

University Senate Plenary

November 22, 2024



University Senate

Proposed: November 22, 2024

Adopted: November 22, 2024

PROPOSED AGENDA

University Senate

Friday, November 22, 2024 at 1:15 p.m.

Via Zoom

[Registration required](#)

After registering you will receive a confirmation email with meeting details.

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of October 25, 2024
3. President's report and questions
4. Chair's report and questions
5. Old business
6. New business:
 - a. Committee updates and reports:
 - i. Report on the proposal to institute Professor of Practice appointments in the Mailman School of Public Health (Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure)
 - ii. Letter concerning the [Committee on Education and the Workforce, U.S. House of Representatives Republican Staff Report](#) (October 31, 2024) (Student Affairs)
 - iii. Update on Section 1.m. Petition from Professor J. Mitts (Structure and Operations)
7. Adjourn

University Senate

Proposed: November 22, 2024

Adopted: November 22, 2024

Minutes of the Meeting of October 25, 2024

Eighty-six of 107 senators were present.

Senator Jeanine D'Armiento (Ten., P&S), Executive Committee Chair, called the University Senate to order at 1:15pm on Zoom. Sen. D'Armiento welcomed Senators and guests to the second Plenary of the 2024-2025 session. Sen. D'Armiento reminded attendees of the Parliamentary procedures for the Zoom meeting.

Senators adopted the [agenda](#) and the [minutes](#) of the September 20, 2024 Plenary.

Sen. D'Armiento then turned over the meeting to Interim University President Katrina Armstrong.

Updates from President Armstrong

President Armstrong began her updates by encouraging community members to attend the undergraduate Family Weekend. President Armstrong stated that the administration is continuing to improve campus access and restructuring Public Safety. She said that the administration is working toward a full open campus as many community members would like while considering uncertainty around upcoming dates like the election. President Armstrong stated that the administration is working to hear from many different constituencies, especially students through the student councils and the Senate Student Affairs Committee. President Armstrong emphasized having the administration work with the Senate committee structure and continual meetings with groups of faculty members to understand all stakeholders in the functioning of the University. President Armstrong stated that she would like to meet with any groups on campus through the Senate or through direct outreach. She also mentioned that the Provost's Office is working on new intellectual efforts to thrive as a University. President Armstrong mentioned that Vice Provost Dennis Mitchell is working on inclusion efforts through the [Campus Climate Collaborative](#). She then stated that the administration has received positive feedback on the lunch tables on the Butler Lawns on the Morningside campus. She additionally mentioned the hope to have research projects or scholarship opportunities around these issues in alignment with the University's focus on research and education.

President Armstrong mentioned the discussion of the Office of Institutional Equity presentation and that she hopes to discuss more how to strengthen the support for the Rules Administrator Gregory Wawro. President Armstrong also acknowledged how to best support academic opportunities, especially by

looking at financing for education through the common cost structure. She also mentioned the need to focus about the physical planning of the Morningside campus, referencing the recent work done at the Medical campus.

Sen. D'Armiento clarified how the agendas are set for Senate Plenaries, detailing that agenda items are initially developed in Senate Committees and then proposed to the Executive Committee as an item on the agenda. She explained that the Executive Committee, which includes the University President and Provost, gives final approval on agenda items.

Sen. D'Armiento asked about updates on the formation of the [President's Advisory Committee on Institutional Voice](#). President Armstrong responded that the administration has a draft charge for the Advisory Committee and that she will get back with more information soon. She added that she would like to evaluate processes for task forces or commissions like the Advisory Committee in order to ensure that they are set up with effective input.

Chair's Report and Questions

Sen. D'Armiento did not have any updates at this time and summarized the agenda items for the plenary. There were no questions for the Chair.

Establishment of the Office of Institutional Equity

Sen. D'Armiento introduced Provost Angela Olinto to lead a [presentation](#) on the newly established [Office of Institutional Equity](#) (OIE). Provost Olinto introduced herself and stated that Vice Provost Laura Kirschstein as the head of the Office of Institutional Equity and that the OIE staff have met with Senate committees. Provost Olinto introduced the mission of the office: "supporting an inclusive non-discriminatory environment for a vibrant academic community, the Vice Provost and her staff oversee compliance with policies and federal, state, and local laws concerning all forms of discrimination." Provost Olinto stated that the Office came into being over the course of the summer of 2024 and consolidated the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA), the Gender Based Misconduct Office, the Office of the Title IX Coordinator, and the Office of the Protection of Minors. Provost Olinto outlined the [major functions](#) of OIE. She added that OIE's formation was in response to the increased volume of reports and the need for coordination across offices, before stating that the Office is still growing. Provost Olinto described the changes and updates to the student anti-discrimination and discriminatory harassment policy and procedures. Finally, Provost Olinto overviewed the mandatory trainings run by OIE for students, faculty, and staff.

Senator Natalie Voigt (TTOT, NURS) asked if OIE comprises the [Office of Professionalism](#) at the Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC). Provost Olinto responded that OIE does not oversee the Office of Professionalism but that the two Offices communicate with each other.

Senator Melinda Aquino (Admin. Staff, Morningside-Lamont) asked Provost Olinto about the possibility of having an aggregate report of cases of discrimination to see campus trends and climate. Provost Olinto responded that there are currently two annual reports, EOAA and Gender-Based Misconduct, under the old system, which will continue for this academic year.

Senator Greg Freyer (TTOT, SPH) raised concerns about the new formation of OIE, referencing Sen. Voigt's question about the Office of Professionalism, and the faculty's need for independent legal representation from the University when facing charges. Sen. D'Armiento responded that in conversations last year with former Senior Executive Vice President Gerald Rosberg the faculty were told something like that would happen with the new restructuring of OIE.

Senator Jeffrey Gordon (Ten., LAW) asked about potential overlaps between issues of [discrimination that might fall under Title VI](#) and [violations to the Rules of University Conduct](#), which are adjudicated under separate processes. Provost Olinto responded that Vice Provost Kirschstein and Rules Administrator Wawro were meeting regularly to decide which cases went through each adjudication system.

Senator Susan Bernofsky (Ten., ARTS) asked about if Title IX had resources for faculty. Provost Olinto responded that everyone falls under Title IX and that student Gender-Based Misconduct was officially brought under Title IX now, acknowledging the complexity of the changes. Sen. D'Armiento responded that these confusions were partly why faculty have been asking for years for a resource office for the faculty including legal advice.

Senator Henning Schulzrinne (Ten., SEAS) stated that the current Title IX training was not sufficient and asked what improvements can be made to the Title IX training. Provost Olinto mentioned how universities in Chicago had implemented a three-hour training mandated by the City that involved people sharing their experiences, which she found effective and would consider for Columbia moving forward.

Senator Jaxon Williams-Bellamy (Stu., LAW) stated that the Rules Committee has worked with Vice Provost Kirschstein regarding OIE but that there are a lot of remaining questions regarding the overlap between OIE policies and the Rules of University Conduct. Sen. Williams-Bellamy mentioned that many student Senators had wished that student input would have been gathered when implementing the new OIE policies, given that they directly affect students. Provost Olinto mentioned that she would follow-up with the student Senators. Sen. D'Armiento mentioned that the student Senators can ask Vice Provost Kirschstein questions at the next plenary.

Sen. D'Armiento paused the questions for Provost Olinto to ask all attendees on Zoom to follow the policies of the Senate Plenaries and to not record or transcribe meetings.

Senator Mahmood Mamdani (Ten., A&S/SS) asked about representation on task forces related to minorities on campus and OIE's role in ensuring adequate and just representation on these task forces.

Sen. Mamdani also asked about coordination across task forces by OIE so that there are a sharing of resources and accountability. Provost Olinto responded by stating that there are no task forces under OIE and that OIE is comprised of full-time staff that run the sections of OIE in order to comply with federal, state, and local law and the Department of Education, which are more narrow focuses than what other task forces might work on. Sen. Mamdani responded that his understanding of the justification of the Task Force on Antisemitism was to implement the law. Provost Olinto responded that the charge for the Task Force on Antisemitism was wider than applying Title VI civil rights law. President Armstrong added that this confusion is why she had mentioned earlier about clarifying the processes by which task forces can be set up by the University.

Establishing a Dual Degree Linking the Master of Science in Climate and the Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design (Climate, Architecture, Planning & Preservation)

Sen. D'Armiento started the New Business by inviting the Education Committee to discuss the newly established [Dual Degree in Urban Design and Climate](#) between the Climate School and Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation (GSAPP). Sen. D'Armiento noted that because both degrees already existed at the University, there was no official vote from the Senate to approve the Dual Degree, but that the Education Committee would present on the new Dual Degree.

