

OBSERVER
FEBRUARY 18, 2020

FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD

GMM

On Friday February 14, Harold began the General Membership Meeting by welcoming members to the new semester. In his opening statement, he emphasized the importance of study groups to our mission and urged members to become coordinators, either on their own or as co-coordinators with others. A few officers and committee chairs then made reports before Harold returned to brief members on the negotiations with CUNY (both the School of Labor and Urban Studies and the Graduate Center) and to conduct the Town Hall.

Colette Siegel, our Treasurer, thanked the members for their generosity in the IER fund-raising campaign. So far, \$110,000 has been collected from 83 percent of the members. The campaign committee has sent acknowledgements and is still hoping to achieve an even higher contribution rate.

Linda Anstendig of the Curriculum Committee, "channeling" the absent chair Jonathan Gaines, described the series of workshops the committee is offering this semester at SLU to guide new and prospective coordinators as well as current ones. See below for the full schedule but the first workshop is, appropriately, Let's Get Started, on February 24 or 26, geared to both new and experienced members considering a study group.

Renee Solomon, acting chair of the Our Stage of Life Committee, asked members to please register for the committee's event, A Roadmap to Retirement, to be held on Saturday morning March 7. Robert Freedman, an authority on elder law and advocacy for vulnerable populations, will speak and discuss the legal issues we face as we age. See below for full details and the link to register.

Returning to the podium to brief the members on recent developments at CUNY, Harold expressed confidence that the noise and food issues at SLU will fade as both parties grow more familiar with each other.

More important, he reported that the negotiating team's lunch with the officers of the Graduate Center had gone extremely well; he is 99 percent certain that we will become a program of the GC's Office of Academic Initiatives and Strategic Innovation (AIS), with classes starting in September. During and after the lunch, the GC representatives expressed their appreciation for the IRP's:

- extensive and deep connections with CUNY, as so many of our members have been CUNY students, staff, and faculty;
- potential to benefit all CUNY students and the New York community by continuing such current activities as conversa-

- tion partners, voter registration, and webcasts to home-bound seniors, as well as through potential new activities like mentoring CUNY BA students; and
- fund- raising capacity, as in the recent IER campaign

The GC is now in the process of reserving, in advance, classrooms of various sizes for 36 study groups in the fall semester to be held at the GC the at 34th and 5th. The GC is also identifying spaces suitable for larger gatherings such as GMMs and public events like Fridays at One. Rooms at the GC for committees and other meetings after regular class hours will be reserved separately

Next steps include a meeting on Tuesday of the negotiating team with the dean and program development director of AISI and the formation of two temporary groups, a Founding Board and an Operations Committee, each consisting of representatives of the IRP and the GC working as partners to flesh out the details of this new program at the GC over the next two or three months. The Executive Committee will now ask for a meeting with Dean Helen Wussow of TNS Open Campus to discuss the negotiations with the GC and a graceful departure from TNS.

Members expressed their support for these developments and their gratitude to those who had worked to bring it about. Harold, Eileen, Miriam, and Bernie responded to their questions and comments.

- Summer program: We hope to have our usual program and the curriculum committee is soliciting proposals but we are

not yet sure about it, including whether it would be held at TNS or the GC

- Tuition and IER: Tuition (or membership fees), paid to CUNY, will remain the same as they are now. The IER will remain our independent fund-raising arm controlling the money contributed voluntarily by our members in annual appeals
- Administrative support at the GC: This is an important part of the arrangements that are being worked out
- Library privileges, student IDs, print credits: these too are being worked out and will most likely constitute a significant part of the Founding Board agenda
- Role of our elected Advisory Board: The AB remains in place; the Founding Board and Operations Committee, both of which include AB members, are temporary groups dealing with the details on behalf of the full AB.
- Name: Several names have been suggested but this is another of the issues to be considered by the Founding Board
- Discussion with TNS: Our goal is to respect our nearly 60 year history with TNS and work out an equitable, amicable settlement with them

IRP Office

To facilitate the efficient operation of the office, the Executive Committee requests, again, that members email, rather than phone, their requests to Adam. Please identify the nature of the request

in the subject line. The Committee asks also that members set up appointments with Adam when they need to meet him, and avoid just dropping by, when this is at all possible.

Rooms at SLU

As a reminder, two rooms, 19b and 1923, are available Monday through Thursday for committee meetings and events after regular class hours, until 4:30. Room 1923 is also sometimes available for committees during class hours. Adam keeps the calendar; email him to reserve a room, writing Request for Rooms at SLU in subject line.

For socializing, the pantry areas on both 18 and 19 and the reception area on 19 are available and either room 1804 or 1923 is often free. Check them out.

EVENTS

Invitation to Tuesdays with Friends

The TWF Committee invites you to sign up for the spring program of small-group get-togethers featuring talks presented and hosted by IRP members. The dates and topics are:

- March 10—*Behind The Scenes On A Movie Set: The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly*, Presented by Linda Gottlieb
- March 24—*The Inscrutable Power of the Cult*, Presented by Carl Binder
- April 21—*Supertitles: Updating the Opera Experience*, Presented by Sonya Friedman

Take advantage of these special opportunities to spend time with your colleagues. [Click here](#) to read the descriptions and make your choice. (Please note that the invitation and sign-up will be

through the *Observer* announcement only.) The registration deadline is Tuesday, February 18.

Register for 'A Roadmap To Retirement'

- Saturday morning, March 7
- The New School University Center, 63 Fifth Ave., Starr Foundation Hall, Room UL 102 (lower level)

The Our Stage of Life Committee presents Robert Freedman Esq., an authority on elder law and advocacy for vulnerable populations, who will discuss the legal issues we are likely to face as we age. Mr. Freedman was a founder of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and currently serves on the Executive Committee of the Elder Law and Special Needs Section of the New York State Bar Association.

