

Minutes of the GCNYC Meeting held on 25 June at 10.00 EST (3.00pm GMT) via Online Conferencing Facilities

Present: Gordon Jack (Chair), Daniel Bena, Eva Haller, Sylvie Freund-Pickavance, Professor Pamela Gillies, Ian Kerr, Professor James Miller, Professor Ann Priest, JoAnne Rolle, and Johnnie Walker.

In attendance: Jacqueline LeBlanc (VP & Provost GCNYC)
Agnes Russell, Financial Accounting Manager
Paul Woods (Department of Governance - Minute Secretary).

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 The Chair noted that there were no apologies

2. Declaration of Members Interests

2.1 The Board **noted** that declarations of interest had been updated and that there was one entry to be completed.

Action: Department of Governance to complete the update of the register of interests for the next meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held on March 12, 2021

3.1 The Board **approved** the minutes of the previous GCNYC Board of Trustees Committee Meeting held on March 12 2021.

4. Matters arising Briefing Note

4.1 The Board noted a report on the matters arising from its meeting held on March 12, 2021.

5. Chair of the Board Trustees Report

5.1 The Chair reported that he attended a meeting with the Regent Mead, who represented Manhattan on the NYSED Board of Regents and the evaluation meeting for Middle States Accreditation, along with other Trustees. He had been working with the incoming Board Chair, developing good ideas around the connectivity of Trustees. Finally, he noted that currently plans for Commencement were underway and he encouraged Trustees to attend if possible.

5.2 The Vice President & Provost informed members that it was expected to hear the Middle States Accreditation outcome in the coming weeks.

5.3 The incoming Chair informed the Board that one of the connectivity ideas proposed was regular informal meetings of Trustees, involving the President & CEO, and she would email Trustees with proposed dates.

6. President & CEO's Report

- 6.1 The President and CEO reported that the GCNYC Team had prepared an outstanding submission for the Middle States evaluation and as well as meeting the relevant quality standards, the review team had indicated they felt the College had a distinctive purpose.
- 6.2 The President also noted that the current recruitment environment continued to be challenging in the post-Covid environment, particularly in international recruitment, and competition was fierce. However, distributed leadership, as shown by GCNYC and GCU, had been a model for greater resilience during the pandemic. Understandably remote working was still taking a toll on staff and plans for campus engagement would help, with a planned 2-3 days on campus rotation for staff from August.
- 6.2 There were plans to connect staff with Yunus Centre Social Business in Germany and secure invites for their next conference. The President had been in touch with Professor Yunus to help facilitate this.
- 6.3 The President informed the Board that she was looking forward to the informal meetings with Trustees and was happy to be flexible on dates and times.

7. GCNYC Board Secretary's Report

- 7.1 The Board received a report from the GCNYC Board Secretary. He highlighted that the outcome of the Board Effectiveness Review was included as appendix 1 and that the documentation for this academic year's review would be issued during the summer. The report also included the Board of Trustees meeting dates for 2021-22 and the draft programme of work for the Board meetings.
- 7.2 In relation to the Board Effectiveness Review, a Trustee proposed that there should be a session for new trustees on the New York Education environment in order to give an introduction and wider understanding beyond GCNYC itself.

Action: The incoming Chair agree a process with the VP and Provost, President and the Board Secretary to develop an awareness session for new trustees.

- 7.3 The Secretary reported that the College By-laws had been reviewed and a number of changes had been made to bring them up to date with the current practice of the College. The full by-laws were attached as appendix 2 with the changes highlighted.
- 7.4 A member stated that the highlighted changes were very welcome and made it very clear.
- 7.5 The Chair noted that at Section 3.8, Resignation and Vacation of Office, bullet point 4, the word "bringing" should be added.
- 7.4 The Board of Trustees **approved** the proposed updates to the College By-laws, subject to the above amendment.

