

**Queensborough Community College
Academic Senate**

To: Dr. Emily Tai, Secretary, Steering Committee
From: Dr. Susan Jacobowitz, UFS representative, for QCC
Date: 1 March 2006
Re: Items on University Faculty Senate Agenda Plenary Session

**The 317th Plenary Session of the University Faculty Senate
The City University of New York
Tuesday, February 28th, 2006, 6:00 p.m.**

Approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved.

Approval of the Minutes of January 2006. The minutes were approved.

Reports.

Chair (oral and written). Lobbying Day is March 21, 2006. There are two provost searches going on. The Teacher Academy for Math and Science is going full-steam ahead.

OLBA passed the Board yesterday, despite the objection by Susan O'Malley. There are ongoing concerns about the curriculum (too thin), faculty (not full-time), governance issues and the adequacy and vagueness of the budget.

The flash enrollments are out – first-time freshmen are down, first-time students are up. There are 263 part-time students at School of Professional Studies (SPS) after three years. They have a very large staff. OLBA will increase their numbers. There are about ten administrators, some part-time, but more than for the CUNY BA, which has four or five administrators for 500 students. Our objections to OLBA will be taken to State Ed now, where there will probably be a response to some of them. A draft letter opposing OLBA will be circulated. SPS is supposed to undergo evaluation this summer – it is three years old. CAPRA may be doing the evaluation. The question was raised whether it might be possible to get Middle States involved as well. SPS was supposed to generate graduate school scholarships. They gave \$100,000 their second year to the graduate school and none since. Now there will be tax levied funds to support both SPS and the OLBA.. In addition SPS will be moved into offices in the Grad Center since it has grown too large for 80th Street.

The flash enrollment numbers show graduate students down. Those in education are going elsewhere. The tuition increase may have contributed. Teacher vouchers are being stamped by Empire State. Private programs like the one at Touro are more competitive. The tuition increase has proven disastrous for Brooklyn College – they were hardest hit.

Colleges have been using the results of the faculty satisfaction survey in different ways. There will be a conference in April at John Jay to discuss best practices and nationwide

norms. This survey can help provide assessment of college presidents and it has gotten the attention of administrators; it should be repeated. Would it be possible to correlate with the student satisfaction survey? Perhaps not, since the questions and focus are different. It was suggested that faculty should be featured at the April conference and that we shouldn't just focus on national norms.

Regarding the Perez decision, governance at La Guardia is being re-worked and there are other changes going on as well. Some campuses are really struggling and the UFS would like to help. Colleges should ask for assistance. Some places are having a problem with the system of alternates for a quorum, with revising governance plans, etc. We might need smaller governing bodies and fewer students on them if students don't attend. Hunter has 202 members in their governing body; another campus has more students than faculty as representatives.

City College has had a big drop in graduate students. There is an influx of undergraduates but a lot of students are lost after the second year. Is this true everywhere?

Two things going on the listserv for more exploration: which courses and which professors get evaluated, and how? What's happening on campuses with regard to mentoring?

Resolution. A proposal was introduced that mandates the creation of academic freedom standing committees at each campus. It was approved with one friendly amendment to include the word "resolved."

PSC-CUNY Grants. We've been told that grants, money for the welfare fund and salaries all have to come from the same pool. We need to find other sources of money. A recent survey indicates that 47% of the grants funded by the PSC lead to external sources of funding as well.

Possible Restructuring of the Doctoral Sciences. This is of great concern to faculty and all campuses. Recently Chancellor Goldstein expressed his belief that we have too many graduate students in the sciences and that the students we have are not "good enough." He wants to have fewer and offer more funding. But really this is an attack on the consortium model in use that could have far-reaching implications for CUNY as a whole, particularly when it comes to undergraduate science education. If we have one or two flagship campuses (Hunter and City College), programs at other campuses would atrophy. Specialty departments wouldn't be able to provide the same kind of background or training. We will lose students, faculty, grants, federal funding. Undergraduates need to do research, publish and present now to get into graduate school. These opportunities would diminish. Faculty who worked with outside evaluators brought in to assess the situation gave reports and said that the evaluators seemed to agree with their arguments and validate their concerns. It was suggested that a few administrative changes could deal with some of the problems – like students not having valid IDs to have access to facilities at host institutions – without dismantling and destroying the working consortium model now in place.

There are no lab facilities at the Grad Center so all lab work is done on the campuses. Other colleges want to participate and become part of the consortium – the chemistry department at York College has recently become involved. Strong undergraduate programs should lead

to the development of graduate programs – otherwise undergraduate education will suffer as well. In an article in the NY Times several years ago, Chancellor Goldstein spoke about his desire NOT for flagship campuses but for a “flagship environment.” Nobody knows why this has changed. It would be very detrimental to have science instruction isolated on one or two campuses. Students need access to research experience and research active faculty. Reducing by 50% the number of doctoral students will reduce the ability to draw and retain faculty. Ph.D. students should be getting full tuition remission. There is a feeling that the desire to reduce the number of Ph.D.s in favor of increasing the number of MA students is about money. Academic decisions should not be made based on the desire to maximize tuition revenue. We need more science Ph.D.s. We accept only four neuroscience Ph.D. candidates a year, for example, because of funding – the jobs are not only in academe but also in industry and our graduates are aggressively recruited by top-tier institutions and large companies. If we lose magnet programs (pipeline, bridge, etc.) and federal funding we will also lose the ability to recruit and train minorities.

Nothing can happen unless this proposal passes the graduate council. Faculty need to resist a restructuring that dismantles the current approach, reduces the number of graduate Ph.D. students and weakens the undergraduate programs in science throughout CUNY.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Jacobowitz
March 1, 2006