

**Faculty Senate Minutes #538**  
**John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

**Tuesday, April 26, 2022**

**1:40 PM**

**Zoom**

**Present (28):** Alex Alexandrou, Chevy Alford, Andrea Balis, Elton Beckett, Ned Benton, David Brotherton, Marta Concheiro-Guisan, Silvia Dapia, Jessica Gordon-Nembhard, Heath Grant, John Gutierrez, Jay Hamilton, Marta-Laura Haynes, Mohammad Islam, Karen Kaplowitz, Catherine Kemp, Erica King-Toler, Yuk-Ting (Joyce) Lau, Alexander Long, Gerald Markowitz, Mickey Melendez, Maureen Richards, Jennifer Rosati, Stephen Russell, Francis Sheehan, Charles Stone, Fritz Umbach, Violet Yu

**Absent (10):** Mohamed Ben Zid, Jonathan Epstein, Maki Haberfeld, Christopher Herrmann, Veronica Johnson, Anru Lee, Samantha Majic, Patrick Raftery, Gregory Sheppard, Adam Wandt

**Guest: Professor Angela Crossman**

**Invited Guests: Director Mircea Alex Comanescu, Professor Angelique Corthals, Director Dyanna Pooley, Associate Provost Allison Pease**

**AGENDA**

1. Adoption of agenda
2. Announcements
3. Approval of Minutes #537 of the April 6, 2022, meeting
4. Invited Guests: Associate Provost Allison Pease and Director Dyanna Pooley: Restructuring of the Assessment Committee
5. Invited Guests: Professor Angelique Corthals, Professor Glenn Corbett, and Director Alex Comanescu: Senate Panel on Campus Health and Protection
6. Reports from Members of Governance Committees
7. New business

1. **Adoption of the agenda.** Approved.

2. **Announcements**

President Benton reported that the Faculty Senate survey of lecturers has been distributed and he has about a dozen responses so far.

The CUNY Fiscal Affairs Committee has adopted guidelines for excellence fees: these fees are henceforth not to be used for free tuition for any student but it will be permissible to waive the

excellence fee for a student who is having financial distress; furthermore, a report will henceforth be required every five years assessing the use of excellence fees.

**3. Approval of Minutes #537 of April 6, 2022.** Approved.

**4. Invited Guests: Associate Provost Allison Pease and Director Dyanna Pooley: Restructuring of the Assessment Committee**

There is currently a single college assessment committee, which comprises 7 faculty and 3 HEOs. The proposed change is that there be three assessment committees, all of which would report to the Strategic Planning Subcommittee (SPS). Today's presentation is both to receive feedback about the proposal and to determine if the Senate wishes to have faculty members on all of the new committees.

Associate Provost Allison Pease explained that right now faculty members are having to assess such units as student affairs and people from student affairs having to assess such units as forensic science. The proposal would correct this by having the right people doing the assessments and by having an accountability system, in the form of SPS.

The proposal is to pilot the 3-committee structure next year before putting it in our charter because we are copying York College's 3-assessment committee structure and we don't know for sure if it will work for us.

The academic affairs assessment committee would mirror the department memberships of the four review committees of the FPC, with two faculty members from each of the four groups as well as the undergraduate and graduate deans and two students. The gen ed assessment committee would be primarily gen ed faculty, half lecturers teaching gen ed, and half non-lecturers teaching gen ed, as well as students and administrators. The third committee, on assessing administrative, educational, and student support services (AES), would have two members from each of the following areas: academic affairs; enrollment management and student affairs; finance and administration; and institutional affairs, justice initiatives, and legal affairs and/or communication as well as a student and a few others.

Associate Provost Pease noted that assessment of non-academic units has not been going on in a thorough and systemic way. She and Director Pooley do not think faculty are needed on this third committee but the Faculty Senate may disagree.

Senator Mohammad Islam said the proposal makes a lot of sense but asked for the rationale for not having one or two faculty on the administrative assessment committee. AP Pease explained that it's the same reason administrators aren't on the academic assessment committees. VP Kaplowitz pointed out that a student will be on the administrative committee and questioned how a student member would be more appropriate than a faculty member; she added that AP Pease's answer is like comparing oranges and apples because faculty are officers of the university and are supposed to make policy while administrators are supposed to

operationalize those policies. AV Pease said those points are well-taken and it's up to the Senate but that she hates to waste anyone's time. Senator Fritz Umbach asked whether York has faculty on the administrative assessment committee and the answer was it does not.

President Benton asked whether instead of eight faculty for the academic assessment committee there be four, with one from each of the four groupings of departments. AP Pease said there are 33 majors and 13 master's programs and minors to assess and that we don't want to kill people. Director Pooley, noting that the committees will be reporting to SPS, where there are already lots of faculty members, said that the expectation is that lots of faculty on SPS will get involved.