8. Vice President & Provost's Report

- 8.1 The Board received and considered a report from the Vice President and Provost and she highlighted the following items:
- GCNYC has eliminated the position of Recruitment & Admissions Officer and will begin a search for a senior-level position with responsibility for marketing, recruitment, and admissions with the goal of bringing that position on in fall 2021. GCNYC will bring on an Interim Senior Director of Enrollment Management through the Registry service, expected from next week.
 - GCNYC will offer classes at the beginning Trimester A, September 2021. When students register for Tri A classes, they will have the option to choose to participate in a class on campus or remotely. All students who wish to participate in classes on campus will be required to submit proof of vaccination, in line with many other HE institutions in NYC.
 - To address a serious echo problem on the main floor of the GCNYC campus, GCNYC will be installing sound-reduction panels in classrooms and the main event space this summer. In addition, a partial wall in classroom number 2 will be extended to a full wall to ensure better sound quality.
 - It is hoped to receive the official letter with the decision on GCNYC's Middle States accreditation in July, but no later than September. Accreditation will allow the College to use a .edu web and email address. A number of colleges are interested in articulation agreements with GCNYC and are awaiting the accreditation outcome.
 - GCNYC has submitted the application for the permanent degree-granting charter with the New York State Education Department (NYSED). The outcome is expected later in the year
 - Following our submission of an application for recertification of its Title IV program participation, GCNYC has undergone a routine audit by the Department of Education. The decision is to renew for one year until September 2022. It should be noted that the recertification is not permanent as the College has not certified for a full calendar year. She thanked the Financial Accounting Manager for her help with this process.
 - The Vice President & Provost has been working to develop strategic partnerships to build GCNYC's network of advocates who might serve as donors, thesis partners, guest speakers, or hosts for student internships. She thanked the incoming Chair for her support in this and also the GCU Director of Development & Global Engagement.
 - Based on the suggestions of Board members at the March meeting, two working groups of the Board have been formed: The Development and Donor Relations Committee and a Recruitment working group. She thanked the trustees who had supported this work.
 - Summer Commencement will be held virtually on Saturday July 24th at 10:00am EST. An Outlook invitation with Zoom link has been sent to the Board.
- 8.2 The VP and Provost clarified that the Interim Senior Director of Enrollment Management was being sought through the Registry agency who specialise in interim senior administrators in HE. The appointee would bring experience in HE recruitment and marketing and would co-lead the search for the permanent appointment and drive September recruitment.
- 8.3 The Chair asked if there had been any approach to the College landlord regarding modifying rental rates. The Board Secretary reported that this had been undertaken on a number of

occasions with no movement from the landlord but a further approach was under active consideration.

8.4 The Board **noted** the Vice President and Provost's report.

9. Audit Committee Report of 28th May 2021, including Review of Accounting Policies

9.1 The Board considered the Audit Committee Report of 28th May 2021, including Review of Accounting Policies.

9.2 The Treasurer informed the Board that this was an update of Audit Committee items. It was uncontentious.

9.3 The Financial Accounting Manager reported that the main item was agreement of the Audit plan. The accounting policies had also been agreed by the Audit Committee subject to the agreement of the accounting pronouncements

9.4. The Treasurer clarified that the timeline in the accounting plan was standard and not suggestive of a massive workload.

9.11 The Board **noted** the report from the Audit Committee and **approved** the review of the accounting policies.

10. GCNYC Management Accounts

10.1 The Board **noted** the GCNYC Management Accounts covering the period August to end May, Period 10 of the 2020/21 financial year. The P10 2020/21 report forecasts a full year end deficit of \$4.5m, which is a c\$0.1m improvement upon the budgeted position.

11. Strategy Reminder and Draft GCNYC Budget 2021/22

11.1 The Vice President and Provost reported that the draft budget projects that GCNYC will move into operating surplus in Academic Year 2027/28 which is one year behind the 2020/21 budget projection, with the pandemic accounting for the delayed target.

11.2 The Board discussed the marketing spend per student and whilst noting it was very high it was also agreed that initial high spend to gain brand awareness was necessary and it was expected that this would decrease over time. It was further noted that the recruitment targets for 2021-22 were set prudently, taking account of the current environment.

