

**STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CUNY
MONTHLY REPORT
February 11, 2014**

1. Senate Matters: Composition and Membership

All positions in the Academic Senate are filled. Tian Ren replacing Matthew Lau as Faculty-at-large member.

2. Committee Matters: Composition and Membership

All positions on the Academic Senate Committees are filled. Student attendance is less than desired. Remedies are being planned to improve on student attendance. Committees are attempting to fix their meeting times and that should assist student participation.

3. Committee Matters:

The Committee on Committees and the Steering Committee have now completed a proposal to restructure the Standing Committees of the Academic Senate and sent it to the Committee on Bylaws and to relate the new committees to the new MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION Standards for Excellence. The Committee on Bylaws has acted and a resolution is in the current report of the Committee on Bylaws

Objectives include:

- To facilitate the operation of a comprehensive institutional approach to assessment via shared governance and institutional structures
- To accommodate the Middle States Association Review Process with least disruption.
- To provide more opportunities for faculty service to the College by increasing the size of committees
- Providing Staggered terms to insure continuity (faculty members are in multiples of three with 3 year terms)
- Each year most of the committees would involve itself in the annual assessment of those areas under its purview. They would make recommendations as to what they think would improve the assessment process.

Timeline:

PHASE I : Increase the number of positions

Draft of the Proposal December 2013

Approval by the Senate February 2014

PHASE II : Realignment of Committees with Middle States Criteria for Excellence

Draft of Proposal June 2014

PHASE III: Restructuring: Removal of committees, creation of new Committees

Draft of the Proposal December 2014

Approval by the Senate February 2015

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

A. The University Faculty Senate

The University Faculty Senate of The City University Of New York did not meet in November.

B. The CUNY BOT met on November 25, 2013 and took several actions. Available here:

http://policy.cuny.edu/board_meeting_calendars/2013/upcoming_11-25_draft/pdf/#Navigation_Location

Of particular possible interest are these:

C. **CUNY BOT Committee on Faculty, Staff and Administration met on November 4, 2013** and took

several actions. http://policy.cuny.edu/board_committee_documents/faculty_staff_and_administration/summaries/2013/11-04/pdf/#Navigation_Location

Of interest at QCC:

2. Appointment of Denise Ward as Interim Vice President of Pre-College, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development at Queensborough Community College (I-C-2)

5. Appointment of Karen B. Steele as Interim Vice President for Strategic Planning, Assessment & Institutional Effectiveness at Queensborough Community College (I-C-5)

5. Actions of the Steering Committee

A. Revision and reconstruction of the Academic Senate website

- An area (blog) has been created to report on activities of the Committees of the Academic Senate and the Senate itself. <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/governance/academicSenate/as-blogs/news-and-views.html>
- An area has been created to allow candidates for election to seats in the Senate to state their principles and positions for the electorate. <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/governance/academicSenate/CandidatesforSenateMembership.html>
- A page has been created for descriptions of the Standing Committees and what potential faculty and staff members should know about them. http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/governance/academicSenate/What_Faculty_need_to_know.html
- A page has been created for descriptions of the Standing Committees and what potential student members should know about them. http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/governance/academicSenate/What_Students_need_to_know.html

B. Recording of Votes

In order to comply with the Open Meetings Law and the need for a quorum in order to conduct official business, starting with the meeting in December of 2013 when matters are put to a vote in the Academic Senate there will be the options to vote in the affirmative or negative and all other members eligible to vote who are in attendance and not voting either yeah or nay will be recorded as abstaining which would be an accurate rendering of what they are doing. The Open Meetings Law requires a

report to the Public on how each member of the body who was present acted on matters put to a vote. Further, Robert's Rules of Order 11th Edition

“...To “abstain” means not to vote at all, and a member who makes no response if “abstentions” are called for abstains just as much as one who responds to that effect...” (p.45)

“ Although it is the duty of every member who has an opinion on a question to express it by his vote, he can abstain, since he cannot be compelled to vote. By the same token, when an office or a position is to be filled by number of members, as is the case of a committee, or a position on a board, a member may partially abstain by voting for less than for those for whom he is entitled to vote...”(p. 407)

If the Senate wishes to consider other options this should be brought up during the Senate meeting or to the attention of the Steering Committee. The principles challenges to be met are those who are elected to the Senate and do not attend and those who attend but do not participate in the voting. Compliance with the Open Meetings Law on the recording of votes will be met by the insertion of the entire voting record for each meeting at the end of the minutes.

