

BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON  
FISCAL AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
APRIL 4, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m.

There were present:

**Committee Members:**

Hon. Barry Schwartz, Chair  
Hon. Valerie L. Beal, Vice Chair  
Hon. Una S. T-Clarke  
Hon. Terrence F. Martell, faculty member  
Ms. Cecilia Salvi, student member

**University Staff:**

Chancellor James B. Milliken  
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating  
Officer Allan H. Dobrin  
Vice Chancellor Matthew Sapienza  
Vice Chancellor Frank Sánchez  
Senior Advisor Marc V. Shaw

**Ex-officio:**

Hon. Benno Schmidt

**Trustee Observer:**

Hon. Joseph K. Awadjie

**Trustee Staff:**

Senior Vice Chancellor and Secretary of the  
Board Jay Hershenson  
General Counsel and Senior Vice Chancellor  
Frederick P. Schaffer  
Ms. Towanda Lewis  
Mr. Anthony Vargas

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<b>Cal. No.</b>	<b>DISPOSITION</b>
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The agenda items were considered and acted upon in the following order:

**I. ACTION ITEMS:**

**A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 1, 2016.** The minutes were approved as submitted.

**B. POLICY CALENDAR**

1. Armored Vehicle Services. Committee Chair Barry Schwartz asked for the Committee's approval to authorize the General Counsel to execute a contract with a vendor who will provide, as needed, armored vehicle services for the entire University. This is an essential service for the day-to-day operations of campuses in order to transport checks, money orders and cash. By entering into a singular University-wide contract, CUNY is able to extract better pricing than if colleges had to purchase such services individually. Such purchase shall not exceed an estimated annual cost of \$120,000, and the contract term shall be five years.

Following discussion, the item was approved for submission to the Board.

2. Book Binding Services. Committee Chair Schwartz asked for the Committee's approval to authorize the General Counsel to execute a contract with a vendor who will provide, as needed, bookbinding services for the entire University. As with the previous item, by strategically sourcing this into one University-wide contract, the campuses realize savings as opposed to procuring these services on their own. Such purchase shall not exceed an estimated annual cost of \$160,625, and the term of the contract shall be five years.

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In response to a question from Ms. Cecilia Salvi, Brooklyn College (BC) Associate Librarian Susan Vaughn stated that the bookbinding is for three types of materials. First, Brooklyn College gets individual issues of periodicals that are bound into annual volumes. Second, the College provides the rebinding of books that are out of print as it is less expensive to rebind a book than to buy a new copy of it. Lastly, the College binds a lot of music scores that have individual parts to them, and they have to be bound in order to lay flat when used during performances.

In response to another question from Ms. Cecilia Salvi, BC Associate Librarian Vaughn stated that the students do not pay for this service; it is allocated from the library's budget.

In response to a question from Trustee Una Clarke, BC Associate Librarian Vaughn stated that she cannot speak regarding the overall savings of this service.

In response to a question from Committee Chair Schwartz, BC Associate Librarian Vaughn stated that this is a University-wide contract; it is not unique to Brooklyn College.

Vice Chancellor Matthew Sapienza added that this is one contract for the entire system, so each campus does not have to go out and procure bookbinding services. CUNY does it on behalf of the campuses. The campuses do pay for the use of those services; however, by getting one contract for the entire University, the campuses will each get best pricing from the vendors.

In response to a question from Committee Vice Chair Valerie Beal, Vice Chancellor Sapienza stated that the estimated annual cost of \$160,625 is based on past services and on previous contracts that CUNY has had. This annual cost could be increased if needed. He added that the University has negotiated a marginal cost, and the cost is lower so therefore the overall costs would be low.

Trustee Clarke noted that since CUNY is under so much scrutiny about how funds are being used and saved, she wanted the minutes of the Committee on Fiscal Affairs (CFA) to reflect how this bookbinding service is cheaper for CUNY, due to the combined buying power of the entire University, instead of each institution trying to get their own bookbinding service.

Committee Vice Chair Beal stated that she agrees with Trustee Clarke, and added that by increasing the volume, the University has reduced the overall marginal cost, receiving a significant savings. This service is consistent with what CUNY has done in the past.

