

Tuesday, April 18th, 2023, | 3:30-5:00 pm | Hayden Hall, Room 409

Recording: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RYpcb-eqoqY68WXd\_6VJN3rH4DBHpEoe/view

Minutes

**1. Roll Call**

1. Present: Speaker Richard Gustavson, Second Deputy Speaker Jazi Riley, Secretary Nicole Rodi, Senator Esmilda Abreu, Senator Ronald Gray, Senator Tim Ward, Senator Michael McEneney, Senator Amanda Sanseverino, Senator Enrico Forti, Senator William Merriman, Senator Tracy Lahey, Senator Bahareh Estejab, Senator Maeve Adams, Senator Courtney Bryant, Senator Kashifuddin Qazi, Senator Syrita Newman, Senator Kevin Nipal, Senator Corey Curran, Senator Chris Belden, Senator Ali James
2. Excused Absence: First Deputy Speaker Cory Blad, Senator William Clyde, Senator Qian Wang
3. Absent: Senator Justin Orr, Senator Marin Bultena, Senator Luca Villani, Senator Mackenzie Lauture

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

1. The agenda was approved

**3. Approval of Previous Minutes**

1. The minutes previous minutes were approved

**4. Reading from the “Green Book”**

1. “All things are ready if our minds be so” William Shakespeare Page 12

**5. Speaker’s Report**

1. Speaker Gustavson will be meeting with Senator Gray to discuss room reservations in Kelly Commons for the last week of finals
2. Nothing will most likely be done this semester given the short notice, but hopefully this issue will be addressed in coming semesters.

**6. Reports from the Standing Committees:**

a. Educational Affairs Committee (EAC): Senator Clyde

i. Senator James spoke in Senator Clyde’s absence. She spoke on items discussed at the April 4th meeting

1. The College-Wide Curriculum Committee approved a new concentration in chemical engineering called the Processing of Novel Materials. They also approved a name change within the School of Continuing Professional Studies. The Bachelor of Science in Allied Health is now the Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Administration. The business school is looking to create a minor in Sports Management however it needs to go back for further review regarding the number of credits. The committee is asking for guidelines as to what constitutes a minor, concentration, specialization. Clarification on classes that are cross listed as senior/graduate level. This will be helpful to define what the learning objectives are at the graduate level.
2. The College Library Committee announced the opening of the entrepreneurship center as well as a new open study area in Hayes (should be ready in about 2 weeks). There is a new study tutoring center for Student Athletes (Tiered classroom on first floor- opposite alumni room). The Alumni room is still closed for repairs until early summer. Discussion on the lack of consistency about whether AI is a threat or an aid for student learning.
3. EAC approved changes to the Academic Integrity Policy. These changes include language that better reflects developments in AI. Changes went into effect immediately and are reflected on the website.
4. Student government wrote a resolution officially institutionalizing the Jasper Day of Wellness. Asking that the day not only be officially put into the academic calendar but be something that is primarily student run with contributions from other academic departments and organizations. Proposing that Spring classes begin 1 day early beginning in Spring, 2024. In Spring 2024, classes will start on Tuesday January 16th, 2024 (Jasper Day of Wellness will fall on a Tuesday in between Spring Break and Easter). In Spring 2025, classes will start on January 13th (Monday), and the Jasper Day of Wellness can either be a Tuesday or Wednesday, this will eliminate a Monday-Tuesday swap or a Monday-Wednesday class swap.
5. Regarding grade transparency the EAC proposed that that the current single submission of midterm grades around the 7th week of classes be replaced by submission of midterm grades at week 5 and again at week 10 so that students get an earlier indication (week 5) if they are having trouble in courses and then get a reliable indication (in week 10) of their grades just before the withdrawal deadline, which is in week 12. Submission of these two midterm grades would be required of all faculty for all students and should reflect student grades based on all work done to that point.
6. A clarification for the Alumni Room was brought up: there was a walk-through of the space. The space is open, but William Walter is in the process of scheduling new activities in the space.

