

Faculty Senate Minutes #584
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

1:40 PM

Zoom

Present (31): Jacob Adler, Chevy (Schevaletta) Alford, Elton Beckett, Bibi (Silvina) Calderaro, Kathleen Collins, Artem Domashevskiy, Joy Dunkley, Jennifer Dysart, Jonathan Epstein, Sergio Gallegos, Alejandro Garcia Lozano, Heath Grant, Veronica Hendrick, Michelle Holder, Karen Kaplowitz, Allison Kavey, Anru Lee, Kyoo Lee, Jamie Longazel, Cristina Lozano Arguelles, Joseph Maldonado, Brian Maule, David Munns, Raymond Patton, Kumar Ramansenthil, Amada Santiago, Francis Sheehan, Todd Stambaugh, Charles Stone, Shilpa Viswanath, Violet (Sung- Suk) Yu

Absent (6): Ned Benton, DeeDee (Diana) Falkenbach, Sergio Grossi, Joshua Mason, Macushla Robinson, Marie Springer

Invited Guests: Provost Allison Pease, Associate Dean for Student Success & Retention Kate Szur

Agenda

- 1. Adoption of the agenda**
- 2. Approval of Minutes #583 of the May 23, 2025, meeting**
- 3. Election of member to College, CC, and Faculty Senate Committees**
- 4. Review of the September 16 College Council agenda**
- 5. Invited Guests: Provost Pease and Dean Szur**
- 6. New Business**

1. Adoption of the agenda. Approved.

2. Approval of Minutes #583 of the May 23, 2025, meeting. Approved

3. Election of faculty to College, College Council, and Faculty Senate committees

The positions were all uncontested. The following were elected unanimously:

A. Faculty Senate Committee on Technology

Jacob Adler – Library

Penny Geyer – Law, Police Science & CJA

Heath Grant – Law, Police Science & CJA

Sadie Huang – Counseling & Human Resources

Maksi Kutroli – Math & CS
Monica Mattesi – Sciences
Muath Obaidat – Math & CS
Richard Puga – Honors Program
Francis Sheehan – Sciences
Vivek Sharma – Math & CS
Maggie Smith – LPS
Valerie West – Criminal Justice

B. Faculty Senate Committee on Honorary Degrees

Janice Bockmeyer – Political Science
Enrique Arvizo-Chavez – Philosophy
Nathan Lents – Sciences
Gerald Markowitz – Interdisciplinary Studies/History
Mangai Natarajan – Criminal Justice
[George Andreopoulos and Kashka Celinska are continuing their 3-year terms]

C. Executive Committee of the College Council

Elton Beckett – Africana Studies
Artem Domashevskiy – Sciences
Heath Grant – Law, Police Science & CJA
Karen Kaplowitz – English
Joseph Maldonado – Counseling & Human Resources
Brian Maule – Law, Police Science & CJA
Francis Sheehan – Sciences

D. Appeals Panel for Student Complaints Against Faculty

Heath Brown – Public Management
Shonna Trinch – Anthropology
Liza Yukins – English (alternate)

E. Committee on Student Honors, Prizes, and Awards

Mustafa Demir – LPS
Melissa McShea – Public Management
Ashley Velez – English

F. Campus Safety Advisory Committee

Ellen Belcher – Library
Denise Thompson – Public Management
Francis Sheehan – Sciences

G. Student Evaluation of the Faculty

Christopher Herrmann – Law, PS & CJA

Keith Markus – Psychology
Daniel Martens Yaverbaum – Sciences
Sung-Suk Violet Yu – Criminal Justice

H. General Education Assessment Committee

Karla Batres – Psychology
Deneia Fairweather – Anthropology
Thomas Herndon – Economics
Ann Huse – English
Sara Martucci – Sociology
Michael Pandazis – Math & CS
Judy-Lynne Peters – Public Management
Raymond Rosas – English
Samira Zaroudi – Math & CS

I. Academic Assessment Committee

Meryem Abouali – Math & CS
Joel Capellan – Criminal Justice
Calvester Legister – Public Management
Monica Mattesi – Sciences
Muath Obaidat – Math & CS
Lucia Velotti – Public Management

J. Adm, Educational, and Student Services Assessment Comm

LaDawn Haglund – Political Science
David Shapiro – Public Management

K. College-wide Student Appeals of Grades Committee

Michele Galietta – Psychology
Michael Pfeiffer – History
Belinda Rincon – LLS & English
Jennifer Rosati – Sciences
Toy-Fung Tung – English

L. Committee on Student Interests

Anthony Cangelosi – LPS
Shamus Smith – LPS

M. Committee on Student Admissions and Recruitment

Jocelyn Castillo – Library
Michele Galietta – Psychology
Jennifer Holst – Math & CS
Allison Kavey – History
Melissa McShea – Public Management