Committee Chair Schwartz stated that he has been assured by Vice Chancellor Sapienza that any and all contracts that have University-wide application will be negotiated in this way because the savings are not unique to just bookbinding.

Committee Vice Chair Beal stated that this is not a new practice at CUNY. Vice Chancellor Sapienza has always maximized University dollars and CFA will continue to do that.

Following discussion, the item was approved for submission to the Board.

3. Predictive Analytical Software System. Committee Chair Schwartz asked for the Committee's approval to authorize the General Counsel to execute a contract with a vendor who will provide a predictive analytic software system for CUNY's senior colleges. This system and its affiliated services will utilize and provide key data that will support academic advisement and facilitate students' progress toward degree completion. This system will also help provide a predictive model that will detect at-risk students. The contract term shall be five years and shall not exceed an estimated annual cost of \$1,000,000.

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Committee Chair Schwartz noted that at this Committee's last meeting, he asked Vice Chancellor Sapienza if he could advise the Board on performance metrics that the University will use to measure the effectiveness and success of this contract, should it be approved.

Vice Chancellor Sapienza stated that CUNY has realized that the University needs to serve the students in a much more robust way when it comes to advising. Research has shown that other large university systems throughout the country are leveraging technology in order to help with advising, as it would be incredibly costly otherwise. So by leveraging technology to help in the advising process, the University can do it more efficiently and quickly. The Office of Budget & Finance would enter into this agreement with the Committee's approval—and the approval of the full Board later in the month—to acquire this predictive analytical software, which will identify at-risk students more quickly and help students with academic advising.

Associate University Provost Robert Maruca stated that the EAB student success collaborative is a predictive analytics advisement system that looks at the history of CUNY students in every college in every major, for courses that are predictive of success in that particular major. For every student that comes through the system, it provides their academic advisors with a risk assessment of that student for graduation in their major based on their course-taking and grades. If a student is at risk, an advisor can advise getting extra help, and then the system will track the student. Furthermore, this predictive analytics risk assessment is combined with a coordinated care network that refers students to particular services and makes sure that they make their tutoring appointments.

University Associate Dean Cheryl Littman stated that as mentioned by Vice Chancellor Sapienza in regards to hiring advisors, previous survey data shows that advisement is a weak point at some of the CUNY colleges, so students do not have access to good advisors. This is a cost-effective way of improving advisement across the senior colleges, as this platform was designed specifically for four-year colleges. Some of the best performance metrics for CUNY would be the longer-term metrics like graduation rates and time to graduation but no one wants to wait five years to find out whether this product is effective. Some of the shorter-term metrics for the University are academic momentum measures such as one-semester and one-year retention rates, and credit accumulation metrics. Several of those are already part of the Performance Management Process report that comes out every year, so CUNY is tracking those metrics on a regular basis anyway. Subsequently, additional metrics could be considered that might be more specialized to the kinds of outcomes that the University would expect specifically for this particular platform, possibly some usage statistics.

Committee Chair Schwartz stated that the Committee should be provided with a list of what the appropriate metrics are and what the measurement would be over time as it would be useful to know how many students were identified and how many were saved, having been earlier identified as part of the performance metrics.

In response to a question from Committee Vice Chair Beal, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that the Predictive Analytical Software System compliments CUNY's DegreeWorks system which students, and their advisors, use to track progress towards their degree in terms of courses they need. There have been a number of focus groups with students in regards to their satisfaction of DegreeWorks and for the most part the students like it and find it very useful; however, DegreeWorks is used more intensively at some colleges than at others. It is anticipated that this new software system will be both helpful to the students and their advisors. Furthermore, it will provide a complement to the students knowing what they need to get toward their degree, to know how they are doing, and how other students have dealt with similar situations. He added that this was something that was looked into with great due diligence for more than a year.

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In response to another question from Committee Vice Chair Beal, University Associate Dean Littman stated that EAB pulls data right out of CUNY's student information system, which is CUNYfirst—the University's information of record. The data is accurate, and is pulled out and pulled into DegreeWorks so that students understand their degree progress. Then there is another pull of data from CUNYfirst for EAB that will feed the information that is required by the EAB product. That information will provide advisors with information that they do not readily have right now through CUNYfirst or DegreeWorks. It has an early alert component, as well as a scheduling component so it closes the loop on not just identifying at-risk students, but directs them to the services that will help support them, enabling college advisors and faculty to follow-up and see if students have actually availed themselves of those services.