Senator James Applegate (Ten., A&S/NS), Co-Chair of the Senate Education Committee, began by explaining that a Dual Degree is a term that joins two degrees, in this case two master's degrees. Sen. Applegate distinguished the Dual Degree programs from a joint degree, which is a single degree run by two different entities. Sen. Applegate described the new Dual Degree, comprised of a Master of Science in Climate (Climate School) and a Master of Science in Urban Design (GSAPP). He stated that the Dual Degree is comprised of 77 points overall, 32 in the Climate School and 45 in GSAPP. Both programs are independently approved by the Senate and New York State. Sen. Applegate described how a student must be admitted and accepted to both programs independently and can enter the program in multiple different ways.

Sen. Freyer commented that the problem with other Dual Degrees has been the lack of coordination and to encourage the departments and faculty across the two schools to coordinate so students are not confused on requirements. Sen. Applegate mentioned that the Education Committee asks these questions to the Schools in order to best advise the Schools but that Schools ultimately run the Dual Degrees and that the advantage of doing the Dual Degree than the degrees sequentially is to coordinate academic interests and save time and money from the student perspective.

Proposed Update to the University Senate By-Laws (Structure and Operations)

Sen. D'Armiento introduced Structure and Operations member and Professor of Social Work Susan Witte to present on a proposed updated to the University Senate By-Laws, which can be access through the [plenary materials](#). Professor Witte started by discussing the proposed changes to the Executive Committee composition. Professor Witte overviewed the five main responsibilities of the EC. Professor Witte gave a

brief overview of the proposed amendments to the Executive Committee: 1) Revised format; 2) Adding a Vice Chair; 3) Changing Executive Committee composition; 4) Clarifying Chair term limits; and 5) Adjustment to the timing of the Chair and Vice Chair terms.

Professor Witte described the first amendment: to clarify language in the By-Laws to expand about the details of the Executive Committee and consolidate information in one place. She then moved to the second proposed amendment: adding a Vice Chair to the Executive Committee to help with the workload, logistics, and succession of the Chair of the Executive Committee. Professor Witte went over the proposed third amendment: to add the Vice Chair to Executive Committee and add a Research Officer to the Executive Committee to bring the Executive Committee to a total of 15. She then described the fourth proposed amendment: clarifying the Chair term limits passed on December 11th, 2020 were to be applied after that date and not retroactively. Finally, Professor Witte discussed the last proposed amendment: adjusting the timeline of the beginning of the Chair and Vice Chair terms to begin in September in response to challenges in training and transition for the Executive Committee.

Senator Brent Stockwell (Ten., A&S/NS) raised a concern about how the Chair of the Executive Committee plays an important role at the University and that he believes that a six-year term as Chair is too long given the length of time most students are at the University. Additionally, Sen. Stockwell mentioned that he believed amending the By-Laws to allow the current Chair of the Executive Committee to run for a fourth term would be damaging to the reputation of the Senate and independence of the Senate. Sen. Stockwell raised concerns about the Chair using the Vice Chair role being used by the Chair to promote their same viewpoints and the potential situations that could arise between a former Chair taking on the Vice Chair role. Sen. Stockwell suggested that Senators vote against the proposed By-Laws amendments.

Sen. Bernofsky stated that she was in favor of the By-Laws amendments given that a two- or four-year term are too short to perform the Chair's obligations and that the Chair and Vice Chair roles would be elected and campaigned separately. Sen. Bernofsky asked Professor Witte about the history of the length of terms of previous Chairs. Professor Witte asked a Co-Chair of Structure and Operations who might have more knowledge to answer the question. Senator Daniel Savin (Research Officers, Professional), Co-Chair of Structure and Operations, mentioned that before Sen. D'Armiento, the previous Chair had served 12 years and that the Chair before that even longer. Sen. Savin mentioned the proposed changes were to address these concerns and that the Senate as-a-whole votes in the Chair and Vice Chair.

Senator Jalaj Mehta (Stu. (Undergraduate), SEAS) agreed with Sen. Bernofsky and stated that the turnover with student leaders was a challenge with retaining institutional knowledge. Sen. Mehta stated that longer term limits were to the benefit of the Senate and in particular students. Sen. Mehta stated that the concerns around the current Chair serving an additional term were not substantiated by the amendments passed back in 2020 and that he hopes Senators vote in favor of the changes.

Senator Lydia Goehr (Ten., A&S/HUM) added that abuses of power and privilege can occur at every level of governance and within any Senate Committee and that the suspicion of abuse of power should not be taken into consideration when voting on the proposed changes to the By-Laws. Sen. Goehr added that she would like to know whether Sen. Stockwell would suggest any changes to the amendments or was opposed to them completely.

Senator Ulrich Hengst (Ten., P&S) raised concerned in line with Sen. Stockwell about the concerns of the Vice Chair position and that he is concerned that the Vice Chair candidate would be preemptively chosen two years early to be the next Chair.

Sen. Gordon added that most organizations have the equivalent of a Vice Chair position and that the burden of work on a single Chair is large at the moment. Sen. Gordon stated that he is not concerned about the issue of succession because the Senate must vote in the Chair. Sen. Gordon also added that he believed that there was no reason to have an exception to the six-year term limit to the Chair.

Sen. Freyer responded that the Senate needs a Vice Chair due to the workload of the Chair and that the logic of not applying the term limits retroactively is to allow the Chair to be able to train the new Vice Chair. Sen. Freyer added that he does not think that there will necessarily be automatic succession between the Chair and Vice Chair positions.

Senator Jeffrey Wayno (Libraries) mentioned that the issue of institutional memory is important. Sen. Wayno stated that he supported the Research Officer position being added to the Executive Committee but that he hopes in the future that alumni and officers from the libraries can also be added to the Executive Committee.

Sen. Bernofsky mentioned that the University has a new Interim President and Provost and that having some continuity in the leadership on campus is crucial at the moment.

Sen. Mamdani stated that he did not believe it was a good idea to change the rules or interpretation of the By-Laws in response to the person currently in power. He added that it is important to look at the moment the University and Senate was in, adding that nobody was interested in running for Senate when he first joined but now that there is a lot of concern about the Senate and being on the Senate as an elected body. He added that, at this time, he feels that is important to have stable and strong leadership on the Senate. Sen. Mamdani added that he does not share the concerns about the Vice Chair automatically succeeding to the role of the Chair.

Sen. Applegate brought up that these discussions have really been about the events that have occurred on campus since last fall and the conduct of Sen. D'Armiento as the current Chair. Sen. Applegate encouraged Senators to speak directly to those issues in their comments and that the Senate will have further opportunity to address these issues, adding that there are petitions going around at the University regarding

the Chair position and that he has heard from his constituencies about these issues. Sen. Applegate encouraged people who have signed either petition to talk to the signatories of the other petition.

Sen. Savin ended the question period by thanking everyone for their comments and that all comments will be brought back to Structure and Operations. He added there will be a number of solutions brought back to the Senate for final discussion and vote. Sen. Savin added that if any Senators have additional comments to send them to the Senate office to ensure they get to Structure and Operations.

Education Committee Annual Report 2023-2024

Sen. D'Armiento introduced Senator Letty Moss-Salentijn (Ten., CDM) and Sen. Applegate to provide the [Education Committee Annual Report for 2023-2024](#). Sen. Moss-Salentijn explained that the report is an annual document summarizing the work of the Education Committee in a given year. Sen. Moss-Salentijn stated that the Education Committee was behind on these reports from the academic years affected by COVID and that the Education Committee wanted to ensure this report was brought to the Senate promptly.

Petition Under Section 1.m. of the University Senate By-Laws

Sen. D'Armiento next discussed the [petition](#) that had been received under Section 1.m. of the Senate By-Laws. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Executive Committee must validate the petition before it can be referred to the relevant Senate Committee. She added that questions about the process can be directed to the Senate Parliamentarian.

Annual Officers' Benefits Update 2025

Sen. D'Armiento welcomed Executive Director for Benefits Sara Leupp and Associate Vice President for Benefits Michael Bloom to [present](#) the Officers' Benefits Plan for 2025. Executive Director Leupp mentioned that the open enrollment was occurring between Monday, November 4th and Friday, November 22nd. Executive Director Leupp mentioned that all information presented can about Benefits can be found at humanresources.columbia.edu/oe and that Open Enrollment will be mailed to Officers' homes. Executive Director mentioned which elections do not carry over every year as well as voluntary benefits. Executive Director Leupp mentioned upcoming expos, forums, and information sessions.

