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**Minutes of
The Lehman College Senate Meeting
Wednesday, December 16, 2020
Special Meeting of the Senate**

Senators Present: Aisemberg, G.; Alexander-Street, A.; Ali, S.; Auslander, D.; Austin, L.; Babalola, V.; Banks, R.; Baraldi, C.; Bayne, G.; Bettiol, R.; Boston, N.; Budescu, M.; Burton-Pye, B.; Campeanu, S.; Cheng, H.; Cooper, W.; Dominquez, V.; Donkor, B.; Dumais, S.; Ebersole, S.; Ewing-Morgan, D.; Fakhouri, S.; Farrell, R.; Fera, J.; Finger, R.; Firpo, A.; Ford, G.; Fortunato-Tavares, T.; Georges, Catherine A.; Gonzalez Castillo, R.; Harrison, E.; Hattori, T.; Hyman, D.; Kim, C.; Kim, H.; Lemons, D.; Loscocco, P.; Louche, Z.; Luerksen, A.; Machado, E.; MacKillop, J.; Mahon, J.; Maney, B.; Marianetti, M.; Markens, S.; Mazza, C.; McKenna, C.; Mellen, A.; Mills, P.; Mills-Bakhsh, J.; Morgan, J.; Munch, J.; Murphy, B.; Mutoria, F.; Nunez-Torres, A.; Nwosu, P.; O’Neil, C.; Ohmer, S.; Prince, P.; Ramirez, M.; Rice, A.; Ridley, T.; Rosario, Y.; Rotolo, R.; Sarmiento, R.; Schlesinger, K.; Schwittek, D.; Sisselman, A.; Sofianos, E.; Valdovinos, C.; Valentine, Robert T.; Wright, J.; Yavuz, D.; Zerphey, N.

Senators Absent: Bergmann, R.; Calvet, L.; Codrington, N.; Collett, J.; Durodola, S.; Marcelino, K.; O’Dowd, M.; Rivera, C.; Saforo, E.; Stein Smith, S.; Valarezo, J.

The meeting was called to order by President Daniel Lemons at 3:33 p.m.

1. Approval of the Minutes

There were no minutes presented for approval.

2. Announcements and Communications

a. Report of the President—

Dr. Lemons welcomed all to the special meeting of the Senate and made several announcements. Concerning accreditation and the Lehman College graduate nursing program, he informed that Lehman received an extension from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) for the Family Nurse Practitioner M.S. program, which would continue into the next year. Dr. Lemons elaborated that such would allow students of the spring 2021 cohort to graduate with accreditation as well as sit for the CCNE exam and obtain certification. He also announced that a Lehman College alum, Sandra Lindsay, was the first in New York to receive the COVID-19 vaccine; he shared the sentiment of how proud he was of her for taking that step and for being a leader in doing so.

41 Dr. Lemons also announced that the College was among a list of recipients that received a
42 major grant from Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, which he perplexedly informed was a gift
43 of \$30 million. On the motivation behind her generosity and why Lehman was among the
44 fortunate beneficiaries, Dr. Lemons shared the following excerpt from her website:

45
46 Some are filling basic needs: food banks, emergency relief funds, and support
47 services for those most vulnerable. Others are addressing long-term systemic
48 inequities that have been deepened by the crisis: debt relief, employment
49 training, credit and financial services for under-resourced communities,
50 education for historically marginalized and underserved people, civil rights
51 advocacy groups, and legal defense funds that take on institutional
52 discrimination.

53
54 Though Ms. MacKenzie's words illustrate a combination of issues suffered by vulnerable
55 organizations, Dr. Lemons shared that these words in some aspect were reflective of Lehman
56 and much of what the institution, its students, and personnel have suffered during the
57 COVID-19 pandemic. He reiterated the College's fight to overcome the inequities that were
58 exacerbated by such, but also the College's fight to maintain its mission despite it all. He
59 shared his gratitude for the generous gift, and assured that the funding would be used to
60 address the longstanding needs of the College, and most importantly, continue to address the
61 needs of Lehman College students.

