

**Faculty Senate Minutes #572
John Jay College of Criminal Justice**

Monday, October 21, 2024

1:40 PM

Zoom

Present (30): Chevy (Schevaletta) Alford, Elton Beckett, Ned (Warren) Benton, Heath Brown, Mustafa Demir, Artem Domashevskiy, Jonathan Epstein, Diana (DeeDee) Falkenbach, Nina Rose Fischer, Alejandro Garcia-Lozano, Robert (Bob) Garot, Heath Grant, Veronica Hendrick, Mohammad Islam, Susan Kang, Karen Kaplowitz, Catherine (Cathy) Kemp, Vicente Lecuna, Anru Lee, Brian Maule, Adam McKible, Brian Montes, Raymond (Ray) Patton, Alison Perry, Susan Pickman, Stephen (Steve) Russell, Ignacio Sanchez, Todd Stambaugh, Shilpa Viswanath, Violet (Sung-Suk) Yu

Absent (7): Nicole Awai, Nicole Elias, Joseph Maldonado, Joseph Rebello, Francis Sheehan, Marie Springer, Robert Till

Guests: Professors Jennifer Rosati, Toy-Fung Tung

Invited Guests: Title IX Director Gabriela Leal, Chief Legal Counsel Myrna Forney

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of Minutes #571 of the October 8, 2024, meeting
3. Report from the Chair
4. Further revision to the Procedure Rescinding Degrees
5. Invited Guest: Gabriela Leal, Director of Compliance and Diversity & Title IX Coordinator
6. Preliminary discussion about which college entity should henceforth investigate allegations of student academic integrity violations
7. Proposal to change the charge to the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee
8. New business

1. **Adoption of agenda.** The agenda was adopted.

2. **Approval of Minutes #571 of the October 8, 2024, meeting.** Approved

3. **Report from the Chair**

The College has decided to close the Women's Center for Gender Justice. Many years ago the center had been exceptionally vibrant, especially under the leadership of Professor Liza Yukins. But for several years now, the center has been entirely inactive with only a few students entering it and only during community hour. The college has decided to use the large space currently occupied by the Women's Center to instead house the Immigrant Students Center, which is thriving and serving thousands of students. All the programming and services provided by the Women's Center will continue to be provided, but by other college entities.

4. Invited Guest: Gabriela Leal, Director of Compliance and Diversity & Title IX Coordinator and Myrna Forney, Chief Legal Counsel

Director Gabriela Leal is responsible for conducting investigations and outreach to ensure compliance with Title IX and other laws and policies related to harassment and discrimination. She is also JJ's Chief Diversity Officer. She summarized the recent changes to the Federal Title IX Policy, which took effect on August 1. All full-time and adjunct faculty at CUNY are now mandatory reporters. This means that faculty must report to Gaby Leal when they reasonably suspect or actually observe conduct that may constitute sex-based misconduct. In other words, a faculty member cannot agree to confidentiality if a student asks for it or might expect it; rather, as soon as we realize that the student is about to discuss sex-based misconduct, we must advise the student that we are required to report whatever we are told to a college administrator who is in charge of such matters.

Another change is that if a student discloses pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, faculty must provide the student with contact information for Gaby Leal and must also inform the student that the college can support the pregnant student in a variety of important ways. Asked for a clarification, Director Leal explained we do not have to say anything to a student who presents as pregnant, but only to a student who informs the professor of the pregnancy. Chief Legal Counsel Myrna Forney also participated in the discussion.

5. Further revision to the Procedure Rescinding Degrees

The Senate unanimously approved a modification to the previously approved language outlining procedures for rescinding honorary degrees. This amendment covers scenarios in which the recipient engaged in dishonorable conduct before having received the degree, but such conduct only came to light after the honorary degree was awarded. This will be added to the proposal that will be on the agenda of the November meeting of the College Council.

