

Minutes of the GCNYC Meeting held on 12 March at 10.00 EST (3.00pm GMT) via Online Conferencing Facilities

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

In attendance: Jacqueline LeBlanc (VP & Provost GCNYC)
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 required to be updated.

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 December 11, 2020

3.1 The Board **approved** the minutes of the previous GCNYC Board of Trustees Committee Meeting held on December 11 2020.

4. Matters arising Briefing Note

4.1 The Board considered a report on the matters arising from its meeting held on December 11, 2020.

4.2 It was noted that there was one action at minute 4.4 for the VP GCNYC to make contact with CEO of Business of Fashion with a new approach via personal contacts. This action was outstanding and it was proposed that there required to be clarity in what was being requested of the CEO.

Action: That a narrative of what is being requested of the CEO of Business of Fashion be developed (VP GCNYC, Sylvie Freund-Pickavance, Professor Ann Priest, GCNYC President and CEO).

4.3 The Board Secretary confirmed that that Board Effectiveness review was now complete and the report would be re-presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Action: Board Secretary to provide Board Effectiveness Review Report for meeting scheduled for 25 June 2021.

5. Chair of the Board Trustees Report

5.1 The Chair reported that he had been involved in discussions with the VP GCNYC on marketing efforts, with the Chair of GCU F&GPC on expectation management around

student numbers in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and with the incoming Board Chair. He informed the Board that he had attended the excellent GCNYC resilience and reconstruction webinars and encouraged all members of the Board to attend if possible. It was noted that the links to the sessions were presented in the community update circulated by the admin team. The Chair also reminded the Board of the forthcoming Middle States evaluation meeting, which is the next and final step in achieving full MSCHE accreditation.

6. President & CEO's Report

- 6.1 The President and CEO reported that Eva and Yoel Haller had donated three Haller Common Good scholarships to GCNYC and she expressed gratitude on behalf of the Board for this donation. It was noted by the Board that this generous donation in setting up a named scholarship programme would serve as a platform from which other such donations should be sought and agreed to move forward with re-engaging with a previous consultant to advance further.

The President agreed with the Chair that the resilience and reconstruction series of meetings were excellent and commended the hosting skills of Dr de los Reyes.

- 6.2 The President also noted that in the regular listening meetings with GCNYC staff and faculty she had detected some weariness with the ongoing COVID restrictions, as had also been detected with a proportion of staff at GCU. However, she informed the Board that despite this, the team remained very upbeat and were engaging well with students and alumni.
- 6.2 Members discussed other ways in which conversation could be facilitated using remote communication tools and, more broadly, enhancing the profile of GCNYC and promoting ways of getting involved. The *Clubhouse* app was suggested as well as *YouTube*, which is already being used by GCNYC. It was recommended that a more comprehensive review of social media strategy should be undertaken.

**Actions: 1. VP GCNYC to update the trustees' circulation list
2. VP GCNYC to review GCNYC social media strategy.**

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 Chair nomination process was that Sylvie Freund-Pickavance was nominated as Chair and the appointment was approved by the Sole Member as confirmed at the meeting of its governing body on 18th February 2021. The Board's ratification of the nomination was now being sought.
- 7.2 The Board of Trustees **approved** the appointment of Sylvie Freund Pickavance as the Chair to the board of the Trustees effective from the 1st August 2021.
- 7.3 The Board Secretary stated that approval was sought from the Board that Mr Gordon Jack continue as a Trustee to the College to provide support and continuity for the incoming chair.

- 7.4 The Board of Trustees **approved** that Mr Gordon Jack continue as a Trustee to the College for one year from 1st August 2021.
- 7.5 The Board Secretary highlighted that notification had been received that the first Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan has been forgiven in full. The College has now taken up the opportunity to submit another application for the same level of support (\$0.182M). The eligibility criteria have been altered slightly, but advice from finance advisors is that the College meets these criteria. The terms of forgiveness remain the same as the first round of loans.

- 7.6 The Board Secretary informed the Board the Annual Policy Review update confirmed the following:-

The Conflict of Interest Policy – no changes required.

