

## **TECH FEE TASK FORCE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **REPORT TO THE CHANCELLOR**

#### **ISSUE**

A recent audit by the New York City Comptroller of the Borough of Manhattan Community College's Student Tech Fee process made several recommendations concerning student representation on college Tech Fee Committees, procedures/guidelines regarding the use of funds, and the role of the central office in reviewing college Tech Fee Plans. In addition, the University Student Senate (USS) has expressed interest in working with the Chancellery, college presidents and deans to effectuate certain changes in how Student Tech Fee Committees operate at CUNY colleges.

#### **CHARGE**

In April 2019, Interim CUNY Chancellor Vita Rabinowitz established a Tech Fee Task Force comprised of members from the Council of Presidents. The Task Force was charged with the following.

1. Review and recommend any necessary changes to procedures, policies and guidelines with respect to the colleges' tech fee committee make-up and authority.
  - a. What guidelines should cover size, representation and scope of tech fee committees?
  - b. What does significant student representation mean?
  - c. Review and make any necessary recommendations with respect to who can submit a tech fee proposal and how that proposal will be submitted.
2. Review current spending practices and make any necessary recommendations regarding the use of tech fee funds.
3. Review and make any necessary recommendations with respect to:
  - a. ensuring that tech fee plans are publicly accessible; and
  - b. ensuring transparency with respect to project and fiscal status.
4. Make any additional recommendations that the Task Force determines as necessary or appropriate.

#### **TECH FEE TASK FORCE MEMBERS**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>COLLEGE</b>
Russell Hotzler (Chair)	President	New York City Technical College
Karol Mason	President	John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Claudia Schrader	President	Kingsborough Community College
Karrin Wilks	President (Interim)	Borough of Manhattan Community College
Mary Pearl	Dean	Macaulay Honors College
Matthew Sapienza	Senior Vice Chancellor/CFO	Budget and Finance
Brian Cohen	Vice Chancellor/University CIO	Technology
Joseph Laub	CIO	John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Although USS leadership were not appointed Task Force members, the Task Force actively sought to collaborate with the USS on this important undertaking. Our collaboration included meetings with USS leaders and the joint drafting of some of the recommendations contained in this report.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

1. The Task Force conducted a document review that included:
  - a. 2018/19 Tech Fee Plans from all CUNY colleges
  - b. CUNY's annual tech fee call letter and current guidelines
  - c. Audit Report of the Borough of Manhattan Community College's Control Over Technology Fees (June 28, 2018)
  - d. CUNY Board of Trustees Minutes establishing the CUNY Tech Fee (February 25, 2002)
  - e. Tech Fee proposals from CUNY University Student Senate (USS)

The Task Force along with USS representatives, including; Haris Kahn the USS Chair; Rejwoan Matubbar, USS Vice Chair for Technology Fee Affairs; and Hussein Abdul, Vice Chair for Part Time and Evening Students, participated in two meetings aimed at achieving the stated goals above.

## **TIMELINE**

### **April 11, 2019 - Tech Fee Task Force Full Meeting**

- Interim Chancellor charges committee
- Task Force discussed the NYC Comptroller audit, the proper approach to address the audit, schedule and substance of future meetings
- Task Force agrees that USS leadership must be active contributors to the review process

### **April - May 2019**

- Task Force members review documents/background materials
- Vice Chancellor Brian Cohen meets with USS leadership to review their proposals
- Revised USS draft policy developed

### **May 8, 2019 – Tech Fee Task Force Full Meeting**

- Joint meeting between Task Force and USS leadership to discuss student concerns and students' draft Tech Fee Policy proposal. Vice Chancellor Brian Cohen works with students to revise policy in preparation for next meeting.

### **May 28, 2019 – Tech Fee Task Force Full Meeting**

- Final USS policy proposal discussed and agreed upon
- Remaining concerns from Comptroller's audit addressed
- Task Force agrees to begin drafting report for Chancellor and the Council of Presidents

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Task Force recommends that the following guidelines be considered by the Chancellor of the City University of New York and the Council of Presidents for adoption at all CUNY colleges and schools. The Committee believes that these recommendations will address the concerns and interests of the students and college leadership and address many of the recommendations that were included in the NYC Comptroller's Audit Report of the Borough of Manhattan Community College's Control Over Technology Fees (June 28, 2018).