b. Campus Life Committee (CLC): Senator Abreu

i. Senator Abreu spoke on items discussed at the April 10th meeting

1. Residence life commitment to belonging and creating presence on campus. Working to prepare for Arches Living Learning Community move-in: August 22nd and 23rd. BBQ and greeting - 08/23/2023. Field trips begin 08/24/2023.
2. The Food Insecurity Committee invites students to donate extra Dining swipes and Jasper Bucks to the food insecurity swipe donation program. Faculty and staff please spread the word.
3. The Diversity Council met with the Faculty Diversity Committee to align goals and objectives. They have moved forward to collaborate with Human Resources in addressing diversity hiring needs and anti-bias training efforts.
4. Truth Tobacco/ Vape Free Campus Initiative has hired three ambassadors. They will be sending them to a national training event in Washington DC and creating an Earth Day event on April 19 for promotion. Efforts are rooted in three pillars: health, environment, and social justice.
5. Associate VP and Dean of Students, Dr. Esmilda Abreu, Residence Life Director, Matt Lewis, and AVP of Student Engagement, John Bennett met with representatives of the Staff Council: Syrita Newman, Grace Cabrera, Kevin Nipal and Debra Pitula. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the importance of student activities and engagement on campus post COVID. The good news is that the students are fully engaged with more than 868 events hosted by more than 120 student clubs, 700+ residence life programs hosted by Residence Life including Arches trips, and weekend trips to Broadway, Yankees Games, NYC landmarks, and Heritage Museums. It was shared that 69 intramural sports events took place so far this year. It was also shared that our SGA elections averaged 24-27% voting rate while the national rate is on average 7%. It was agreed that this cross divisional meeting with the Staff Council was helpful and should be repeated annually so we could provide an accurate pulse on student involvement and activities to our very caring and involved staff on campus.

**7. Old Business**

1. None

**8. New Business**

a. May 3rd Election Meeting

i. Virtual election meeting at 12pm during the Wednesday free period. Should not be long, 5/10 minutes. The purpose is to elect new officers of the Senate: Speaker, First Deputy Speaker, Second Deputy Speaker, and Secretary. The meeting is open to all current and incoming senators. An email will be sent out next week.

1. Senator Ward encourages both the continuing senators and the new senators to seriously consider running for a position. It is always good to have a student or faculty member as the Speaker of the Senate. And an administrator can take one of the other slots. This is good for both the leadership experience and for our shared governance.
2. Speaker Gustavson agreed with Senator Ward. Being Speaker has opened his eyes to different parts of the governance of Manhattan College. He will not be a member of the Senate next year therefore he encourages those interested to nominate themselves at the election meeting and others to consider running for a position.

b. Remarks from President Gardner

i. President Gardner first thanked the Senate for the opportunity to speak about the planning and budgeting priorities for the 2023-2024 academic year. He prefaced that, although these are the strategic priorities of himself as president, that may not be the case if a new president emerges. Therefore, they are being made known to the community and will strongly be encouraged during the possible transition.