6. Preliminary discussion about which college entity should henceforth investigate allegations of student academic integrity violations

Dean Andrew Sidman has determined that John Jay College is not in compliance with the new CUNY Academic Integrity Policy, which went into effect in 2022. Currently at John Jay, the Academic Integrity Officer investigates, adjudicates, and administers penalties related to academic integrity violations. The new CUNY policy requires a change in this procedure,

whereby a committee must conduct the investigations after which the Academic Integrity Officer carries out the subsequent steps. In May, UCASC presented an updated Academic Integrity Policy to the College Council, which approved it; in this update the investigative work for cheating and plagiarism cases was assigned to the College-wide Grade Appeal Committee [GWGAC], which comprises 5 faculty members selected by the Faculty Senate.

Subsequently, last month, it was discovered that between 40-50 cases of alleged plagiarism, in which the student denies the plagiarism, is investigated by our Academic Integrity Officer (Jennifer Dobbins) each year. Earlier this month, Dean Sidman consulted with the leadership of the Faculty Senate and of the Council of Chairs and all agree that the workload is too onerous for the GWGAC and, therefore, are in concurrence that the newly revised JJ Academic Integrity Policy must be changed.

President Kaplowitz outlined four possible solutions for bringing the college into compliance with the new CUNY policy. The central question is: who should handle cases in which a student denies an academic integrity violation that would result in an academic sanction, such as a zero on an assignment or a reduced grade for a course, or a disciplinary sanction, such as suspension or expulsion.

The following are possible options, so far, that have been developed through discussions between the leadership of the Faculty Senate and the leadership of the Council of Chairs and Dean Sidman:

- a. Rename and enlarge the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee, which currently comprises 5 tenured faculty chosen by the Faculty Senate and change it to the following: 4 faculty selected by the Faculty Senate, plus the 22 chairs of the department grade appeals committee, plus a faculty member from the Library. This 27-member committee would comprise nine 3-member panels, with each case investigated by one of these panels. An administrator would be assigned to conduct the administrative duties.
- b. Assign the investigations to the 22 department grade appeals committees, with each appeals committee dealing with only alleged plagiarism reported by members of their own department.
- c. Assign the investigation to the Student-Faculty Disciplinary Committee, which comprises 9 faculty and 6 students and which operates in three panels of 5.
- d. Create a 3-member faculty committee with reassigned time for each member in order to compensate for the heavy workload.

Prof. Toy-Fung Tung, elected chair of the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee, spoke at length against the option of assigning this work to the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee. She said the committee has too much work already and that the functions of her committee are

totally different from the investigations required by the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy. She, therefore, advocated against such an action and instead proposed the formation of a new committee, established separately from other existing committees at the college, for the purpose of investigating allegations of student plagiarism.

Senator Chevy Alford, who is also a member of the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee, anticipates that it will take some time to formulate a clear procedure around these issues.

7. Proposal to change the charge to the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee

President Kaplowitz also reported that Dean Sidman suggests changing the mandate of the College Grade Appeals Committee. Currently, if a student appeals a grade and the department grade appeals committee disagrees with the faculty member's grade, and the faculty member then declines to change the grade, the department committee could opt to send the case to the college-wide grade appeals committee. A second way that a case can currently be referred to the college-wide committee is if a department grades appeal committee fails to act.

Dean Sidman is proposing, instead, that the only reason for a case to go to the college-wide appeals committee is if after a faculty member declines to change the final grade, the student appeals once again.

Prof. Toy-Fung Tung clarified how the College-wide Grade Appeals Committee has functioned. She observed that cases never come because a department committee has failed to act, although that is one way cases may reach her committee. She said that when cases do come to her committee, and they are very few, the parent of a student has often hired a lawyer to represent the student, and so the committee's work must be undertaken with a degree of thoroughness and precision not required at the departmental level because, she said, the college could be sued. She said one case that was referred to her committee resulted in the committee issuing a 100-page report along with a 200-page appendix; it took the committee a year to resolve the case.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Provided by S. Russell & K. Kaplowitz