62
63 Dr. Lemons presented the resolution regarding the implementation of the credit/no credit
64 grading policy for the Fall 2020 semester. He motioned to consider the resolution, and it was
65 seconded. Thereafter, he detailed the matter at hand. Dr. Lemons informed that shortly after
66 the last meeting of the Senate, additional solutions were provided by the Chancellor
67 concerning the credit/no credit policy. There were three options offered to CUNY colleges,
68 with the requirement that one be selected and submitted to the Central Office by the deadline,
69 December 11, 2020. Dr. Lemons went on to inform that Lehman selected the second option,
70 as did all but one of the CUNY colleges. He explained that those who selected the second
71 option were expected to turn in a list of courses excluded from the credit/no credit policy by
72 the deadline, December 18, 2020. However, Dr. Lemons clarified that the College could not

73 proceed until the policy—in the format of a resolution—was approved by the College Senate.
74 He explained that courses would be excluded from the credit/no credit policy if using
75 credit/no credit grades would jeopardize licensure and/or accreditation. He added that
76 moving forward with the policy would include a charge to the Committee on Admissions,
77 Evaluation, and Academic Standards (CAEAS) to review and approve the list of courses
78 proposed for exclusion for reasons other than licensure and accreditation, of which there
79 were three. Dr. Lemons assured that leaders of the SGA, as well as the Governance
80 Committee Chair, Professor Joseph Fera, and the College Senate Parliamentarian, Professor
81 Duane Tananbaum, were all part of the discussion leading to the resolution before the Senate.
82 He also assured that the aforesaid group were all made aware of the College’s choice to adopt
83 the second option alongside the list of excluded courses. Furthermore, Dr. Lemons shared
84 that the timeframe would allow students 20 consecutive days, after the grade solution
85 deadline, to participate in the credit/no credit option. This, he added, would not only help to
86 avoid registration complications, but ensure that grades are finalized before the beginning of
87 the spring term.

88
89 Dr. Lemons opened the floor to discussion on the resolution for the credit/no credit policy
90 and discussion ensued. There was a request to name the three courses to be excluded, to
91 which the President informed was PSY 226, PSY 305, and CMP 167, from the School of
92 Natural and Social Sciences. There were also concerns on how a grade of credit/no credit
93 could be misinterpreted, by graduate and professional programs, as something other than a
94 passing grade. Professor Penny Prince shared an internal example of the difficulties faced by
95 one of her students when applying to Lehman, and she suggested that a notation be included
96 beside credit grades to ensure that they are well received. Professor Ayanna Alexander-Street
97 inquired about whether students in the health science fields—if they were to receive a credit
98 in place of a letter grade—would be accepted by the Nursing Department for entry into the
99 Nursing Program. The chair of the department, Professor Catherine Georges, informed that
100 such would be unacceptable for the purposes of maintaining accreditation. Professor Richard
101 Finger assured that faculty and the deans would provide additional information to students
102 through the decision making process, and that the chatbot would be updated to address
103 students’ concerns accordingly. Prof. Finger also announced that from December 21, 2020
104 to January 12, 2021, there would be a Zoom room staffed with professional advisors every

105 Monday through Friday, anytime between 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. He also stressed that there
106 was no shortage of support, and informed that on January 5th, 6th, and 12th, students would
107 be able to consult with the College's academic departments. Professor Robert Farrell
108 inquired about the number of students the credit/no credit policy would benefit, as he recalled
109 that there was a small percentage. Dr. Nwosu expressed that though the percentage was
110 slight, there would be better communication moving forward—including a meeting with
111 SGA leaders, not simply to get the message across, but to thoroughly inform students of the
112 opportunities available to them. Lastly, Professor Duane Tananbaum requested floor rights
113 and they were granted. He inquired about the number of courses that were exempt in the
114 schools of HS2N and education, per reasons related to licensure and accreditation. An
115 estimation was provided. The Dean of the School of Health Sciences, Human Services, and
116 Nursing (HS2N), Dr. Elgloria Harrison, informed that there were possibly around 30 courses.
117 The Dean of the School of Education, Dr. Serigne Gningue, informed that there were
118 possibly around 20 courses.

119
120 Dr. Lemons moved to vote on the credit/no credit policy resolution. Professor Joseph Fera
121 clarified that votes in favor of the resolution would be in approval of the following three
122 items: (1) giving the Senate the authority to okay all courses on the exclusion list for licensure
123 or accreditation purposes; (2) voting to charge the Committee on Admissions, Evaluation,
124 and Academic Standards (CAEAS) with approving any additional courses beyond the three
125 mentioned—that is, PSY 226, PSY 305, and CMP 167; and (3) voting that exclusionary
126 courses would be published alongside rationale. Thereafter, the motion was put to a vote,
127 and the resolution was unanimously approved.

128
129 See Attachment I

130
131 Professor Fera warned, on behalf of Mr. Steve Castellano and the Information Technology
132 Department, that students, faculty, and staff beware of malicious emails. He informed that
133 such scams were on the rise, and that recently, students were swindled as a result. He urged
134 all to take precaution and to be on the alert.

135

136 Dr. Lemons thanked all for attending the special meeting of the Senate and for a wonderful
137 turnout, in acknowledgment of the short notice. He also thanked everyone for their dedication
138 and commitment, and welcomed all to the live briefing on December 17, 2020, which was
139 scheduled for 4:00 p.m. Dr. Lemons wished all a safe, joyful, and restful remainder of the
140 year, and likewise for the journey into 2021.

141

142 **b. Student Legislative Assembly—**

143 There was no report.

144

145 **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES—**

146

147 **1. Graduate Studies**

148 There was no report.

149

150 The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

151

152 **2. Governance Committee**

153 There was no report.

154

155 The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

156 **3. Committee on Admissions, Evaluations and Academic Standards**

157 There was no report.

158

159 The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, December 18, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.

160

161 **4. Undergraduate Curriculum**

162 There was no report.

163

164 The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

165

166 **5. Academic Freedom:**

167 There was no report.

168

169 The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, February 4, 2021 at 3:30 p.m.

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171 **6. Library, Technology, and Telecommunication**

172 There was no report.

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174 **7. Campus Life and Facilities**

175 There was no report.

176

177 The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

178

179 **8. Budget and Long-Range Planning**

180 There was no report.

181

182 The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

183

184 **9. University Faculty Senate Report**

185 There was no report.

186

187 The next Plenary Session was scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

188

189 **4. Report of Ad Hoc Committee**

190 **a. Report of the Academic Assessment Council—**

191 There was no report.

192

193 **Old Business**----None.

194

195 **New Business**----None.

196

197 **ADJOURNMENT**

198 President Lemons adjourned the meeting at 4:16 p.m.

199

200 Respectfully submitted:

201

202 Cynthia Cessant

Lehman College Senate

RESOLUTION REGARDING IMPLEMENTATION OF CREDIT/NO CREDIT GRADING POLICY FALL 2020 SEMESTER

WHEREAS, as of October 8, 2020: Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that Covid-19 infection rates are at a record high and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed that Covid-19 disproportionately affects communities of color; AND

WHEREAS Covid-19 rates, hospitalizations, and deaths have continued to rise since that announcement; AND

WHEREAS, CUNY's Spring 2020 "Covid-19 Flexible Grading Policy was designed in consultation with campus Presidents, Deans, the University Faculty Senate, the University Council of Registrars, and the University Student Senate to provide students with maximum flexibility during the ongoing and challenging transition of all courses to distance learning;" AND

WHEREAS, constituent outreach conducted by the Lehman College Student Government Association found that the online transition at Lehman College in the Fall term continues to be a significant hardship for many Lehman students because of the use of technology and also because students are suffering financially, and emotionally because of Covid-19; AND

WHEREAS, Lehman College must safeguard its mission for educational accessibility and success to all, including communities of color; AND

WHEREAS, the Chancellor has the discretion to review and extend the policy as necessary to meet public health emergency policies and practices; AND

WHEREAS, the Lehman College Governance Documents give the College Senate, "subject to the authority and Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, . . . responsibility for the formulation of academic policy," including "grading practices and standards"; AND

WHEREAS, the Lehman College Senate on December 2, 2020, passed a resolution providing in part "that during the Fall 2020 semester, all students shall have the option to convert any or all letter grades they earn in their classes to CR/NC grading"; AND

WHEREAS, the CUNY Chancellor subsequently, on December 7, 2020, decreed that the colleges Would have the option to "(1) Allow the use of CR/NC grades for all Fall 2020 courses as in the Spring 2020 term" or "(2) Allow the use of CR/NC grades for all Fall 2020 courses except those the college designates to be excluded"; AND

WHEREAS, Option 2 above did not exist at the time the Lehman College Senate approved its resolution on December 2, 2020; AND

WHEREAS, the President of Lehman College, after consultations with student and faculty governance leaders, selected Option 2, with a short list of courses not eligible for CR/NC grades to be determined; AND

WHEREAS, in offering options for a CR/NC policy the chancellor stipulated “due consideration to issues concerning academic progression, accreditation and licensure requirements, transferability of credits, and financial aid eligibility, among others deemed to be important to their respective campus communities,”

Therefore, be it resolved that the Lehman College Senate approves excluding any and all courses from the Fall 2020 CR/NC grading policy if letter grades in those courses are necessary for licensure or accreditation purposes; AND

Be it further resolved that the Lehman College Senate charges its Committee on Admissions, Evaluations, and Academic Standards (CAEAS) with reviewing and approving any and all other course exclusions to the Fall 2020 CR/NC policy. This list shall be forwarded to the President; AND

Finally, be it resolved that the list of each course excluded from the Fall 2020 CR/NC policy shall be published along with its rationale for being included on said list.