The Record Retention Policy – no changes required

The Whistle-blower Policy – no changes required

The Form 990 Review Policy - to be dealt with under the Financial Procedure Review and presented at the next meeting of the Board.

- 7.7 For the Gift Acceptance Policy: the By-laws required an overseeing committee and it had been agreed previously that this should be the Board of Trustees. The Board agreed that it should continue to serve this purpose.

- 7.8 Members asked for clarification on the monetary limits set in the gift policy. The Board Secretary clarified that gifts above these limits must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Board **approved** the arrangement that Board of Trustees continue as the Gift Acceptance Committee and that the gift limits set out are appropriate.

- 7.9 The Board Secretary explained that the Expenses Policy contains a number of limits which are set in order that claimants are not liable to taxation on the claim. He proposed removing the specific figures and instead referring to rates as detailed by the IRS

The Board **approved** the updating of the wording relating to the tax limits.

- 7.10 The Board noted that the GCNYC By-laws were under review and some updates would be brought forward to the Board for approval. Finally, the date for the remaining meeting of the current academic year and the items due to be considered were included in the Board Secretary's report for noting.

The Board **noted** these items of the Board Secretary's report.

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:

- Remote delivery will continue through trimester C.
- A Covid relief grant of \$30K was received through US Government support CARES grant, to be split equally between direct grants to students and instructional costs.
- GCNYC plans to use the instructional portion of the CARES grant to install cameras in classrooms to facilitate combined online and face-face instruction using the Hyflex platform, providing greater flexibility for students.
- The self-study report for Middle States accreditation has been submitted to the Middle States Higher Education Commission and a virtual visit will take place from April 12 to 14. A draft agenda for this visit is expected soon and Board members are welcome to be involved in the visit.
- GCNYC has received notification from the New York State Education Department with regard to the application for the Permanent Charter. A decision is due in June 2022.
- GCNYC is required to apply for recertification of its Title IV program participation agreement by March 31st and the application has been submitted.
- Thesis Partnerships have been launched with a number of companies and organisations for GCNYC student thesis partnerships. 5 students are participating.
- Dr. Gaston de los Reyes has created a Fellowship and Externship Program for college students or recent college graduates who are interested in the study of social impact and sustainability. 7 applications have been received so far.
- Collaborative relationships with GCU and GCU London are building, including potential for extending thesis partnerships with American partners.
- The VP and Provost welcomed and thanked the ongoing support from Trustees. She highlighted the event in May where Eva Haller as agreed to be a guest speaker for GCNYC, and she will be interviewed by Dan Bena for the event. Also Dan Bena introduced the Vice President & Provost to social entrepreneur and documentarian Ann Feldman who will work with GCNYC to pilot a new collection of case studies created for graduate and undergraduate studies.

8.2 Board members welcomed the report and were interested in the student perspective in relation to Hyflex. The VP and Provost stated that evidence is that students who have used the platform are very positive. Board members were keen to track student experience including, potentially, using pop up surveys at the end of each session.

8.3 Board members asked the VP and Provost about the likely outcome of the application for Permanent Charter. The VP informed the Board that there were 3 options: 1- permanent charter; 2 – extensions of current provisional charter; 3- cancellation of charter.

8.4 The Board Secretary added that the College had previously been advised that cancellations were rare and usually in response to specific circumstances such as bankruptcy or evidence of criminal activity.

