

# University Senate Plenary

April 5, 2019



University Senate

Proposed: April 5, 2019

Adopted: April 5, 2019

University Senate Plenary  
Friday, April 5, 2019 at 1:15 p.m.  
School of Nursing, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Event Space

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Adoption of the minutes of March 8, 2019
3. President's report
4. Executive Committee chair's report
5. New business:
  - a. Resolution to Create or Revise By-Laws for All Columbia Academic Units (Faculty Affairs, Academic Freedom, and Tenure Committee)
  - b. Resolution to Establish an Advanced Certificate Program for Pediatric Acute Care Nurse Practitioners (School of Nursing) (Education Committee)
6. Committee reports:
  - a. Campus Planning and Physical Development: Report on Facilities Maintenance at CUIMC
  - b. Student Affairs Committee: Report on Food Insecurity on Campus
  - c. Student Affairs Committee: Subcommittee for Students with Disabilities Report

### **MEETING OF MARCH 8, 2019**

In President Bollinger's absence, Executive Committee chair Sharyn O'Halloran (Ten., SIPA) called the Senate to order shortly after 1:15 p.m. in 103 Jerome Greene. Sixty-seven of 105 senators were present during the meeting.

**Adoption of the agenda.** The agenda was adopted with two abstentions.

**Adoption of the minutes.** The minutes of February 8 were adopted as proposed.

**President's remarks.** Sen. O'Halloran explained that Provost John Coatsworth would take questions in President Bollinger's absence.

Sen. Andrew Hsu (Stu., GSAS/Pure Sciences) said he didn't understand why the agenda item was called President's Remarks, when most of the time it's the provost who's making the remarks. This lack of clarity was the reason why he had abstained on the motion to adopt the agenda. He suggested calling the agenda item Provost's Remarks.

Sen. Hsu also noted that students had heard that the administration had canceled the recent bargaining session in its current contract negotiations with two unions: graduate student teaching and research assistants, and research officers with post-doctoral and associate research scientist and scholar titles. Sen. Hsu asked why the meeting had been canceled, and how such conflicts could be avoided in the future.

Provost Coatsworth said there had been first meetings with each bargaining group on February 25. But it has been difficult to schedule the next round of meetings. He hoped to meet every week or every other week. He said the administration had not canceled any meeting.

The provost added that there are two web pages, one for each of bargaining unit, that provide useful information on the sessions, as well as other relevant information. He said the University wants to be as transparent as possible. A week after the first bargaining session, an account of it was posted. He hoped to maintain this practice.

Sharyn O'Halloran noted that there would be bargaining sessions in the coming week.

Sen. David Cheng (Stu., SW) asked if it was now possible to affirm a new policy on sexual and romantic relationships between faculty (or staff) and undergraduate students. He noted that the new version of the policy was now posted online.

Sen. O'Halloran said student senators could use their legislators' franking privileges to communicate this news to their constituents in mass emails.

Sen. Cheng asked if there would also be a memo from the Senate informing the student body.

Sen. O'Halloran said she would be happy to work with Sen. Cheng on language for a memo. But she thought students would be more likely to read a communication from their senators.

Sen. Cheng asked if the Senate could have a timeline for the development of the graduate student relationship policy, including an indication of the point in the process when students can get involved in the drafting. He said there have been concerns about how this process went before, and he hoped for an assurance from the Executive Committee chair on this point.

Sen. O'Halloran said she would set up a meeting with General Counsel for the purpose of determining this timeline, and she hoped to have this arranged in about a week.

*Tributes to Dean Peter Awn.* Two senators from the School of General Studies, Lisa Rosen-Metsch (the dean) and Jonathan Criswell (a student) both read [tributes](#) to former GS dean and longtime Columbia professor Peter Awn, who died on February 18.

*Statement of concern from Sen. Julia Hirschberg (Ten., SEAS).* Sen. Hirschberg asked the provost for help with a particular problem. She said the IT Committee, which she co-chairs, met on February 1 met with a group of administrators in the office of Executive Vice President for Finance Anne Sullivan, who are preparing the new travel and business expense report system, or TBERS. Sen. Hirschberg said the present system is mainly on paper, and people have been pushing for years to get it more automated. Guests on February 1 included Paul Reedy, assistant vice president for finance services, and several members of his team, including Kate Sheeran.

Sen. Hirschberg said decisions have already been made about what software and what companies will be involved in the new online booking system. The system will use World Travel and a new expense management system called Concur to replace the old TBERS. Concur is used by many Ivies, but designers of the new system seem to have checked only with upper-level system management people and not with the people who actually work with Concur.

Sen. Hirschberg said she had actually used Concur two weeks ago, to expense two receipts from a meeting at the National Academies. She said this task took her 45 minutes. She said she is a computer scientist, and is not stupid, but this is not a user-friendly system. A friend at NYU and other faculty who have used Concur say it's awful.

Sen. Hirschberg said there will also be a new credit card to go with this system. A knowledgeable person says this will not be the magic wand to eliminate the headache of documentation and submissions, though it will eliminate some paper, and some administrative documents and approvals. If the traveler uses World Travel for bookings and the Concur expense system, and approved vendors like Lyft, United, and Starbucks, then the documentation will be automated. If you use their network, things will go more easily. But if one does one's own booking arrangements, as she does, then the reimbursement subsystem will be more involved. She worried that the experience will get worse, not better.

Sen. Hirschberg said no faculty or administrative staff or students now have input into this process. The IT Committee pushed to get some faculty included so they would actually be able to make some suggestions, and tell the planners how people actually travel here and what kind of expenses they want to submit. A faculty advisory committee has been promised but not yet established, and its role is not clear—will it have any real influence on decision making? There have also been no plans to include the department administrators who often do the work involved in reporting these expenses, and no word about input from students, who also travel on University business.

Sen. Hirschberg said decisions are being made without faculty or student input. She urged senators to talk to their chairs and deans, and urge them to insist on getting this problem solved. She repeated her request for help from the provost.

The provost said an application to be used by hundreds of people will surely be piloted first.

Sen. Hirschberg said that once the system is in place, there will be outreach to get user feedback, but at that point it will be too late to make significant changes.

Provost Coatsworth said he would look into this problem.

He added that the practice of sending provostial letters to faculty reaffirming their reappointment and indicating their new salaries will be discontinued. It's too cumbersome a job for his limited staff, and takes too long to complete. Faculty have also already received notice from their academic units, and don't need a second letter from the provost. So his office is no longer sending out thousands of reappointment letters, and is saving some trees.

Sen. Daniel Savin, chair of the Research Officers Committee, said the description of the new expense reporting system reminded him of Accounting and Reporting at Columbia (ARC), which he said had a disastrous rollout in 2012 and needed several years of additional work to get into usable form, although there are still significant complaints about it. Sen. Savin said he was surprised to hear that the administrators who rolled out ARC may be making the same mistakes here. He appealed to the senior administrators in the room, the provost and Senior Executive Vice President Jerry Rosberg, to put pressure on the appropriate administrators to make sure the system is designed properly before it's rolled out.

Sen. Hirschberg said this was exactly what she had said at the February 1 IT Committee meeting.

Sen. Nachum Sicherman (Ten., Bus.,) asked who was making these decisions. In over 30 years at the University, he still doesn't know who decides what.

Sen. O'Halloran repeated the request to the provost and Mr. Rosberg to get the needed information for Sen. Hirschberg.

Sen. Hirschberg said Paul Reedy and Kate Sheeran had heard from the IT Committee, and would certainly want to hear from others.

Sen. Sicherman asked who has the authority to order this to be done the right away. The provost cannot simply fire the vice presidents involved.

Sen. O'Halloran said that instead of firing people, the provost can work on improving communication about this decision-making process, to make sure there is no repeat of ARC, which was not only difficult and painful for administrators and for faculty, but it was extremely expensive to make the fixes that are now in the system. So a replay is in no one's interest, and she was sure the provost and Mr. Rosberg agreed.

Sen. Sicherman noted that the current phone system does not have a redial feature.

Sen. O'Halloran said the Senate IT Committee, a ready-made faculty advisory group with genuine expertise, is a resource for any administrators who want to make good, strong policy decisions. This well-run committee represents the entire University.

### **Committee reports:**

*Update on the [Board on Town Halls](#) (External Relations and Research Policy Committee).*

Sen. O'Halloran introduced three members of External Relations, which produced the resolution on free expression that was unanimously adopted by the Senate a year ago. One of its provisions called for a board to organize town hall meetings on controversial subjects, an initiative that President Bollinger agreed to support financially.

Sen. Eli Noam (Ten., Bus.), the first speaker, mentioned President Trump's statement of the past few days threatening an executive order to withhold federal funding from universities that fail to uphold the principle of free speech. As he was reading this news story, Sen. Noam realized that Columbia set its house in order last year with the Senate's [Resolution in Support of Freedom of Expression](#). Columbia doesn't need Washington to tell it what to do.

Sen. Noam said senators may be familiar with the University of Chicago principles on freedom of expression in a campus setting. They're fine, Sen. Noam said, but they're basically just a declaration, an exhortation. The Columbia Senate resolution sets a standard, which is basically that what you can say on Broadway you can also say on College Walk. This is a powerful principle, and if applied correctly, it will make Columbia a wonderful example of freedom of expression, even though it is a private university.

To help implement this principle, the resolution called for town halls that could address controversial issues, countering or supplementing the presentations on campus of controversial outside speakers. Sen. Noam said the committee had now established that board. He introduced Sen. James Piacentini (Stu., GSAPP), vice chair of the Student Affairs Committee, whom he credited with a crucial role in securing student support for last year's resolution, and with the very idea of town hall meetings.

Sen. Piacentini added special thanks to members of SAC last year—particularly co-chair Sonya Nanda—who were full partners in the freedom of expression initiative.

Sen. Piacentini then announced the student members of the Board of Town Halls roster.

Sen. Megan Mroczkowski (NT, P&S) then introduced the faculty, administration, and alumni members of the BoTH roster. She looked forward to addressing divisive issues in a principled way, thereby helping the University to achieve its full purpose.

Update on “[Achieving women’s equity in academic medicine: challenging the standards](#)” (*Commission on the Status of Women*). Commission chair Jeanine D’Armiento (Ten., P&S) began by wishing everyone a happy International Women’s Day.

She reported on the Commission’s contribution to a special issue of the British medical journal *The Lancet* called “Advancing Women in Science, Medicine and Global Health,” which addresses inequities in health and leadership around the world. She mentioned her coauthors: Sen. Susan Witte (Ten., SW), Lamont-Doherty administrator Kuheli Dutt, biostatistics professor Melanie Wall, and Senate staff director Geraldine Mc Allister. The issue included articles from China, Yemen, Cameroon, Nepal, and Singapore, and the UN.

For the special issue there was a launch in London, and also one in New York, at Columbia’s Lerner Hall, which was sponsored by the School of Public Health, with Sen. Anne Taylor, vice dean for faculty affairs at P&S, on one of the panels.

Sen. D’Armiento said the Commission’s *Lancet* contribution was closely based on its report to the Senate last year, which focused on the decade from 2007-08 to 2016-17 on the medical campus. During that span, the total share of female faculty increased from 40 percent to 45 percent, but the fraction of tenured women barely moved, starting and ending at around 18 percent, and the overall fraction of tenured or tenure-track women actually declined.

The Commission maintained in its Senate presentation that the persistently low tenured rates were tightly linked to leadership. A year ago 11% of department chairs were women (3/27), and women made up 28% of division chiefs and 13% of center directors. Sen. D’Armiento reported some improvement over the past year, with the appointments of a female chair of Pharmacology (Dr. Cory Abate-Shen) and a new Division Chief in Infectious Diseases in the Dept. of Medicine (Magdalena Sobieszczyk).

Sen. D’Armiento said the Commission would give its final report at the May 3 plenary, addressing the situation of female faculty in other Columbia schools. She thanked her co-authors.

Sen. Witte said it was exciting to see Columbia and the experience of female faculty as part of a worldwide issue on which the Commission has a voice and a position. She urged colleagues to seek out more opportunities of this kind.

Sen. O’Halloran said the Senate does serious work, and should be more active about making its findings public.

Sen. Daniel Savin said that as science editor for the *Astrophysical Journal* and as an organizer of multiple conferences, he finds that when he asks female colleagues to review articles or give invited talks, he finds that there are too few of them, they’re overcommitted, and they’re asked

too often. But women are more numerous now in the less senior academic ranks—postdocs, graduate students—where they are not so overcommitted. He suggested reaching out to these junior members of the academic community in the interest of enhancing diversity.

Sen. Anne Taylor, P&S vice dean for academic affairs, thanked Sens. D'Armiento and Witte for their work, including their contributions to the *Lancet* conference. She said the event was important for the participation not only of academic institutions but also of professional societies. Sen. Taylor mentioned the recent news that the NIH not only has a policy on sexual harassment now, but it has actually discontinued funding for individuals found responsible for sexual harassment. She said this action marks a change in the entire culture of an organization closely linked to academe.

Sen. Taylor also noted that P&S had actually looked at the Commission's data from last year, as well as some other data, and an advisory committee broadly representative of the P&S faculty conducted a review over the past nine months. The committee has presented recommendations to Dean Lee Goldman, and will present them to the uptown Faculty Council and eventually the Senate.

### **Other reports.**

*Annual Report of the Advisory Committee on Socially Responsible Investing (Prof. Merritt B. Fox, chair).* Prof. Fox said ACSRI advises the Trustees on social issues that may affect decisions on how to vote on shareholder proposals, and sometimes on where to invest the University's endowment. The Trustees make all final investment decisions.

The Committee has 12 voting members: four students, four faculty, and four alumni. ACSRI has voting guidelines for proxy resolutions, based on a codification of previous decisions, for certain types of related shareholder issues that are posted on the Committee's website. But there are always close cases that require discussion. In recent years, the most common shareholder resolutions have concerned political spending, gender pay equity and greenhouse gas emissions.

Prof. Fox said the ACSRI from time to time considers divestment proposals that come from the University community through a procedure that has become established. This year there have been no divestment proposals so far through that channel, and he doubted that there would be one before the end of the academic year.

The Trustees have over the years approved several types of divestment—from companies conducting certain activities in the Sudan, and from the tobacco, private prison, and thermal coal industries. Another regular exercise for ACSRI is to go through the list of companies excluded from the portfolio, and to add or subtract a few.

Sen. Andrew Hsu asked what the process is for submitting a divestment proposal.

Prof. Fox said there's a form on the ACSRI web site on which proponents can write a rationale for a divestment proposal. The ACSRI takes it from there.

Sen. Alfredo Dominguez (Stu., CC) asked whether a certain level of student support would be sufficient to get a divestment proposal seriously considered by ACSRI. Is the decision to make a recommendation to the Trustees entirely at the discretion of ACSRI?

Prof. Fox said every proposal submitted through the process gets considered. One of the criteria for divestment is the existence of a broad consensus within the University community on the issue at hand.

Sen. Hsu asked whether vaping is included in the ban on tobacco.

Prof. Fox said ACSRI discussed that question this year, and decided that a company solely involved in vaping did not fit the Trustees' definition of an activity to be banned. The committee also recognized a division of opinion on this question within the public health community. [*In a later correction, the ACSRI said, "Columbia's 2019 Tobacco Divestment/Non-Investment list does include publicly traded vaping companies."*]

Sen. Toqa Badran (Stu., CC) asked how frequently the criteria on which ACSRI bases divestment decisions are reviewed and revised.

Prof. Fox thought those criteria have not been changed in many years. He added that all current members of the ACSRI seem to be comfortable with them.

Sen. O'Halloran said she believed that the Senate established ACSRI through a resolution. There were general guidelines in discussion of the committee's role.

Student Affairs Committee co-chair Zoha Qamar (SEAS undergraduate), referring to Sen. Badran's question, asked whether there is a process for members of the community to recommend adjustments to the list of companies that might be involved in divestment decisions—or to revise the criteria for divestment.

Prof. Fox said that if there were community sentiment for raising these issues—expressed in the Senate or in some other organization—ACSRI would consider them, and would alter criteria if the committee were persuaded of the value of the idea. He understood Sen. O'Halloran to be suggesting that any such revisions would have to come before the Senate.

Sen. O'Halloran thought such a change would also require Trustee approval. There would have to be a broad dialogue to change the process at this point since the procedures for working with the president and the Trustees are well established. She suggested that any serious concerns should be articulated in a concrete way.

Sen. Qamar said she understood.

Prof. Fox said a clear starting point is the strong presumption that Columbia is a socially progressive institution that is organized to do good, to educate and to develop knowledge. These activities require financial resources, and therefore the endowment should be invested in a way that maximizes those resources. But in certain situations that are deeply offensive to nearly all

members of the community, the University sometimes commits what ultimately, in terms of its effects, is a symbolic act, which is to withdraw from a particular industry. Such a decision will probably not seriously damage that industry, but it's a way for the University to make a statement.

Sen. Mike Ford (Stu., GSAS/Humanities) asked how student members of ACSRI are chosen. He said the ACSRI roster now includes three Columbia College students and one CC alumnus.

Prof. Fox said the University Senate Student Affairs Committee nominates members, and then the administration, if there are more nominations than seats, chooses among those, probably with a preference for students in representative roles. He said EVP for Finance Anne Sullivan would be the right person to answer that question. He added that candidates have to understand the workload involved. He said appointees serve two-year terms.

Sen. O'Halloran said staff director Geraldine Mc Allister could explain the details of the selection process.

Sen. Piacentini added the clarification that SAC does not choose the student members of ACSRI. It submits its recommendations, and the decisions are made elsewhere.

**Other issues.** Sen. D'Armiento said she had forgotten during her own presentation to thank the provost's office for all of its collaborative work on the Commission's studies.

**Adjournment.** Sen. O'Halloran adjourned the meeting shortly after 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Mathewson, Senate staff

University Senate

Proposed: April 5, 2019  
Adopted: April 5, 2019  
Approved without dissent but  
1 abstention

RESOLUTION TO CREATE OR REVISE BY-LAWS  
FOR ALL COLUMBIA ACADEMIC UNITS

WHEREAS the academic mission of this great university is mainly pursued away from the core, in 14 schools and dozens of departments, institutes and centers, and

WHEREAS Columbia University is therefore in large measure a dispersed and decentralized academic polity, with major variations among campuses and schools in culture and governance, and

WHEREAS in such complex intellectual terrain it is vital to be able to see all the way across, and to retain the assurance that all of these academic units share a few essential principles, and a core of common practices and procedures in the development and management of academic programs and the appointment and promotion of faculty, and

WHEREAS it is essential that all faculty members of every school, department, division, institute, or center have ready access to a document that lays out these core principles and practices, as well as their own rights and responsibilities, and any compatible variations in rules and procedures that characterize their own academic unit;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the University Senate call on all Columbia academic units, including schools, departments, divisions, centers, and institutes, to produce by-laws if they do not exist, or, if they do, to review and revise them at regular intervals;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the University Senate maintain a collection of these by-laws and related documents in a single online location available to everyone in the Columbia community.

Proponent: Faculty Affairs Committee

University Senate

Proposed: April 5, 2019

Adopted: April 5, 2019

Unanimously approved

**RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH AN ADVANCED CERTIFICATE PROGRAM  
FOR PEDIATRIC ACUTE CARE NURSE PRACTITIONERS (School of Nursing)**

WHEREAS children with complex chronic illnesses are living longer and need practitioners who can care for them in both acute and primary care settings; and

WHEREAS to provide optimal care and meet the needs of children across all settings, the best option is a doctor of nursing practice-pediatric nurse practitioner with a formal education and certification in primary and acute care; and

WHEREAS an increasing number of children's hospitals prefer pediatric nurse practitioners certified in both primary and acute care; and

WHEREAS the certificate will be offered as an option to be taken in conjunction with the curriculum for the doctor of nursing practice pediatric nurse practitioner primary care, or for licensed and certified pediatric nurse practitioners as a stand-alone advanced certificate; and

WHEREAS graduates who earn the advanced certificate will be eligible to sit for the Pediatric Nurse Certification Board examination for acute care pediatric nurse practitioners; and

WHEREAS the program neither replaces nor duplicates any existing Columbia programs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate approve the creation of an Advanced Certificate Program for Pediatric Acute Care Nurse Practitioners.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Education Committee review the program five years after its inauguration.

Proponent:

Education Committee

## **1. Purpose**

We are proposing that an acute care pediatric nurse practitioner (AC- PNP) Advanced Certificate be offered.

Our current pediatric primary care program has a forty-year history of producing safe and well-utilized Pediatric Nurse Practitioners (PNPs). We have the experience and the faculty to be able to meet this needs. The Pediatric Acute Care Advanced Certificate will be offered as an option to be taken in conjunction with the DNP-PNP Primary Care curriculum or for licensed and certified pediatric nurse practitioners (PNPs) as a standalone Advanced Certificate. Graduates who earn the AC-PNP Advanced Certificate will be eligible to sit the Pediatric Nurse Certification Board examination in AC-PNP.