Executive Director Leupp gave updates for what is new for 2025: increases to HDHP deductible and out-of-pocket maximums, health savings accounts, support for menopause, additional caregiving resources, enrollment in Identity Theft insurance, Calm Health app, retirement contribution changes, special enrollment opportunity, and new contribution rates. Executive Director Leupp went into detail with the medical plan contribution increases between 2023 and 2025.

Executive Director Leupp then took questions from the Senators. Senator Adrian Brügger (Research Officers, Professional) asked about the increases the salary deductions and the idea that the University is moving away from subsidizing part of its responsibilities of health coverage. Executive Director Leupp

responded that the increase in salary deductions is driven by the cost of healthcare increase across all plans, specifically by the costs of care in New York and the utilization by members. Sen. D'Armiento mentioned that in 2011 there was a task force that decided that the share of the University would be 80/20 and that last year there was discussions about reevaluating this agreement given that there were salary freezes after COVID. Sen. D'Armiento mentioned that the Senate Benefits Committee is discussing this issue and that the Benefits Committee can potentially present at the upcoming plenary.

Sen. Schulzrinne mentioned that healthcare inflation was 3.2% and NYU only increased their contribution by 4% and he wanted to know why Columbia increased to 9%. Associate Vice President Bloom stated that it is hard to compare to another University because the membership and demographics are different. He stated that the rate increase is consistent with trends occurring within the healthcare industry. Associate Vice President Bloom mentioned the increase in high-cost claimants that drive costs into our medical plan. Sen. D'Armiento mentioned that NYU gives increased supplementation to their employees and that the Senate would need to discuss if this is something that Columbia wishes to pursue.

Sen. Gordon mentioned that constituents raised that the premiums on life insurance understate the cost to employees that lead employees to use insurance of the University. He stated that the additional costs end up being higher than a third-party provider of insurance due to the distortion at the University of what the cost of life insurance will be. Sen. D'Armiento stated that the Senate can ask the office to add those considers to what is shown that employees will actually pay to which Associate Vice President Bloom also agreed.

Sen. D'Armiento adjourned the meeting after reminding University members to vote in the upcoming election.

Respectfully submitted,

Senate staff

	Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom, and Tenure Committee	Approved by Committee: November 1, 2024
		Report to Senate: November 22, 2024

**Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee Report:
Approval of the Proposal to Establish Professorships of Professional Practice
for Mailman School of Public Health**

Rationale: Public health can broadly be defined as “the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society, organizations, public and private communities, and individuals.” (CEA Winslow, 1920). Advances in public health demand evidence-based research. As a result, evidence-based research remains at the forefront of the mission and purpose of the Mailman School of Public Health (MSPH). At the same time, MSPH must stay abreast of the ever-changing, dynamic public health landscape. Creating the conditions for health across the life course, structural racism, gender identity, food policy, environmental health, and health promotion, marketing and technology are just a few examples of areas where current public health professionals may provide meaningful expertise and experience to help inform the direction of research and practice. As a result, MSPH must partner research endeavors with “real world” experts in the practice of public health. Through this partnership, MSPH students and the breadth of faculty will have access to the most current and most pragmatic information to guide pedagogy, research, and practice. This vision is in alignment with the university’s Fourth Purpose Task Force report (announced by President Bollinger in February 2021) which highlights impact—along with research, teaching, and service—as the fourth purpose of the university, emphasizing our outward-looking aspiration to engage the world and affect the human condition.

One approach to ensuring this partnership is to incorporate practice faculty into the teaching and collaborative faculty at MSPH. The Columbia University Faculty Handbook identifies practice faculty as one of the appointment titles for officers of instruction. The intention is to provide professional schools, such as MSPH, the latitude to recruit to their faculty ranks those who have substantial professional expertise and experience, but who may not have the pre-requisite scholarly training and credentials required of the research faculty. The practice faculty title fills a gap in the appointments that MSPH currently has, in two ways: (1) While candidates who focus on educational and instructional activities may be offered a lecturer appointment, a professorial title would be more appropriate for candidates who are truly distinguished in their fields of practice and are committed to bringing this expertise to the classroom. (2) The “at CUMC” appointment may exclude qualified candidates who do not have a doctorate degree, but who have highly desired professional experience and expertise. In addition, the focus and emphasis of an “at CUMC” title may not reflect a faculty’s professional practice in public health. To illustrate, we describe here three categories, as examples, of public health professionals who may be recruited through this track:

1. Prominent individuals who engage in policymaking and advocacy and who have held political offices. Leaders in these domains may not have the pertinent terminal degrees such as JD or PhD. And their domains of work may not be described as clinical or medical.
2. To reflect the increasing importance of communication of science and trust as elements of public health, our School may recruit journalists, columnists, and authors who have established to be reliable voices to the public.
3. Public health leaders and practitioners, particularly those who have engaged in global health projects, will have substantial experience to share and teach based on their work on the ground. These individuals may not have the opportunities to receive a terminal degree. Each of these individuals bring practice-based experience and insight that would be valuable in translating scientific findings into innovative practice and bring value to scientific collaborations, including to disseminate findings.

While these examples do not exhaust all possible candidate pools, the inclusion of such practice faculty at MSPH will increase the impact of the School's curriculum and ensure that MSPH students are educated in all areas of public health practice, and that research translation and service in which MSPH engages is anchored in state-of-the-art public health knowledge and practice.

Professors of Practice may include individuals who are accomplished and dedicated teachers, as well as those with distinguished nonacademic careers. The latter include individuals with professional experience that allows them to inform the curricular needs that fall outside the expertise and interest of the traditional professorial faculty and/or expand the impact of the scientific and service work of the traditional faculty. The contribution of faculty of practice, would not ordinarily take the form of producing traditional research output as expected of tenure-track or tenured professors at MSPH, and would enhance the quality of the educational experience at the school and would enhance its public health impact by enabling translation of research into practice or policy. Their professional activity might entail contributing to design and implementation of public health programs, producing work of consequence in a specific area of public health; providing advisory and consulting work for public health and other agencies; holding leadership roles in professional organizations; and providing evidence-based advocacy for marginalized local, national, and international populations. In short, practice faculty will be engaged in ongoing educational, research, and service activities that advance the discipline and impact of public health. We expect the addition of practice faculty will complement the expertise and experience of our faculty body.

Instituting practice faculty appointments requires prior approval of the Provost and the University Senate Faculty Affairs Committee. The following schools have been authorized to make such appointments: the School of the Arts, the Graduate School of Business, the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), the Graduate School of Journalism, the School of Law, and the School of Social Work. As an example, SIPA was approved in 2000 by the Faculty Affairs Committee to add renewable appointments for professors of practice, that is, for accomplished teachers and those with experience as distinguished practitioners of professions in international and public affairs who are not candidates for tenure in the University. Practice appointments are also available at

other institutions. At *Harvard Arts & Science*,¹ such appointments are reserved for instructors who have a national or international reputation as leaders in educational innovation and are the best in the field in terms of curriculum development, educational reform (such as leading a major curriculum reform), and pedagogy. Appointments are ordinarily made for five-year terms and are renewable. The Mailman School proposes that these appointments be annual and renewable.

What does a practice appointment look like? Per the Faculty Handbook and in practice in the other schools/institutions, practice appointments may be made for distinguished practitioners who, while not necessarily having the academic credentials, will play a significant role in advancing our educational, research, and service missions. Those faculty may be appointed to one of the three grades in the practice faculty:

- *professor of professional practice in (department)*
 - Criteria: National or international recognition of contributions within the area of focus. Faculty at this rank should be widely acknowledged by peers inside and outside of Columbia University as exceptional within their area of expertise.
- *associate professor of professional practice in (department)*
 - Criteria: Important contributions to public health in the area of focus. Faculty at this level should be acknowledged by peers inside and outside of Columbia University as experts in their area of expertise.
- *assistant professor of professional practice in (department)*
 - Criteria: Substantial experience or expertise in public health practice that uniquely qualifies them to fill the needs for which they are employed.

Advancements through the ranks of assistant professor, associate professor and professor of practice will be available for eligible candidates.

Credentials and expectations are compared across tracks in Table 1. Practice appointments are made for a stated term, which is renewable, and the incumbents of these appointments may not be eligible for tenure at Columbia University while they hold practice titles. While members of the practice faculty are not subject to the statutory limits on full-time nontenured service, the Faculty Handbook suggests they may be appointed for more than eight years only if they have successfully passed a major review that is similar in nature to a review for tenure, but with different requirements. To satisfy this requirement, MSPH will conduct annual reviews of all practice faculty for internal purposes. In addition, MSPH will conduct a major review of practice faculty during the 5th year of service; see Review Process below.

