



University Student Senate
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**MINUTES OF THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE
UNIVERSITY STUDENT SENATE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
HELD
SUNDAY, May 15, 2022
ON ZOOM**

I. ROLL CALL

Upon a roll call the attendance recorded was as follows:

2021-2022 USS Steering Members:

Salimatou Doumbouya, Chairperson
Cory Provost, Vice-Chair for Legislative Affairs
Oumou Sylla, Vice-Chair for Fiscal Affairs (Absent)
Vice-Chair for Graduate Student Affairs (Vacant)
Tzvia Waronker, Vice-Chair for Senior Colleges
Elizabeth Asemota, Vice-Chair for Community Colleges (Absent)
Muslimah Abdul Muntaqim, Vice-Chair of Evening and Part-time Affairs
Zhuo Yin, Vice-Chair of International Affairs
Saaif Alam, Vice-Chair for Disability Affairs
Jonathan Hanon, Vice-Chair for Technology Fee Affairs

2021-2022 Delegates & Alternates:

Ashley Chen, Delegate, Baruch College
Daniel Flores, Delegate, Baruch College
Jessica Yauri, First Alternate Delegate, Baruch College (Absent)
Richard Reyes-Romero, Second Alternate Delegate, Baruch College (Absent)
Candi Primus, Graduate Delegate, Baruch College (Absent)
Timothy Hunter, Graduate Alternate Delegate, Baruch College (Absent)
Rajvinder Kaur, Delegate, Borough of Manhattan Community College (Absent)
Rayon Chan, Delegate, Borough of Manhattan Community College (Absent)
Zaki Azam, First Alternate Delegate, Borough of Manhattan Community College (Absent)
**Nuhamin Melaku, Second Alternate Delegate, Borough of Manhattan Community College
(Absent)**
Ekinadose Elizabeth Asemota, Delegate, Bronx Community College (Absent)
Jeithy Jason Ofosu-Mensah, First Alternate Delegate, Bronx Community College

Kellis Rickards, Second Alternate Delegate, Bronx Community College (Absent)
Maria Jose Romero Urquijo, Delegate, Brooklyn College (Absent)
Chika Otisi, Delegate, Brooklyn College
Aharon Grama, First Alternate Delegate, Brooklyn College
Iqura Naheed, Second Alternate Delegate, Brooklyn College (Absent)
Louis Di Meglio, Graduate Delegate, Brooklyn College (Absent)
Anna Matarazzo, Graduate Alternate Delegate, Brooklyn College (Absent)
Kazi Tejwar, Delegate, City College of New York (Absent)
Andrew Salmieri, Delegate, City College of New York (Absent)
Aneesah Saeed, First Alternate Delegate, City College of New York (Absent)
Abdullah Moiudd Mohiuddin, Second Alternate Delegate, City College of New York (Absent)
Bashir Juwara, Delegate, Guttman Community College
Kelsey Lowe, Delegate, Guttman Community College
Hridika Tasnim, First Alternate Delegate, Guttman Community College (Absent)
Fatima Butt, Second Alternate Delegate, Guttman Community College (Absent)
Brian Carter, Delegate, Hostos Community College (Absent)
Bouampoundi Thiombiano, First Alternate Delegate, Hostos Community College
Ariana Ahmed, Delegate, Hunter College (Absent)
Shuhashini Khan, Delegate, Hunter College (Absent)
Devashish Basnet, First Alternate Delegate, Hunter College (Absent)
Kayla Benjamin, Second Alternate Delegate, Hunter College (Absent)
Denisse Batista, Delegate, John Jay College (Absent)
Tzvia Waronker, Delegate, John Jay College
Devon Brooks, First Alternate Delegate, John Jay College (Absent)
Gregory Kirsopp, Second Alternate Delegate, John Jay College (Absent)
Saaif Alam, Graduate Delegate, John Jay College
Purusotam Shah, Graduate Alternate Delegate, John Jay College (Absent)
Anthony Thomas, Delegate, Kingsborough Community College (Absent)
Malka Bergmann, First Alternate Delegate, Kingsborough Community College (Absent)

Lana Krinberg, Second Alternate Delegate, Kingsborough Community College (Absent)

James Stuart, Delegate, LaGuardia Community College (Absent)

Junayed Ahmed, Delegate, LaGuardia Community College (Absent)

Maya Demby, First Alternate Delegate, LaGuardia Community College (Absent)

