

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Senate Matters: Composition and Membership

As of this writing, the Committee on Committees conducted its very first election of thirteen Senators-at-large, CLT, HEO, and Adjunct representatives completely on line. The Steering Committee wishes to thank the chair and members of the Committee on Committees, particularly the architect of the Senate's electronic voting system, Raj Vaswani from the Queensborough Academic Computing Center, for their extraordinary efforts to implement a system with direct implications for the work of Queensborough's Sustainability Campus Council.

The Steering Committee and the Committee on Committees have nevertheless been obliged to address a few difficulties that have arisen with the conduct of a fully on-line election, from somewhat lowered faculty participation rates, to the necessity that arose for members of the Committee on Committees to resend 117 e-mails which initially bounced! These difficulties may be attributed to a variety of factors—from server slowdowns due to various CUNY-wide computer problems; to list serves that have not been kept entirely up-to-date as Queensborough transitions to the new CUNY FIRST system; to the discomfort of a few faculty with electronic balloting or with e-mail more generally. Because the Steering Committee and the Committee on Committees are unanimous in their firm belief that every voice counts, and that the fullest possible participation in Senate elections should always be encouraged, we have decided to redo the one election that was genuinely compromised by these difficulties, for the Senate's adjunct representative. During this second adjunct election, the Committee on Committees will be introducing a few measures that we are hoping will raise participation rates more generally: two paper advisories, the first regarding the nomination process, and the second regarding election procedures, will be sent to Department Chairs and Administrative Assistants for distribution as paper advisories placed in the mailboxes of all eligible faculty. These paper advisories will remind faculty when the election e-mails are scheduled to arrive, and address any other questions that might arise. The Steering Committee and the Committee on Committees would also ask that Department Chairs reinforce these advisories by reminding adjuncts in their departments to vote for their Senate Representative.

The Steering Committee welcomes any additional ideas or comments on this point senators might wish to share.

2. Committee Matters: Composition and Membership

The members of the Academic Senate will shortly be invited to review a full roster of individuals nominated for service on the eighteen committees of the Academic Senate. Once

again, the Steering Committee would like to remind all members of standing committees that it is customary for the election of a committee chairperson and secretary to occur at its first meeting as a newly constituted committee—which means that old and new members meet at final May meetings. The Steering committee will also request final reports from those individuals who have served as committee chairs during the 2008-2009 academic year. It is the Steering Committee's current plan to hold a meeting of all committee chairs to review these procedures, and discuss any other matters that may be important for the support of the committees of the Academic Senate, on April 22, 2009, during Free Hour, in Medical Arts Basement MC31.

3. Committee Matters: Activities

In addition to the Committee on Committees, from whose chair Senators will hear at the forthcoming meeting, a number of committees were hard at work until the week of our recess considering various matters of importance:

- After extended conference with the chair of the Committee on Committees, and Dr. Thomas Gerson, who has been serving, despite his status as a retired faculty member, as an “ex-officio” Senate Technology Officer, the Steering Committee has asked the Committee on Bylaws to craft an amendment to the By-Laws of the Academic Senate, which would clarify the responsibilities of the Senate Technology Officer, which this body will elect for the first time in May, 2009. A report and resolution on this point has been prepared by the Committee on Bylaws and is included in this Agenda as Attachment H. The Steering Committee wishes to thank the Chair of the Committee on Bylaws, Dr. David Sarno, and his fellow members for their deliberations in this matter.
- As of this writing, the Steering Committee has been in contact with all academic departments, and has assembled a roster of representatives to the proposed Special Committee to Develop On-Line Education at Queensborough.