Table 1. Comparison of practice faculty with existing appointment types at CUIMC

	Tenure	Tenure Track	At CUMC	Practice
Timeline	Long term	Max 8 years with yearly review	Yearly appointment	Yearly appointment. Reviews should be conducted in years

¹ Harvard A&S stopped authorizing appointments to Full Professors of the Practice in 2018. Part-Time Professors of the Practice remains an option for multi-year renewable appointments <https://academic-appointments.fas.harvard.edu/b-part-time-professors-practice>

				1, 3, 5, 7. After successful passing of major review in year 7, they can be reappointed to terms of no more than 5 years.
Expected activities	Teaching, research, service	Teaching, research, service	Teaching, research, service	Teaching, pedagogical research and service as relevant

Restrictions on use of practice faculty:

- The number of practice faculty appointments made by a Department at MSPH will not at any time exceed 10% of the full-time tenured, tenure track, and “at CUMC” faculty in that department. For context, the School currently has about 200 full-time faculty members; and the size of departments ranges from 20 to 43.
- Movement from practice faculty to tenure-track will not be permitted. Nor can a practice faculty resign and immediately apply for a tenure-track position. There needs to be at least a two-year gap before any individual reapplies for a track movement. Therefore, it must be clear, and put in writing at the outset, in which instructional category the faculty will be appointed. In addition, all communication (i.e., faculty lists, MSPH website, professional stationary, recruitment postings, etc.) will clearly denote the practice faculty title track.
- Practice faculty will have the same voting rights as non-tenured faculty members within MSPH.
- Practice faculty will be subject to the same letter of non-renewal notice period afforded “at CUMC” faculty of equal seniority should non-renewal be necessary.
- Per University’s policy, only full-time appointment will be available for practice faculty title.
- Practice faculty can serve as Principal Investigators or co-Investigators on extramural grants.

Review Process for Practice Faculty: To unify the process with other non-tenure track appointments (i.e., faculty with an “at CUMC” title) and ensure an equitable and consistent policy for all MSPH non-tenure appointments, practice faculty will be subject to annual reviews by their Department Chair that will inform reappointment status. These reviews will remain internal to MSPH. Criteria for review will include the quality of teaching, output in terms of programmatic activities and public health engagement, current knowledge of recent developments in public health and public health education, the quality of general participation in the life of the School, and activities that advance public health research, practice, and policy. Full-time practice faculty who, after review, are not reappointed will be provided a letter of non-renewal (LON) notice according to the CUIMC guidelines for “at CUMC” title (revised 6/16/21, attached).

In addition, practice faculty will be subject to a major review in the 7th year of service. The result of this major review will be shared with the Dean of The Mailman School, the Executive Vice President for Health and Biomedical Sciences, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, or the

Senior Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Career Development at CUIMC, and the Provost. For the 7th year review, department chairs will appoint a review committee consisting of 2-4 faculty members (both within the Department and when appropriate, outside the department). In preparation for the review, the committee will evaluate the following:

- CV
- A statement from the practice faculty announcing their candidacy for reappointment and highlighting their contributions to the public health discipline, practice, and policy, including significant projects now in progress or likely to be completed in the next several years.
- Student evaluations are an element of the review process, as well as direct classroom observation by those conducting the review.
- Other items (i.e., publications, grant submissions and funding, policy analysis, white papers, gray literature, impact analysis, etc.) specific to individual practice faculty appointments.
- School, university, and professional contributions and services.

After review of the outlined documents, the review committee will draft a written report. The report will focus on the contributions the practice faculty has made to widening the reach of the department in specific areas of public health.

The department chair will provide a copy of the report prepared by the committee to the practice faculty member and will meet with the practice faculty to discuss the report. The practice faculty will be afforded the opportunity to prepare a written response to the report, in the form of a letter addressed to the chair of the committee.

The final report, and all supporting documents will be sent to the Vice Dean for Faculty and the Dean of MSPH for review and endorsement. That endorsement, along with all documentation collected for the faculty practice review will be sent to the Executive Vice President for Health and Biomedical Sciences, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, or the Senior Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Career Development at CUIMC, and the Provost. If the outcome of the 5th year review is an offer of renewal, the next major review will take place 5 years after the review.

Monitoring of practice faculty appointments: MSPH leadership will conduct periodic written reviews (a minimum of every 5 years) that evaluate the significance of the contributions of practice faculty appointments on the department and the school, including the intellectual quality and scholarly standing of the school, public health programmatic impact, and to its impact on curriculum. Such review will be made available to the Provosts' Office and to the University Senate Faculty Affairs Committee. The review will serve as an opportunity to evaluate the role that practice faculty play within the broader mission of the department and MSPH in general.

November 19, 2024

Statement Regarding Student Concerns over Trustee Overreach

To whom it may concern:

We are deeply concerned about the actions of the University's Board of Trustees over the past year, as alleged in the Republican Staff Report from the House Committee on Education and the Workforce.

If confirmed, we believe these actions would betray the students' right to privacy and confidentiality, which the University should strive to respect notably in the spirit of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Furthermore, these actions would jeopardize the integrity and fairness of disciplinary processes.

We recognize the important role of trustees in overseeing the institution's governance and their fiduciary responsibilities. Nevertheless, communications presented in the report are deeply concerning. Most significantly, a member of the trustees reportedly reviewed individual student records in a manner that creates the appearance of an improper influence on the student disciplinary process.

As students, it is unfortunate that these trusted individuals whom we admire and respect for safeguarding the institution's values, maintaining the integrity of its governance, and upholding the rights of its students allegedly behaved in such a manner.

In order to maintain the fairness and impartiality of our disciplinary processes, it is crucial that even the appearance of improper influence be avoided. To share information regarding ongoing student disciplinary cases with individuals with no formal role in the disciplinary process threatens the integrity of that process and risks not only betraying students' trust but also violating students' right to privacy.

We call upon the university administration to take action to rebuild and sustain trust throughout the community. It is the only way we will be able to make progress as an institution.

We hope that the University will reaffirm its commitment to student privacy so as to ensure that disciplinary processes remain independent and confidential.

We stand ready to join in this effort.

Student Affairs Committee

Update from the Structure and Operations Committee
University Senate Plenary Meeting: November 22, 2024

Introduction

The Executive Committee has referred the validated petition of Professor Mitts and others to the Structure and Operations Committee (S & O). Under section 1 m of the By-Laws, “Any matter so placed on the agenda of a standing committee shall be disposed of by the committee at the earliest time with due regard to other prior agenda items, and the disposition shall be reported to the full University Senate.” This is the first of what we anticipate being several reports in response to this mandate.¹

The petition contains two parts: a series of recommendations for changes in the By-Laws and a series of “Allegations of Partiality of the Current Chair.” This report concerns the second part. We are obligated to review this part pursuant to the requirement of section 4 k (xii) of the By-Laws, which states that the S & O Committee “shall observe and review the operations and effectiveness of the University Senate, through statutory amendment and otherwise.” We will turn to the petition’s recommendations for By-Law changes, which are extensive and complex, on completion of this report on allegations.

In approaching the allegations, we faced a problem of competence. We are not an investigative or judicial body, and the By-Laws do not empower us to become one. Nor do we wish to engage in an adversarial proceeding.

Our goal in this report, therefore, is to inform you, the members of the Senate, about the context and about other facts that you might find relevant in your review of the allegations. We express no conclusions, we do not editorialize, we do not speculate about motives, and we do not draw any inferences. Instead, we deal only in statements that are verifiable according to documents that we have in hand and arrange these statements as simply as we can. When we do not know something with a high degree of certainty, we say that we do not know it.

In the body of this report, we begin the discussion of each allegation with a verbatim copy of the allegation, and a verbatim copy of the footnote attached to it, if it had a footnote attached to it. We follow this with our comment. There are ten allegations in total, and we divide them into three sections based on topic: five allegations about demonstrations, three allegations about the agenda of Senate plenaries, and two allegations about the conduct of Senate plenaries. Within each of these sections, we arrange the allegations in chronological order, as best as we can

¹ S & O co-chair Daniel Savin was unable to participate in the writing of this report because prior commitments took him out of the country.

determine it. In keeping with our epistemic commitments, we do not have a summary or conclusion.

We acknowledge the complexities and challenges of the events since last October that are the backdrop of what has been set before us. These have had a divisive impact on the entire University community as well as the Senate, which has been an otherwise collegial body with many common goals. Although the members of the S & O Committee probably have divergent views on these events, we came together to agree on the facts in this report.