Shopna Mazumdar, Second Alternate Delegate, LaGuardia Community College (Absent)

Aryeh B. Kalb, Delegate, Lehman College

Emile G. Zounon, Delegate, Lehman College

Kenya Mighty, First Alternate Delegate, Lehman College (Absent)

Caleb Kim, Second Alternate Delegate, Lehman College (Absent)

Tameka Ridley, Graduate Delegate, Lehman College

Diamond Derival, Delegate, Medgar Evers College (Absent)

Brian Garret, Delegate, Medgar Evers College (Absent)

Tracey Squires, First Alternate Delegate, Medgar Evers College (Absent)

Tricia Bartholmew, Second Alternate Delegate, Medgar Evers College (Absent)

Salimatou Doumbouya, Delegate, New York City College of Technology

Frank Lachapelle, Delegate, New York City College of Technology (Absent)

Alisha Corke, First Alternate Delegate, New York City College of Technology (Absent)

Saida Bary, Second Alternate Delegate, New York City College of Technology (Absent)

Jamal Mark, Delegate, Queens College (Absent)

Muslimah Abdul Muntaqim, Delegate, Queens College

Zaire Couloute, First Alternate Delegate, Queens College (Absent)

Enrique Peña, Graduate Delegate, Queens College

Audrey Arias, Delegate, Queensborough Community College (Absent)

Chloe Chery, Delegate, Queensborough Community College (Absent)

**Charlayne Hurlington, First Alternate Delegate, Queensborough Community College
(Absent)**

Sofia Rosado, Second Alternate Delegate, Queensborough Community College

Marwan Mahmoud, Delegate, College of Staten Island (Absent)

Angelyne Acevedo, Delegate, College of Staten Island (Absent)

Jesus Rolon, First Alternate Delegate, College of Staten Island (Absent)

Michael Ivany, Second Alternate Delegate, College of Staten Island (Absent)

Jingyi Weng, Graduate Delegate, College of Staten Island (Absent)

Keanu Loyola, Delegate, York College (Absent)

Oumou Sylla, Delegate, York College (Absent)

Sumaiah Ali, First Alternate Delegate, York College (Absent)

Bianca Chery, Second Alternate Delegate, York College (Absent)

Jonathan Hanon, Graduate Delegate, CUNY Graduate Center

Zhuo Yin, Alternate Graduate Delegate, CUNY Graduate Center

Peter Tomao, Delegate, CUNY School of Journalism (Absent)

David Westenhaver, Alternate Delegate, CUNY School of Journalism (Absent)

Tania Caldwell, Delegate, CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies

Marlon Bailey, Graduate Delegate, CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies

Kevin Wilson, Graduate Alternate Delegate, CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies

Nerdeen Mohsen, Graduate Delegate, CUNY School of Law (Absent)

Cory Provost, Graduate Alternate Delegate, CUNY School of Law

Daniel Sayani, Delegate, CUNY School of Professional Studies (Absent)

Jamie Lerner-Brecher, Graduate Delegate, CUNY School of Professional Studies

Jacklyn Tomlin, Graduate Alternate Delegate, CUNY School of Professional Studies

(Absent)

Sherline Altidor, Graduate Delegate, CUNY School of Public Health (Absent)

Claudia Calhoon, Graduate Alternate Delegate, CUNY School of Public Health (Absent)

University Student Senate Staff:

Robin Green, Executive Director

Jasper Diaz, Legislative Director & Secretary to the USS Plenary

CUNY Central Office of Student Affairs:

Joseph Awadjie, Director for External Relations and Compliance; University Liaison to the University Student Senate

University Faculty Senate:

Professor Hugo Fernandez, CUNY University Faculty Senate (UFS)

Student Members of CUNY USSERC:

Marlon Bailey, Student Representative Member of USSERC

USS Executive Director Robin Green conducted roll call. 9 members were present and voting. Quorum was not established.

The meeting was called to order by USS Chairperson Salimatou Doumbouya around 12:15PM.

The original agenda for the meeting was as follows:

AGENDA

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA
- III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES
- IV. CHAIRPERSON REPORT
- V. OLD BUSINESS
- VI. NEW BUSINESS
- VII. VICE CHAIR REPORTS
- VIII. RESOLUTIONS
- IX. ADJOURNMENT

Due to the absence of quorum, Chairperson Doumbouya will provide her Chair's report followed by a discussion.

II. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The past two weeks have been focused on meeting with the USS Vice Chairs from May 2nd to May 12th. Meetings went well and helped me to have a grasp of what is happening on the ground. Then we had the All Students Townhall on May 6th, which was organized by the Strategic Roadmap Committee.

Back on April 24th at the last Plenary, members of the administration presented that the Chancellor had put forward an initiative to create a Roadmap for CUNY for the next 5-10 years. Their first student townhall was on May 6th above, which was open to students and was productive. There is a concern that there are not more students on the committee, but that is something that we keep advocating for. The purpose of the town halls and the interactive format, is to have student input.

The CUNY Board of Trustees Public Hearing was on May 9th. We did not have a lot of student testimonies during the hearing. In the future, we will make sure that students are testifying and telling CUNY Trustees what the issues are on campuses.

On May 11th, I had a meeting with the USS Staff to get up to date and to get to know everyone better. We had another Student Centered Equity Driven University Strategic Roadmap Panel meeting on May 12th, where I was invited to be one of the panelists for this panel. More than a hundred attendees were present at this meeting.

On May 13th, we had a USS Steering Committee meeting, right after the one on ones with Vice Chairs that went well, followed by our last Plenary Meeting today.

Throughout this time, I have been undergoing the official on-board process, working out of the USS Office and with the staff, and communicating with the CUNY Board of Trustees, Chancellor's Office and advocacy groups. So far everyone has been very receptive, as I have been letting people know that USS has a new Chair now.

Tomorrow, there will be a Board of Trustees meeting on May 16th. There will also be a CUNY Day of Remembrance on May 17th. I have also initiated meeting requests with the Vice Chancellor and a Strategic Roadmap Check-in Meeting, to see how we can further include students in the planning process.

We currently have around 20 voting members, so we are close to quorum.

Some initiatives for the summer are Vice Chair Summer Hours, USS Retreat, Summer Potluck, 50-year USS Bi-Centennial (since 1972), USS Constitution and Bylaws (Red-lined) amendments, USSERC Rules Amendments, Disability Pride March (spearheaded by Vice Chair Saaif Alam), and the Eid Resolution introduced by Brooklyn College.

Summer Office Hours are important so that students can communicate with Steering. We will still be active, have office hours, and be accessible to you. We will send out a form as well to see what initiatives you would like to have us work on.

We will also be organizing the USS Retreat for this year, typically in August. Right now, we are still in the thinking process. The planning process will take place after Finals.

As for the 50-year USS Anniversary, this is an opportunity to get USS out there, especially as we have a lot to celebrate. This will help give a new energy that we can carry through to the next administration.

I would also like us to work on constitution and bylaws amendments, in addition to reviewing the USSERC rules.

Vice Chair Saaif Alam will talk more about the Pride March which we put a lot of energy and work into. I would also like us to work on the Eid Resolution as well.

I will keep sending emails and will leave it open for any suggestions, and how you would like to still be involved.

Vice Chair Zhuo Yin mentioned he would like to have a training on how to write a testimony and consider having a summer emergency plenary meeting.

Chairperson Doumbouya mentioned that teaching students how to write testimonies would be part of the retreat.

Vice Chair Alam stated that we do have the power to hold plenaries but due to the transition calendars it may not be feasible.

Vice Chair Hanon stated that USS doesn't synchronize with the student government transition calendars of other campuses. However, we can still do a lot without having formal plenary meetings. Vice Chair Hanon asked how we are handling committees for the summer.

Chairperson Doumbouya stated that she will get back to everyone on that as far as the schedule. In addition, bylaws must be voted on at the next plenary meeting.

With no additional comments or questions about the Chairperson's report, the report has been concluded. The Plenary has now entered into a discussion as a whole.

Sen Juwara states that it is important to take actions now and start communicating to new members as soon as possible.

Mr. Joseph Awadjie states that we will have close communication with the Offices of Student Affairs and the CUNY Central Office so that we can start communicating with new delegates and alternates as soon as possible, so they know what to expect going into USS. As for bylaws, there are certain times and dates that need to be met.

Vice Chair Hanon states that there is a difference when between when delegates' terms begin on their local campuses vs the USS Calendar. USS turns over on July 1st whether or not a student has graduated.

Mr. Awadjie states that at some point in August, all the campuses must send delegate lists. Once received, USS can move forward.