1. The strategic plan phase 3 was scheduled to last from 2020 to 2025. Developed by the community and approved by the Board of Trustees. Priorities include academic excellence, student success, community engagement, financial health and stability, and campus infrastructure. All decisions are based on these priorities. Given the broadness of these priorities, each year, depending on different circumstances, the cabinet and the newly formed EVP task force create more specific priorities.
2. Cabinet priorities 2023-2024:
   1. Aesthetically Beautiful Campus- It became clear across various offices and constituencies that this was an important factor. If we want to create pride in the place, we work and live, we want it to be aesthetically beautiful. Functionally, if we want to recruit new faculty, staff, and students, our campus needs to be aesthetically beautiful to show that we have the resources to put into our campus and that this is a place where people want to learn and work.
      1. Senator Bryant asked if this is solely visually appealing or if this includes attention to the lack of vendors and food opportunities on campus?
         1. Food opportunities have not been part of this particular conversation point. The continued increase in technology for classroom use across campus has been included.
   2. Connection to Lasallian Partners- Global engagement, admissions and other offices have taken this on. There are many benefits. (1) Expert faculty can share their expertise on a global network of institutions. (2) From an admissions standpoint, there are almost 80 Lasallian schools across the U.S., therefore it is easy to integrate those students into our own charism if we recruited there. (8) Service opportunities
   3. Manhattan University- Topic of importance across alumni from different events around the country. Many faculty and departments across campus have indicated their interest in exploring this further. Surveys put out to the entire community reflect interest in making a name change. The Board of Trustees has listened to this and are eager to push this back to the cabinet to come up with a resolution. Brother Daniel is nervous to do this on his own as an unconfirmed President of the institution. Therefore, this is an important area of interest best suited for the new president.
   4. Hispanic Serving Institution- The college has made many commitments of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Becoming a Hispanic serving institution is one way to get significant government sponsorship through grants and a community of other Hispanic serving institutions colleges and universities across the country. This will help us to achieve some of our goals in this area and was one of our priorities. This week we received a letter from the federal government which gave us a waiver and will allow us to become a Hispanic serving institution in the fall semester. This is a significant benefit to our campus community and a really important statement on our part of the importance of maintaining our commitment to many first generation and diverse students.
   5. Enrollment, Retention- This is a constant battle because we go up against many competitive schools that have similar admissions, facilities, and programs. The pool of students has declined in the Northeast. An engagement in the enrollment process to best be able to find new markets and new types of programming that would draw student attention. Retention efforts particularly in the first-year experience program that academic affairs and student life are developing with the office of admissions.
   6. Costs (efficiency and effectiveness of college)- All of us have been touched in some way by budget cuts and positions eliminations across the college. Cost efficiency and effective planning needs to be balanced to have excellence and be fiscally responsible.
   7. Community Engagement- product of the Diversity Council and a constant source of mission for Campus Ministry and Social Action along with Community Engaged Learning program. Continues as a priority and the ability to fund such programming.
3. Highlights 2023-2024 Divisional Objectives. An email was sent including a 30-page document outlining all of the divisional objectives cross connected to the strategic plan priorities. These highlights are not diminishing the important objectives for the divisions. These are a couple important highlights according to President Gardner.
   1. First Year Experience- This directly affects retention and our ability to properly orient students to the mission of Manhattan College. In debt, an entire year program to get students to be a part of our community and remain here as successful students.
   2. Hispanic Serving Institution Designation
   3. School of Health Professions- emergent and development for the fall semester. The increased need for health professionals across the country will significantly impact enrollment, retention, budget, and effective cost efficiency among other areas.
4. 2023-2024 Budget Priorities
   1. Marketing and Communication- additional funding to promote Manhattan College
   2. Capital Expenditures- much funding has already gone towards facilities and buildings to keep their longevity and remain aesthetically beautiful however there are more expenditures to be done.
   3. Restoring benefits for faculty, staff, and administrators up to the full matching point
   4. Ensure across the board salary increases for faculty staff and administrators.
      1. Senator Adams had some comments regarding the Cabinet priorities and the reactions from constituencies of the School of Liberal Arts regarding the document sent on April 13th. Budgeting priorities that may open up faculty lines. Concern over how faculty will be supported in the academic excellence strategic priority. Specifically, in continuing to develop their talents and expertise, research, and conference attendance. How do you see support for faculty for example opening faculty lines that have been frozen. Regarding the connection to Lasallian partners, will sharing expertise only be seen as a service opportunity.
      2. President Gardner’s response- Covid showed us that we need to take one step at a time to restore budgets back to normal. Continue to develop alongside efforts of enrollment and recruitment. Not sure we can accomplish all the good things because of lack of resources. We had to make some choices out of the many goods out there. These are just some of them. That does not indicate that other areas won't be fulfilled. They can grow and develop into those things. Eager to speak with liberal arts constituents to develop more emphasis on those areas. The Lasallian service is a grassroots effort. Faculty can choose to teach at other schools or have students here on campus. Professors can make the relationships within the Lasallian community for mutual benefits.
      3. Senator Adams- There may be questions about possible incentives for doing this work.

c. Update on College Finances by Vice President McManness

i. This year has been similar to a volleyball game. The budget at the beginning of the year had a 2-million-dollar deficit. The expectation was that we were going to work through the year in order to resolve that. What occurred once we got into the year were changes in president, chair of the board and members of the board. The recommendation was toto run a deficit in our budget this year. Being allowed to run a deficit (didn't have a specific number) was okay because we have a 140 million budget. What occurred was that the budget deficit went up. By December we had a 6 million deficit. Majority related to personnel. In the summer Brother Gardner and Mr. O'Malley made recommendations to fill key positions. Previous board had a mandate to balance the budget. With the new president, interim president and chair the recommendation was to get back to quality level staff, fill positions not filled, and put money into capital spending.