Allegations about demonstrations

- A. *Sent faculty members to the illegal encampment in spring 2024 (notwithstanding allegedly notifying the administration of their presence), thereby implicating the Senate in a violation of the Rules of University Conduct as well as nondiscrimination and student conduct policies.* Footnote 10.

<https://senate.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Plenary%20Binders%202024-25/>

The Chair offered her explanation of the role of the faculty at the encampments during the September 20, 2024, plenary session (pages 3 and 4 of the minutes): “The article purported to show pictures of faculty members of the Rules Committee participating in protests. Sen. D’Armiento offered some context. During the encampments, as a method of de-escalation, a group of faculty, including some senators, stood at the entrance to the encampment both to ensure that it was open to all Columbia members, but also to ask whether individuals in the area were affiliates, in an effort to keep non-affiliates away from the encampment. These faculty wore orange jackets to distinguish themselves from participating protesters. The purpose of the activities was to reduce tension at the site. Chief Operating Officer Cas Holloway and VP for Public Safety Gerald Lewis, as well as Sen. D’Armiento herself, were aware of these activities.”

- B. *Falsely told a student leader of a counterprotest against CUAD’s “All Out for Lebanon” protest that the Rules of University Conduct required them to counterprotest in a specific remote location, despite Senate leadership later acknowledging that the Rules do not require protest in a given location and that guidance to that effect is purely suggestive.*

Footnote 11. <https://x.com/LishiBaker/status/1840865446855393691>

On the afternoon of September 27, 2024 an All Out for Lebanon protest occurred at the sundial and a counter-protest was nearby. We have reviewed an email from a senior leader in the Columbia Jewish Community who was present. The email was directed to the Interim President, the Chair, and several other University officials. In the email, the sender estimated that about a hundred students were at the protest and about 20-30 counter-protestors were present. The sender was extremely disturbed that the groups were “inches away from each other,” and, “One blow of the wind and a flag hits someone in the face and we have a real fight on our hands.” We have been told that because delegates were not available then, the Chair went to the sundial after receiving this email to speak with counter-protestors to try to get them to move further away from

the protest. According to video available on X, the Chair did not direct the counter-protestors to the Furnald lawn. (We are not attaching the email at this time because we have not requested or received permission from the sender to do so.)

C. Allowed a student Senator, speaking on behalf of the University Senate, to publicly contradict the Interim President regarding whether an unregistered Demonstration on October 7, 2024 was sanctioned by the University or the Senate, without any discussion within the Senate about this disagreement. Fn 9. Stand Columbia, Issue #010: The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly: A Sober Assessment of October 7 2024 on Columbia's Campus, <https://standcolumbia.org/2024/10/11/issue-010-the-good-the-bad-andthe-ugly-a-sober-assessment-of-october-7-2024-on-columbias-campus/>.

This allegation appears to refer to an email statement sent by the leadership of the Student Affairs Committee. The leadership of the Student Affairs Committee sent the email in question (see exhibit C-1) to all students (copies to Executive Committee) at about 1:26 am on October 7, 2024. Exhibit C-2 contains the President's Update on October 7, 2024 (revised as of 12:30 am October 7) as published on the Columbia University President's website when the Student Affairs Committee sent its email (which is the same as it appeared on November 17, 2024).

The President's Update, revised as of 12:30 am October 7, 2024 states: "We will take the necessary steps to respond to these developments while working to support the student group special events that are currently scheduled, as well as non-violent demonstrations that have been sent through the notification system established under the Rules of University Conduct. Public Safety and delegate support are fully prepared for this purpose." Neither the word "sanctioned" or "unsanctioned" appears in any form in the President's update.

The Student Affairs Committee email of 1:26 am refers to that revised President's Update and states: "Following the [President's revision](#) to today's community update and in order to ensure freedom of speech, we want to confirm that the University does not sanction or unsanction protests. Furthermore, the University Senate does not review, approve or sanction events or demonstrations."

The Student Affairs Committee email does not appear to contradict the revised President's Update to which it links.

D. Other than generically condemning calls for violence, failed to condemn the unregistered, unsanctioned and harassing Demonstration on October 7, 2024 in which protestors openly displayed signs like “long live the Al-Aqsa Flood,” (i.e., the October 7 terrorist attacks), retracted an apology by a student who expressed a desire to commit murder and clarified they now stand by the student’s words, celebrated a lynching on social media, openly backed a terrorist group and said “violence is the only path forward,” and actively distributed imagery and other material created by terrorist groups. Footnote 12: Id.

The Chair of the Executive Committee has not commented in a plenary on the content of this or any other demonstration.

E. Despite insisting that the “Columbia United Against Terror” counterprotestors stay in a specified location, failed to endorse time, place and manner rules on CUAD’s protests before or after on October 7, 2024, allowing the CUAD protestors to breach a barrier, spill out of their assigned zone and overwhelm the Public Safety cordon meant to keep the crowds separated. This allowed the CUAD protesters to go on a dangerous and unsanctioned “march” across campus and thereby create “no go” zones for students and faculty who at a University-approved memorial art installation were grieving their family and friends who had been murdered by the “Al Aqsa Flood” Hamas attack that CUAD supported, causing some of them to suffer panic attacks and emotional distress as the mob approached. Of note, the tabling of art that was supposed to be held for a week was not held the next day due to exhaustion. No source cited.

The Chair of the Executive Committee is not a delegate and thus not involved in enforcing the University Rules of Conduct. In addition, the Chair has told us that she was not in New York City on October 7, 2024.

Allegations about the agenda of Senate plenary meetings

For all three of these allegations: The Chair does not set the agenda of Senate plenary meetings. Pursuant to section 4 k (i) of the By-Laws, the Executive Committee sets the agenda. The

Executive Committee consists of the Chair and twelve other members, all of whom are either the President, appointed by the President, or elected by a Senate caucus.

F. Arbitrarily silenced comments and letters sent by students with lived experience harassment, discrimination, and exclusion based on their protected classes based on shared ancestry, religion, nationality, or veteran status, while allowing others not in these specific protected classes many opportunities to be heard. Footnote 15.
https://x.com/gil_zussman/status/1788319534551535759

This allegation appears to relate to the “In Our Names” non-Senator student petitioners. During the spring (the time the source seems to be speaking of), only one non-Senator student spoke at a plenary.

In the March 22, 2024 plenary, the Senate considered (and adopted) a Resolution for the Creation of Dedicated Space for Columbia University’s First-Generation, Low-Income Students. This resolution was recommended by the Commission on Diversity, the Student Affairs Committee, and the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee after a long period of study. Three speakers introduced the resolution and described its content and the research that had been done. Of these three, two were Senators (one faculty, one student) and one was a non-Senator student who was particularly knowledgeable and had been involved in the committees that developed the resolution.

Student Senators, on the other hand, spoke at all the spring plenaries, on many topics, and espoused many positions on said topics. Most of the May 3 plenary, in particular, was devoted to reactions by Senators to the recent events, including the problems of access to food, libraries, and laboratories. In all, 28 different Senators (or non-Senator members of Senate committees) spoke on non-procedural matters, some of them more than once—five student Senators are included in this number.

The “In Our Names” petitioners in question never formally asked to take part in a plenary and were not given an opportunity to be heard apart from their petition. A representative of the petitioners met with several different members of the Student Affairs Committee, including the chairs, several times but apparently never initiated a request to speak at a plenary through them. We have reviewed an email, dated May 8, in which a former Senator, gave the Chair a link to the petition and requested that it be distributed to Senators. Most Senate business is conducted through committees, and so following normal procedures, the Chair forwarded this request to the

Student Affairs Committee and Diversity Commission to consider and to reach out to the students involved.

- G. Dedicated virtually all time in recent plenary meetings to the Rules Committee, while failing to advance agenda items for other Senate committees and cutting short discussion of University business more broadly. No source.*

The Senate has often dedicated large amounts of time to an issue because it is important or controversial. For instance, many plenaries were largely devoted to COVID in one form or another.

- H. Inequitably used her power to manage the Senate agenda by silencing one specific group of students with lived experiences of discrimination, harassment and exclusion based on their membership in a particular protected class, denying them the opportunity to share their experiences when the Task Force on Antisemitism presented its second report and explicitly asked that students join their presentation.*

Footnote 13. Elisha Baker, Silenced by the University Senate, Columbia Spectator, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/opinion/2024/10/01/silenced-by-the-university-senate/>

This allegation appears to relate to the September 20 2024 Senate plenary. The Executive Committee invited the chairs of the Anti-Semitism Task Force to this plenary because they wanted to hear from the authors of its recently issued report. The students in question (who were not Senators) were not invited to speak as they did not author the report.