11.3 The Board **approved** the GCNYC Budget for 2021-22.

12. Annual Financial Procedures Review

12.1 The Board considered the Annual Financial Procedures Review for 2020-21 and the Financial Accounting manager reported that whilst the content and substance of the Financial Procedures has not changed, the following updates should be noted:

- Section 9.3.1 Paying Tuition Fees – Individuals - updated to reflect that students can now file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) if they meet the eligibility criteria. Successful applicants will have the federal funds applied directly to their account.
 - Section 9.8 Federal Reporting Guidelines – new section which details the requirement on the College to complete and file form 1098-T (Tuition Statement). Amounts reported should be the total amount received from a student which relates to qualified tuition and related expenses. Copies should be sent to the individual students and subsequently filed with the IRS.
- 12.2 The Board Secretary clarified that there was a Homeland Security requirement for the College to confirm the financial worthiness of international students at application stage. International students were not affected by the IRS procedures.
- 12.3 It was noted under 7.2 (Budget Control Arrangements – Responsibilities) that the budgetary control responsibilities should include members of the President’s Executive Group (PEG), rather than the Executive Board.

Action: The Financial Accounting Manager amend section 7.2 to include President’s Executive Group (PEG), rather than the Executive Board.

- 12.4 The Board approved the Annual Financial Procedures Review, subject to the above amendment.

13. Student Recruitment and Marketing Report

- 13.1 The Board considered a Student Recruitment and Marketing Report for Trimester A, 2021 and recruitment efforts and planning to date. The Vice President and Provost provided a broad reflection on strategic changes since initial beginnings recruiting students to the Fair Fashion center. She highlighted the key appointment of the Director of Recruitment & Admissions and launch of MS Sustainable Fashion in fall 2020, which now accounts for half of all leads and enrollments.
- 13.2 The VPP stated that whilst the College and the Board had been unsatisfied with the work of Carnegie Dartlett overall, some strategies had been successful e.g. search engine optimization, social media campaigns via LinkedIn. It was expected that the new marketing company, Hydrogen, would provide a more nimble service.
- 13.3 A key element of the marketing strategy would be the flexibility to provide online and hybrid learning, using the Hyflex system. Non-degree provision had not proved to be successful and this provision would be discontinued.
- 13.4 Articulation agreements with other colleges were being pursued and a number had indicated interest. The College was also reaching out to Fair Fashion Center partners and leveraging current students and alumni on prospects.
- 13.5 International recruitment had been hit badly by the pandemic and although there were signs of recovery this was now from a low base. She highlighted Professor de los Reyes had

discussed possible articulation with an Indian partner and the College was also discussing partnership with the African Leadership College.

13.6 Further diversification of income streams was being investigated.

13.7 The Board **noted** that a lot of work was going on and agreed that it would be important to have data to reassure the Board that the strategies were working.

14. Discussion and update from the Development and Donor Relation Committee of the Board

14.1 The Vice President and Provost reported that there had been a meeting of the Committee. She was very appreciative of the support of Board members in this area. A proposal to hold a celebration event at the New York campus was being planned and the intention was to invite friends of the College to this event. Any suggestions on invites would be welcomed.

14.2 The Board noted the update on the Development and Donor Relation Committee.

15. Draft agenda for Next Meeting of GCNYC Board of Trustees

15.1 The Board noted the draft agenda for the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

15.2 That the standing item of Student Recruitment Report be added to the agenda.

ACTION: Clerk to the Board to update the agenda.

16. Date of Next Meeting

16.1 It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Friday, October 22nd, 2021.

Chair's Last meeting

The Chair informed members that as this was his last meeting as chair he wished to express his thanks to the Board, in particular to the President and CEO, the Board Secretary, the incoming Chair and especially to the GCNYC team lead by the Vice President and Provost. It had been a long journey and he was proud of the College's achievements, particularly that of being the first foreign college to be approved to operate in New York.

The President and CEO thanked the Chair on behalf of the Committee for his guidance through the many challenges, which he had handled with skill and diplomacy.