

## Steering Committee Report to Academic Senate –February 14, 2006

### 1. Meetings of the Academic Senate

On November 17, 2005 the New York State Court of Appeals rendered a unanimous decision that has direct bearing on how meetings of the Academic Senate and its various committees are conducted. This was reported to the Senate in December of 2005. We now are aware of the implications of this court action in more detail.

The Academic Senate meetings will be publicly announced and the public permitted to attend.

#### **Voting**

We will need to decide on the method by which votes will be recorded and made available to those seeking the information.

Here are several possibilities.

Open Ballot Direct: All senate votes will be by show of hands and/or voice and recorded and the minutes will note those who vote in the negative or who abstain. This will indicate that all those in attendance voted in the affirmative unless otherwise noted. It will assume that those listed as attending remained and participated until the meeting was adjourned.

Open Ballot Direct (modified): This would be as the one above but there would be a “sign out” sheet at the door that only those who leave briefly and return or who leave before adjournment would sign with the time they left in order not to be included in the list of those assumed to have voted in the affirmative due to their presence at the meeting.

Open Ballot Written: All senate votes will be by written ballot that are signed. The ballots will be tallied and the results indicated in the minutes. The written ballots or their record will be made available with the Senate minutes in the College Archives (Library).

Open Ballot Combined: All senate votes will be by show of hands and/or voice and recorded and the minutes will note those who vote in the negative or who abstain. At the same time there will be a ballot circulated amongst the Senate members who will each indicate their ballot. This circulated ballot will be made available with the Senate minutes in the College Archives (Library).

Open Ballot Electronic: By use of an audience response system all ballots will be cast by means of a hand held card somewhat like a calculator. The devices will send the ballots to a computer that will tabulate and indicate how each senator has voted. Those tabulations will go into the minutes.

Closed Ballot Possibility:

If the Senate so desires the following option is available for use and it is consistent with legal obligations.

Any member of the Academic Senate would have the right to request a closed ballot vote concerning any item that is to be voted on by the Academic Senate. A Senate Policy could set such a request as one that must be granted. The ballot would operate as follows:

1. Each member of the Senate votes by paper ballot and indicating on it either: yes, no or abstain.
2. Each senator would sign the ballot in a manner that identifies the senator.
3. The ballots would be collected and counted.
4. The results are announced and placed into the minutes
5. The ballots are placed in an envelope and given to the Secretary
6. Should anyone connected with the Senate or the College or CUNY or anyone want the results of the ballot identifying how each senator voted then the request would be made of the Freedom of Information Officer such a report would be prepared and provided to that person
7. the Senate would be informed that a request had been made and the information sent and the name of the person requesting the information would be supplied by the Freedom of Information officer of the college
8. any Senator could then ask for that same information or that the information then be placed in the minutes.

### **Impact on Committees of the Academic Senate**

At this time we believe that the various committees of the Senate do not come under the court decision and the Freedom of Information Law or the Open Meetings Law as they are not the deliberative and policy making bodies.

### **2. The Senate Website**

The Senate Website is found on the Governance webpage of the Queensborough website:  
<http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/default.asp>

The site is now receiving the Agenda and Minutes of all Academic Senate Committees:  
[http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/academic\\_senate\\_committees.asp](http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/academic_senate_committees.asp) .

### **3. New Members of the Senate**

As Pedro Meza is now on Travia Leave and ineligible to serve in the Academic Senate his place has been now occupied by his successor as Chairperson of the Department of History, Professor Gilmar Visoni. We welcome Dr. Visoni to this position in the Senate.

Dr. Kyu Sung Kim has left the position of Chief Librarian. Senator, faculty member-at-large, Devin Feldman has been appointed to the position of acting Chief Librarian as so we both congratulate her and note that she transfers her status in the Senate to one in which she is serving as a Department Chairperson, an administrative position. Her position as faculty member-at-large will be filled by Geoffrey Burleson (Music Dept.) for the remainder of her term (April 2008) or until her return whichever is sooner. We welcome Professor Burleson to his position in the Senate.

Senator Feldman has been dedicated to the college and generous with her time serving on both the Committee on Committees and the Committee on Course and Standing. Unfortunately in

her case, according to the Senate bylaws (See article VII section 1 and then Article VI section 1) she is now ineligible to serve on those committees and so the Committee on Committees has elected Professor Barbara Bonous-Smit to serve on the Committee on Course and Standing and there will be nominations from the floor for her replacement on the Committee on Committees at this meeting of the Senate.