Allegations about the conduct of Senate meetings

- I. Muted the microphone of a tenured Senator during a plenary meeting, in contravention of the bylaws of the Senate and despite admitting that her action “broke the rules,” because she disagreed with the viewpoint expressed by that Senator. Footnote 8. <https://nypost.com/2024/05/11/us-news/columbia-faculty-senator-warns-campus-had-been-infiltrated-by-terrorist-organizations/> and see more recent article by NYTimes on the topic: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/09/nyregion/columbia-pro-palestinian-group-hamas.html>.*

The article refers to the May 3, 2024 plenary, which was by Zoom.:

During that meeting, the Chair muted Senator Garber for about 25 seconds, and then unmuted her. After another 55 seconds (during which two other Senators, both of whom were out of order, debated the muting), Senator Garber continued speaking and concluded without further interruption or limitation on her speaking time.

Robert's Rules of Order 4:31 states in part: "Although the presiding officer should give close attention to each speaker's remarks during debate, he cannot interrupt the person who has the floor so long as that person does not violate any of the assembly's rules and no disorder arises." Before Senator Garber started speaking again, the Chair acknowledged that she had made a mistake.

J. During a presentation by the Task Force on Antisemitism, allowed a single critical Senator more than twice the time to speak as other Senators and almost as much as time as the entire Task Force on Antisemitism combined, using that as a pretext to repeatedly cut off the co-chair of the Task Force while he attempted to answer critical comments and questions by Senators, thereby preventing the ordinary discussion and debate that are consistent with Senate principles, and ignoring a written response to the critical Senator's opinion piece that had already been published in the Spectator, which was not read in response. Footnote 14. Id.

Neither the University Statutes nor the Senate By-Laws specify how long a Senator may speak during the plenary. Senate meetings are governed by Robert's Rules of Order when the bylaws and other authoritative documents are silent on a matter. Robert's Rules of Order 43:8 limits members' speeches to 10 minutes in the absence of special circumstances. The Senator spoke for approximately 11 minutes. No other Senator raised a point of order. The Task Force presented their findings for about 22 minutes and responded to questions and summarized for about 8 minutes.

Exhibit C-1

§ 2024/10/07 01:25:41 AM A Message from the Student Affairs Committee Leadership

Subject: A Message from the Student Affairs Committee Leadership

Hello everyone,

After the recent campus access changes, we want to ensure that everyone is able to reach out to the Columbia University Senate's Student Affairs Committee team. Please feel free to connect with your school's Senator, who you can find [here](#), or reach out to us directly.

If you experience any issues in the upcoming days regarding campus and building access, please bring these concerns to us so we can provide you with assistance or connect you with the appropriate departments.

Following the [President's revision](#) to today's community update and in order to ensure freedom of speech, we want to confirm that the University does not sanction or unsanction protests. Furthermore, the University Senate does not review, approve or sanction events or demonstrations.

Giving [notice](#) is key to managing demonstrations and would also include notification if the nature of an event changes. We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of all to give notification of protests this semester, allowing the University to plan effectively.

(For more information, see [Guidelines to the Rules of University Conduct](#)).

Sincerely,
 Student Affairs Committee Chairs
 Columbia University Senate
 Maria Martinez (CC), Undergraduate Co-Chair
 Jaxon Williams-Bellamy (Law), Graduate Co-Chair
 Bruce Goumain (GS), Vice Chair

Exhibit C-2 President's Update October 7, 2024

§ October 6, 2024, Update for Our Community:

<https://president.columbia.edu/news/update-our-community-10-6-24>

Editor's note:

Revised 10/7/24, 12:23 AM

October 06, 2024

Dear members of the Columbia community:

I am writing to update you on our current situation on campus, our understanding of what different groups are planning given the significance of the week ahead, and our preparations to support you and the Columbia community.

As I expressed in [my message last week](#), we anticipated and have been preparing for a period of uncertainty in the coming days. Over the last few days, and particularly the last 24 hours, there has been rapidly increasing evidence that the Morningside campus is a major focus for protest and other activity. We have several student groups planning for special events and non-violent protests and are working diligently to support those plans with public safety and delegate support. At the same time, we have also learned and had evidence of plans of groups not affiliated with Columbia choosing to come to our Morningside campus for activities that raise concern about the potential for violence. We understand that there has been a call for a walkout as part of a larger protest effort across New York City. This walkout was not notified through the process established by the Guidelines to the Rules of University Conduct. We continue to implement public safety measures to plan for every eventuality. We take those concerns with extreme seriousness.

For More Information

[Supporting Our Community](#)

[Public Safety Morningside Campus Access](#)

Because of this information and in line with our responsibility for the safety of our campus community, we are taking several immediate steps to ensure that our campus can continue to carry out our academic mission, particularly in the classroom. First, for today and tomorrow (October 6 - 7) and possibly later into the week, we are no longer accepting the QR codes generated when guest access to the Morningside campus is requested and will be working closely with leadership across the schools and programs to determine where guest access is critical for our academic mission. We are also working on revising the automated system so that it can be used again. Anyone who is not a current employee or student is considered a guest for

this purpose. We are also working to develop approaches for student groups who were hoping to have meetings with guests on Morningside campus at other locations and to provide support for all our students to see their family and friends at this challenging time.

Second, we will be increasing the public safety presence across campus for the next three days. We are all eager to get back to an environment where that is not needed and appreciate the challenges that widespread public safety presence can create for our community and the wellbeing of individuals within that community. We will also be using traditional approaches to guide people tomorrow to ensure the appropriate safe locations for protest and counter-protest for public safety. We expect that there will be more dividers and barricades than are commonly seen on campus and will have public safety on site to help with guidance in the moment. I am learning more and more that the remarkable benefits of being an open campus within New York City also come with the need to make difficult decisions about when that position can lead to significant safety risks for our Columbia community.

Third, we will be reevaluating building access to balance the importance of access to university resources and the need to ensure the safety of our campus, particularly the risk of violence to any member of our community. Again, we anticipate having reduced building access over the next three days at certain time periods and understand the challenges that will create.

Fourth, because we will need to move public safety personnel to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff, and campus, we will shift to the restricted gate access status for the next three days. Restricted access means that some gates will not be available. Information about gate access is available at the [Public Safety Morningside Campus Access page](#).

We will take the necessary steps to respond to these developments while working to support the student group special events that are currently scheduled, as well as non-violent demonstrations that have been sent through the notification system established under the Rules of University Conduct. Public Safety and delegate support are fully prepared for this purpose. We will continue to provide frequent updates to inform you of any changes to scheduled events or other developments.

I know that this incredible University community can navigate the challenges of the next several days with compassion, understanding and resilience. Throughout all this planning, we are working closely with Senate leadership, faculty, student and decanal leadership, and our partners across the city and the state. None of these are easy decisions and we will continue to ground every decision in our mission and our principles and expand our engagement and dialogue as we move forward.

All my best,
Katrina Armstrong
Interim President
Columbia University in the City of New York

Update from the Structure and Operations Committee

University Senate Plenary Meeting

November 22, 2024

Introduction

- The Executive Committee has referred the validated petition of Professor Mitts and others to the Structure and Operations Committee (S&O).
- Per Section 1(m) of the By-Laws:
 - "Any matter so placed on the agenda of a standing committee shall be disposed of by the committee at the earliest time with due regard to other prior agenda items, and the disposition shall be reported to the full University Senate."
- This is the first of several anticipated reports in response to this mandate.

Introduction

- The petition consists of two parts:
 - Recommendations for By-Laws Changes
 - “Allegations of Partiality of the Current Chair”
- This report addresses the second part concerning allegations of partiality.
- Pursuant to Section 4(k)(xii) of the By-Laws, the S&O Committee:
 - “Shall observe and review the operations and effectiveness of the University Senate, through statutory amendment and otherwise.”
- Review of the petition’s recommendations for By-Laws changes will follow the completion of this report, as they are extensive and complex.

Introduction

- In approaching the allegations, we faced a problem of competence:
 - We are not an investigative or judicial body, and the By-Laws do not empower us to become one.
 - Nor do we wish to engage in an adversarial proceeding.
- Goal of This Report:
 - To inform you, the members of the Senate, about the context and other facts you might find relevant in your review of the allegations.
 - We express no conclusions, do not editorialize, do not speculate about motives, and do not draw inferences.
- Focus on Verifiable Facts:
 - We deal only in statements that are verifiable according to documents in hand and arrange these statements as simply as possible.
 - When we do not know something with a high degree of certainty, we state that we do not know it.

