

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, The City University of New
York**

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, QUALITY OF LIFE AND DISABILITY ISSUES of the ACADEMIC
SENATE**

TO: Dr. Joel Kuszai, Chairperson, the Academic Senate Steering Committee
FROM: Dominic Hull, Chair, Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Issues
SUBJECT: Annual Report of the Committee on Environment Quality of Life and Disability Issues for
DATE: September 2017-May 2018

Committee Members:

Prof. Dominic Hull, Chair
Prof. Sara Danzi Engoron, Secretary
Prof. Edward Davis, Member
Prof. Jonathan Funk, Member
Prof. Anthony Monahan
Mr. Benami Freier, Member
Prof. Wei Lai, Member
Prof. Julia Rothenberg, Member
Prof. Weier Ye, Member
Prof. Allison Crutchfield
Prof. Noelia Diaz
Prof. Eladia Raya

Chong Jue, Liaison to the Committee on Committees
Sheila Beck, Liaison to the Steering Committee
Vice-President William Faulkner, Liaison, President's Designee

Mr. Mel Rodriguez, Environmental Health and Safety, Committee Liaison
Mr. John Triolo, Office of Campus Safety, Committee Liaison
Ms. Isabel Hocesvar, R.N., Office of Health Services, Committee Liaison
Victor Silva and Sherice Leggette, Student Members

Number of Committee Meetings: The Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Issues met four times during the 2017-2018 academic year.

During 2017-2018, Vice President William Faulkner served as the President's Designee to the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues.

Space Allocation/Utilization/Facilities

Email Request from the FEC regarding parking

The committee received via email a list of proposals regarding parking issues from the FEC. The committee discussed and reviewed each item in the proposal. A formal response was generated and delivered via email to the FEC by the committee chairperson. A summary of the request and responses are listed below:

Responses are indicated below:

a/b. A higher fee for reserved parking for those individuals working Monday thru Friday all day was suggested.

The committee agreed that reserving spots for individuals would actually lead to fewer spots available for general parking and would only serve to make the problem worse.

c. It was suggested that lot #2 (between Science and Humanities) be reserved for faculty and staff, Monday thru Thursday from 7am to 2pm. After 2pm the lot would be open to anyone.

Lot #2 is a pay lot for anyone to use. Students use the lot as can anyone who is willing to pay for parking at \$2 per day. The committee has considered this option, as well as converting the lot to exclusive faculty and staff parking. However, leaving students with even less parking will only solve one problem and create another. Currently, anyone can use the lot if there are spots available. In addition, it was noted that taking lot #2 away from students would be contradictory to our 4th charge from the Steering committee, specifically to “advocate for a campus environment that communicates openness and trust to the student body.” The committee considered other options as well, including renting available parking space elsewhere for faculty and staff and using a shuttle bus to campus. The feasibility of securing parking space and the additional cost make this unlikely to work.

d. A reduced parking rate for adjuncts was suggested since they are not here as many hours.

The committee pointed out that the pay lot is available at \$2 per day and this may be a cheaper alternative than paying for annual parking. Many adjuncts have evening classes when more pay parking is available (Lot #1 in addition to #2 and #6).

e. It was suggested that vehicles from B&G that are not needed during the day be relocated so they don't use parking spaces that could be used by others.

This has been the policy and whenever possible, those vehicles are located in other areas around campus. College vans are kept on grassy areas and Bill Faulkner indicated that they will continue to monitor and enforce the situation.

f. The FEC requested that the College retains an engineer to review and assess the current parking resources for improvements.

The College is currently working with engineers to redo lot #1. The increased fee for parking will help to offset this cost. The lot will be resurfaced and all potential ways to add parking spots will be considered. This will include all of the suggestions from the FEC on this issue. Dominic Hull will respond to the FEC with our comments.

College Health and Environment Issues

Parking Discussion

Several guests were invited to the meeting to discuss the ongoing parking issue on campus. Guests included Phil Pecorino from the Faculty Executive Committee, Joel Kuszai from the Academic Senate Steering Committee, and Michael Betancur from the Student Government Association. Bill Faulkner, Vice President for Finance and Administration is a standing member of the committee. The committee chair described the history of the committee's attempts to find solutions to the parking problem. The topic was then open for discussion.

Phil Pecorino appreciated the collaborative effort to work on the parking problem. It was noted that Bill Faulkner has responded favorably to all suggestions. Improvements have been made wherever possible. Plans are in place to renovate the main parking lot (#1) over the summer of 2018 and engineers will provide input to

rearrange parking spaces to maximize coverage. A new protocol is in place for a trial run in to reduce congestion at the Kenilworth entrance to faculty parking and student lot #6. During prime time parking, faculty and staff should approach the lot from Enfield Place instead of Kenilworth where student cars line up waiting for parking spots to open.

Jack Black added that frequent visitors to the school are accommodated when requested and this requires some spots to be saved each morning. The idea of QCC shuttles from the LIRR or other trains was discussed again, but costs to students would be prohibitive. A suggestion was made to promote using city transportation for faculty and students whenever possible to “go green.” There is no money for a multilevel parking structure and city administrators are trying to discourage individual car use.

A suggestion was made to allow all day parking once the parking fee is paid. Currently if the car leaves the lot and returns the same day, the fee has to be paid again.

Michael Betancur, the Student Government Association representative, shared ideas that the SGA is considering including surveying community residents to seek approval for increasing allowable parking time on the streets. A suggestion was made to discuss this with community leaders who deal with parking before going door to door as a safer and more effective approach. Bill Faulkner suggested speaking to VP Rosemary Zins who is a member of the community board. Ride sharing among students exists but safety is a concern.