N. Food Services Subcommittee of the Auxiliary Corp Board

Ellen Belcher – Library
Bibi Calderero – ISD & EJS

O. Auxiliary Services Corporation Board: [continuing their 3-year terms]

Ned Benton – Public Management
Alexa Capeloto – English
Karen Kaplowitz – English

P. Student Activities Association Board of Directors

Chernice Miller – English
Toy-Fung Tung – English
Sharon Gandarilla-Javier – LPS (alternate)
Sadie Huang – Counseling & Human Services (alternate)

Q. Student Travel Advisory Committee

Katarzyna (Kashka) Celinska – LPS
Rosemary Barberet – Sociology (alternate)

**R. Student/Faculty Disciplinary Chairs Comm – the following were elected to
2-year terms for 2024-26 by the Faculty Senate on April 17, 2024**

Panel of 3 faculty chairs:

Emily Haney-Caron – Psychology
Susan Pickman – Security, Fire, & Emergency Management
David Shapiro – Public Management

Panel of 6 faculty members:

Mustafa Demir – Law, Police Science, & CJA
Jennifer Holst – Math & CS
Linda Humes – Africana Studies
Jose Olivo – Math & CS
Gloria Proni – Sciences
Todd Stambaugh – Math & CS

The following were elected on April 4, 2025 to fill vacancies:

Erica Burleigh – English [panel of chairs]
Sharon Gandarilla-Javier – Law, PS, CJA [faculty panel]
Jamie Longazel – Political Science [faculty panel]

4. Review of the September 16 College Council agenda

The Senators were reminded that because of NYS's Open Meetings Law, the way each College Council member casts her or his vote is recorded, that secret ballots are not permitted, and that anyone wishing to speak must go to the mic and identify oneself by name and department. President Kaplowitz reported that an additional action item will be on the agenda of the September 16 College Council meeting. This past May, the Department of Security, Fire, and Emergency Management (SFEM) voted to dissolve after having spent a year unsuccessfully trying to solve its problems. Then each SFEM member chose which department they would like to transfer to: half chose Public Management, half chose Law and Police Science, and one chose a joint appointment with two other departments. The next step is that the College Council must affirmatively vote its approval and then the CUNY Board of Trustees do the same and approve the transfer of the faculty members to other departments, although for practical purposes the transfers already have taken place. The dissolution of the Department of SFEM was a faculty decision, not one imposed on them. Asked the impact on students, it was explained that all the majors and minors remain unchanged and the courses go with the faculty who teach them. After an affirmative vote at the College Council and the BoT, the NYS Department of Education will remove the name SFEM from John Jay's list of departments.

Senator Todd Stambaugh asked how this diminution in the number of departments changes the composition of the College Council. President Kaplowitz praised the question and explained: given that there are 30 faculty seats on the CC, when we had 22 departments and each department elected a representative to the CC, the Senate elected 8 members from among its 17 at-large Senators; now that we have 21 departments, we have 21 department reps and the Senate elects 9 members from among its 17 at-large Senators. The number of faculty on the CC – 30 – remains the same.

5. Invited Guests: Provost Allison Pease & Associate Dean for Student Success and Retention Kate Szur

Provost Pease said she would like to apologize for the Undergraduate Foundations (UGF) implementation having been rushed during the spring, without sufficient faculty input. But the importance of providing coordinated care for our students is not something she wanted to delay. This is a program in process and, thus, is open to change, and she welcomes suggestions for improvement. She said that UGF is not curriculum and does not determine curriculum. Rather, it is coordinated care, a support network. We had a first-year program and then a sophomore program; now this is a coordinated effort for both first year and second year students. During their sophomore year, students reported that they felt that they had fallen off the face of our attention and, indeed, their attrition rates were much higher than for first-year students. UGF is a way for students to explore majors, minors, career possibilities, and outside curricular events. Provost Pease explained that Kate Szur has been in charge of this since 2008 when she first started the First Year Program, a program that she, as provost, is proud of and impressed by. The program has encompassed financial aid, advising, leadership, and transition.

Senator Todd Stambaugh asked if this means that UGF is replacing both the first-year and second-year success programs; the provost said it is. He then asked whether those programs had gone through governance or faculty oversight and the provost said they had not.

Senator David Munns said that when one clicks on the links on the UGF website, one is taken to a list of classes in each of the five UGFs. So this isn't just social or extracurricular; rather, it seems to be guided curriculum. Dean Szur said the courses on the website are First Year Seminars [FYS], in other words they are Gen Ed courses. As part of John Jay's Gen Ed program, every student must take one FYS in their first semester. She explained that we started this in 2015 but not all students could be offered a FYS because we did not have the capacity to offer enough FYSs. The data showed that retention was 20% lower for those who did not take a FYS. This semester we are offering 74 FYSs, which serve every first-year student. To help students choose from the 74 FYSs, we put them into the five thematic clusters called UnderGraduate Foundations. If we didn't do that, just about all our first-year students would choose the category of criminal justice. By structuring these as "you might be interested in education; you might be interested in public health," etc., we are widening the areas of exploration for them. She noted that previously we had eight clusters; this semester we have five. She said she and her colleagues appreciated the help faculty gave at the end of last semester in improving the categories of the clusters and their descriptions and titles.