Introduction

- Each response begins with a verbatim copy of the allegation and its attached footnote, if applicable.
 - This is followed by our comment.
 - There are ten allegations in total, divided into three sections:
 1. Five allegations about demonstrations.
 2. Three allegations about the agenda of Senate plenaries.
 3. Two allegations about the conduct of Senate plenaries.
- Allegations within each section are arranged in chronological order, as best as we can determine.
- In keeping with our epistemic commitments, the report has no summary or conclusion.

Introduction

- We acknowledge the complexities and challenges of the events since last October that form the backdrop of what has been set before us.
- These events have had a divisive impact on the entire University community and the Senate, which has otherwise been a collegial body with many common goals.
- Although members of the S&O Committee probably have divergent views on these events, we came together to agree on the facts in this report.

Allegations about demonstrations

- A. Sent faculty members to the illegal encampment in spring 2024 (notwithstanding allegedly notifying the administration of their presence), thereby implicating the Senate in a violation of the Rules of University Conduct as well as nondiscrimination and student conduct policies. Footnote 10.

<https://senate.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Plenary%20Binders%202024-25/>

Response

- The Chair offered her explanation of the role of the faculty at the encampments during the September 20, 2024, plenary session (pages 3 and 4 of the minutes):
 - “The article purported to show pictures of faculty members of the Rules Committee participating in protests. Sen. D’Armiento offered some context. During the encampments, as a method of de-escalation, a group of faculty, including some senators, stood at the entrance to the encampment both to ensure that it was open to all Columbia members, but also to ask whether individuals in the area were affiliates, in an effort to keep non-affiliates away from the encampment. These faculty wore orange jackets to distinguish themselves from participating protesters. The purpose of the activities was to reduce tension at the site. Chief Operating Officer Cas Holloway and VP for Public Safety Gerald Lewis, as well as Sen. D’Armiento herself, were aware of these activities.”

Allegations about demonstrations

- B. Falsely told a student leader of a counterprotest against CUAD's "All Out for Lebanon" protest that the Rules of University Conduct required them to counterprotest in a specific remote location, despite Senate leadership later acknowledging that the Rules do not require protest in a given location and that guidance to that effect is purely suggestive. Footnote 11.

<https://x.com/LishiBaker/status/1840865446855393691>

Response

- On the afternoon of September 27, an All Out for Lebanon protest occurred at the sundial and a counter-protest was nearby.
- We have reviewed an email from a senior leader in the Columbia Jewish Community who was present.
 - The email was directed to the Interim President, the Chair, and several other University officials. In the email, the sender estimated that about a hundred students were at the protest and about 20-30 counter-protestors were present.
 - The sender was extremely disturbed that the groups were “inches away from each other,” and, “One blow of the wind and a flag hits someone in the face and we have a real fight on our hands.”
- We have been told that because delegates were not available then, the Chair went to the sundial after receiving this email to speak with counter-protestors to try to get them to move further away from the protest.
- According to video available on X, the Chair did not direct the counter-protestors to the Furnald lawn. (We are not attaching the email at this time because we have not requested or received permission from the sender to do so.)

Allegations about demonstrations

- C. Allowed a student Senator, speaking on behalf of the University Senate, to publicly contradict the Interim President regarding whether an unregistered Demonstration on October 7, 2024 was sanctioned by the University or the Senate, without any discussion within the Senate about this disagreement. Fn 9. Stand Columbia, Issue #010: The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly: A Sober Assessment of October 7 2024 on Columbia's Campus <https://standcolumbia.org/2024/10/11/issue-010-the-good-the-bad-andthe-ugly-a-sober-assessment-of-october-7-2024-on-columbias-campus/>.

Response part 1

- This allegation appears to refer to an email statement sent by the leadership of the Student Affairs Committee.
- The leadership of the Student Affairs Committee sent the email in question (see exhibit C-1) to all students (copies to Executive Committee) at about 1:26 am on October 7, 2024.
- Exhibit C-2 contains the President's Update on October 7, 2024 (revised as of 12:30 am October 7) as published on the Columbia University President's website when the Student Affairs Committee sent its email (which is the same as it appeared on November 17, 2024).

Response part 2

- The President's Update, revised as of 12:30 am October 7, states:
 - "We will take the necessary steps to respond to these developments while working to support the student group special events that are currently scheduled, as well as non-violent demonstrations that have been sent through the notification system established under the Rules of University Conduct. Public Safety and delegate support are fully prepared for this purpose."
- Neither the word "sanctioned" or "unsanctioned" appears in any form in the President's update.

Response part 3

- The Student Affairs Committee email of 1:26 am refers to that revised President's Update and states:
 - "Following the President's revision to today's community update and in order to ensure freedom of speech, we want to confirm that the University does not sanction or unsanction protests. Furthermore, the University Senate does not review, approve or sanction events or demonstrations."
- The Student Affairs Committee email does not appear to contradict the revised President's Update to which it links.

Allegations about demonstrations

- D. Other than generically condemning calls for violence, failed to condemn the unregistered, unsanctioned and harassing Demonstration on October 7, 2024 in which protestors openly displayed signs like “long live the Al-Aqsa Flood,” (i.e., the October 7 terrorist attacks), retracted an apology by a student who expressed a desire to commit murder and clarified they now stand by the student’s words, celebrated a lynching on social media, openly backed a terrorist group and said “violence is the only path forward,” and actively distributed imagery and other material created by terrorist groups. Footnote 12: Id.

Response

- The Chair of the Executive Committee has not commented in a plenary on the content of this or any other demonstration.

Allegations about demonstrations

- E. Despite insisting that the “Columbia United Against Terror” counterprotestors stay in a specified location, failed to endorse time, place and manner rules on CUAD’s protests before or after on October 7, 2024, allowing the CUAD protestors to breach a barrier, spill out of their assigned zone and overwhelm the Public Safety cordon meant to keep the crowds separated. This allowed the CUAD protesters to go on a dangerous and unsanctioned “march” across campus and thereby create “no go” zones for students and faculty who at a University-approved memorial art installation were grieving their family and friends who had been murdered by the “Al Aqsa Flood” Hamas attack that CUAD supported, causing some of them to suffer panic attacks and emotional distress as the mob approached. Of note, the tabling of art that was supposed to be held for a week was not held the next day due to exhaustion. No source cited.

Response

- The Chair of the Executive Committee is not a delegate and thus not involved in enforcing the University Rules of Conduct. In addition, the Chair has told us that she was not in New York City on October 7, 2024.

Allegations about the agenda of Senate plenary meetings

- For all three of these allegations:
 - The Chair does not set the agenda of Senate plenary meetings.
 - Pursuant to section 4 k (i) of the By-Laws, the Executive Committee sets the agenda.
 - The Executive Committee consists of the Chair and twelve other members, all of whom are either the President, appointed by the President, or elected by a Senate caucus.

Allegations about the agenda

- F. Arbitrarily silenced comments and letters sent by students with lived experience harassment, discrimination, and exclusion based on their protected classes based on shared ancestry, religion, nationality, or veteran status, while allowing others not in these specific protected classes many opportunities to be heard.

Footnote 15.

https://x.com/gil_zussman/status/1788319534551535759

Response part 1

- This allegation appears to relate to the “In Our Names” non-Senator student petitioners. During the spring (the time the source seems to be speaking of), only one non-Senator student spoke at a plenary.
- In the March 22, 2024 plenary, the Senate considered (and adopted) a Resolution for the Creation of Dedicated Space for Columbia University’s First-Generation, Low-Income Students.
 - This resolution was recommended by the Commission on Diversity, the Student Affairs Committee, and the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee after a long period of study.
 - Three speakers introduced the resolution and described its content and the research that had been done.
 - Of these three, two were Senators (one faculty, one student) and one was a non-Senator student who was particularly knowledgeable and had been involved in the committees that developed the resolution.

Response part 2

- Student Senators, on the other hand, spoke at all the spring plenaries, on many topics, and espoused many positions on said topics.
- Most of the May 3 plenary, in particular, was devoted to reactions by Senators to the recent events, including the problems of access to food, libraries, and laboratories.
- In all, 28 different Senators (or non-Senator members of Senate committees) spoke on non-procedural matters, some of them more than once—five student Senators are included in this number.

