

As approved April 9, 2025

**Senior Scholars at Queens
Board of Directors Minutes
March 12, 2025**

Board Members Present: Steve Lauer, Carlos Glender, Said Atri, Jack Gill, Barbara Devinney, Dave Collins, Len Norman, Alan Matthews, Aimee Hite, Dave Collins, Ollie Frazier, John Koch, John Romano, Kristan Smith

Others Present: Linda Brandt, Gordon Haymond, Carol Kesmodel, Allison Meyer-Tucker, Ken Orenbach, Ian Pollitt, Nancy Stancill

Call to Order: President Steve Lauer called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

Approval Minutes: On motion by Steve Lauer, second by Ollie Frazier, the minutes of the February 12, 2025, Board meeting were approved with corrections as noted.

Queens University Report: Allison Meyer-Tucker provided Queens activities of potential interest to Senior Scholars:

- QUnited, Queens Annual Day of Giving, March 13.
- “Passion for Bach & Coltrane,” concert and spoken word poetry, March 14, 7:30 p.m. at the Sarah Belk Gambrell Center. Tickets are \$32-\$65.
- Viewing and discussion of documentary film *North Putnam*, March 25, 6-8:30 p.m., free at Ketner Auditorium in Sykes Learning Center.
- Royal Easter Egg Hunt, March 29, 9:30 a.m., free on the South Lawn by the Levine Center for Wellness.
- Distinguished Leaders in Action Lecture Series featuring Rick Schnell, Co-Chairman and Governor of the Charlotte Hornets, April 3, from 6-7 p.m., free at Ketner Auditorium in Sykes Learning Center.

Special events will be winding down as commencement approaches on May 3.

Aimee asked for an update on the cost of Dining Hall tickets, which can be bought in blocks of ten meals. Allison will check on the current rates so Aimee can update them on the Senior Scholars website. Allison is still checking on the process for SSQ members to audit classes.

Committee Reports:

Treasurer’s Report and Finance Committee: Dave Collins indicated that finances are in good shape, as Glenn Paton provided in his written report. While continuing members renew at a respectable rate, new members are down about 25 over the previous year.

With close to \$4,000 in the checking account, additional cash is needed to cover a \$1,400 technology bill and upcoming capital expenses. He and Glenn will be meeting at Wells Fargo to convert a maturing CD with about \$6,000 to cover those expenses, which will leave about \$4,000 in the bank to cover ongoing expenses.

Nominating Committee: Len Norman reported that the committee has filled two positions, with Linda Brandt now serving as Lunch Bunch coordinator and Ian Pollitt as Field Trip Coordinator. The committee is still seeking an email coordinator to relieve Kristan so she can focus on Wildacres. A co-chair is still needed for Wildacres, and Len will ask some new members for assistance.

Webmaster & Email Committee: Aimee Hite has updated the speakers on the website, and she updates the slide deck with new speaker information. Additions to the Speaker Archives are always posted in restricted mode and are password protected, unless she is otherwise advised.

Steve and Aimee agreed to use the Jotform process for online registrations for Lunch Bunch, Field Trips, and Spring and Holiday Luncheons. This will be in lieu of the RSVP button that currently defaults to designated email addresses. Steve will forward to Aimee information on Jotform for the April 7 field trip to the Duke Mansion, and they will use that as a test of the process.

Curriculum Committee: Carlos Glender expressed thanks to Pierce Howard for filling in at the last minute for a Zoom-only presentation on March 14 on the topic of critical thinking. He announced that John Gaertner has agreed to serve as Science Manager for the Curriculum Committee. Carlos will be forwarding his information to the Nominating Committee.

Carlos also shared a screenshot of speakers scheduled from March 14 through the fall. The spring slots and first three slots in the fall are filled. Some upcoming presentations include:

3/21/2025	Mark Kelso	International Climate Cooperation in an Era of Geopolitical Turmoil
3/28/2025	Dmitry Vovchuk	NATO
4/4/2025	Harry Chernotsky	American Foreign Policy in the Middle East
4/11/2025	Dina Diorio, County Manager	
4/18/2025	Parig Sakia	India
4/25/2025	Dr. Sarah Fatherly, Queens Provost	

Of the six slots remaining in the fall, several are being reserved for Great Decisions speakers.

Social Committee: Nancy Stancill reviewed the Spring Luncheon plans for Thursday, June 5, at Raintree Country Club. With a “Southern Picnic” theme, the meal will feature a barbecue and chicken buffet, with salads and dessert served at the table. Tom Hanchett will be the speaker, and he will be offering recommendations for restaurants we may not have tried, especially ethnic restaurants on east side of Charlotte. The cost will be \$45 with the option to buy drinks at the bar. Most members will likely pay online, as they did for the holiday luncheon.

Lunch Bunch. Linda Brandt reported that a lunch outing is scheduled for March 28 at Leo's Social Club. Registration is being posted on the website, and Steve will help promote via email and announcements. Future outings are being considered, perhaps a little further out from the SouthPark area and with diverse cuisines. Calle del Sol could be considered again.

Field Trips. Ian Pollitt has agreed to serve as Field Trip Coordinator, but Lauren Judson will be helping with the first field trip while Ian is dealing with some medical issues. For the outing on April 7, the Duke Mansion will be able to accommodate up to 60 people, but Lauren is focusing on 50 people to keep the group size a little smaller. The plan is to spend half the time inside and half out, with the gardener helping with information about plants and trees. Reservations are set to close on April 1, and Aimee will add a Jotform reservation link to the website event description. Dave Collins suggested watching "The Secret Life of Doris Duke," currently on Netflix, as background preparation for the tour.

A visit to the Carolina Raptor Center is being planned for April, with the date to be announced.

Marketing & Cultural Diversity Committee: Len reported for Cyndi Henry. The committee suggested encouraging members to bring guests to the educational presentations. Cyndi has access to gift certificates for restaurants that could be offered as incentives to the members bringing guests. Steve encouraged promoting this in the spring, to encourage registrations by June 1 when new members receive a year and a half for the price of a year.

Representatives also plan to visit assisted living facilities to leave Senior Scholars literature and talk with staff and residents. The committee is reviewing a list of senior facilities and coordinating to begin outreach activities.

Membership & Directory Committee: Steve reported the information provided by Pam Nemecek. Current membership in 2025 to date is 729, with 294 members from 2024 remaining in the database. The Membership Directory has been updated and is on the website.

Pam has been soliciting email responses on interest for a visit to the Raptor Center and reports slow response. For marketing, Pam has ordered 200 of the two-sided color postcards, at approximately \$68. She also ordered 300 business cards, as the original supply was quickly depleted.

PUMC Liaison: John Koch indicated that two tables will be set up for the mini-expo exhibitors on March 21.

Wildacres Retreat Committee: Kristan Smith reported that a potential collaboration with Sun City during the retreat would not be possible due to the limited number of rooms at Wildacres. A connection with Sun City representatives will be maintained for potential future collaboration. The previous hospitality coordinator for happy hour will be having surgery this year, so the planning group is discussing who might be willing to help this year.

Technical A/V Committee: Jack Gill reported that new equipment is now in place and Alan Matthews has been using it to make tremendous looking archive videos. Alan said it is easier to

make a better product because the new equipment records all video input into separate files. The prior way was a single string from Zoom, which was hard to edit.

Steve will soon be convening the ad hoc committee established to consider the comparative merits of using Zoho, Excel, Dropbox or Airtable for maintaining speaker and presentation information.

Old Business:

Steve will be reviewing the Jotform speaker registration process to avoid copyright infringements in weekly presentations.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Devinney, Secretary