### **DRAFT CUNY Student Technology Fee Committee Policy DRAFT**

#### **I. Student Technology Fee Committee**

- a) The Student Technology Fee (STF) is designed to provide funds for improving existing technology related operations and acquiring new technology that substantially benefits students or student success and is used by the students of the City University of New York (CUNY) and its respective individual constituent colleges. The committee is subject to the Board of Trustees resolutions regarding the collection of Student Technology Fee and procedures or guidelines established by the respective college.
- b) The Student Technology Fee committee shall meet each semester at times that can be as mutually convenient for as many members of the committee to attend as possible. The purpose of these meetings is to develop the Technology Fee Plan and receive, review, approve and oversee the implementation of project proposals from students, faculty, and staff. At the initial meeting or at a time prior to the initial meeting the Committee Chair shall provide the members of the committee with an overview of roles and responsibilities as well as a review of the previous year's plan and results of any student feedback collected.
- c) The Student Technology Fee committee is composed of the college President/Dean or his/her designee as chairperson, and at least three students equal to, if not greater than, the combined total of faculty and administrative members. The President/Dean shall decide the total size of the committee and shall have the ability to identify non-voting members that he/she would like to serve as advisors or offer input into the committee's work and considerations.
  - i. Student members shall be selected by the student government. These members shall be representatives of the student body and may be part of the elected student government. In the event that there are less than three student governments at a college, then each student government will select at least one representative and the remaining representatives will be selected, as nearly as practicable, in proportion to the student enrollment by headcount from the respective constituencies.

- ii. Faculty members shall be selected by the appropriate college faculty governance body. The President/Dean shall determine the number of faculty representatives on each committee.
  - iii. Administration members shall be selected by the college President/ Deans. The President/Dean shall determine the number of administration representatives on each committee.
- d) Obtaining student feedback and input that will inform college investment in technology and future Student Tech Fee plans is paramount to all CUNY students. To achieve this:
- i. student government shall perform an annual student government survey with assistance from the college President/Dean/Leadership; student government shall have access to survey tools that the university owns or licenses; or
  - ii. college Presidents/Deans, with student government participation, shall perform a bi-annual student satisfaction survey where questions related to current student tech fee use as well as areas for investment are included in questions; or
  - iii. student government and the college President/Dean shall obtain student feedback in a manner mutually agreed to by both parties.

## **II. Student Technology Fee Uses - Expenditure Categories**

Student Technology Fee funds shall be allocated and expended only for the following purposes:

1. Implementing or upgrading of instructional computer labs
2. Acquiring or upgrading accessible technology
3. Implementing or upgrading student-serving computer labs
4. Improving and implementing student services
5. Faculty development of new or improved courseware
6. Electronic information resources in the library
7. Personnel for installation and maintenance of computer services
8. Upgrading instructional spaces to support technology-assisted learning
9. Acquiring technology tools to support college-sponsored student activities
10. Expand student access to current and emerging technology
11. Purchase of Enterprise Solutions

## **III. Student Representation**

- a) The Chair of the Student Technology Fee committee shall report the names and CUNY emails of each student representative on the committee to the CUNY University Student Senate Vice Chair for Technology Fee Affairs as soon as the new committees are formed.
- b) The college President/Dean upon establishment of the Tech Fee Committee will inform student government.

## **IV. Plan Status Reporting**

- a) The upcoming academic year's Technology Fee Plan and project submission guidelines shall be made available to the public on campus websites.

- b) The college President/Dean or their designee shall at least once a semester provide the student government with a progress report on the current year's Technology Fee Plan. At the end of the Academic Year, the progress report shall also include a final financial overview. The final financial overview shall include, but not be limited to, the source of all student technology fee income by constituency, past reserves, surplus accounts and projects that will continue to roll over from year to year.

**V. Role of the Chancellor and Central Office**

- a) The Chancellor of the City University of New York or his/her designee(s) shall be responsible for the following:
- i. Creating a standardized template for tech fee plans (the Task Force believes that a standard template both for the narrative and budget will benefit the planning and review process).
  - ii. Initiating the college student tech fee planning process each year by sending a call letter to college Presidents and Deans.
  - iii. Reviewing submitted plans to ensure adherence to policy recommendations above.
  - iv. Providing timely feedback to the colleges so as not to impact the colleges' ability to successfully implement and achieve its plan.
  - v. Providing periodic reports to the colleges on tech fee collections and expenses for the academic, fiscal, and/or calendar year.
  - vi. Meeting regularly with the USS Vice Chair for Technology Fee Matters to review issues or matters related to the Student Technology Fee and report those matters to either the Council of Presidents or respective college president/dean.
  - vii. Ensuring fiscal policies that address the collection, management, carry over, and use of Student Tech Fee Funds.