

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

Committee on Bylaws

A Standing Committee of the Academic Senate

**A GUIDE FOR
COMMITTEE ON BYLAWS
MEMBERS**

Prepared by:

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Committee on Bylaws. Briefly, the job of the Committee is to consider and recommend to the Academic Senate new bylaws and amendments to the Bylaws of the Academic Senate. The Committee also considers and recommends to the Academic Senate new bylaws and amendments to the existing Bylaws of the Board of Trustees. It informs the Academic Senate of changes in the Bylaws by the Board of Trustees and advises regarding the application of the Bylaws. Upon the request of the Faculty Executive Committee, the Committee considers and recommends to the faculty new bylaws and amendments to the Bylaws of the Faculty. Anyone can raise an issue and bring it to the Committee for consideration; the Committee on Bylaws is both proactive and reactive.

2. Committee Composition

The Committee is composed of five members of the instructional staff and one student. The student representative is appointed by the Student Government and in some years has been the President of the Student Government. The Chair of the Committee on Bylaws should notify the Student Government of the Committee's meetings and solicit student participation. If a student representative is appointed, he or she must be afforded full rights as a member.

The faculty members are elected in the spring to one-year terms by the Academic Senate through its Committee on Committees. The Committee on Committees has adopted the policy that no member of a standing committee serves more than three consecutive terms. The President of the College and the Chairperson of the Academic Senate's Steering Committee, or their designees, are ex-officio members of the Committee on Bylaws who do not vote. In addition, the Committee has others attend its meetings as invited guests. Others who express an interest in attending the meetings of the Committee may also be sent notices of its meetings. See *Attachment 1 - Academic Senate Bylaws Relating to the Committee on Bylaws* for dates of election, quorum information, and other Bylaws governing the Committee.

Any member of the instructional staff may be present and request permission to speak at a meeting of any Academic Senate committee [Art. VII, Sec. 2d].

3. General Operation

The Committee on Bylaws meets when there are agenda items to consider. Meetings are called by the Chair and notification sent to all members, designees and liaisons. Every effort is made to achieve a quorum so that issues can be resolved or moved forward by vote.

The Committee serves as an intermediary party between individual departments and the departments and the administration. It may arrive at recommendations to the Academic Senate that are impartial and in the best interests of the College as a whole. Although the faculty members are appointed into particular academic departments they do NOT represent those departments at the Committee meetings. This should be made clear by the Chair to both the Committee members and their respective department chairpersons. Committee members should not be relied upon as sources of information from or conduits for communications to their departments.

The Committee must prepare an agenda, take minutes of the meetings, and prepare an annual report. [Refer to the GUIDE FOR STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS on the QCC website and see *Attachment 3 – Sample Format for Annual Report to the Academic Senate.*] Meetings should follow Robert's Rules of Order which can be accessed at <http://www.gutenberg.net/etext/9097>.

Documents generated by and received by the Committee should be forwarded to others on a timely basis. E-mail should be used wherever possible. See *Attachment 2 – Mailing List*, for the Committee's mailing list for distribution of meeting dates, agenda, meeting minutes, and documentation for review.

4. Communications with College Committees Related to the Standing Committee

There are standing committees of the Academic Senate that have committees of the College not formed by the Academic Senate acting in areas related to their charge. Such committees are expected to send a communication to those College committees requesting information such as the following:

- current membership of the College Committee
- current charges assigned to the Committee
- date of the last meeting of the Committee
- any information the Committee cares to share with the standing committee of the Academic Senate that may be helpful to the work of the standing committee

The standing committees that have such cognate committees will be informed of such in the Activities form and in the Guide for Committee Members.

Article III. POWERS OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE Section 1. Through its Steering and Standing Committees, the Academic Senate shall have the power to request and receive information appropriate to or necessary for the performance of its duties, from the President and members of the administration, from students and student organizations and from such other sources as may be appropriate

Section 3. Committees' Jurisdiction The primary function of an Academic Senate committee shall be: to study the subjects referred to it by these bylaws or by the specific action of the Senate; to formulate appropriate policies thereon; and to propose such policies to the Senate for action. Every Academic Senate committee shall maintain a continuing review of College policy in its area.

To assist committees to maintain a continuing review they are empowered to receive information related to their charge.

5. New Member Preparation

What new members should do to prepare to work on the Committee:

- read this Guide and familiarize themselves with current documents available at the Queensborough Community College website under "Governance."
 - [Bylaws of the Academic Senate](#)
http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/academic_senate_bylaws.asp
 - [Bylaws of the Faculty](#)
http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/docs/bylaws_of_the_faculty.pdf
 - [Bylaws of the Board of Trustees](#)
<http://portal.cuny.edu/portal/site/cuny/index.jsp?epi-content=GENERIC&epiproxymethod=get&viewID=epiproxybanner&beanID=1266530055&epiproxyrealurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww1.cuny.edu%2Fabcuny%2Ftrustees%2Fbylaws%2Findex.html>
- speak with the current Committee Chair.

6. Committee Chair Preparation

The Committee Chair should:

- become familiar with the [GUIDE FOR STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS](#) (a copy can be obtained from the Academic Senate area of the Queensborough Community College website [<http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/SC/documents.asp>] or from the Steering Committee);
- speak with the prior Chair of this Committee.

7. Ordinary matters

The Committee should seek input from the College community concerning the matters related to its charge. This can be done in a variety of ways including e-mail, memoranda and newsletters.

The Committee should seek input from the parties who are involved with or related to matters under its consideration. It may be prudent to invite such parties to attend Committee meetings on matters of possible controversy or where faculty, departments, and the administration may not be in agreement.

8. Meetings of Committees, Subcommittees and Special Committees

The public has the right to attend any meeting of committees and sub committees and special committees. Any time a quorum of any such committee gathers to discuss business, the meeting must be held in public, subject to the right to convene an executive session under certain limited circumstances. In addition, there must be prior notice of the meeting; the business of the meeting must be recorded in written minutes; and a record must be maintained of the final vote of each member of the committee on all matters on which a vote is formally taken. Non-members must conform to the usual requirements of parliamentary procedure; the Parliamentarian will interpret and enforce the rules which include that no non-member of the body may speak without the permission of the body.

9. Procedures

First, an issue comes to the attention of the Committee – this can happen in a wide variety of ways. Second, there is a listening and interviewing phase. It's important for the Chair or a member of the Committee to gain a sense of what kind of change, revision or amendment to the Bylaws is desired, and why. Through a process of listening and asking questions, a draft is created. This draft of a motion to amend or change the Bylaws is the working document. During scheduled meetings of the full committee, the draft will be discussed. Suggestions will be made and the draft may go through multiple revisions. At some point, there will be a vote to accept and recommend the draft. At this point, the document is ready to be referred to the Academic Steering Committee via a monthly report. The Academic Steering Committee may choose to place the item on the agenda of an upcoming Academic Senate meeting. See *Attachment 5– Sample Draft of a Motion*

10. Recommendations and Policy Proposals to the Academic Senate

Either form of report (monthly or annual) to the Steering Committee of the Academic Senate might contain recommendations that would be made to various units of the college, including other Senate bodies. It is expected that the committees would be sending these recommendations directly to the units involved as well as reporting them to the Senate.

Recommendations made to units of the College are to be followed up by the Committees who make them and responses reported in subsequent reports to the Academic Senate. If there is no response or no adequate response, as determined by the Committee, the Committee may report this to the Academic Senate after consultation with the Steering Committee. The current disposition of each recommendation should be noted in a monthly report and also in a summary of all items in the annual report. See *Attachment 3 – Sample Annual Report* and *Attachment 4 – Annual Report for Committee on Bylaws*.

From time to time the Committee may determine that it is necessary to have the Academic Senate consider a Policy for the College. In this case the Committee frames a proposal and sends it to the Steering Committee. See *Attachment 6– Sample Policy Statement*, for an example of a policy statement. Actions for the Academic Senate to approve, including policies of the College, are to be so designated in reports sent to the Senate. Such actions, recommendations and policies as are approved by a vote of the Senate are to be followed up by the committees of origination and the Steering Committee. If there is no response or no adequate response, as determined by the Steering Committee, the Committee may report this to the Academic Senate for a further discussion of the matter and a determination by the Academic Senate as to the appropriate course of action for the Senate to take on the matter. Of course, at any time, any member of the Senate may request a report on the status of previous Senate resolutions and policies.

Through the process of making and reporting on recommendations, the role of the Academic Senate in Governance is effectuated.

11. Chair's Presentations to the Academic Senate

As the Committee sends its reports and recommendations to the Academic Senate, the Chair of the Committee should be prepared to present the matter to the Steering Committee and be prepared to answer questions concerning such reports and recommendations.

If the Steering Committee submits a matter to the Academic Senate, the Chair of the Committee should arrange with the Steering Committee the manner in which the Committee Chairperson would participate in the presentation to the Academic Senate. The Committee Chairperson might make the principle presentation or simply respond to questions. If the Chair is in dissent from the matter forwarded from the Committee to the Academic Senate, then the Chair might ask to present a dissent, as is the right of any member of the minority faction of the Committee. The Committee Chair should be present to answer questions from the Academic Senate concerning the matters placed before the Academic Senate by the Committee. The Committee Chair might invite other members of the Committee or the College faculty or staff to be present at the Academic Senate meeting in order to respond to specific matters. If they are not members of the Academic Senate, either the Committee Chair requests permission for the nonmembers to speak, knowing that they want to do so, at the start of the Committee presentation or when nonmembers raise their hands to respond to or question the report, they need to have permission to speak.

It is best for the Chair to prepare the way for the Academic Senate to act on whatever measures are being sent to it. The Chair should contact the principle parties and apprise them of the matter. If there is opposition to the measure expected, the Chair should discuss this with the Steering Committee and those affected.

12. Final Remarks

The Committee on Bylaws has an important role to play in Governance. In order to make sure that changes to the Bylaws are accurately logged, the Chair should maintain a copy of the current Bylaws on his or her computer. Changes should be made as motions pass and an updated version of the Bylaws should be saved (with date, so that it is always clear which is the latest and most accurate version) and the entire document sent for posting to the Webmaster at webmaster@qcc.cuny.edu. It can be found under “Governance.” [<http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/>] A complete and accurate set of the Bylaws should also be available in the College Archives, in the files of the Academic Senate, and Administration.

ATTACHMENT 1 – ACADEMIC SENATE BYLAWS RELATING TO THE COMMITTEE ON BYLAWS

Members of the Academic Senate standing committees shall function from the date of election until September 1st of the calendar year following their election. During the changeover period from the April Senate meeting to the September first next following, the various committees shall consist of members of both the retiring committees and the new committees. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the committee size as of September first. Those who will constitute the new committee shall elect one chairperson before the last day of classes of the semester in which the committee is elected. The new chairperson shall serve beginning September first, the retiring chairperson shall be responsible for the preparation and submission of the annual report as stipulated in Article VII, Section 7b, of these Bylaws.

(Article VII, Sec. 3b)

Charge:

A. General

The primary function of an Academic Senate committee shall be: to study the subjects referred to it by these bylaws or by the specific action of the Senate; to formulate appropriate policies thereon; and to propose such policies to the Senate for action. Every academic Senate committee shall maintain a continuing review of College policy in its area.

(Article VII, Sec. 3a)

Each standing committee shall distribute to the members of the instructional staff an annual written report and a copy filed with the secretary of the Academic Senate prior to the first Senate meeting in September. The secretary shall inform the Academic Senate of the names of the committees, which have not filed such reports.

(Art. VII, Sec. 7b)

B. Specific

The Committee on Bylaws shall consist of five (5) members of the instructional staff and one (1) students.

The Committee on Bylaws shall:

- a. Consider and recommend to the Academic Senate new bylaws and amendments to the Bylaws of the Academic Senate.
- b. Consider and recommend to the Academic Senate new bylaws and amendments to the existing Bylaws of the Board of Trustees.
- c. Consider and inform the Academic Senate of changes in the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees.
- d. Advise the Academic Senate regarding the application of the Bylaws.
- e. Upon the request of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, consider and recommend to the faculty new bylaws and amendments to the Bylaws of the Faculty.

(Art. VII, Sec. 12)

ATTACHMENT 2 – MAILING LIST FOR COMMITTEE MATERIALS

Documents generated by and received by the Committee should be forwarded to others on a timely basis.

- A. Related to the regular meetings of the Committee: agenda, minutes, memoranda
 - Members and ex-officio members of the Committee
 - Guests who attended/participated in the meeting
 - Office of Academic Affairs
 - President's designee
 - Academic Senate Steering Committee designee
 - Liaison from Committee on Committees
 - Academic Senate website (webmaster@qcc.cuny.edu)
 - College Archives (cwilliams@qcc.cuny.edu)
 - Student Government - if no student members attend

- B. Other Materials: annual report, assessment requests etc.
 - Pertinent parties – e.g., Secretary of the Steering Committee
 - College Archives

- C. Copies of materials should be sent to the Academic Senate Steering Committee as they are deemed significant and leading to possible actions by the Academic Senate.

ATTACHMENT 3 – SAMPLE FORMAT FOR ANNUAL REPORT TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York
ACADEMIC SENATE

COMMITTEE ON [NAME]

Telephone
Fax
Email

To: _____, Secretary, Steering Committee, Academic Senate

From: _____, Chairperson

Date:

Subject: Annual Report of the Committee on _____ for 200__ / 200__

- . Committee members
- . Date committee met and times it meets regularly
- . Narrative summary of committee work
- . New Recommendations
- . Former Committee Recommendations/Actions of the Academic Senate /Strategic Plan items/Middle States Items/Steering Committee Charges
- . Current Disposition of all items acted on by the Committee, by the College, or by the Academic Senate
- . New Committee Members
- . New Chairperson and Secretary
- . Thank members and others who have provided assistance during the year

ATTACHMENT 4 – SAMPLE ANNUAL REPORT FOR COMMITTEE ON BYLAWS

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Phone: 718-631-6302

FAX: 718-631-6637

Room H-428

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr.Emily Tai, Secretary, Academic Senate Steering Committee
FROM: **Dr. Susan Jacobowitz, Chair, Bylaws Committee**
DATE: **September 26, 2005**
SUBJECT: **Bylaws Committee, Annual Report 2004-2005**

The Committee on Bylaws

Susan Jacobowitz (English), Chair 2004-2005
Kevin Kelly (Business), Secretary
Belle Birchfield (Electrical and Computer Engineering Technology), Bonnie Duen (student representative), Kevin Kelly (Business), Paul Marchese (Physics), Craig Weber (Mechanical Engineering Technology and Design Drafting)
Liaison: Robert Holt (Mathematics and Computer Science)
President's Designee: Howard Lapidus (Chief Operating Officer)

Our mission is to consider and make recommendations re: the Bylaws of the Academic Senate, the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees and, upon request of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, the Bylaws of the Faculty.

I. Recently, the Academic Senate Bylaws have been amended with regard to:

1. revising the title, description and charge of the College Environment Committee to the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Issues;
2. creating a standing committee on Distance Education;
3. creating a standing committee on Vendor Services;
4. creating a standing committee on WID/WAC (Writing in the Disciplines/Writing Across the Curriculum).

Regarding items 1-3, the Bylaws Committee drafted and submitted the recommended changes that were approved. With regard to item 4, the Academic Senate voted to create the WID/WAC Committee using a draft other than that which had been negotiation and revised by the Bylaws Committee during the 2004-2005 academic year.

II. Our committee worked on trying to establish the Honors Program as a permanent, standing committee of the Academic Senate but it remains a task force for now.

III. We worked to draft a proposal that will create a new committee that will focus on promoting student achievement.

IV. We addressed the need for revisions to two committees that make reference to a “cultural coordinator,” which we currently do not have – three separate people share these responsibilities.

V. Changes are being made to the Committee on Ceremonial Occasions to reflect its function as an advisory body.

VI. We are working to amend the Bylaws to reflect that students are excluded from voting on the awarding of certificates (Article VI, Section 1, item G).

VII. At the final meeting of the Bylaws Committee in May 2005, Susan Jacobowitz was re-elected chair for the upcoming 2005-2006 academic year. Belle Birchfield was elected Secretary and the members for 2005-2006 are: Craig Weber, Robert Holt, Kevin Kelly and a student representative who has yet to be named. Howard Lapidus will remain the President’s Designee and Sharon Lall-Ramnarine is our liaison from the Steering Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Jacobowitz

ATTACHMENT 5 – SAMPLE DRAFT OF MOTION

Draft [19 October 2005]

The Committee on Bylaws recommends the adoption of the following motion as an amendment to the Bylaws of the Academic Senate:

Motion: to **Restructure** the Committee on Awards and Scholarships so that the charges reflect the following changes:

From:

- a. Evaluate and recommend to the Academic Senate criteria and selection procedures for recipients of awards and scholarships.
- b. Select and recommend to the Academic Senate recipients for College awards and scholarships.
- c. Assist departments and coordinate administration of awards and scholarships.
- d. Receive data on all awards and scholarships granted in the College and report the data to the Academic Senate.
- e. Seek out new awards and scholarships.
- f. Seek out additional funds or mechanisms to support existing awards and scholarships.

To:

- a. Evaluate and recommend to the Academic Senate criteria and selection procedures for recipients of awards and scholarships.
- b. Select and recommend to the Academic Senate recipients for College awards and scholarships.
- c. Assist departments and coordinate administration of awards and scholarships.
- d. Receive data on all awards and scholarships granted in the College and report the data to the Academic Senate.
- e. **Create an “Honors Club Membership Fund” to support the membership fees of students who are eligible to become a member of Honors societies, and who can demonstrate the need for such help.**

ATTACHMENT 6 – SAMPLE POLICY STATEMENT

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Academic Senate
Committee on Computer Resources**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Academic Senate Steering Committee
FROM: Committee on Computer Resources, George Thorsen, Chairperson
SUBJECT: Monthly report: Two proposals regarding email and the QCC Technology Plan
DATE: Wednesday, November 30, 2005

Proposal 1. TIGERMAIL

Whereas, there are a number of benefits that come to students from the use of their college supplied email system,
whereas, there are a number of benefits that come to faculty from the students using the college supplied email system,
whereas, there are a number of benefits for the college administration that come from the students using the college supplied email system,
Be it resolved that: all students of the College use Tigermail exclusively for school related business and
be it further resolved that: faculty so inform students of this requirement and attempt to enforce it if they have email communications with their students.
Be it further resolved that: the faculty be encouraged to use the college email in school business.

Proposal 2. FACULTY EMAIL

Whereas, there are a number of benefits that come to faculty use of the college supplied email system,
Whereas, faculty often continue many of their academic activities after they have retired from teaching,
Be it resolved that: all retired faculty members who worked fulltime be allowed to maintain an email address