Dean Szur further explained that students will be offered community-building events around their UGF theme beginning in October, including an exploration series with JJ alums who will talk with students about how they got to where they are professionally, the courses they took, while at John Jay, etc. We're also asking outside community members to do the same. There will be major and minor events for the students so they can explore other options and decide which is the correct path for them. In the spring the students will be able to explore topics that faculty are passionate about and about career pathways, etc. There was a welcome event last month.

Provost Pease said we have to offer First Year Seminars and we asked the faculty teaching these courses which category they wanted their course to be in and then we placed the courses in those categories. Senator David Munns asked where the History FYS courses are placed; he was told there are four History FYS courses and they are placed into three categories, according to the wishes of the faculty teaching them. President Kaplowitz pointed out that each academic department decides whether to offer FYSs and, if so, which course or courses they want to designate as a FYS. Dean Szur said all students get a choice sheet which is updated daily as to availability; all 74 FYS courses are now full.

Senator Ray Patton asked how can we be sure curriculum is aligned with what we are being told is in Foundations; how can we be sure that everything is working together and is not disjointed. Dean Szur explained that the UGF descriptions focus on student interest rather than what they will be learning. This will be a two- to three-year process before everything to be in place. The UCASC GenEd subcommittee will be mindful of these issues.

Senator Allison Kavey said that it is untrue that this is not about curriculum; language shapes choices. The FYS courses are narrowly defined and described. Faculty need to write better courses. Students need better skills; curriculum matters more than the clubs that students join and evidence shows that training for dead-end jobs doesn't work. Provost Pease said each FYS is a course that went through governance. Dean Szur added the UGF administrative structure did not go through governance but every First Year Seminar course was created by the faculty and went through governance about 15 years ago. She said if the outcome of this conversation is that more interesting FYSs are created and brought through governance she'd be ecstatic. Academic Affairs is, in fact, planning to strengthen student skills through the Gen Ed curriculum. The world has changed and so has expectations of students. A focus on skills defines and unifies the five UG Foundations.

President Kaplowitz said that having read the descriptions for the FYSs on the UGF website, she is not impressed; she said if she had been an entering first-year student she would not have been excited by the course choices, except for a couple of exceptions, one of which – an Economics course – had a course description that began – this is a paraphrase from memory: “How did everything become so totally screwed up?” She said she would like to know the answer to that question and probably many students do as well and she guesses that course filled up very quickly. She suggested that Senators alert their departments about the opportunity FYSs offer as an introduction to their programs and suggested that they suggest that their departments consider creating new courses with exciting titles and compelling descriptions. Provost Pease said she has told the Chairs how much we need a curriculum redo and noted that the History Department has done a revision of its major, as has the English Department, and the Criminal Justice BS degree, but that much less energy and attention is being paid to Gen Ed courses.

Senator Munns asked to what extent are students choosing a FYS because of their schedule and availability of the interlocking English 101 course and to what extent are the FYS and English 101 professors talking to each other and cooperating. He added that the majors are the real support structure and questioned why another layer is being developed on top of this? Dean Szur said it is the faculty who choose the category that their FYS goes into. We want the professors to be able to talk to the interests of the students. If a professor is teaching a First Year Seminar, it is a part of the Foundations goal to help move students towards graduation. The majors are developed to support students over time in a consistent matter. If more courses are made available, they can be a part of this. Dean Szur added that 40% of our students change their majors and 60% of our students are in only 8 of our majors.

Provost Pease said she doesn't disagree that majors are a central organizing principle. But that is not the problem we're addressing. The problems we are addressing are as follows: (1) we have a non-residential student body of which 50% are first-year college attendees who need wrap-around support; 2) we have 36 majors but 86% of our students enroll in only 5 of them. Although 40% change their majors, their choices are limited by their experiences, and we want to expose them to other majors. UGF is meant to supplement and not compete with the majors; there should be a synergy between them.

Senator Stambaugh said he agrees broadly about making our courses interesting and attractive; he doesn't think that's at the heart of the confusion. He asked whether any of the FYSs were cancelled for low enrollment. Dean Szur said one FYS was cancelled and two were moved to a different category.

Senator Jennifer Dysart agreed with Senator Kavey in not understanding why we have a random assortment of FYSs.

Provost Pease and Dean Szur were thanked for meeting with the Senate. The provost said she is happy to attend whenever invited and is available to further discuss UGF. After the two left, Senate members requested that the UGF initiative be further discussed at the next meeting with data about graduation and retention rates; the reasons students switch majors; the assessment plan for the UGF initiative; data about the distribution of the 74 First Year Seminars into the 5 UnderGraduate Foundations; and any other relevant documents. President Kaplowitz assured the Senate that she would request these materials and distribute them as soon as she receives them.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 PM.

Provided by H. Grant and K. Kaplowitz