##### **5. Invited Guests: Professor Angelique Corthals, Professor Glenn Corbett, and Director Alex Comanescu: Senate Panel on Campus Health and Protection**

President Benton welcomed Professor Angelique Corthals and Health and Safety Director (and adjunct professor of science) Mircea Alex Comanescu, two of the three members of the Faculty Senate's Panel on Campus Health & Protection. The third member, Professor Glenn Corbett, is at a conference in Indiana.

Professor Corthals said that the Covid virus is mutating fast. We are now in a situation where most PCR tests are not free and, so, most are doing home tests and so lots of cases are not being reported and so we're missing the data. The sewer surveillance shows infection rates should be much higher. BA.2 is the main variant but there's also BA.4 and BA.5 and a recombined variant where two variants have combined. These variants are 30% to 60% more contagious than Omicron. At least 80% of us know someone who has had Covid. Infections are rampant right now. Covid is not a respiratory virus; it's a systemic virus, especially effecting heart vessels and the heart; indeed, diabetes has increased because of the virus.

She said her prediction based on trends is we are going to have small bump in the spring, things will recede in summer because everyone will be outside, and then there will probably be a new variant in the fall that's going to give us an Omicron-like wave. Her recommendation is to keep masks on, especially those who are vulnerable. Second boosters are available only to those who are at least 50 years old and those who are immunocompromised. At John Jay, everyone should keep their masks on. This is even more true now than before, because now the time to exposure is much reduced.

President Benton asked as we return to campus, how should we go about this so that the college can be as safe and resilient as possible. Professor Corthals said the war in Ukraine is having a huge impact because there is no longer any possibility of Covid funding that is not connected to Ukraine funding. We are going to see more variants until the entire world is vaccinated. A recent article by Dr. Anthony Fauci says we can't expect herd immunity with Sars-Covid-19 and so we'll see these waves over and over. We have to normalize mask wearing; we're not going to ever return to the pre-pandemic world. Those who do better will be those who adapt to this new situation. She added that our students are hungry for online content and

that absenteeism has never been higher. Most importantly students must tell Malaine Clarke, the college's nurse, when they are infected; it's essential that they report and it's essential that we track the cases.

VP Kaplowitz said that many, many of her students are now sick with Covid but they don't know that there are anti-viral medications now available. Should we be informing them of this, she asked? Professor Corthals said that the anti-viral medications are not available to everyone. They are only available to those who are vulnerable or immunocompromised or not vaccinated. These medicines are approved only for emergency usage. And, furthermore, testing facilities are not yet ready to prescribe and, so, only a physician may prescribe them.

Senator Francis Sheehan said that we are fortunate to have three wonderful colleagues on our Senate panel. He noted that Alex has a Ph.D. in health sciences and is the new Director of Health and Safety at the college as well as an adjunct in the Sciences Department. He is, in addition, an alumnus of John Jay. And Professor Glenn Corbett is an expert in emergency management, who often testifies before Congress.

President Benton asked whether we should use UV lighting to make our air safer and cleaner. Director Alex Comanescu said Director of Facilities Anthony Bracco is installing UV light filters.

Senator Jerry Markowitz thanked the guests, saying they have provided critical information. He asked whether, with the upcoming graduation ceremonies, we are setting ourselves up for a super spreader event? Professor Corthals said we fortunately stopped the January 11 commencement from happening. She said that a May 31 commencement can happen but only if everyone is required to be masked and not a cloth mask but a surgical mask; she furthermore recommended that N95 masks be available for everyone. She also suggested we recommend that the stadium roof be open. Director Comanescu said that CUNY has been allowing the venues to make such Covid-precaution decisions.

Senator Cathy Kemp said two really basic conditions should be established: we should be requiring masks on campus and all employees should be required to be vaccinated. We should urge the president to consider independence from CUNY about Covid issues. Professor Corthals said she agrees that everyone should be required to be masked.

Senator Fritz Umbach expressed concern about a colleague in his department who is immunocompromised and suggested there should be a waiver for such people from the contractual obligation to attend commencement. VP Kaplowitz said there is, actually, no such contractual obligation; rather, the contract requires us to be available to work through the end of the day of commencement.

President Benton said the Senate should send a message to the faculty and a different message to the administration and that these should be written in consultation with our panelists.

## **6. Reports from Members of Governance Committees**

President Benton reported that at commencement, the faculty will be seated far back on the stage and the students will walk across the stage far away, at the very front of the stage. The president and provost will be on the stage but will not shake hands. Everyone will be encouraged to wear masks – the president and provost themselves will wear masks – but it will be voluntary. VP Kaplowitz said 3,000 graduates have signed up to attend, which is the same number as before the pandemic; these 3,000 include graduates from the 2020 and 2021 graduating classes.

## **7. New business**

President Benton returned to the question as to whether the Senate is of the opinion that faculty should serve on all three new assessment committees, including the administrative assessment committee. Hearing comments in the affirmative and none in the negative, he said he would convey this to AP Pease.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Provided by  
Karen Kaplowitz