In response to a question from Committee Chair Schwartz, University Associate Dean Littman stated that this software system relates to CUNYfirst and DegreeWorks in the sense that the data from CUNYfirst is the same data that this new system would be using, but it is not a function of CUNYfirst. It has its own separate platform. It takes data out of CUNYfirst but uses it separately. The same goes for DegreeWorks. It is essentially a standalone system that makes use of the data in the official student information record system but has a platform that does something different. It also provides degree audit and educational planning.

In response to another question from Committee Chair Schwartz, University Associate Dean Littman stated that CUNY cannot operate as an institution or system if the University does not have faith in CUNYfirst data, because it is absolutely the system of record throughout the University. So while it is certainly not perfect at this stage—the whole University is working on improvement—EAB is a relevant piece of this program.

In response to a comment from University Faculty Senate (UFS) Chair and Trustee Terrence Martell, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that this software system will provide students information with reasonable accuracy—based on their record—on the probability of completing their degree successfully. By using this system, CUNY is providing better information early enough for students to make reasonable decisions just in case they need to decide on another path to success.

Chancellor James Milliken stated that with regard to DegreeWorks, one of the things frequently heard is that the University needs to upgrade it. This predictive analytic tool came to CUNY as a suggestion from two provosts from other systems where it was successfully used. This is something the University did not hatch. He added that in his view, predictive analytical tools are the future for students' success at most large universities, as they would allow for disaggregate sets of interventions to more accurately predict which students need what levels of assistance. The University will ultimately be more cost effective because of that.

In response to a question from Trustee Clarke, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that the term at-risk refers to the probability that a student will graduate in their intended major given their course performance to date.

In response to another question from Trustee Clarke, University Associate Dean Littman stated that a couple of different scenarios could play out when the software system identifies an at-risk student. One is that while students are being advised, their advisor can also share with them information about other career avenues or other majors so that they are not wasting credits already taken. Students can also be directed to support services to improve their performance in a course that is critical to their major.

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In response to a third question from Trustee Clarke, University Associate Dean Littman stated that there is no system platform or model that can uplift a student's aspiration and move them to think of another career path. A lot of that will have to come from advisors, faculty, and other support personnel as they will be trained to direct students in that way. She added that one thing that this platform does allow for is that the model is customizable for each college, so if there are certain aspects of the students' background that are predictive at some colleges, it might not be predictive at other colleges. Furthermore, there is some customization that can take place in the model so that certain features of a student's background may weigh into the information that can come out of this.

Chairperson Schmidt stated that he supports this program.

In response to a question from Chairperson Benno Schmidt, General Counsel and Senior Vice Chancellor (GC&SVC) Frederick Schaffer stated that he has not seen the contract yet. However, in regards to the language in the resolution—the term of the contract is for five years—it refers to a business term to be negotiated like other business terms.

In response to another question from Chairperson Schmidt, GC&SVC Schaffer stated that at the request of the Board, he will make every effort to cancel this contract if a review of the performance metrics shows that CUNY is getting nothing for its money.

University Associate Dean Littman added that some outcomes are going to take more than a year for the University to realize.

In response to a question from Committee Vice Chair Beal, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that there are consulting services that are provided throughout the term of the contract. Every college will be assigned their own dedicated consultant who will train all of the advisors, including the network of all of the other colleges that have used the system. During the due diligence process the product and the company received extremely high reviews in terms of their training, their desire to continuously improve the product, and for good customer service.

In response to the question from UFS Chair and Trustee Martell, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that this software system only relies on college level data. It is based upon what a student does in college, not before college.

UFS Chair and Trustee Martell stated that the quickest way to failure at CUNY for many students is running out of TAP, and the probability of running out of TAP increases with the number of curricular mistakes made. So if the University can identify more appropriate courses of study for students earlier on, it will increase their chances of not running out of TAP until they are well and truly far enough along.

In response to questions from Committee Chair Schwartz and Committee Vice Chair Beal, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that the University is only purchasing this software system for the senior colleges as those students have already been through remediation. This program will not improve students' academic skills, it will inform the student whether they are at-risk and provide them possible options or remedies for the risks that they face. The intelligence is only useful if the student acts upon it in a constructive way.