Another suggestion was to increase the number of bike racks, which may encourage biking in better weather. The discussion concluded with encouraging words for future progress in whatever ways they are possible.

Recycling on Campus and Hallway Crowding

The committee discussed the on campus recycling program employed by Building and Grounds. The committee learned that Building and Grounds have additional recycling containers for use throughout campus. A recycling container can be requested from Building and Grounds for placement in specific areas on campus. The use of Styrofoam containers was also discussed. It is the committee understanding that Styrofoam and plastic bowls will be discontinued in phases at the various food service locations on campus. The final status of Styrofoam and plastic containers is unresolved. The committee intends to reach final conclusion on this matter in the future.

Hallway Doors

The issue of hallway doors was discussed. At present the Hallway fire doors are usually closed in many building on campus. This presents a problem for individuals in wheelchairs or otherwise physically disabled to open successfully. Currently most external entry doors have automatic entry systems however internal hallway doors do not possess these systems. More of these automated doors are needed for internal hallway fire doors. Joe Catolano informed the committee that the matter will be discussed in regards to adding more automatic entries where hallway traffic is highest.

Bathroom Signage

The bathroom sign posted on the back of each bathroom entrance door was discussed and reviewed in detail. Initially, the committee expressed concerns about the actual size of the sign posted. In the committee’s view the signs are too small and will be missed or ignored by bathroom occupants. The notice conveyed by the sign regarding inclusion of all genders in the bathroom is very important and all bathroom occupants should be aware of this notice. Therefore the committee initiated a review of the sign in an initial discussion with Vice President Faulkner (appointed committee member) in order to improve its visibility in all bathrooms on campus. A discussion was held with VP Faulkner on replacing the current signs with a much larger and visible sign. As per VP Faulkner the signs in the each bathroom will be replaced by a larger more appropriate sign in each

bathroom. VP Faulkner requested the committee's input on proper redesign of the sign. The committee discussed various sign size options ranging from 6 inches to the size of a standard sheet of paper. It was agreed with VP Faulkner that a mockup of the new sign will be generated and presented to the committee for final approval before placement in the bathroom. It was also agreed that the current language on the currently posted signs will remain on the new larger version. At present the committee awaits presentation of the mockup of the new sign by VP Faulkner. Final approval of the sign will be determined by the committee in the near future.

Safety and Security Issues

Annual Security Report

The 2017 security report (the Clery Report) was provided to the committee. The committee formally discussed the contents of the report and posed questions regarding its content to John Triolo, the public safety representative on the committee. The committee learned that any crime reported to public safety will be documented in the Clery report even if they are later determined to be unfounded. Committee members inquired about the number of officers permitted to carry weapons on duty on campus. There are currently five officers that are licensed to carry weapons. Additionally, only the President of the College can increase the number of officers able to carry guns on campus.

Health and Safety Data

The committee received a report on QCC Campus Issues spanning from September 2015 to February 2017. This report was presented to the committee by Clara Wajngurt. The committee reviewed the campus issues report and offered suggestions for future reports. Some of the issues on the campus issue report that have been specifically addressed by the committee. These issues include parking, security camera footage usage and quality of drinking water. The committee suggested that the campus issues report should be subdivided into categories with summaries for each category to facilitate easy dissemination of the information. Additionally, a comparison of issues from year-to-year should be generated in order to identify persistent problems that either reoccur or that has not been satisfactorily addressed.

Other Issues

Library Bathroom Accessibility

A request was made by Joanne Chang, chair – Library Committee regarding bathroom accessibility for the handicap in the Library building. It was noted that all bathrooms must be handicap accessible and comply with the number of bathrooms available. Currently there are handicap accessible bathrooms however they are not present on every floor in the Library building. For example, handicap accessible bathrooms are present in the basement of the library building. At present funding is unavailable for additional conversions of bathroom to handicap accessible.

Update from 504/ADA Committee and QCC Emergency Management Committee

The chair of this committee was asked attend the meetings of the 504/ADA Committee and the QCC Emergency Management committees. These committees report directly to the president of the college on their

proceedings and activities pertaining to their directives. It was requested by these standing committees that the chair of this committee be full members of these committees as academic senate representative. The president of this committee attends the meetings of these committees and reported their proceedings to the committee at large. It was reported from the 504/ADA Committee that an extensive discussion on the current university policy on procedures for accommodating employees in need of assistance or may have a disability. These and similar issues will be discussed and investigated by the 504/ADA Committee with contribution with the president of this committee.

Additionally, the chair of this committee participated in the proceedings of the Emergency Management Advisory Committee. This is a newly formed committee tasked with advising the president on campus related safety and emergency issues. The committee discussed the recent Bomb Threat made to QCC campus and the response taken by Public Safety and local authorities. The committee discussed the placement and availability of AED (Automated External Defibrillators) and Trauma Kits to be located at various locations on campus. The committee discussed of the availability of an outdoor loud speaker system for campus wide communications. Additionally it was noted that Public Safety is available to any department on campus for active shooter training. It was also discussed a new alert system called ALERTUS will be implemented that can send campus wide alerts to all computers and telephones.

Recommendations for 2018-2019

The following are the members of the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues for 2017-2018:

Continue to discuss parking and transportation solutions
Continue to participate in the from 504/ADA Committee and QCC Emergency Management Committee
Advocate for a campus environment that communicates openness and trust to the student body
Continue work on the bathroom signage informing occupants on rights of usage

At our May 16, 2018 meeting, Prof. Sara Danzi Engoron was elected as committee chair for the 2018-2019 academic years.

Plans for the 2018-20189 academic year:

- To continue to consider solutions for the parking issues on campus
- To respond to the quality of life needs and queries of campus community.
- Final approval of bathroom signs

Respectfully Submitted,
Dominic Hull, Chair