1. FY Operating and Capital Budget Update: current year adjustments in review- major highlights- variances revenue budget
   1. Tuition and Fees- Spring enrollment caused a $250,000 variance from budget
   2. Financial Aid- $1.8 million adjustment- tend- due to discount rate
   3. Room and Board- $3.8 million shortfall due to lower occupancy-and changes in spring enrollment
   4. Graduate Revenue- $1,100,000 shortfall in tuition revenue- lower in spring against budget
   5. Advancement- $3.5 million higher attainment due to DLSD
   6. Rental Revenue- $400,000 over-attainment in rental revenue
   7. Other Revenue- Additional revenue anticipated from the OV Net Proceeds (May) and Mobile Tower Contract
2. FY Operating and Capital Budget Update: current year adjustments in review- major highlights expense budget
   1. Salaries (64 million budget) and Benefits (18 million budget)
      1. Since July 1st the College filled almost 100 positions
      2. There are currently 33 positions in recruitment (proposing to hold until July)
      3. There are positions on hold, and we may need to defund some of those positions
      4. Adjunct Faculty Rate Adjustment of 10%- $200,000
      5. Public Safety Officer and Maintenance Staff Adjustments - $250,000
      6. Projected $2 million overrun in the salary budget and $500,000 in the benefits budget
   2. Key Searches - to be determined
   3. Overtime- under review but we are trending in savings
   4. New Marketing Initiatives- $600,000 additional expense
   5. Operating Capital Budget- $3 million of additional expense to account for current projects
   6. Projected 6 million deficit- under review
3. FY Operating and Capital Budget Update: revenue and expense in review to minimize the deficit
   1. Growth in Non-Credit program- summer revenues and faculty changes
   2. Business Services Contract Negotiations- Service Agreements- HECap Funds
   3. Event and Conference Service Revenue- Changing policies to grow revenues through access to facilities
   4. Renew Summer Conference Clients
   5. Hold some recruitments
   6. General Operating Fund Savings
4. FY 2023 and beyond Capital Planning Priorities
   1. Capital Planning
      1. Chrysostom Hall
      2. Horan Hall
      3. Refresh the Master Plan
      4. Renovation of Leo, Hayden, and RLC
      5. HECap projects
      6. Infrastructure Projects

ii. Open for questions

1. Senator Ward noted that the Senate appreciates Vice President McManness’s hard work over the last few years and for coming to us with an update, either good or bad. Thank you for that! Are we being more conservative as we go forward into the next budget year based on what we have seen this last year?
   1. We have done 2 things. We look at the historical trend cycle on actuals which will prevent the over projection of graduate credit hours. Working with Dr. Clyde, as we build a budget and talk with program directors, we have a better sense of what’s happening in the market. There is a 24-budget pro forma. That number is flat of a tuition rate increase recommended by the board. Yes, we will be more conservative. We are required by the board to have a balanced budget for next year. Also trying to factor in what President Gardner put in as priorities. We're in the process of building that right now. We need the core sounds of freshman enrollment. Discount rate priority.
2. Senator Forti appreciates the transparency of the numbers. Do we have an idea about the unit economics of the College and what is the strategy to attract international students? Whether the college will be open to transition from a semester structure to a quarter structure to attain more flexibility? Strategy and budget for implementing and building new programs in health that do not target only American students but students from all over the world. Planning initiatives to generate more cash flows?
   1. This level of conversion is being had at the board level. The provost is developing a profit law statement on the strategies related to building health programs. All of those factors are tools and resources to grow a better margin. Big challenge is the discount rate and the 92 million of investment into Higgins and Leo. 15 million came from cash reserves. 34 million to 35 million of cash reserves drew down reserve funds. Then we were hit with the pandemic. Prior to, we typically had a 2 ½ million surplus that was invested back into capital. We have since lost some of that capacity. Focus now is to fund programs to grow the net tuition revenue of the college. We expect this to bring down the discount rate. FWC are in the front seat of those discussions.
3. Senator Bryant noted that many students have expressed subpar eating options on campus. This could be a reason that people choose not to come or choose not to live on campus. Are we thinking creatively about how we can bring other venders that would be renting space on campus? Shocked to hear this is not a priority.
   1. Just like any service contract, we look at how we can provide the best program to students. We do have a student dining committee. It would be good for the Senate to get information regarding dining experiences from that committee. The dining program 3-4 years ago was set up by 3400 students. We now have 2800 students. Budget for room and board has fallen 12 million dollars. So much revenue in the program compared to three years ago. Constant priority between balancing what we can fund and providing the best program. Figuring out if we can fund reopening Cafe 1853 and Sip and Chill. Putting more dining service funds into athletics. Lost capacity has impacted us. Is there concern about the quality of the program? End of year study with Aramark in the midst of contract negotiations. The information acquired via surveys is taken into consideration. Vice President McManness is open to more questions via email.
4. Senator Nipal thanked Vice President McManness for his service to Manhattan College. He wished him a happy retirement and congratulations on his grandchild.
5. Senator Ward thanked Speaker Gustavson for his service as Speaker this past year.

**9. Adjourn**

1. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm.