

York College
94-20 Guy R. Brewer. Blvd.
Academic Core AC-3D01 (In-person)
12:15-1:50 pm

Minutes of March 25, 2025

Present

Administration:	Schrader, Brazill, Fellows, Rios, Williams
Faculty:	Alapo, Amaghionyeodiwe, Barley, Birk, Burke, Buxenbaum, Chirico, Baron, Forrester, Dahina, Githuku, Hartman, Henry, Hourung, Lee, McGee, McNeil, Meddeb, Moore, Penn, Radhamohan, Richards, Saad, Sheidlower, Smith-Sanchez, Thompson, Wang
Students:	Agwai, Ambati, Baez, Bishundayal, Daniles, Dorismond, Eghaghe, Fordjour, Gueye, Kargbo, Khamis, Latour, Maharaj, Matthew, Mohan, Molien, Ogueri, Patino, Polack, Richard, Santos, Sarasty, Sinclair, Singh, Sookraj, Toumba, VanVelzen
Guests:	Ayers, Rodriquez, Demsen, Boyle, Francois, McGee, Metallinos, Hsu, Ganb, Salek, Dinsman, Williamson, Holne, Salnave, Haggler, Platzek, Tihui, Duval, Alexandre, Rodgers, Peal, Howell, Eaton, Vega, Levey, Augustin, Lopez, Wright, Jason, Barkler, Jamieson, Beverly-Skinner, Eaton, Ng, Walker, Dahiya, Dahli, Muny, Wong, Fe, Utlen

1. President's Report:

With all that's happening in the world and our country, it is easy to see the glass as half empty. There is understandable worry about our undocumented students and dreamers and students in mixed status households. Faculty and staff are understandably concerned about the impact of Executive orders and non-legally binding "Dear Colleague" letters that may impact their research, teaching, program curricula, and student support resources like the Men's, and Women's Centers and our Lavender graduation. I, too, am concerned as are all the members of the administration, about all these things and more, but I am also clear that we should continue to work to fulfill our mission and attend to the business of teaching, mentoring and supporting our students toward earning their college degrees. There is not a person in this institution who will disagree with me when I say that now more than ever our work is important; and students, it is critical that you remain focused on earning your degree as well. Your success is what helps to fill the glass.

As we prepare for the full launch of our Strategic Plan in the fall, we need all members of the college community to grab a cup and join us at one of three Mission, Vision and Values virtual forums to discuss proposed York Mission, Vision and Values, its process, timeline, and preliminary findings from

the Survey and Digital Engagement conducted this semester. Your input into the guiding principles of our college community is essential.

The first Mission Vision Values: Virtual Town Hall was held for Faculty this morning. Subsequent sessions are noted below, with the last session being open to all members of the college community. Please make every effort to participate in this important work.

Mission Vision Values: Virtual Town Hall for **Students**, April 1 from 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tJf6eWVtW>

Mission Vision Values: Virtual Town Hall for **Staff**, April 2 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tJf6eWVtW>

Mission Vision Values: Virtual Town Hall for **All**, April 3 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

- <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tJf6eWVtW>

Enrollment

As I shared previously, fall 2024 freshmen enrollment increased 12% over fall 2023; transfer student enrollment increased 9% over fall 2023 and was the highest it has been since 2021; and this past fall for the first time in 5 years. Overall enrollment demonstrated a 1% increase.

This past spring first time freshmen enrollment increased 17% over fall 2024. While we did meet our spring targets, we did not increase our overall enrollment but instead experienced a decrease of 1%. Summer and fall 2025 registration opened approximately two weeks ago. As of today, there are 553 continuing students registered for the summer, which represents 31% increase over this time last year. With regards to fall 2025, 686 students have already enrolled for the fall, compared to 627 this time last year.

There are approximately 3200 students in the continuing student pool. With registration open, and midterms in the rearview mirror, we have an opportunity prior to the final exam season and summer to bring more students out of the pool, and into our registered student headcount.

Students:

Connect with your advisor, get advised and get registered. I know in many cases you are waiting for your final grades, but there is nothing precluding you from getting advised, and putting classes in the shopping cart you anticipate you will need. Once your grades are in, you can 'check out' and get registered. Early registration also gives you a sense of how you will finance your education in the coming year. (Click Here for important Financial Aid-related dates <https://www.york.cuny.edu/financial-aid>). And for students who aren't waiting on grades, see your advisor and register for classes early.

Please know we are continuing to develop a plan for improving student advisement at the college and I look forward to seeing the fruits of that labor soon.

Governance

Thank you to the Committee on Campus Environment and Facilities for providing an update on the Committee's accomplishments and goals for the remainder of the academic year; and to the Curriculum Committee for a cogent presentation, which included course changes, revised major designs, new courses and new certificate program in Teacher Education for teachers who already maintain initial or professional certification. I trust that by the end of the semester all the committees will have the opportunity to provide an update to the Senate on their progress toward meeting their goals prior to the end of the semester.

I encourage all of you to come out to Senate meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of the month to hear committee reports as well as reports from the Student and Faculty Caucuses. We are in the process of collecting pertinent documents as well as committee policies/procedures so that this information/resources can be included on the York College Senate website.

FY 26 Budget Development

Per our revised Budget Development Timeline, budget templates have been distributed to VPA and they will meet with respective departments to discuss budgets by April 18. Budget requests will then be submitted to the Budget Office by 4/21 and shared with the Resource and P&B Committees for review and recommendations along with consultation with the SGA which should be completed by 5/20.

Unfortunately, at February's Senate meeting we ran out of time and VP Rios did not have an opportunity to present his Budget Report. To ensure that he was able to share his report and address questions that may arise, he held a virtual meeting where he presented and discussed the budget, as well as the newly enhanced budget process. The session was well attended (over 60 members of the college community) and it was well received.

Assessment Matters

I was excited to learn that there was a good turnout of the college community at OIESP's Let's Talk Data inaugural session. It is important that we not only engage in activities that help us to determine impact, efficacy, and learning, but that data is shared and discussed. This cycle of assessment moves us from not just producing or even analyzing data but to use data to inform improvement or validate practices.

Just as assessment is not relegated to classrooms alone, but is actively present in offices across the college, Middle States is not an administrative initiative, it is an institution-wide responsibility. I am grateful for the efforts of our Self Study Steering Committee in leading this work as we prepare for our 2027 visit. But please know that the true work of ensuring the educational quality at York, is all of our – faculty, staff, and students-responsibility. <https://www.york.cuny.edu/institutional-effectiveness/accreditation/self-study>.

Speaking about educational quality....

In March we were notified that the CSWE Reaffirmed the accreditation of our Master of Social Work Program! This makes us Queens County's first accredited graduate social work program under the new standards. The program has experienced phenomenal growth (154% increase in enrollment between 2018 and 2024) and also offers a part-time cohort option to provide maximum flexibility for those who desire to transform lives.

Last month we were also excited to learn that the January 2025 graduates in the Physician Assistant (PA) program achieved a 100 percent first-time pass rate on their national board exam (PANCE). The PANCE is a rigorous assessment that evaluates the clinical knowledge, clinical reasoning,

and other medical skills and professional behaviors deemed necessary for entry-level practice as a PA. The program is proud to achieve a 100 percent pass rate twice in the past four years.

Our cup runneth over with good news

I am excited to share...

- Our JFK Redevelopment Program partnership is pouring into our cup. We await final word on our new scholarship for aviation master's students, full rides and internship opportunities included.
- After 2 weeks of having put up our "Rent Me" sign on our athletic field, we have about 7 inquiries—let's get those additional resources to support academic and other initiatives.
- We are getting ready to roll out – no pun intended-- our MTA bus ads this month.
- The Cafeteria is taking shape, but before we cut the ribbon there, will be a ribbon cutting for our graduate student lounge which is ready and open for our graduate students.
- Thanks to your generous donations and time, we assembled over 450 bags of hygiene and toiletries products as part of the Donation Drive for Wellness & Women's Health Kits. Bags are now available for students in the Women's Center.
- Congratulations Travis Hilton, CUNY Office Assistant for going above and beyond, for your collegiality, for your mentorship of college assistants, and for your unsurpassed institutional knowledge and contributions to the Library!
- I am also excited to share that I am excited to share that York College leads CUNY as the first campus to implement the Spring Perspectives pilot training this semester.

York College began Perspectives with 32 student leaders from the Student Government Association on March 25th. The training which ends on April 10th, will be virtual, and our students are assigned into 8 groups of 4 to have peer-to-peer conversations. A special thank you to Dr. Walton for her leadership in helping to provide opportunities for students to learn how improve their professional communication skills.

In April get ready for the:

- Spring Faculty Research Symposium: April 10, 2025
- Spergel Lecture Series: April 21, 2025
- Administrative Professional Day: April 23, 2025
- Denim Day: April 28, 2025, **Denim Day** is recognized on a Wednesday in April in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month. *The campaign began after a ruling by the Italian Supreme Court to overturn a rape conviction because the justices felt that since the victim was wearing tight jeans she must have helped the person who raped her remove them, thereby implying consent. Following the reversal, the women in the Italian Parliament came to work wearing jeans in solidarity with the victim.* You are invited to wear denim on that day.

And look towards May for our:

- Employee Years of Service Celebration: May 6, 2025
- Faculty Awards: May 12, 2025 (**The 1st Annual Yemmy Awards (The Yemmy)**, like the Emmys but only better because we are recognizing York's outstanding faculty)
- Dean's List Awards Ceremony for students: May 15, 2025
- Commencement on May 28, 2025

If all things go well at the CUNY Board of Trustees meeting later this month. York will present its first Honorary Degree Recipient at Commencement. Thank you to all those involved for finalizing the process

and bringing it to fruition. The next step is review by the full Board who will render the final decision. Once a decision has been rendered, we will share more information about our recipient.

Currently, we have one person who in addition to other duties, shoulders the responsibility as dean of two schools. As such the decision to appoint interim deans was made in an effort to provide faculty in these schools with dedicated advocacy, faculty and student support. Also before the Board for consideration in April, is the appointment of two interim deans. My understanding is that information regarding their appointment of interim deans was prematurely shared. Please know that only the full Board can render a final decision. If approved, Dr. Brazill as Provost and VP of the division will make a formal announcement to the college.

Operations

Over the past year, we have endeavored to share information about personnel matters, hires, separations, and internal transfers in the Staffing Updates shared regularly with the Office of Human Resource. I trust this information has been helpful in ensuring that the college community is aware of changes in personnel so that we can ensure the most effective operations possible.

I have reviewed the process for event scheduling and am still meeting and talking with various members of the college community so I can develop a firm plan for improving our event scheduling and implementation. I anticipate any changes that will be made will take effect Fall 2025.

Broadly speaking we have processes and systems that rely heavily on the oral tradition as a way of sharing information and processes. As such there is need to improve overall operations, communication protocols, technology use, and review existing and long-standing policies and procedures to ensure they align with our current practices.

Always, I am open to your input and you are free to email me with your thoughts about areas for improvement as well as ideas for moving the college forward.

Finally, even as we enter a new month with new possibilities, may we continue to not only celebrate the achievements of women, but create opportunities for their success to be possible.

2. SGA Leader (Polack)

Good morning, everyone!

Spring is officially here—even if the chill in the air still reminds us that winter isn't quite ready to let go. And while the weather may be hesitant, our momentum is not. Midterms are finally over—well, for most of us—so take a breath and let's welcome this new season of change and progress.

I want to start by celebrating Women's History Month and the incredible women who enrich York College community every day. A special thank you goes to our Public Relations team for their inspiring tribute video, which honors the remarkable contributions of our female leaders, students, and staff. This recognition isn't just for March; it's a reminder to uplift and support one another all year long.

In recent weeks, we've been busy putting our ideas into action. I had the privilege of representing York at SOMOS in Albany alongside the University Student Senate, where we continued our passionate fight for Free MetroCards for CUNY students. Our petition has surged past 5,000 signatures, and elected officials have joined the movement, showing that our voices are truly making a difference. It was heartening to see members of our York family from across

campus, including Renny Matthews representing us in the Model Senate, taking on leadership roles that inspire us all.

Back on campus, our commitment to engaging with the community has been unwavering. From the inspiring Trichotomy Fireside Chat—where Rachel shared her journey in social work and Dr. Selena Rodgers guided the conversation—to the delightful movie days with our senior citizens, every event has reinforced our belief in the power of connection. I may have missed some of these events in person, but the positive energy and feedback I heard speak volumes about our shared commitment to community.

Our efforts extend to practical solutions as well. VP Faith Ibeh has been working tirelessly to reopen the SGA Computer Lab just in time for finals. For many of you, York isn't just a campus—it's the only quiet place to study, away from the distractions of a commuter life. Reopening this space is a step toward ensuring that every student has the environment they need to succeed. And as we continue these conversations, I remain a staunch advocate for extending library hours across CUNY, because we know that sometimes, campus is the only sanctuary for focused work.

We're also investing in our future leaders. This month, our senators will begin participating in the Constructive Dialogue Institute, a CUNY-wide initiative led by Dr. Walton from Student Activities. I went through this training last year, and I can attest to its power in transforming our leadership skills. As election season approaches, our tabling efforts have already shown promising signs of increased engagement—even though I was under the weather during the last session, I heard nothing but enthusiasm from you all.

In the spirit of innovation and engagement, we've also launched our first episode of "The Chirp" from the state-of-the-art studio on the 4th floor. With Kimani hosting, along with Club Council President Sylvester, Twasi, and I, we're setting out to create a regular platform that boosts York pride and student interaction.

I recently met with the Provost to discuss how we can further enhance student life, and one idea that emerged was to consolidate our committee meetings into a single day. This way, we can free up more time for actual student engagement and ensure that our governance doesn't take away from the vibrant student life that makes York so special.

Looking ahead, we have more opportunities to make our voices heard. This week, CUNY stakeholders will march from Brooklyn Borough Hall to City Hall in support of Free MetroCards for CUNY students—an essential step toward removing barriers to education. And at our last full board meeting, we passed three key resolutions calling for enhanced academic and career advisement, free MetroCards, and expanded affordable food options at York College. These aren't just words on paper; they're a commitment to tangible change.

I was recently reminded of a video from 15 years ago that showcased the vibrant club life at York. Today, with a new Club Council President at the helm, I am confident that we will revive that spirit and reintegrate club life as a core part of the York experience.

Our upcoming calendar is filled with events designed to engage and inspire—from Town Hall and brunch on April 3, to movie nights, multicultural celebrations, fashion shows, and even a softball game on April 25. Each event is an opportunity for us to come together, to celebrate our diversity, and to work collectively toward a stronger, more united campus.

I know that change can feel uncertain at times, but I leave you with the words of Helen Keller: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." At York College, our strength lies in our unity. We must work together—not against one another—for the good of our students and the entire community.

Let's move forward as one united force for progress, driven by compassion, determination, and the belief that together, we can achieve more than any one of us could alone.

Thank you, and let's get to work!

3. Faculty Caucus Leader (Chirico): **Why Academic Freedom Matters**

The past month has seen multiple egregious attacks on Academic Freedom.

Locally, Governor Hochul demanded, and Chancellor Matos Rodriguez acquiesced to CUNY removing two ads for faculty positions at Hunter College.

So far, 14 CUNY campuses have written in protest, including the Faculty Caucus at York, who voted unanimously to respond. The president of the American Association of University Professors wrote the following in a letter to Governor Hochul and Chancellor Matos Rodriguez:

As the AAUP's 1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure reflects, intervention by governing boards—and certainly by elected officials—into matters of what is researched, debated, and taught “destroys the essential nature of the university. . . in which the conclusions expressed are the tested conclusions of trained scholars” . . . (Todd Wolfson).

This and other incidents throughout the country has created a firestorm of protests. To highlight some of these:

- Columbia University has been at the center of the storm. While there are many issues raised, the greatest threat to academic freedom is that the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies has been placed into receivership. What does this mean? It means that the authority for the oversight of the department has been taken away from the department chair. The department chairs led by the stewardship of the chief academic officer, the provost, are the backbone of the academic life of a college. I am sure many of you have turned to a department chair for assistance in your academic journey.
- Multiple universities and university systems have purged their websites of any references to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The University of Virginia, for example, shuttered its diversity, equity, and inclusion office overnight, removed its entire DEI infrastructure, and fired everyone associated with DEI.
- Classroom and campus discourse in protest are thwarted by financial retribution.
- Research is being halted for the mere mention of any of the words on the “banned word list” issued by the Trump administration.
- That list includes words in the names of majors, minors, and numerous courses at York: cultural heritage, disability, diversity, ethnicity, gender, multicultural, political, social justice, women.

The Faculty Caucus stands with our students to protect and defend their right to engage in intellectual debate without fear of censorship or retaliation. Thank you.

4. Standing Committees of the Senate:

a. College Curriculum

- 4.a.1 Course Changes (SOC 388, SOC 314, SOC 220, POL 222, SOC 321, POL 321, ANTH 220, ANTH 321, BUS 210) Passed.

- 4.a.2 New Course (EDUC 370A, SOC 324)
- 4.a.3 Revised Major Design (Political Science and Sociology; History, Philosophy and Anthropology: Anthropology). Passed.
- 4.a.4 New Certificate Program (*Teacher Education: Certificate Program in Bilingual Education*). Passed.

5. Adjournment.