

Queensborough Community College  
The City University of New York  
Department of English

MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Prof.. Kathleen Villani, Secretary, Academic Senate Steering Committee

**From:** Dr. Susan Jacobowitz, Chair, Bylaws Committee

**Date:** May 10, 2007

**Re:** Bylaws Committee, Annual Report 2006-2007

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**The Committee on Bylaws**

*Members:*

Belle Birchfield

Victor Defazio

Robert Holt (Secretary)

Susan Jacobowitz (Chair)

David Sarno

*Liaisons/Designees:*

Liza Larios, President's Designee

Caf Dowlah, Steering Committee Designee

Jan Ramjerdi, Committee on Committees Designee

Our mission is to consider and make recommendations regarding 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.

**Activity**

Our work this year focused on three areas: The Committee on Ceremonial Occasions, Academic Freedom and the Perez Decision

**The Committee on Ceremonial Occasions.** The Bylaws Committee voted to retain the Committee on Ceremonial Occasions. There was compelling testimony from people who had served or were serving on the committee and from administration representatives that the committee serves a useful and valuable function.

**Academic Freedom.** We have tried to bring ourselves up to speed on the issue of academic freedom by studying various resolutions and policies (including those

emanating from the University Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees) and trying to discern which issues are most important in terms of our focus. There is concern that we not interfere with policies and procedures already in place through the union (collective bargaining, the grievance procedure) or through AAUP. There are concerns about faculty members investigating other faculty members and possibly being held legally responsible for the outcomes of such investigations. It might also engender a climate on campus that is not conducive to good relations or a healthy work environment. It does seem that a good way to proceed would be to create a committee of the Academic Senate so that faculty, HEOs and CLTs are all involved, with charges that focus primarily on information and education. We have had conversations with members of the Faculty Executive Committee to this effect, and they are in agreement. We have undertaken to create a document that can be circulated to the college community to explain the situation now and what some of the pitfalls and hazards might be of acting precipitously. We also recommend that President Marti appoint a special task force to look into all of the implications of creating an academic freedom committee, with particular reliance upon those who have the appropriate legal expertise.

**The Perez Decision.** A review of the Perez decision (1 No. 159 In the Matter of Aneudis Perez, et al., v. The City University of New York, et al., Respondents) was undertaken to determine where we need to make changes to the bylaws in order to be in compliance with the Open Meeting law. A resolution was passed at the meeting of the Academic Senate on May 8, 2007, and the changes that should be made to the bylaws have been forwarded to Dave Moretti.

**Changes to the Bylaws Committee**

Thanks are due to outgoing member Belle Birchfield for her service to the committee. The new committee will be as follows:

- Caf Dowlah
- Joseph Goldenberg
- Robert Holt
- David Sarno
- Cheryl Spencer.

A final meeting for 2007 is scheduled for May 24, 10:00 a.m., H-428, to elect new officers for 2007-2008.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Susan Jacobowitz, May 10, 2007