6. Resolutions presented by the Steering Committee for the consideration and disposition by the Academic Senate

A. On Governmental Interference with Free Speech and Academic Freedom at New York Colleges and Universities

Whereas, the CUNY Board of Trustees and CUNY Chancellery have affirmed Academic Freedom at CUNY, and

whereas, Queensborough Community College respects, upholds and is committed to academic freedom, and

whereas, bill was introduced in the New York State Legislature that would penalize institutions by reducing state aid to universities that do not condemn an academic boycott of Israel, and

whereas, there have been concerns that external pressures might be placed upon faculty and/or academic institutions with regard to positions taken on current issues that would compromise Academic Freedom;

therefore, be it resolved that the Academic Senate of Queensborough Community College strongly affirms Academic Freedom for our faculty and our institution and condemns attempts to weaken such by agencies external to the institution.

RATIONALE:

The City University Faculty Senate Executive Committee in December issued a [statement](#) that in part opposed such [outside political pressures and threats](#) being placed upon academic institutions related to the position of individual faculty members and scholarly organizations on current issues of international politics, specifically in connection with recent resolutions such as endorsed by the American Studies Association and the Modern Language Association. We submit that, whatever position individual faculty might adopt relative to these resolutions, academic institutions and their faculty should remain free from such external pressures and threats to the exercise and expression of

their academic judgments and academic freedom. **A letter** was sent to CUNY Interim Chancellor William Kelly, imploring him “to take immediate action to terminate any and all association with this organization”, the ASA, to which he made a **public response at the end of December**.

B. Resolution on QCC-DOE Early College High School Program (B-Tech)

Whereas, as per Article III, Section I of its bylaws, the Academic Senate, as the policy making body of the College, has purview over:

The establishment and location of new units of the College (3)

The formulation of the policy relating to the admission and retention of students, subject to the guidelines of the Board of Trustees, and curriculum, awarding of College credits, and granting of degrees. (5) other areas affecting the welfare of the institution (7)

and

whereas, the proposed Department of Education of New York City and CUNY Queensborough Community College Early College High School project touches upon all these areas;

therefore, be it resolved that :

(1) The Academic Senate provides its approval for the College to be initially involved in this project to develop a program with the NYC Department of Education and,

(2) Representatives of the Academic Senate and/or relevant committees of the Academic Senate will be included in the program development process;

(3) A final description of the participation of the College in the Early College High School project be submitted to the Academic Senate for review and consideration;

(4) A comprehensive annual progress report and assessment, prepared by the College administration, will be submitted for review by the members of the Committee on Curriculum of the Academic Senate annually.

RATIONALE:

The Early College High School project portends a significant development and change in the nature of the Queensborough Community College. While our college has maintained an array of partnerships with institutions of secondary education (through College Now and other initiatives) and the private sector (the partnership with Verizon, for example), Queensborough’s involvement in the Early College Initiative (website at <http://www.earlycolleges.org/>) breaks new ground for our institution, representing a simultaneous partnership with the CUNY Central Office, the Department of Education, and a private sector corporation. Many faculty members have important questions about the direction of this initiative, relative to curricular content, instructional delivery, and the future of students who would attend Queensborough in the course of their involvement with this program. The Academic Senate wishes to insure that these students receive an education consistent with Queensborough’s educational mission and the talents of its dedicated faculty. For this reason, we have already proposed that representatives of faculty governance be officially included in the process of curriculum development and program review from this ground-breaking program’s inception, and throughout its operation.

7. Shared Governance Discussions and the Academic Senate

In our readiness to entertain discussion of all other college-related matters, we wish to remind all members of Queensborough's faculty that all meetings of the Academic Senate are open to the public as per the 2006 Perez decision on Open Meetings Law, as noted in Article I, Section 3, b of the Bylaws of the Academic Senate:

Meetings of the Academic Senate shall be subject to the Open Meetings Law and the Freedom of Information Law. Under the Open Meetings Law, the public has the right to attend any meeting of a public body. Any time a quorum of a public body gathers to discuss business, the meeting must be held in public, subject to the right to convene an executive session under certain limited circumstances. 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.

As always, we pledge to recognize any member of faculty who wishes to contribute to our dialogue.