#### **4. Senate Parliamentarian**

Our Parliamentarian, Dr. Pedro Meza, is on Travia Leave in the Spring of 2006. This being the case, there will need to be an election of a new Parliamentarian at this meeting of the Academic Senate. There will be nominations from the floor at this meeting of the Senate.

#### **4. Standing Committees**

##### **Work in Progress:**

The Committee on Bylaws is presenting to the Senate a number of proposals for revisions in the bylaw charges of several current Standing Committees. It continues to work on the changes required by the court decision in the Perez case and other matters.

#### **5. Council of Faculty Governance Leaders Resolution for consideration by the Academic Senate**

The Council of Faculty Governance Leaders voted on November 18, 2005 to request that college senates take a vote on affirming the following resolution unanimously adopted on that date by the Council of Faculty Governance Leaders: "Be It Resolved, that no University-wide degree program should go forward unless approved by the University Faculty Senate."

The QCC Academic Senate Approved of this resolution in December of 2005. There are now over 12 CUNY colleges that have done likewise.

#### **6. The College Policy on Email use**

The QCC Academic Senate Approved of this resolution in December of 2005.

Whereas, there are a number of benefits that accrue to everyone from the use of their college supplied email system,

Be it resolved that: all members of the college community use the college supplied email system to receive and send communications related to any college matter.

Since that time there has been a little bit of discussion concerning its meaning. If any senator wants clarification it might be brought up under "Old Business" at this meeting of the Academic Senate.

**7. Shared Governance, Local Governance Bodies and the QCC Academic Senate**

At a meeting of the Academic Senate (February, 2005) student government members raised the issue of the cancellation of classes for students who are in their last semester at the college. "Student Representative Rose Topal spoke of student concerns regarding class cancellations. President Marti recommended the formation of a task force of students, faculty and administrators to look into the issue under Vice President Mark McCulloch."(Minutes, 2-8-05)

At the same meeting the Academic Senate passed a resolution that increased the maximum class size for writing intensive sections of courses. At that time a Senator Paul Azrak raised the issue that the consequence of the resolution for instructors who taught their entire class load as WI would be an increase that amounted to adding an additional class. There was brief discussion of the matter and then the Vice President of Academic Affairs indicated that he might address this situation on an individual basis.

Following that Senate meeting President Marti expressed the view that they did not think that the Senate had the authority to determine maximum class size although the Senate had done so on two occasions in relation to the Writing Intensive program at QCC. Both the University Faculty Senate and the PSC were contacted for their views on this matter and the administration was to contact the University for its view. The UFS and PSC indicated that class size was a matter for the local governance body to determine according to its governance plan and bylaws. These responses were shared with the President.

Recently, there has been information shared with the governance leaders of the university that indicates that the local governing body does indeed have the authority to set class sizes and limits, both minimum and maximum limits.

As you will see in the report below John Jay College of Criminal Justice has set class size by a policy of its governing body. This action was upheld by the University General Counsel.

This being the case I share the information with members of the QCC Academic Senate should any senators concerned with the matters left unsettled from Spring of 2005 wish to revisit it.

At this time there is no intention on the part of the Steering Committee to advance any proposal for a policy related to class size or the cancellation of classes on students in their last semester. The latter situation appears to be well handled by current practices.

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At John Jay College its College Council passed a policy that set class limits. The President of the College, Gerry Lynch, had objected to the resolution attempting to rule it out of order. Members of the Council demanded a vote on motion on the floor to add the proposal to agenda. A secret ballot was requested because some might be anxious about opposing the administration position. The faculty majority won. The

President, Gerald Lynch, attempted to get the CUNY General Counsel and Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs, Frederick P. Schaffer, to rule it was not within the authority of the governing body to pass such a policy. But, the Vice Chancellor ruled that as long as there was an escape clause for fiscal emergencies allowing the president to overrule under certain conditions of exigency then the governing body could pass such a policy.

The policy set class size limits at various levels for different classes. The max was 36 for most lower level undergrad classes, 24 for senior seminars. The policy also limited the Provost's ability to cancel classes for being too small. It set low minimums. The policy has been followed EXCEPT at 100 level. The administration has claimed that there are not enough classrooms. The largest classes had been 44-45. Now even Freshmen classes are at max of 40 (the policy says they should be 36.) The policy is being followed for soph-senior level.

