2 will be fully funded, and secondly that we will enjoy the advantage of getting budget numbers from Central Office early in June, which is much earlier than usual and helpful to planning expeditiously. **3. Procurement:** More good news is that the University Board has authorized the Chancellor to sign off on procurements up to \$500,000. Previously, procurements above \$20,000 had to go to the CUNY Board of Trustees. The new arrangement will expedite our purchasing as against having to go through a number of time-consuming steps. **4. Parking:** An e-mail was recently sent out on this subject. Next year, if all goes well with Phase 1 of the new Science facility, construction will begin near Gillet Hall in March 2008. If that happens, alternate parking arrangements will be made for the 30 reserved spaces in the Gillet lot, and this will be done on the Paul Avenue side of the campus. For general parking, additional space will be created by a phenomenon called "piggy-backing," which operates on the principle that many parkers are not here five days a week and can consequently share spaces. An incentive will be provided in the form of a reduced parking rate.

**G. New business**

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

The next scheduled Faculty meeting will be on Wednesday, September ---, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

Grace Russo Bullaro  
Executive Committee