Response part 3

- The “In Our Names” petitioners in question never formally asked to take part in a plenary and were not given an opportunity to be heard apart from their petition.
- A representative of the petitioners met with several different members of the Student Affairs Committee, including the chairs, several times but apparently never initiated a request to speak at a plenary through them.
- We have reviewed an email, dated May 8, in which a former Senator, gave the Chair a link to the petition and requested that it be distributed to Senators.
- Most Senate business is conducted through committees, and so following normal procedures, the Chair forwarded this request to the Student Affairs Committee and Diversity Commission to consider and to reach out to the students involved.

Allegations about the agenda

- G. Dedicated virtually all time in recent plenary meetings to the Rules Committee, while failing to advance agenda items for other Senate committees and cutting short discussion of University business more broadly. No source.

Response

- The Senate has often dedicated large amounts of time to an issue because it is important or controversial. For instance, many plenaries were largely devoted to COVID in one form or another.

Allegations about the agenda

- H. Inequitably used her power to manage the Senate agenda by silencing one specific group of students with lived experiences of discrimination, harassment and exclusion based on their membership in a particular protected class, denying them the opportunity to share their experiences when the Task Force on Antisemitism presented its second report and explicitly asked that students join their presentation. Footnote 13. Elisha Baker, Silenced by the University Senate, Columbia Spectator, <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/opinion/2024/10/01/silenced-by-the-university-senate/>

Response

- This allegation appears to relate to the September 20 Senate plenary.
- The Executive Committee invited the chairs of the Anti-Semitism Task Force to this plenary because they wanted to hear from the authors of its recently issued report.
- The students in question (who were not Senators) were not invited to speak as they did not author the report.

Allegations about the conduct of Senate meetings

- I. Muted the microphone of a tenured Senator during a plenary meeting, in contravention of the bylaws of the Senate and despite admitting that her action “broke the rules,” because she disagreed with the viewpoint expressed by that Senator. Footnote 8.
<https://nypost.com/2024/05/11/us-news/columbia-faculty-senator-warns-campus-had-been-infiltrated-by-terrorist-organizations/> and see more recent article by NYTimes on the topic:
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/09/nyregion/columbia-pro-palestinian-group-hamas.html>.

Response

- The article refers to the May 3, 2024 plenary, which was by Zoom.:
 - During that meeting, the Chair muted Senator Garber for about 25 seconds and then unmuted her. After *another* 55 seconds, during which two other Senators, both of whom were out of order, debated the muting, Senator Garber continued speaking and concluded without further interruption or limitation on her speaking time.
- Robert's Rules of Order 4:31 states in part:
 - "Although the presiding officer should give close attention to each speaker's remarks during debate, he cannot interrupt the person who has the floor so long as that person does not violate any of the assembly's rules and no disorder arises."
 - Before Senator Garber started speaking again, the Chair acknowledged that she had made a mistake.

Allegations about the conduct of Senate meetings

- J. During a presentation by the Task Force on Antisemitism, allowed a single critical Senator more than twice the time to speak as other Senators and almost as much as time as the entire Task Force on Antisemitism combined, using that as a pretext to repeatedly cut off the co-chair of the Task Force while he attempted to answer critical comments and questions by Senators, thereby preventing the ordinary discussion and debate that are consistent with Senate principles, and ignoring a written response to the critical Senator's opinion piece that had already been published in the Spectator, which was not read in response. Footnote 14. Id.

Response

- Neither the University Statutes nor the Senate By-Laws specify how long a Senator may speak during the plenary.
- Senate meetings are governed by Robert's Rules of Order when the bylaws and other authoritative documents are silent on a matter.
- Robert's Rules of Order 43:8 limits members' speeches to 10 minutes in the absence of special circumstances.
- The Senator spoke for approximately 11 minutes.
- No other Senator raised a point of order.
- The Task Force presented their findings for about 22 minutes and responded to questions and summarized for about 8 minutes.

Thank you

Exhibit C-1

§ 2024/10/07 01:25:41 AM A Message from the Student Affairs Committee Leadership

Subject: A Message from the Student Affairs Committee Leadership

Hello everyone,

After the recent campus access changes, we want to ensure that everyone is able to reach out to the Columbia University Senate's Student Affairs Committee team. Please feel free to connect with your school's Senator, who you can find [here](#), or reach out to us directly.

If you experience any issues in the upcoming days regarding campus and building access, please bring these concerns to us so we can provide you with assistance or connect you with the appropriate departments.

Following the President's revision to today's community update and in order to ensure freedom of speech, we want to confirm that the University does not sanction or unsanction protests. Furthermore, the University Senate does not review, approve or sanction events or demonstrations.

Giving notice is key to managing demonstrations and would also include notification if the nature of an event changes. We acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of all to give notification of protests this semester, allowing the University to plan effectively.

(For more information, see [Guidelines to the Rules of University Conduct](#)).

Sincerely,

Student Affairs Committee Chairs

Columbia University Senate

Maria Martinez (CC), Undergraduate Co-Chair

Jaxon Williams-Bellamy (Law), Graduate Co-Chair

Bruce Goumain (GS), Vice Chair

Exhibit C-2 President's Update October 7, 2024

§ October 6, 2024, Update for Our Community: <https://president.columbia.edu/news/update-our-community-10-6-24>

Editor's note:

Revised 10/7/24, 12:23 AM

October 06, 2024

Dear members of the Columbia community:

I am writing to update you on our current situation on campus, our understanding of what different groups are planning given the significance of the week ahead, and our preparations to support you and the Columbia community.

As I expressed in my message last week, we anticipated and have been preparing for a period of uncertainty in the coming days. Over the last few days, and particularly the last 24 hours, there has been rapidly increasing evidence that the Morningside campus is a major focus for protest and other activity. We have several student groups planning for special events and non-violent protests and are working diligently to support those plans with public safety and delegate support. At the same time, we have also learned and had evidence of plans of groups not affiliated with Columbia choosing to come to our Morningside campus for activities that raise concern about the potential for violence. We understand that there has been a call for a walkout as part of a larger protest effort across New York City. This walkout was not notified through the process established by the Guidelines to the Rules of University Conduct. We continue to implement public safety measures to plan for every eventuality. We take those concerns with extreme seriousness.

For More Information

Supporting Our Community

Public Safety Morningside Campus Access

Because of this information and in line with our responsibility for the safety of our campus community, we are taking several immediate steps to ensure that our campus can continue to carry out our academic mission, particularly in the classroom. First, for today and tomorrow (October 6 - 7) and possibly later into the week, we are no longer accepting the QR codes generated when guest access to the Morningside campus is requested and will be working closely with leadership across the schools and programs to determine where guest access is critical for our academic mission. We are also working on revising the automated system so that it can be used again. Anyone who is not a current employee or student is considered a guest for this purpose. We are also working to develop approaches for student groups who were hoping to have meetings with guests on Morningside campus at other locations and to provide support for all our students to see their family and friends at this challenging time.

Exhibit C-2 President's Update October 7, 2024

Second, we will be increasing the public safety presence across campus for the next three days. We are all eager to get back to an environment where that is not needed and appreciate the challenges that widespread public safety presence can create for our community and the wellbeing of individuals within that community. We will also be using traditional approaches to guide people tomorrow to ensure the appropriate safe locations for protest and counter-protest for public safety. We expect that there will be more dividers and barricades than are commonly seen on campus and will have public safety on site to help with guidance in the moment. I am learning more and more that the remarkable benefits of being an open campus within New York City also come with the need to make difficult decisions about when that position can lead to significant safety risks for our Columbia community.

Third, we will be reevaluating building access to balance the importance of access to university resources and the need to ensure the safety of our campus, particularly the risk of violence to any member of our community. Again, we anticipate having reduced building access over the next three days at certain time periods and understand the challenges that will create.

Fourth, because we will need to move public safety personnel to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff, and campus, we will shift to the restricted gate access status for the next three days. Restricted access means that some gates will not be available. Information about gate access is available at the Public Safety Morningside Campus Access page.

We will take the necessary steps to respond to these developments while working to support the student group special events that are currently scheduled, as well as non-violent demonstrations that have been sent through the notification system established under the Rules of University Conduct. Public Safety and delegate support are fully prepared for this purpose. We will continue to provide frequent updates to inform you of any changes to scheduled events or other developments.

I know that this incredible University community can navigate the challenges of the next several days with compassion, understanding and resilience. Throughout all this planning, we are working closely with Senate leadership, faculty, student and decanal leadership, and our partners across the city and the state. None of these are easy decisions and we will continue to ground every decision in our mission and our principles and expand our engagement and dialogue as we move forward.

All my best,

Katrina Armstrong

Interim President

Columbia University in the City of New York