Coffee and light refreshments begin at 9:30AM. Mr. Freedman's presentation begins at 10, followed by a Q and A session. The event is open to IRP members and their friends as well as to members of the community. Admission is free. Please register in advance; the committee needs a count to arrange seating and order the refreshments. [Click here](#).

Curriculum Committee Workshops

Please note the schedule of workshops for February and March. All workshops will be held at SLU, room 1923. To register for one of them, email Adam.

LET'S GET STARTED—Thinking About Coordinating But Want Assistance? Bring your ideas to this workshop on:

- Monday, February 24, 1:15-3PM, or
- Wednesday, February 26, 11:15-12:45PM

Whether you have just the germ of an idea or one that is almost fully developed, this workshop is for you. We will work with you to support the development of your ideas, suggest resources, help you to find a co-coordinator (if you want one) and answer your questions about the study group proposal process.

HOW'S IT GOING?—Current coordinators are invited to discuss experiences with their study groups—what's working and what's...not so much.

- Monday, March 2, 1:15-3PM, or
- Wednesday, March 4, 3-4:30PM

Come and share insights and techniques with your colleagues. These meetings have proven very helpful!

COMPLETING A PROPOSAL—Want some help completing a study group proposal for next semester or for the future? Join us on:

- Monday, March 9, 1:15-3PM or
- Wednesday, March 11, 3-4:30PM

Learn more about finding appropriate resources on your topic, organizing a working syllabus, and completing the proposal form. Experienced coordinators will be there to answer your questions and to share their techniques for developing a proposal. We encourage those of you who are at a later stage of proposal development to attend this workshop.

Women's Group Meetings

The IRP Women's Group will meet in room 19b at SLU on Wednesday, February 26, at 3PM and on Friday, March 6, at 1PM.

MEMBER FORUM

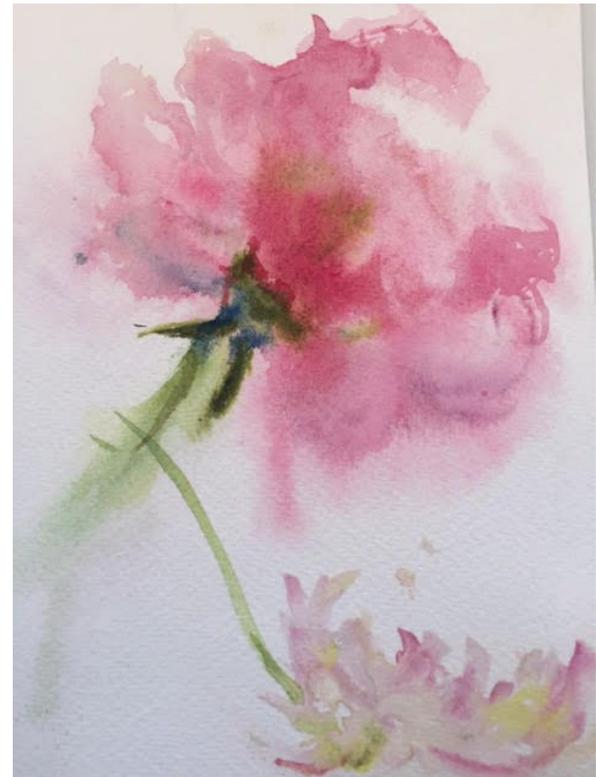
Study Groups

Jan Adler is thinking of offering a study group on the awareness of death, exploring the many ways in which the awareness of death has influenced societies over time. He will welcome suggestions for readings and topics—please email him at adlerjan@optonline.net.

We encourage others to use this member forum to solicit ideas or to exchange ideas about the topics they are considering for study groups. The forum can enhance not only the process of developing study groups but also the intellectual and social life of our community.

Online Art Show

Patti Kaplan provides our seventh contribution to our online art show.



Peonies, by Patti Kaplan

According to Patti, this is a “watercolor painting inspired by our lush summer garden.”

“Upper West Side Story” Performance
IRP member, Carol Sterling, invites members and their guests to a free performance of Stephen Spielberg's "Upper West Side Story," in honor of the Jewish holiday of Purim. The performance will take place on Monday, March 9 at 6PM at Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, 30 West 68 Street. Carol is a proud member of the ensemble and has participated in 13 previous Purim shows over the years. If you are able to attend, please email Carol at Csterling646@gmail.com.

REMINDERS

Information Sessions

Please spread the word to people you think might be interested in joining the IRP that the information sessions for potential new members will be held at TNS on:

- Friday, February 28, 1-3PM and
- Wednesday, April 22, 3:15-5:15PM

The Admissions Committee is seeking to broaden our membership with qualified applicants who will reflect the diversity of our city. Those interested in attending should send an email to Adam.

RESOURCES

IRP Zine

- To access the IRP Zine, go to www.irpzine.org. To view the directory or IRP Faces, you must login with these credentials:
 - Username: IRPNewSchool
 - Password: Fall2018
- For the fall and spring calendars, [click here](#).
- Member bios: <https://www.irpzine.org/news/new-member-bios-fall-2016/>
- *Observer* Archive: <https://www.irpzine.org/irp-observer-2/>

New School Events Calendar

- [Learn more](#) about upcoming events at The New School

CUNY Events

- Learn about [Music in Midtown](#), a program of free concerts at 1PM on Thursday afternoons at the Graduate Center on 5th Avenue and 34th Street
- Graduate Center Spring Public 2020 Events—To view the lineup and reserve your spot now, click here: www.gc.cuny.edu/public-programs
- School of Labor and Urban Studies (SLU) [public programming schedule](#), 2019-2020
- [Public programs in Midtown Manhattan](#)