The AC-PNP Advanced Certificate will enhance the existing Doctor of Nursing Practice-Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. It does not replace any programs nor duplicate existing programs. It will be incorporated as one of the offerings at Columbia School of Nursing in the same manner as our other Advanced Certificate programs.

## **2. Need**

An increasing number of children's hospitals including Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Boston's Children's, and the Northwell Health systems prefer PNPs who practice in a pediatric acute care setting to hold this certification. In some cases, the nurse practitioners who work in a pediatric critical care setting are required to hold certification as an AC-PNP. Children with complex chronic illness are living longer and need practitioners who can care for these children in both an acute and primary care settings. To provide optimal care and meet the needs of children across all settings, a DNP-PNP with a formal education and certification in primary and acute care is the best option.

At present, New York State has no acute care PNP programs in the metropolitan area, Mid-Hudson, Northeast region or in the Western regions (<http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/nurse/nurseprogs-masters.htm#metro>). The nearest program accepting candidates is in Pennsylvania. Our state-of-the-art simulation center and multiple facilities that are presently using primary care PNPs to work in acute care setting can support the acute care track. Students who would have this coursework and clinical experience along with a primary care coursework would receive over 1,000 hours of supervised clinical experience as per the Pediatric Nursing Certifications Guidelines.

## **Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee**

### **REPORT ON LABORATORY MAINTENANCE ISSUES AT CUIMC**

#### **A. History**

In the spring of 2018, the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee (the Committee) became aware of problems with the quality of the laboratory space owned or leased by the Columbia University Irving Medical Center. In October of 2018, a detailed report (the Report) on laboratory conditions commissioned by the Research Officers Committee and the Columbia University Postdoctoral Society (CUPS) was presented to the Committee by Dr. Regina Martuscello, a researcher who was previously the University postdoc senator and just promoted to associate research scientist. The Report represented the aggregation of the observations of many CUIMC and Morningside research staff. In some circumstances valuable samples were lost, necessitating a request to the NIH for replacements. As a consequence, valuable time was lost in the conduct of investigators' research programs. In at least one case, the resulting delay necessitated a renegotiation of the terms of the corporate sponsor's contract with CUIMC. In another case a longstanding NIH contract to CUIMC will not be renewed.

The spaces in question are used principally by postdoctoral researchers, professional research officers, and the principal investigators under whom they work. Some of the problems identified in the Report were (1) water leakage into laboratory and office spaces that damaged expensive equipment and interrupted experiments, (2) electric disruptions that resulted in unstable voltage and electrical surges that damaged freezer compressors, incubators, and other highly sensitive equipment, which has caused freezer malfunction and loss of freezer contents, (3) extreme temperature variation in labs and equipment rooms which diminished the accuracy of experimental results, the efficiency of sophisticated equipment and the efficacy of room-temperature reagents, (4) construction-related noise and dust, which disturbed laboratory animals, most notably their ability to reproduce, and (5) the substantial time interval that often passed before the problems were addressed by maintenance staff. While recognizing that the relevant lab spaces are in old buildings (the largest one having been constructed in the late 1920s), the Committee concluded that structural change was needed in the way maintenance

services are organized. In a series of meetings, various Committee members brought these issues to the attention of the responsible individuals, including Dean Lee Goldman; Dr. Michael Shelanski, Director of Research, CUIMC; Amador Centeno, Senior Vice President, Facilities Management, Operations and Planning; Dr. Donna Lynne, Senior VP and Chief Operating Officer of CUIMC and CEO of Columbia Doctors; Brian Karolewski, Director, Institute of Comparative Medicine; and others. All had received copies of the Report noted above. The participation of these individuals encourages us to believe that the issues detailed in the Report were receiving appropriate attention.

On Friday morning, March 15, 2018, Senators Janet Horan, Julie Yoshimachi and John Donaldson met with James Thompsen, Assistant V.P for Facilities Engineering at CUIMC. As we were suggesting the possibility of a pilot experiment whereby the maintenance office would assign personnel to specific buildings for which they would be exclusively responsible, Mr. Thompsen indicated that they had begun to implement such a system in the fall of 2019 (see the attached document). Previously, maintenance staff were not permanently assigned to specific areas or buildings but would be temporarily called to any area of CUIMC where there was an issue. Recently all the buildings at the CUIMC have been divided up into three agglomerations: the East Campus (e.g., the Nursing School), the Super Block (e.g., P&S and the Black Building) and the West Campus (the Hammer Building, etc.). Each area now has its own building-by-building, building-specific, permanent general maintenance and air-handling personnel. Other experts (e.g., painters, locksmiths) are summoned on an as-needed basis.

CUIMC Facilities is also in the process of evaluating a new work order system, Maximo being the trade name, which will resemble the system employed on Morningside. Essentially, CUIMC Facilities is in the process of implementing most of the requested organizational changes noted in the conclusion to the Report, but with the important exception that they do not apply to the New York Brain Bank, over which CUIMC Facilities has little control (see below). Facilities also plans to implement a formal maintenance service evaluation process like one already implemented on Morningside, and the system ultimately adopted is likely to be the same.

Mr. Thompsen was very accommodating and helpful, and the Committee hopes to establish a long-term working relationship with his office. We are considering asking him to become a member, or for his office to appoint a permanent representative. In any case, it will be important to monitor the situation closely going forward to be certain, at the very least, that the evaluation process is implemented within a reasonable period. The following issues remain for the Committee to decide:

1. Is the revised organizational structure being implemented sufficient to close this question?
2. If not, what should be the next steps?

3. Dr. Martuscello and her CUPS colleagues put a lot of work into their Report and this should be recognized by the Senate. How, then, might the original concerns presented therein be best tracked?
4. The Committee realizes that all the lab maintenance issues are not likely to be resolved overnight in buildings that are approaching 100 years of age, or by a reorganization of existing personnel only. Is there some way the Committee can constructively be involved in monitoring the situation to assess the degree of improvement? Should we ask Mr. Thompsen's office for regular reports?

The Committee hopes that its initial focus on maintenance issues and our championing of the Report helped to persuade the CUIMC leadership to recognize that there are real problems affecting many researchers in various ways at the CUIMC, and to begin to address them in the way they have. The Committee is gratified by what has been accomplished thus far, and especially thanks Mr. Centeno and Mr. Thompsen for their support and participation.

#### **B. A Special Problem: The New York Brain Bank**

The Report detailed specific problems at the New York Brain Bank. This facility receives the brains of individuals with specific neurological disease profiles and makes tissue samples available to scientists conducting neurological research, both at CUIMC and at other universities. We understand, though this has not been verified, that it is administered by CU, but that it resides in space owned by New York Presbyterian Hospital. Apparently, this arrangement of "dual responsibility" has led to confusion and neglect of the space housing the Brain Bank itself, and its mechanical and electrical systems.

In the March 15 discussions, the issue of the Brain Bank and the conflicting responsibilities there came up as well. Mr. Thompsen was not fully informed as to who had responsibility, ownership, etc., of the Brain Bank and he did not regard himself as having any authority over it. In the past, questions extended to maintenance staff of New York Presbyterian (in which the Bank is housed) by his office have been ignored. He opined that since issues involving the Brain Bank were not immediately pertinent to patient care, the Hospital was unlikely to give them high priority. He suggested that we contact Maria Delgado, Executive Director of Space Planning, CUIMC, to uncover the precise terms of the master lease that governs the Brain Bank, and the cost structure. The Committee hopes eventually to acquire a full listing of all spaces utilized by CUIMC personnel but housed in New York Presbyterian space. Julie Yoshimachi accepted responsibility to contact Maria Delgado, and to set up an appointment. Both John Donaldson and Janet Horan came away feeling that the University is open to solving this problem even if it means the University must accept the added costs. The Committee believes that Mr. Thompsen will be an easy person with whom to work and that gentle persistence on

the Committee's part, while working through his office, will be enough to get the Brain Bank issues permanently resolved (eventually). But, the Committee will need to be patient and persistent! Presently, it does not even know how the Brain Bank is funded, but it is known that individual research groups at CUIMC have NIH-sponsored contracts to bank brains of various patients with neurological diseases at the New York Brain Bank. Only recently did Dr. Martuscello show us its location in the sub-basement of Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital.

In preparation for our interview with Maria Delgado, and in response to her specific request for precise questions, Janet Horan, Julie Yoshimachi and John Donaldson met on Friday 22 March. Although some questions may best be directed to the Brain Bank director, Dr. John Paul Vonsattel, and some to Dr. Martuscello, who first brought the problems in the Brain Bank to the Committee's attention, we decided to pose the following questions to get the discussion moving:

1. Who has the ultimate supervisory role for the New York Brain Bank? Does it have an active board of directors?
2. Who owns the space, who owns the equipment in it, and what is the Brain Bank's legal status?
3. Who is responsible for maintenance of the space and the equipment therein; most especially the electrical service, air handling and machine (freezer) monitoring? Is it NYP or CUIMC? In practice how is this work load assigned and to whom?
4. Is it associated in some formal way with the New York Psychiatric Institute?
5. How is it financed? Are indirect costs from CU research grants used in part to defray the Brain Bank's operating expenses? Is it largely funded by NIH?
6. Can control of the space, whatever the word "control" means in practice, come under the exclusive authority of CU, and at what cost to CU?

While these issues are distant from their final resolution, thorough answers to the questions above will at least allow the Committee to move forward in its investigations, and perhaps eventually to propose changes to the Brain Bank's operating and governance structure. We view this as a collaborative effort with all concerned.

John Donaldson, Chair

Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee

<b>Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee 2018-2019</b>				
Ten.	David R. Bickers		P&S	Sen.
Ten.	John B. Donaldson	Chair	BUS	Sen.
Ten.	Andreas Hielscher		SEAS	Sen.
Ten.	Mary Munding		NURS	Sen.
Ten.	Andrew Marks		P&S	Sen.
Nonten.	Patrice Derrington	Vice Chair	GSAPP	Sen.
Nonten.	Ellen Morris		Barnard	Sen.
Stu.	James Piacentini		GSAPP	Sen.
Stu.	Danielle Resheff		CC	Sen.
Stu.	Julie Yoshimachi		NURS	Sen.
Libraries	Aline Locascio		Libraries	Nonsen.
Admin. Staff	Paula Goodman		Administrative Staff – Morningside	Sen.
Research Officers	Stefaan Van Liefferinge		Research Officers - Professional	Sen.
Admin.	Janet Horan		Adm.	Nonsen.
Admin.	James Wang		Adm.	Nonsen.
Alum.	Julia Lewis		Alum.	Nonsen.



**Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC) and  
New York Presbyterian (NYP) Facilities**

**Senate Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee**  
Sen. John Donaldson, chair  
Sen. Julie Yoshimachi

**Senate Research Officers Committee and Columbia University Postdoctoral Society**  
Regina T. Martuscello, Ph.D., postdoc senator 2017-2019

## **CUIMC Laboratory Maintenance**

### **Report of the Campus Planning and Physical Development Committee**

#### **Outline**

- A. History
- B. Committee's Involvement
- C. Facilities Issues (Dr. Martuscello)
- D. Governance Issues: CUIMC, NYP and the  
NY Brain Bank (Sen. Julie Yoshimachi,  
P&S)
- E. Progress: Organizational Changes

## C. Facilities Issues

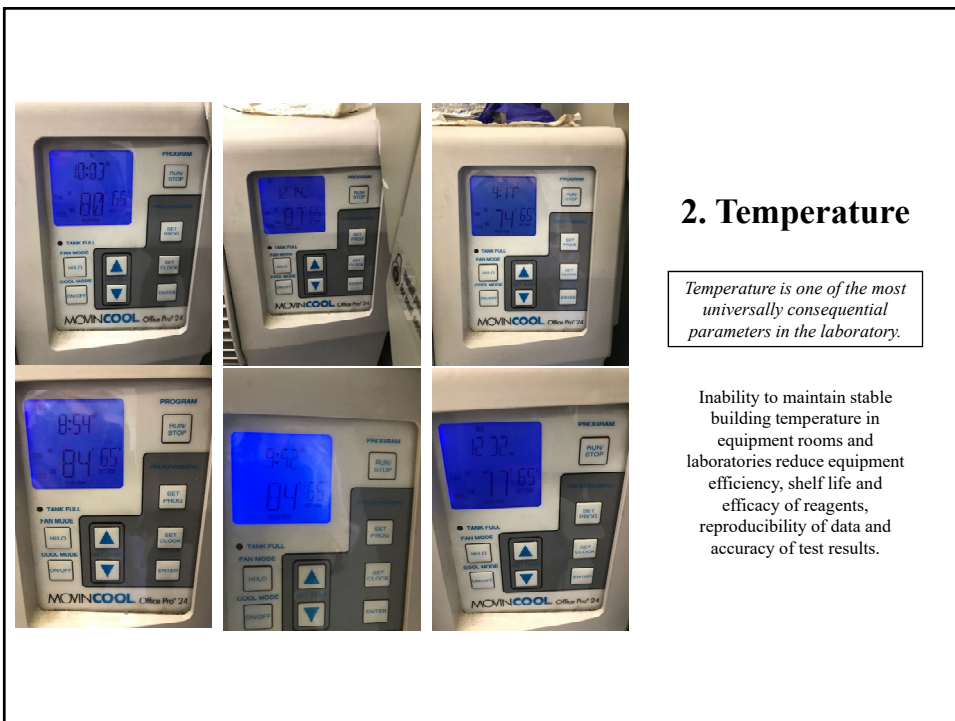
### 1. Damaging Effects of Water Leaks and Flooding



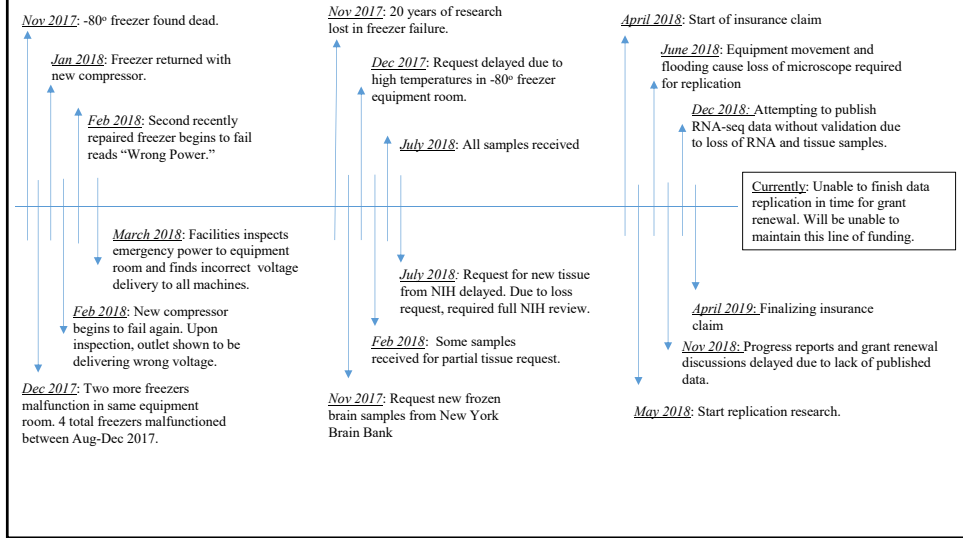
### 2. Temperature

*Temperature is one of the most universally consequential parameters in the laboratory.*

Inability to maintain stable building temperature in equipment rooms and laboratories reduce equipment efficiency, shelf life and efficacy of reagents, reproducibility of data and accuracy of test results.



### 3. Timeline of Facilities Affecting Scientific Research



### 4. Electrical Disruptions, Surges and Shutoffs

Required maintenance of the electrical system results in emergency backup power being disrupted and shut off.

- During this time all machines on backup power are turned off for 30-60 minutes at the beginning and end of maintenance.
  - This happens usually in the evenings and weekends, results in midnight runs to the lab for equipment checking.
  - People have found essential equipment unplugged or off after these events.
- Alterations in the electrical system will coincide with electrical surges.

Exploded plug from compressor malfunction due to power error.

## 5. Facilities Affecting Scientific Research

### Noise and Animal Research

- Experiments utilizing animal models can take months to years for completion, and projects requiring knockout mice or specialized breeding can take years to decades.
- Rodents, in particular, have a much higher level of decibel and frequency sensitivity than humans.
- When loud noises occur, animal behavior can become erratic and result in removal from the study.
  - EX: Rodents will stop eating, overeat, lose fur, reduce breeding, eat their litters, fight and even die from excessive noise levels.
- **Individuals have stated a loss of grant funding and industry-sponsored projects** due to losses in animal cohorts from excessive noise, construction during evening hours and maintenance in the facility.

### NYP vs. CUMIC

- Shared spaces between NYP and Columbia cause gaps in responsibility for facilities maintenance.
- New York Brain Bank
  - Housed in the sub-basement of NYP. Utilized by Columbia researchers and NYP.
  - Funded by:
    - Columbia
    - NIH-sponsored grants
    - NYP
- “Low Priority”
  - Priority of problems puts patients first, followed by immediate emergencies (i.e., flooding).
  - Softer issues such as temperature regulation are often pushed aside as lower priority.

## D. Topics to Evaluate Further Governance Issues: Issues of Joint Ownership : NYP, CUIMC and the NY Brain Bank



- Facilities concerns related to:
  - CUIMC vs. NYP space
  - Ownership of equipment
  - Communications
- Damage related to Facilities concerns:
  - Loss of samples
  - Loss of contracts and grants
  - Cost acquired due to damages
  - Loss of productive time
- CUIMC vs. NYP

## 1. CUIMC vs. NYP Buildings

Columbia Owned	NYP Owned	Other
154 Haven	Allen Hospital	DOH Building – NYC
390 Ft. Washington Avenue	CHoNY Center	New York State Psychiatric Institute- NYS
51 Audubon	CHoNY North	21 Audubon – Private Landlord
83 Haven	CHoNY Tower	Edge Hotel – Private Landlord
Alan Rosenfield Building	Eye Institute	Koib Building - NYS
Alianza	Eye Institute Annex	
Bard Hall	Harkness Pavilion	
William Black Building	Herbert Irving Pavilion	
Georgian Building	Milstein Hospital Building	
Hammer HSC	Neurological Institute	
ICRC Building	Presbyterian Building (Floors 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 1/2 of: 15, 16)	
Lasker	Service Building	
Nursing Building	Vanderbilt Clinic *Tenants in Common Lease	
Presbyterian Building (Floors 7, 8, 9, 1/2 of: 15, 17, 18, 19, 20)		
Russ Berrie Pavilion		
Tower I		
Tower II		
Tower III		
Vagelos MedEd Bldg		
VP&S Building		
Vanderbilt Clinic *Tenants in Common Lease		


## 2. Next Steps

- In-depth evaluation of Columbia-affiliated members' evaluation of experience with CUIMC and NYP facilities
- In-depth evaluation of equipment ownership, rent payments, etc., in each space
- Working with CUIMC Facilities to facilitate a meeting with NYP
- Further evaluation of overall NYP Facilities process



## E. Progress: Organizational Changes Changes Already Happening within CUIMC Facilities

1. Previous allocation of facilities personnel
2. Present allocation of facilities personnel

 COLUMBIA <small>COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IRVING MEDICAL CENTER</small>	<b>Commercial Model 2019</b>	Facilities Engineering
<b>COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IRVING MEDICAL CENTER</b>		
<b>EAST CAMPUS</b>	<b>SUPER BLOCK</b>	<b>WEST CAMPUS</b>
21 Audubon Administration 51 Audubon Administration Alianza Dominica Building The Edge Hotel Irving Cancer Research Center Mary Woodward Lasker Building Russ Berrie Medical Science Pavilion	William Black Building New York City Department of Health Edward S. Harkness Eye Institute Annex Georgian Administration & Residence New York Presbyterian Hospital Vanderbilt Clinic Vagelos Physicians & Surgeons	Allan Rosenberg Building Hammer Health Sciences Center The Neurological Institute of New York (MRI) Roy & Diana Vagelos Education Center

# Student Affairs Committee

## Food Insecurity on Campus



April 5, 2019



### Literature Review

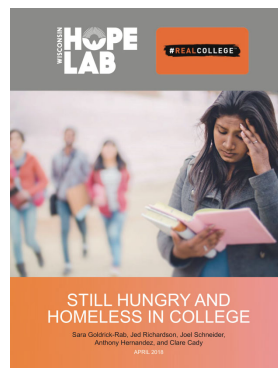


**The Struggle Is Real: A Systematic Review  
of Food Insecurity on Postsecondary  
Education Campuses**

#### **WHEN STUDENTS ARE HUNGRY**

An Examination of Food Insecurity in Higher Education

Cheryl Sternman Rule, Ed.M., Bon Appétit Management Company  
Anthony Abraham Jack, Ph.D., Harvard University



## Defining Food Insecurity

The USDA offers two categories of food insecurity:

- **Low food security**, also known as *Food insecurity without hunger*. Individuals in this category report “reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet” but with “little or no indication of reduced food intake.”
- **Very low food security**, also known as *Food insecurity with hunger*. Individuals in this category report “multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.”

**In sum:** Students who are food insecure have *inconsistent* or *intermittent* access to meals marked by periods of uncertainty. When food is available, it may not be *affordable*, *nutritionally adequate*, or *safe to eat*. Food insecurity is a physiological, economic, and social condition—“a significant public health concern.”

Stemman Rule, C., & Abraham Jack, A. (2018). *When Students Are Hungry: An Examination of Food Insecurity in Higher Education*. Bon Appétit and Harvard University. Retrieved from <http://www.bamco.com/timeline/food-insecurity-report/>

## Scope of the Problem

Largest national survey assessing basic needs security of university students. Sample is of 43,000 students at 66 institutions in 20 states and D.C. This includes over 20,000 students at 35 4-year colleges and universities, as well as students at community colleges.

Findings:

- 36% of university students were food insecure in the 30 days preceding the survey.

Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., Schneider, J., Hernandez, A., & Cady, C. (2018). *Still hungry and homeless in college*. University of Wisconsin–Madison. Retrieved from <https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Wisconsin-HOPE-Lab-Still-Hungry-and-Homeless.pdf>

## Scope: Narrowing In (cont.)

Groups that tend to be disproportionately food insecure at colleges and universities include students of color, first-generation students, older students, students who work longer hours at their jobs, students from the foster care system, veterans, and students who identify as LGBTQ.

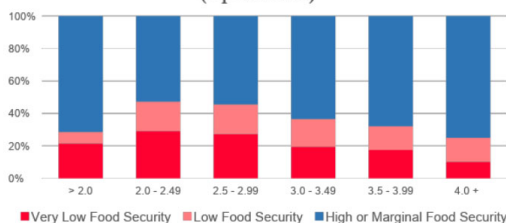
Food insecurity also exists at wealthy, well-funded, elite institutions—especially for students from low-income backgrounds, emancipated students, and international students.

Sternman Rule, C., & Abraham Jack, A. (2018). *When Students Are Hungry: An Examination of Food Insecurity in Higher Education*. Bon Appétit and Harvard University. Retrieved

## Food Insecurity at Columbia

## FOOD INSECURITY

Food Security by Cumulative GPA Group  
(3-point scale)



Program Type	Very Low Food Security	Low Food Security	High or Marginal Food Security
2.0 - 2.49	16 (29%)	10 (18%)	29 (53%)
2.5 - 2.99	51 (27%)	34 (18%)	102 (55%)
3.0 - 3.49	83 (19%)	73 (17%)	271 (63%)
3.5 - 3.99	101 (17%)	82 (15%)	394 (68%)
4.0 +	9 (10%)	13 (15%)	66 (75%)
	260 (19%)	215 (16%)	862 (65%)

 COLUMBIA | GS  
School of General Studies



 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## Food Pantry - Historical Overview

Since its founding, the Food Pantry at Columbia has:

- Received the Virginia Xanthos Awards from Columbia Community Service
- Partnered with the New York City Food Bank
- Partnered with Corbin Hills Food Project
- Surpassed 1,500 disbursements to 20 of the 21 schools at Columbia

In addition, several leading universities have reached out to the Food Pantry at Columbia to learn how to replicate our success.

 COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## The Food Pantry today

Today, the Food Pantry at Columbia:

- Is the only student-run and fully operational food pantry in any of the eight Ivy League institutions
- Is contributing to research pertaining to food insecurity
- Has grown from two volunteers to 145 volunteers, seven committees, and an eight-person Executive Board
- Is the focal point at Columbia in addressing issues pertaining to food insecurity. *Because of the Food Pantry, Columbia is leading the way in addressing the issue of food insecurity.*

## Obstacles

Unfortunately, the Food Pantry at Columbia has continued to face obstacles to its continued success:

- Campus awareness
- Space
- Financial security and stability

## Progress Addressing Obstacles

Recently, progress had been made in regard to several of these issues, in large part thanks to work done in Senate committees:

- Progress towards a satellite location at CUIMC
- Greater Senate awareness
- Successful first-annual Hunger Awareness Week, in partnership with the First Generation Low Income Partnership (FLIP)

However, more work is needed to ensure the Food Pantry's continued success!

## The Columbia Community

The GS Senator recently released a questionnaire asking GS students questions pertaining to food insecurity. Of 266 students who answered "yes" to 1 or more questions indicating food insecurity, 205 had not used the Food Pantry. Of those 205, 76 students, or almost 40%, did not even know about the Food Pantry. Numbers at other colleges are likely even more dire.

- Students are largely navigating this public health concern alone, by the efforts of a dedicated group of volunteer students.
- The primary response to food insecurity is continued growth in financial aid for students. However, the food pantry provides an immediate way to address an immediate concern, and it needs broader support.

## What more can be done?

- With constant fluctuations in the student body due to incoming and outgoing students, too many students with food insecurity are unaware of the Food Pantry and other resources available to them.
- *An email, once per semester, from the Office of the Provost or the Office of University Life would ensure all students, in all colleges across all Columbia campuses are aware of the Food Pantry and other food insecurity resources.*
- Support for the Food Pantry could also be financial in nature; even an allocation of \$5,000 or \$10,000 per year would make a large impact.

## Institutionalization

Institutionalizing the Food Pantry at Columbia via administrative, financial, or other means of support from the broader Columbia community will ensure Columbia University continues to lead the Ivy League (and higher-ed in general) in addressing food insecurity on college and university campuses.

## Next Steps

The Student Affairs Committee and the Food Pantry at Columbia will continue to seek out means of ensuring that food insecurity is understood and addressed at Columbia. Both bodies welcome faculty or administrators who are interested in participating in these efforts.

Interested parties can contact:

- Sen. Jonathan Criswell, School of General Studies
  - [jdc2216@columbia.edu](mailto:jdc2216@columbia.edu)
- Michael Higgins, Co-founder and Chair, the Food Pantry at Columbia
  - [mh3219@columbia.edu](mailto:mh3219@columbia.edu)
- To learn more about the Food Pantry at Columbia visit:  
<https://thefoodpantry.studentgroups.columbia.edu>

## APPENDIX

**Table 2**  
**Food Insecurity Among Undergraduates**

	Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4
<b>Food Security Level</b>				
High Security (score = 0) <sup>a</sup>	32.62	47.90	39.42	43.17
Marginal Security (score = 1)	11.56	12.88	10.03	47.23
Low Security (score = 2–4)	22.81	19.41	23.63	
Very Low Security (score = 5–6)	33.01	19.81	26.91	9.60
<b>Items</b>				
1. The food that I bought just did not last and I did not have money to get more.	51.53	38.44	41.91	20.04
2. I could not afford to eat balanced meals.	59.50	43.23	46.97	NA
3. Any days: Did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there was not enough money for food?	46.01	27.21	41.51	20.90
4. 3+ days/months: <sup>b</sup> Did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there was not enough money for food?	31.79	21.94	19.58	NA
5. Did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there was not enough money for food?	43.31	25.78	37.21	20.72
6. Were you ever hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money for food?	36.37	21.59	30.35	NA
<i>N</i>	26,067	3,921	1,007	1,427