John Jay College of Criminal Justice College Policy: Primary and Secondary Enrollment Limits <http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~calendar/cc/policy.html>

## John Jay College of Criminal Justice

### College Policy: Primary and Secondary Enrollment Limits

<http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~calendar/cc/policy.html>

The College hereby establishes class size standards.

<b>Type and Level of Class</b>	<b>Primary limit</b>	<b>Secondary limit</b>
Standard Undergraduate	34	36
Intensive Undergraduate, as remedial sections, English composition, ESL, speech, foreign languages, and writing intensive.	<b>16</b>	<b>28</b>
400-Level Undergraduate	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>
Graduate	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>
Large Lecture Sections	Determined by the Provost in consultation with the Department.	Determined by the Provost in consultation with the Department.
Laboratories and Art/Music Studios	Two (2) less than the number of functional stations in the lab	Equal to the number of functional stations in the lab

These limits may be modified only with the approval of the Department Chair or, for graduate courses, the Dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Program Director.

The Secondary Limit is two (2) or three (3) students higher than the Primary Limit. Students may be registered into the Secondary Limit with the approval of the Chair, Program Director (in the case of a graduate course) course faculty member, Dean of Graduate Studies or Associate Provost.

Enrollment limits may be amended by vote of the College Budget Committee, at a meeting or meetings to which the Faculty Senate Executive Committee shall be invited without vote, when the College Budget Committee finds that, for a particular budget year, fiscal conditions require or permit alterations in class sizes. In considering whether fiscal conditions require or permit changes in class sizes, all financial resources available to the College shall be taken into account. After such consultation, the enrollment limits and recommendations of the College Budget Committee shall be subject to a final determination by the President based on the College's financial ability. In the event that the President's determination differs from the recommendation of the College Budget Committee, the President shall promptly reconvene the College Budget Committee, with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee invited without vote, for further consultations.

## **8. The President's creation of the Library Task Force**

On January 6, 2006 President Eduardo J. Marti informed our community that  
“if we accept the fact that our Library is more than a research center; that our Library is a place where students primarily congregate to study and to use reference materials for their study projects; and if we accept the fact that original research is now done primarily via the Internet, then it makes sense for us to consider changing the scope of our Library from a traditional research mode to a learning centered facility.

This need has been recognized by the Library Committee of the Academic Senate in the report presented to the Senate last May. While it did not call for a change in the scope of the Library, it recognized that our Library needs to become the focus of the College's attention by pointing out significant needs relative to space utilization, security and staffing. Partly in response to this report, partly because of the opportunity presented by the change in leadership required by Dr. Kim's retirement, and partly due to the need for space for study groups required by learning communities and the ever-expanding need to incorporate technology in the curriculum, this is an appropriate time to re-examine the function of this very important component of the academic life of our institution.

Therefore, I am naming a Library Task Force to be composed of: 2 Librarians, the Acting Chief Librarian, the Chair of Academic Senate Library Committee, the Chair of the Library Space Utilization Committee, 2 Department Chairs elected by the Chairs, 2 Faculty members-at-large, elected by the Faculty Executive Committee, 2 students elected by the student government, the Director of the Academic Computing Center, the Director of CETL, the Campus Facilities Officer, and the Director of Instructional Support Services. The Task Force will be chaired by Dr. Mark McColloch.

By March 1, the Task Force will have reviewed the arrangement of outstanding community college libraries around the country and will make preliminary recommendations as to how to establish a LEARNING CENTERED FACILITY.

By April 1, the Task Force will have conducted a series of Open Hearings enabling all members of our academic community to voice their opinion on the recommendations.

If needed, at the May meeting of the Academic Senate, the appropriate resolutions needed to effectuate the proposed changes will be considered. “

Following upon this action the following proposal is submitted to the Academic Senate:

### **PROPOSAL for APPROVAL of the ACADEMIC SENATE**

Be it resolved that the Academic Senate:

1. approves of the creation of the Task Force on the Library, and
2. requires that the Chair of the Academic Senate Committee on the Library make monthly reports to the Senate (oral or written) on the progress of the Task Force, and
3. requires that the Chair of the Academic Senate Committee on the Library presents any proposals from the Task Force concerning the Library to the Academic Senate Committee on the Library and then, if needed, that committee will send its proposals and/or those of the Task Force to the Academic Senate for approval.