

# CUNY COUNCIL ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY

---

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING** held November 21, 2005 at 2:00 PM, Baruch College

One Bernard Baruch Way, 55 Lexington Avenue @ East 24<sup>th</sup> Street

Department of Modern Languages Faculty Lounge

Vertical Campus, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 6-210

## **PRESENT:**

Anne Marie Bourbon (QCC), Laura Callahan (CCNY), Monica Casco (QC), Jennifer Edy (QC), Lorena Ellis (QCC), Nora Glickman (QC), Giulia Guarnieri (BCC), Annette Kym (HC), Elena Martínez (Baruch), Jenny-Lin Martínez (QCC), Nuria Morgado (CSI), Debra Popkin (Baruch), Alicia Ramos (HC), Oneida Sánchez (BMCC), Liliana Soto-Fernández (JJC), Elizabeth Starčević (President, CCNY), Karen Sullivan (QC), Catherine Theobald (CSI), Eva Vásquez (York), Noriko Watanabe (Baruch), Ping Xu (Baruch)

---

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM.

1. Minutes of September 16, 2005 were approved with minor corrections.
2. Elizabeth Starčević welcomed members and presented the agenda: meeting with George Otte to find out about the CUNY BA On-line; followed by Gloria Sawicki's memorial service.
3. Treasure's Report. Lorena Ellis reported on the current balances: checking: \$2,104.64 and savings: \$451.08. The Council is contributing, as agreed, \$ 500.00 to the Gloria Sawicki Memorial Fund.  
Lorena circulated dues letters for all the colleges and informed the Council that she will not be able to be present at the next meeting. Plans for the holiday party are to be made without her customary help.
4. Elizabeth encouraged the Council to support the Union in order to get a fair contract.
5. As a prelude to the discussion with George Otte, Elizabeth spoke about how other important organizations are going fully online. This is something that we need to consider seriously. She cited the examples of AATSP, fully online with the National Spanish Exams (NSE), and the Bible Society of Australia has created abbreviated Bible text message. Further info can be retrieved at [www.biblesociety.com](http://www.biblesociety.com).
6. The Council discussed the need to look for fundable sources for our events. It was brought up that we should have a list of funding institutions and address them for backing.
7. George Otte, Director of Instructional Technology was invited to speak to the membership. He introduced himself as a member of the English Dept. at Baruch and therefore an English professor, member of the Union without staff or a budget to work with. His function as director of instructional technology is to facilitate the use of online technology by faculty and staff. He explained that he works using grant money. His initial funding came from the Sloan Foundation that allowed for the creation of experimental on-line courses in 2000. This ballooned into 2.3 million dollars multi-year grant to create online courses. The initial project was on a stand-up basis resulting in over 60,000 courses (some hybrid) on Blackboard. CUNY is currently at the forefront of online instruction. Sloan no longer funds course development grants but rather the development of teaching resources. Some of the areas of interest are social sciences, humanities, writing, computers and computer science. The second line of interest is education and possibly, in the future, languages.

Selma Botman put U. Mass online and she wants to have an online degree at CUNY. The online degree will be for degree completers [people who have stopped attending while on good academic standing on account of family or work]. In order to be admitted to the program, they need to have 30-45 credits. The School of Professional Studies will be in charge of the program while the Office of Instructional Research will handle the online courses. The School of Professional Studies has never granted a degree before so this is a new endeavor. It will be comprised of full time faculty by dual appointment. The curriculum will be developed from scratch.

George opened the floor to questions. Annette Kym wanted to know about the type of degree that will be granted. George replied that it would be a baccalaureate degree. Research shows that in the tri-state

area there are over 163,000 people who stopped attending college while on good standing. Lorena Ellis questioned whether the courses are fully online or blended. George Otte replied that they would be fully online. A listing of all CUNY online courses can be found at [www.dln.cuny.edu](http://www.dln.cuny.edu) . At that address one can find a link to George Otte.

Elena Martínez asked about the academic implications of this type of BA. George responded that faculty had been asked to participate in order to have a curriculum approved by the advisory board. Fabio Girelli-Carasi is part of that group.

Debra Popkin inquired about the possibility of having a second language as part of the BA. George Otte replied that the decision has not been made.

The biggest concern about the CUNY BA online has been whether or not this is going to be a real degree. The majority of people do not trust online degrees. Therefore, every effort is being made to correct that misconception.

Elizabeth pointed out that there has been very little faculty involvement in this project. Faculty should decide on the courses. Currently this is being pushed through without following the faculty channels. How is it possible that these courses being accepted do not go through the proper faculty channels?

George Otte replied that people propose courses, not discipline councils. Currently only three discipline councils are functioning.

The faculty of the School of Professional Studies will make the decisions as to what courses run. George Otte reiterated that this type of degree is not for everyone, nor everyone should teach it. Faculty will be developed to teach in this program.

Elizabeth pointed out that this is not a question of whether the Council is there or not but rather a question of the role of languages in a degree program. Languages are an important part of a degree program and they need to be there. Our concerns need to be transmitted to the administration.

Professor Otte said that not all campuses are represented but that our input is definitely welcomed.

Elizabeth thanked George Otte for taking the time to address the Council and the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 for Gloria Sawicki's memorial.

Respectfully submitted by:

Liliana Soto-Fernández - CUNY Council VP  
Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice  
212-237-8712, 1535 North Hall