Bruening, M., Argo, K., Payne-Sturges, D., & Laska, M. N. (2017). The Struggle Is Real: A Systematic Review of Food Insecurity on Postsecondary Education Campuses. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 117(11), 1767–1791. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2017.05.022>

**Table 4**  
**Variation in Food and Housing Security Status by Institutional Sector**

	Food Security Status					Housing Security Status					
	High Security	Marginal Security	Low Security	Very Low Security	$\chi^2$	<i>N</i>	Housing Insecure	$\chi^2$	Homeless	$\chi^2$	<i>N</i>
Study 3 (all)	39.42	10.03	23.63	26.91		1,007	15.07		2.30		1,002
Institutional Sector					*			***		**	
2-Year College	27.73	8.40	26.05	37.82		119	48.31		5.93		118
4-Year College	40.99	10.25	23.31	25.45		888	10.63		1.81		884
Study 4 (all)	43.17	NA	47.23	9.60		1,427	23.96		NA	NA	1,436
Institutional Sector								***			
2-Year College	45.49	NA	43.38	11.13		521	32.31		NA	NA	523
4-Year College	41.83	NA	49.45	8.72		906	19.17		NA	NA	913

Bruening, M., Argo, K., Payne-Sturges, D., & Laska, M. N. (2017). The Struggle Is Real: A Systematic Review of Food Insecurity on Postsecondary Education Campuses. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 117(11), 1767–1791. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jand.2017.05.022>

## Historical Overview:

“Columbia University in New York, N.Y., opened its first food pantry during finals week in 2016. It was the first Ivy League to do so...after encountering initial resistance, the Food Pantry has since relocated to a more permanent spot three times as large. This resource, as well as others like a swipe share program and an anonymous digital platform where students could see where they could get free food, began with students.”

Stemman Rule, C., & Abraham Jack, A. (2018). *When Students Are Hungry: An Examination of Food Insecurity in Higher Education*. Bon Appétit and Harvard University. Retrieved from <http://www.bamco.com/timeline/food-insecurity-report/>

# **Report of the Student Affairs Committee's**

## **Subcommittee for Students with Disabilities**

**April 5, 2019**

### **Introduction**

For three years the Subcommittee for Students with Disabilities (SSD) has been working to improve the quality of life for students with disabilities at Columbia. The Student Affairs Committee (SAC) created SSD in spring of 2016 in response to the Quality of Life (QoL) survey results from spring of 2015, which revealed that students who identified as disabled were less satisfied with their Columbia experience than any other group. SAC is happy to report that the most recent QoL survey indicates an overall increase in satisfaction among students with disabilities. Under SAC leadership, SSD has been instrumental in a number of large-scale improvements and changes at Columbia regarding disabilities services and accessibility on campus. After conducting extensive research into departments for disability services at peer institutions, an increase in staff in the Office of Disability Services (ODS) was one of the major changes that SSD helped initiate. However, there continue to be obstacles that students with disabilities face, obstacles that SSD has continued to learn about and address this year.

### **Updates - Ongoing Projects**

In Spring 2018, SSD issued a report that explained the subcommittee's most recent findings and provided recommendations for follow-on action. In summary of those findings SSD recommended the following:

1. An accessible online portal where registered students could make ODS accommodation requests.
2. Permanent academic testing spaces that would better accommodate the growing number of proctored exams, which currently ranges from 100-250 per day.

Regarding the online portal, ODS has recently made many necessary forms (the Disability Registration Form, Testing Accommodation Request Forms, etc.) available online in PDF format, and these forms, once completed, can be emailed to ODS. These changes have helped to create a more streamlined process. Although Columbia does not yet have an online portal, SSD continues to work with Columbia Health on the development and launching of accessible online tools to support students with disabilities, and new resources are expected in the coming academic year.

Regarding the second recommendation made, permanent testing space, SSD is happy to be able to report that additional dedicated testing space has been secured in Chandler and, soon, in Havemeyer. These additional spaces will increase the total available testing spaces by a capacity of 93 students. Furthermore, the facility will also have a testing center and on-site staff. This additional dedicated testing

spaces will help to significantly reduce the person-hours ODS requires to facilitate testing accommodations, and represent significant progress on this important issue.

### **Students with Disabilities Town Hall**

On April 3, SAC partnered with the General Studies Student Council to hold a town hall event for students with disabilities and allies, the second town hall of its kind. At the town hall, students discussed obstacles, shared concerns, and provided feedback that will be extremely valuable for the Subcommittee for Students with Disabilities to use moving forward.

### **Disability Representation in Education**

In recognition of the fact that representation in education is important, and having heard complaints from students about a lack of representation of disability topics in education, in January 2019, SSD searched the Columbia Course Directory of Classes to identify courses available that are about disability or that include disability topics. Unfortunately, the results were sparse. The following are search results from the January registration period. The results pertain to keyword searches of different identity subjects, and the number listed is the number of search results found with that keyword. (Some categories, such as race and ethnicity, may overlap).

- Ethnicity - 53
- Sexuality - 247
- Race - 291
- Gender - 409
- Religion - 449
- **Disability - 11**

As is apparent, whereas other keywords obtained dozens, if not hundreds, of search results, “disability” resulted in less than a dozen findings. Of those finding, only 7 classes were available to undergraduates; of those 7, only one appeared to be an introductory course; and regarding that one class, disability issues were only one part within a broad spectrum of public health issues the course discussed. SSD believes that these are not satisfactory findings. **According to census data, the disabled community comprises approximately 19 percent of the U.S. population, or over 56 million people; approximately half of those reported that their disability is “severe” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).** This community has its own vast complexity, long history, unique obstacles, and sense of identity. Furthermore, issues pertaining to persons with disabilities often intersect with other identities in ways that are complex and that deserve to be understood. And yet these issues are simply not sufficiently represented within Columbia’s course offerings, particularly in undergraduate education.

SSD recognizes that an increase of representation of disability topics in education - whether that be in discussions of history, public health, law, economics, or many other topics - would be beneficial to

students with disabilities as well as to the broader community. We will continue to work to identify ways to accomplish this, including by working with administrators to have American Sign Language provided as a course offering to more students (an initiative we have been working on this year).

## **Conclusion**

Students with disabilities are a too-often overlooked population, and their obstacles are many. The recent town hall event hosted by SAC and the GSSC helped to give a clearer picture of concerns that students from across Columbia face, which will help to inform work on SSD. Furthermore, SSD will provide recommendations for adjustments to questions on the next SAC Quality of Life Survey that will help to further identify and quantify students' concerns. Addressing the issues that Columbia's students with disabilities face - whether they have to do with physical accessibility, campus community, representation, or otherwise - is an ongoing process, and will continue to be a priority for the SAC Subcommittee for Students with Disabilities.

Work Cited: U.S. Census Bureau Public Information Office. "Nearly 1 in 5 People Have a Disability in the U.S., Census Bureau Reports - Miscellaneous - Newsroom - U.S. Census Bureau." *Census.gov*, United States Census Bureau, 25 July 2012, [www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/miscellaneous/cb12-134.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/miscellaneous/cb12-134.html).