9. GCNYC Strategic Plan – Report on KPIs

9.1 The Board **noted** a presentation from the VP and Provost on the GCNYC Strategic Plan.

- 9.2 The VP and Provost outlined progress on the 5-year strategic plan against the 7 strategic goals:
1. Align Academic Programs and Curricula with the Mission for the Common Good
 2. Cultivate a Culture of Research-Driven Academic Excellence
 3. Grow Enrollment to Build Financial Strength and a Dynamic College Community
 4. Develop Programming to Offer Students Flexible Learning Modalities
 5. Collaborate with Business and Community Leaders to Support the Sustainable Development Goals
 6. Commit to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
 7. Establish a coordinated, integrated process for assessment for continuous improvement and strategic planning
- 9.3 The VP and Provost reminded Board members that this was the first year of a 3-year, short term strategic plan developed on the basis of feedback from both students and academic staff. A cycle of strategic planning would begin in Fall 2021.
- 9.4. The VP and Provost estimated that goal 1 was 75% complete, with the redesign of International Fashion Marketing program to Sustainable Fashion Marketing complete and the appointment of a Director of Career Services key aspects.
- 9.5 For goal 2 the appointment of Dr de los Reyes as the first full-time Faculty member was a key development, helping to facilitate collaboration between students and faculty on research projects and facilitating the creation of programming and resources in writing, public speaking, and core business knowledge.
- 9.6 As noted in the subsequent agenda item, goal 3 was currently the most challenging.
- 9.7 Key elements to goal 4 were implementing a learning management system and a more robust student information system. Blackboard has been acquired to address the first of these but the VP and Provost informed the Board that as a new SIS is a major investment, plans to implement were paused until enrollment is back on track.
- 9.8 Goal 5 showed good progress with the establishment of the Center for Social Impact and introduction of thesis partnerships. It was intended to create more GCNYC events along lines of current speaker series.
- 9.9 Goal 6 was on track.
- 9.10 The VP and Provost estimated that goal 7 was 75 % complete. As noted above the strategic planning cycle would begin in Fall 2021.
- 9.11 The Board **noted** the presentation by the VP and Provost.

10. Student Recruitment and Marketing Report

- 10.1 The Board received and considered a GCNYC Marketing and Recruitment Report, providing information around GCNYC's marketing, recruitment, and enrollment (Tri C 2021 and beyond).

- 10.2 The VP and Provost highlighted a revised enrollment projection in response to the current challenging environment. The new projection moved the target forward by one year.
- 10.3 There are 654 prospects which compared to 77 in the prior year. Considerable input was still required to move the prospects into converted enrolments but it was an indicator that interest was building. It was estimated that there were 27 serious prospects overall and potentially 5 for Tri C 2021 enrollment, in addition to 3 already completed.
- 10.4 The VP and Provost summarised recruitment and marketing activities since the last Board meeting, which included:
- Call Campaigns involving key faculty members and prospective students
 - Tailored & Specialized Webinars/Teaser Classes to provide prospective students with a “taste” of GCNYC.
 - Opportunities for prospective students to sit in on specific classes.
 - Robust Drip Campaigns & Communications, with the help of COCO Marketing and the Slate consultant, building out robust and streamlined drip campaigns (via Slate) and email communications.
 - Hyper-focused targeted messaging with InMail campaigns using the LinkedIn accounts of key faculty members, which was working well.
 - Reaching Out to Human Resource Departments, promoting a partnership for posting job openings for our graduates and for providing professional development training to their employees.
 - Exploring Articulations and Agreements with Colleges for example with liberal arts colleges and international partnerships and discussions with Cormack Consultancies on the potential for creating pathway programs to GCNYC’s graduate programs in U.S. colleges.
 - GCNYC is researching alternative marketing partnerships with the Carnegie Dartlet contract due for completion at the end of June 2021.
 - The intention to create a fund raising subgroup of the Board of Trustees.
- 10.5 Board members welcomed this very detailed report. Members discussed the challenging environment in the context of the pandemic and the need to be flexible and closely attuned to the interests and needs of prospective students as post-pandemic regeneration develops. Board members proposed a short-term subgroup of trustees to brainstorm ideas with the VP and Provost with a focus on Tri A 2021-22 recruitment.

Action: The VP and Provost to convene a subgroup of trustees to share ideas focused on Tri A 2021-22 recruitment.

11. GCNYC Management Accounts

- 11.1 The Board **noted** the GCNYC Management Accounts for the period August to end January, Period 6 of the 2020/21 financial year.

12. Annual Compliance Report 2020-21 (including report on use of whistleblowing policy, conflict of interest policy and gift acceptance policy)

12.1 The Board **approved** the Annual Compliance Report (including report on use of whistleblowing policy, conflict of interest policy and gift acceptance policy) for 2020-21.

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

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

14. Date of Next Meeting

14.1 It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Friday, 25 June 2021.