Chancellor Milliken added that EAB has extensive experience with four-year degree programs. They also have a new product for two-year degree programs. So, if CUNY is going to test the water and see whether this program is helpful, it is probably better to do it with the one that they have years of experience with than the new one.

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Committee Vice Chair Schwartz stated that OAA should keep the community colleges in mind because these same problems that CFA is currently discussing are experienced there as well.

In response to a question from Ms. Salvi, Chancellor Milliken stated that this software system gives students the opportunity to receive one-on-one support from an advisor. It is a tool that predicts results, and it is only as good then as the interventions that can be coupled with it. This is what CUNY has to be focused on, not ignoring predictive data, but making decisions based on what to do with it, by intervening in the appropriate ways as suggested.

In response to another question from Ms. Salvi, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that the program is meant for academic advisors, and the students are meant to receive their information from the academic advisors. Unlike DegreeWorks, which both advisors and students can use to get information, this program is meant to facilitate conversations between advisors and students.

Committee Chair Schwartz stated that he would like to suggest that OAA provide CFA, before the next Board meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, with its proposed performance metrics to evaluate the success of this new system. He added that the full Board should be advised as to the conditionality of the system.

Committee Vice Chair Beal stated that she would like to see how this expenditure coordinates with DegreeWorks, and how this system coupled with DegreeWorks will lead to greater results.

In response to a question from Committee Chair Schwartz, University Associate Dean Littman stated that this software system will use the data from CUNYfirst.

In response to a question from Committee Vice Chair Beal, Chancellor Milliken stated that an explanation of how this system extracts data from CUNYfirst can be obtained very quickly. If the data is inaccurate, CUNY has problems with everything, but that is not the case. It is the user-friendliness of the system and the manipulation of it, and the ease with which students and faculty can use it.

In response to another question from Committee Vice Chair Beal, Chancellor Milliken stated that DegreeWorks is a separate bolt on. So is the Predictive Analytic Software System. They both extract data from CUNYfirst. The information upgrade to DegreeWorks is thought to be such a priority by the academic administrators on the campuses and what that upgrade will do to meet their needs, and how this system works with CUNYfirst data and provides additional information that is going to be useful to the advising core and ultimately to the students. He added that he would get that information to the Committee soon.

In response to a question from Committee Chair Schwartz, Associate University Provost Maruca stated that CUNY already has a tight schedule to begin the use of the new software system for the first time in the fall, so tabling this item until June would increase the risk of the University delaying it by a semester.

In response to a question from Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer Allan Dobrin, Chairperson Schmidt stated that it would suffice the Committee if all concerns are answered before the next Board meeting.

During discussion of the Predictive Analytic Software System resolution, Trustee Una Clarke suggested an amendment to strike the term "at-risk students" from the explanation section of the resolution. After further discussion, the Committee agreed to that revision. During the

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formal vote, Trustee Clarke abstained, and Trustee Valerie Beal and Student Representative Cecilia Salvi voted NO.

**II. INFORMATION ITEM:**

**\*\*\*REPORT BY VICE CHANCELLOR MATTHEW SAPIENZA ON THE 2016-17 STATE ENACTED BUDGET\*\*\***

Committee Chair Schwartz stated that he would like to commend the leadership of Chairperson Schmidt and Chancellor Milliken, and particularly Senior Vice Chancellor and Secretary Jay Hershenson and Vice Chancellor Sapienza for leading the University through this difficult budget process.

In response to a question from Chairperson Schmidt, Vice Chancellor Sapienza stated that unfortunately, the Office of Budget and Finance is planning to do cuts at the senior colleges and Central Office again next year. CUNY's mandatory needs budget is short by about \$27 million. As mentioned in the report, about \$12 million of that is for fringe benefits but there is no funding for salary increment costs. There is also no funding for energy costs.

In response to questions from Chairperson Schmidt and Committee Vice Chair Beal about the state budget and the status of collective bargaining, Chancellor Milliken indicated that efforts are underway to reach an agreement as soon as possible, including through mediation and additional meetings. He added that he will be reviewing the state budget further with respect to salary increments and other funding matters, while continuing discussions with the Administration and Legislature.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 p.m.