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CSI faculty and staff overwhelmingly reject President Fritz's governance plan; Fritz threatens to ignore will of faculty and staff

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STATEN ISLAND, NY- On Monday, October 4, faculty and staff at the College of Staten Island (CSI) rejected President William J. Fritz's proposed governance plan by an overwhelming majority of 87 percent. The plan would largely abolish established and effective shared governance procedures in favor of a hand-picked group likely to approve any proposals coming from the President's office.

President Fritz himself shared these results in an email to the campus community. He had earlier refused to commit to abide by the results of this referendum, which he had initiated. His email also repeated the same arguments he had made earlier in favor of his own plan, including on the ballot itself, an egregious act.

"It's clear that despite holding the bully pulpit and controlling the means of communication, the majority of the college community was overwhelmingly against this plan from the start," said Professor John Verzani, chair of CSI's College Council. The president should immediately withdraw his proposal, engage the college's bylaws committee if he wants to pursue revisions, and begin mending the bridges he burned throughout this process."

"Faculty are integral to making sure students achieve academic and professional success," stated Maxwell Velikodny, former student government president and current CSI senior. The faculty has encouraged student voices and our present plan welcomes students at the table. What Fritz is doing is tyrannical, not democratic. No person should be able to disregard so many people's wishes and ignore something as self-evident as the desire for representation and fairness."

President Fritz put forward the governance plan on February 17, 2021, following a vote of no confidence in him in December 2020, which centered on his mishandling of the campus budget and undermining faculty governance. Following a public outcry against a referendum on the governance plan sprung on the campus at extremely short notice last spring, President Fritz postponed the referendum until September of this year and proposed a new, lightly-revised version of his original governance plan, both of which replace shared governance with unprecedented administrative control over policy-making bodies.

According to Professor George Emilio Sanchez, CSI Chapter Chair for PSC-CUNY, the union representing faculty and staff at the college, "The strength of the opposition to President Fritz now runs far deeper than reflected in last year's vote of no confidence. Members of the college community are calling on Fritz to resign; new leadership is critically needed."

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CSI United represents faculty, staff and students advocating for a democratic CSI

For more information:

- A FAQ on the crisis and other materials can be found at www.csiunited.com
- An [article on Medium](#) on the crisis by CSI Professor Matt Brim
- For the vote of no confidence, see the February 2021 article in [the Clarion](#)
- Coverage of the present referendum is in the [April 2021 Clarion article](#)
- For a complete set of documents covering the full crisis, see the [website of College Council Chair John Verzani](#)
- The [interview with President Fritz can be viewed here:](#)
 - (Important quotes at 1:50, 15:10, 15:39, 32:30)

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