

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Senate Matters: Composition and Membership

2. Committee Matters: Composition and Membership

As of December 9, 2008, Senate and Committee membership is stable. The Steering Committee wishes to renew its thanks to Dr. Jannette Urciuoli and the members of the Committee on Committees, as well as the members of Student Government and Ms. Gisela Rivera, for maintaining faculty and student representation on Committees of the Academic Senate.

3. Committee Matters: Activities

The attached agenda includes a report and resolution from the Academic Senate Committee on Curriculum. In addition to the attached resolution, the Committee on Curriculum anticipates a report to the Academic Senate from the Committee's Special Subcommittee on the Status of the Humanities at Queensborough, whose membership has been augmented to include representation from the Department of Music, as well as any recommended actions as a result of the Committee on Curriculum's representation on the Sustainability Campus Council. The Steering Committee also anticipates hearing from the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues, as its chairs and membership also work with Vice-President Call and Dean Marchese on the Sustainability Campus Council.

As of this writing, the Steering Committee has also requested information concerning the work of the Special Committee to Evaluate the Assessment Database. We are aware that the Committee has encountered a few scheduling problems, engendered by the demands of the pending Middle States review, but we are hoping to have actionable recommendations from this committee within the near future as well.

As many members of the Academic Senate will be aware, a variety of factors—from anticipated enrollment surge engendered by the shifting economy to our own college's Strategic Plan process—have moved college administration to revisit the notion of expanding Queensborough's offerings of Asynchronous and Hybrid on-line courses. Members of the Academic Senate will be familiar with the recommendations concerning Distance Learning that were submitted by the Committee on Distance Education last year under the leadership of Professor Patrick Wallach. (These recommendations are available at <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/DE/documents.asp>.)

The Steering Committee wishes to report to the Senate membership on the extraordinary efforts of the Committee on Distance Education, now chaired by Dr. Edward Volchok, to insure that action is taken on these recommendations. As of this writing, the Committee on Distance Education has initiated queries to the registrar regarding the promotion of registration into on-line courses; and begun inquiries into whether the current STX-100 course, which freshmen will be required to take as of fall, 2009, will include a computer literacy component. At the invitation of the Steering Committee, the Committee on Distance Education has also partnered with members of the Committee on Academic Development, chaired by Dr. Joan Petersen, to develop a faculty evaluation form that would address the particular

needs and concerns of students in on-line classes. The Steering Committee wishes to thank the chairs and members of both committees, who have been hard at work on honing this evaluation form, which we hope will be available for the Senate's review in the new year. Should a modification of the STX-100 curriculum be required to inculcate computer literacy, the Steering Committee plans to encourage a similar partnership between the Committee on Distance Education and the Committee on Curriculum to move this forward, and to see if even more comprehensive partnerships—between the Committee on Distance Education, Committee on Curriculum, the Committee on Academic Development, and the Committee on WID/WAC—might be forged to train faculty less versed in on-line instruction, and formulate recommendations concerning optimal class size, best pedagogical practices in on-line courses, and intellectual property and privacy issues, where they might apply to faculty curriculum or student performance. The Steering Committee has been advised that protocols for the peer evaluation of on-line faculty for observation purposes have also been developed by the Professional Staff Congress and will also be posted by Dr. Volchok on the “Documents” portion of the Distance Education website.