Vice Chair Hanon states that it is important to have that coordination with Student Life Directors to receive the delegate lists on time.

Sen Aharon Grama asks is there anything that prevents us from changing the USS Bylaws so that they align with student government calendars.

Mr. Awadjie recommends that the Plenary consider looking into in 2023 and 2024 so that changes can be made for the following year. It's something that we all wanted to change, so I would encourage everyone to look into making those changes.

Vice Chair Hanon states that the term of the USS delegate begin on September 1st. Therefore, we cannot hold a plenary earlier as far as nominations and elections.

Chairperson Doumbouya thanks everyone for participating in the discussion.

III. VICE CHAIR REPORTS

Vice Chair Jonathan Hanon states that there are concerns with students who do not know how to properly register for classes in the new system. In addition, the USS Scholarship Committee really needs members to help review scholarships. We need all the help we can get.

Mr. Awadjie states as many people as possible would be helpful. With the aggressive timeline that Jonathan and his team have, if it is not met there will be additional work that will have to be done.

Chairperson Doumbouya encourages students to reach out to Jonathan if they wish to get involved and asks for a roll call of steering members for plenary attendance. Roll call concluded, there is a quorum of steering members.

Vice Chair Cory Provost states that he will be brief. Over the last couple of the weeks he has spent time including Chairperson Doumbouya in a lot of prior conversations with NYPIRG, PSC and other advocacy groups. We will be reaching out to members of the Higher Education Committees of the NYC Council and NYS Legislature to update them as well. In addition, I was appointed as the Student Representative on the Search Committee for the Vice Chancellor of Technology Affairs. We have interviewed around 5 candidates for that position. We may narrow down to produce recommendations to the Chancellor or widen the search and keep the window process open. We have also made sure to include CUNY focused questions during those interviews. There are some who have worked only in the education sector and some who have only worked in the private sector. Some candidates have worked in both. The last point of importance I wanted to mention is reaching out to members of the NYC Council to figure out their priorities and how we can work together as far as the city's budget process in pertaining to public higher education.

Vice Chair Hanon will follow up with Vice Chair Provost offline regarding questions pertaining to the Search Committee for the Vice Chancellor of Technology position.

Vice Chair Tzvia Waronker states that she has been focusing on her committee and hopes everyone is doing well.

Vice Chair Muslimah Abdul Muntaqim states that she is working with PSC to get more students involved (at least 2 core leaders per CUNY college) so that we can have more student representation at marches. She is also trying to make sure libraries and CUNY institutions are more available during finals.

Vice Chair Hanon has a question on the PSC aspect. In what capacity will these student leaders be affiliated with PSC, given that they are a labor union.

Vice Chair Abdul Muntaqim states that they are looking for student leaders to represent us at meetings. Vice Chair Hanon will follow up with questions offline.

Vice Chair Zhuo Yin states that recently there was a meeting at his local student government association. This year, CUNY received a good amount of state funding. However, we want to make sure that the additional funding received from the state is spent on students and that the tuition goes down.

Vice Chair Saaif Alam provides report. On April 29th, Vice Chair Alam attended the Building Bridges Conference, followed by the CCSD Meeting in Person on May 6th. The Disability Awareness Campaign was released on CUNY Brief. Vice Chair Alam made sure that the campaign happened and thanked student leaders on the call, which was shared on CUNY social media. The CCSD Study Session was held on the week of May 9th from 12PM-2PM and 6PM-8PM for five days a week at different times. Vice Chair Alam thanked the CCSD Executive Board for holding the study session. Upcoming initiatives include the Disability and Mental Health Committee Meeting during the first week of June and the CCSD Disability Parade on July 10th. Anticipated events and initiatives include the Open Forum Event with CCSD, Meeting with Student Life Directors, and the Disability Pride March on July 26th at Brooklyn Borough Hall.

Vice Chair Alam stated it its worth looking into whether CCSD can receive student activity funds. Vice Chair Alam mentioned that there will also be a City Council Budget Oversight Hearing on ay 18th at 12PM on Zoom regarding students with disabilities on CUNY college campuses.

Chairperson Doumbouya asks if any work is being done as far as mask mandates and vaccines. Vice Chair Alam states that several students he has spoken to have expressed support for mask

mandates. Vice Chair Yin states that there are differences in opinions on vaccines. Many students of East Asian descent are supportive of wearing masks.

Meeting is concluded at approximately 1:29 PM.