The charge of this special committee would be develop recommendations for the Academic Senate to consider in three areas:

- Identification of fully or partly online programs that the college could offer within 24 to 36 months. To meet this time constraint, these certificate and degree programs would probably be based on programs currently offered by the college.
- Identification of “new-to-the-college” programs that could be offered online on a three-to five-year horizon.
- Identification of the requirements fully or partly online programs might have in terms of:
 - Infrastructure
 - Student support
 - Faculty support and development

- Promotion to new students

RATIONALE:

The current imperative to find ways to accommodate Queensborough's recent surge enrollment, together with trends reported in the 2007 Distance Education Survey of the Instructional Technology Council of the American Association of Community Colleges that document a growing student interest in E-learning and Distance Education, have renewed the interest among Queensborough faculty in developing on-line programs and courses.¹ The Steering Committee has understood these developments as a strong rationale for examining the possibility that some programs currently offered at Queensborough might be offered in on-line form, or that new programs might be developed as courses offered primarily in asynchronous form. Members of the Committee on Distance Education and the Steering Committee are in agreement that the assembly of such a sub-committee might carry several advantages: first, it would address the potential that on-line programs might have to bring new enrollment to Queensborough from among older non-traditional students who find it difficult to travel to campus even for evening courses; second, it would allow individual departments to consider adding on-line sections of courses so as to avoid placing further pressure on limited classroom space; third, it would identify courses and programs that do not currently enroll large numbers of traditional students but might enjoy higher enrollments in on-line form; and finally, such a sub-committee might identify types of courses that might lend themselves felicitously to on-line instruction. The Committee on Distance Education and the Steering Committee are imagining on-line program development as a collaborative process that should involve all of Queensborough's departments, because many of our programs include general education requirements that will compel a spectrum of courses to be developed in on-line as well as classroom form. The Steering Committee would also urge members of this sub-committee to reflect upon the ways in which on-line learning might be fit into the Academy Structure currently being crafted for next year's class of Queensborough Freshmen.

The Steering Committee would therefore like to offer the following resolution to support the formation of this Special committee, as follows:

Whereas, trends reported in the 2007 Distance Education Survey of the Instructional Technology Council of the American Association of Community Colleges document a growing student interest in E-learning and Distance education, and

¹ This report is available at <http://www.itcnetwork.org/file.php?file=%2F1%2FITCAAnnualSurveyMarch2008.pdf>.

Whereas, Queensborough Community College faces an unprecedented rise in enrollment that might be felicitously managed by the availability of more asynchronous and hybrid on-line courses and

Whereas, any on-line courses or programs offered at Queensborough would need to draw upon the pedagogical and disciplinary expertise of all departments and;

Whereas, any such discussion is best undertaken by representatives from each of the academic departments in Queensborough Community College;

Be it resolved that a Special Committee to Develop On-Line Education at Queensborough be formed to fully consider the possible development of one or more on-line programs at Queensborough Community College, with the following representation and charges:

Department of Art and Design: Professor Anissa Mack

Department of Basic Educational Skills: Dr. Helene Dunkelblau

Department of Biological and Geological Sciences: Dr. Nidhi Gadura

Department of Business: Dr. Edward Volchok

Department of Chemistry: Dr. Jun Shin

Department of Counseling: Dr. Wilma Fletcher-Anthony

Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology:

Professor John Buoncora

Department of English: Dr. Jean Darcy

Department of Foreign Languages: Professor Indra Avens

Department of Health, Physical Education and Dance: Dr. Alicia Sinclair

Department of History: Dr. Kenneth Pearl

Department of Library: Dr. Sara Rofofsky Marcus

Department of Mathematics and Computer Science: Dr. Patrick Wallach

Department of Mechanical Engineering Technology and Design Drafting:

Dr. Joseph Goldenberg

Department of Music: Professor Melanie Sehman

Department of Nursing: Professor Patricia Burke

Department of Physics: Dr. Alex Flamholz

Department of Social Sciences: Dr. Caf Dowlah

Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts: Professor Robert Sweetnam

CHARGES: to develop recommendations for the Academic Senate to consider in three areas:

- a. Identification of fully or partly online programs that the college could offer within 24 to 36 months. To meet this time constraint, these certificate and degree programs would probably be based on programs currently offered by the college.
- b. Identification of “new-to-the-college” programs that could be offered online on a three-to five-year horizon.
- c. Identification of the requirements fully or partly online programs might have in terms of:
- d. Infrastructure

- e. Student support
- f. Faculty support and development
- g. Promotion to new students
- Among the many favorable findings by the recent Middle States Evaluation Team, the Steering Committee was delighted to hear praise for the documents on Academic Integrity placed on Queensborough's website by former Steering Committee Chair, Dr. Philip Pecorino. There was also praise for the Faculty Handbook. The Steering Committee would like to thank Dr. Eugene Harris and all the hardworking members of the Publications Committee, as well as Assistant Dean Liza Larios, for all the trouble they have taken to craft this handbook into a valuable faculty resource. As of this writing, the Steering Committee is in receipt of communication from the Publications Committee that there is interest in adding a brief section to the Faculty Handbook on involvement in campus governance, particularly membership to committees. It has been suggested that the Publications committee refer to the By-laws of the Academic Senate in formulating this language, so as to extend the familiarity of new faculty with this important document.

4. University and College Wide Matters with Direct Bearing on the Senate

- The Steering Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank our Vice-Chair, Dr. Linda Reesman, who rendered a formidable service to the entire Queensborough Community by formulating an elegant summary of the extensive notes she took at Dr. Edna Baehre's presentation of the preliminary findings of the Middle States Evaluation Team on Wednesday, March 18, 2009. (For those Senators who, like the Steering Committee Chair, were prevented from attending, the Steering Committee would like to remind Senators and members of the College community that the contents of Dr. Baehre's presentation are available on line at <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/tigermmedia/detailView.aspx?MediaID=1042>; Dr. Reesman has also very generously agreed to make her summary available upon request.)

One significant component of these findings pertained to an issue the Steering Committee has already looked to address through the formation of its Special Committee to Review the Assessment Database. Although it was the opinion of the Middle States evaluators that Queensborough's current assessment modalities do not appear to be "organized, systematized, and sustained," the Steering Committee is inclined to see the problem as one of promulgation; that is to say, many departments are engaging in assessment, but lack a proper venue from which to publicize their data and whatever departmental or program-wide actions might have been taken in response to assessment findings.

The Steering Committee's position on this point would seem to be supported by discussions at the recent Academy Teaching Workshops hosted on April 6-7, 2009 by Dr. Derek V. Price, director of DVD-PRAXIS LTD, an educational consulting firm, together with Dr. Michelle Kalina, a specialist in Classroom Assessment Techniques,

or CATS. Drs. Price and Kalina will be working to assist Queensborough Faculty in developing assessment protocols for the Freshman Academies, with a particular focus upon learning outcomes as a result of High-Impact Learning Activities, such as Cornerstone Courses, E-portfolio, Writing Intensive Courses, Learning Communities, and Service Learning. Many of the faculty who participated in these workshops described innovative assessment techniques they were already employing in on-line and traditional classroom courses, as well as in Information Literacy Sessions led by our library faculty. (Faculty who could not participate may request power-point outlines of these sessions, which Drs. Price and Kalina have very kindly indicated they will be providing to the Steering Committee.)

As the work of the Special Committee to Review the Assessment Database proceeds, it is the Steering Committee's hope that its deliberations will provide guidance concerning the way in which any website re-design might support such data collection and exhibition. Such an effort would, incidentally, go some way towards addressing the concern expressed by the Middle States evaluators that information for students and transparent information about our institution also be made more easily accessible through our campus website.

- In response to a request from Dean John Mogulescu for nominees to a Steering Committee for the New Community College that will include several members CUNY's central administration, including Vice Chancellors Logue, Schaffer, Malave, Weinshal, Moore, Deans Crook and Ptachik, as well as President Peruggi of Kingsborough Community College, President Gail Mellow of LaGuardia Community College, and University Faculty Senate Chair Professor Manfred Phillip, our own President Eduardo Marti has nominated two members of our faculty to serve on this committee: Dr. Philip Pecorino, the Steering Committee's nominee, who also serves on the Executive Committee of the City University Faculty Senate; and Professor Nathan Chao, who will represent Queensborough's Faculty Executive Committee as an alternate. The Steering Committee would like to thank President Marti, the Faculty Executive Committee of Queensborough Community College, and Professor Pecorino and Chao for their gracious willingness to serve on this committee.
- During the March, 2009 meeting the Academic Senate, the Steering Committee made a presentation relevant to the proposed modifications to the PSC-CUNY Research Award Program. As per the Resolution of Censure introduced before the Queensborough Faculty at the meeting of March 25, 2009, and the formal censure of this proposal unanimously ratified by the City University Faculty Senate at the Plenary meeting on March 31, 2009, the Steering Committee would like to advance the following resolution for ratification by the Academic Senate of Queensborough Community College:

Resolution Concerning the PSC-CUNY Research Award Program:

Prologue:

In 2007, 1,280 faculty colleagues conducted research and scholarship supported by PSC-CUNY grants averaging \$3000. Awards are distributed widely across the

CUNY campuses. The funds for this program are specified in the PSC-CUNY contract. In 2007-2008, the total budget was \$3.6M and the administrative expenses for running the program were only \$165, 751 or 4.6%.

The PSC-CUNY Research Award Program is a peer-reviewed grant program designed to assist faculty at all levels to pursue their research and scholarship. The University Committee on Research Awards (UCRA) is responsible for program review. Members of the UCRA are screened and recommended to the Chancellor by the University Faculty Senate. The UFS Research Committee has been in continuous service to CUNY since 1970. This committee initiated review of the FRAP (Faculty Research Award Program) awards that in 1973 became the PSC-CUNY Award Program as an allocation from the money set aside for collective bargaining by the city and later also by the state. By arranging for high quality peer review of PSC-CUNY grant applications, the UFS Research Committee and the UCRA continue to collaborate and support the needs of CUNY faculty members.

In November, 2008, the Vice-Chancellor for Research, Dr. Gillian Small, established a task force based on her assumptions that the program is “unsustainable and needs restructuring.” In contrast, broad faculty support across the university is strongly supportive of the way the faculty peer-review research program functions now, and is supportive of the manner in which grants are distributed.

During the two meetings of the task force, the arbitrary assumptions that surfaced were:

- Separate, local campus decision making is desirable
- Recompensed Peer review is much too expensive
- Too many grants are awarded

An unofficial draft report has emerged. Contrary to Article 25 of the PSC Contract, Vice-Chancellor Small’s report radically alters the present practice of peer review, which has assured the program’s academic integrity, by transferring the authority for grant approval to the provosts on each campus. This would open the way to arbitrarily focusing awards in certain disciplines, or to politicization of the selection process.

A reading of the PSC-CUNY contract states that responsibility for establishing guidelines rests with the University Committee on Research Awards. That committee consists of faculty members who are recommended by the UFS and appointed by the chancellor. This contract makes no reference to having university administrators be part of the review process. There are good reasons for this. In particular, it is not appropriate for administrators to be involved in funding decisions in a program that derives from monies that would otherwise be available for faculty compensation.

Resolution:

Whereas, the monies that fund the PSC-CUNY Awards Program result from the PSC-CUNY Contract, which are funds that by consent of PSC members, are excluded for use as salary and other compensation and are not part of general city or state funding of the University and;

Whereas, the task force set up by the chancellery is an inappropriate body to alter the present arrangement of making these awards;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Academic Senate, the governing body of Queensborough Community College, reject the restructuring proposal in the task force draft report, and;

Be it Further Resolved, that the Academic Senate of Queensborough Community College request that the Task Force on the PSC-CUNY Awards Program be disbanded and that its suggestions be presented to the University Committee on Research Awards and its Executive Committee, for their consideration.