

1. Senate Matters: Composition and Membership

Last December, the Steering Committee, acting in concert with the Committee on Committees, circulated a petition among College Laboratory Technicians and Department chairs, requesting the nomination of a College Laboratory Technician who might be elected from the Senate Floor to join Pedro Irigoyen as the second of two CLT Senators, elected to replace Charlie Prancel, who has retired from the College. The Committee on Committees and the Steering Committee was delighted to report that we received a nomination for this representative, Mr. John Luby, Senior College Laboratory Technician in the Department of Business. Although we were unable to conduct an election at the December Academic Senate, we are delighted to announce our intention to do so at the February meeting of 2011.

The Steering Committee would like to renew its thanks to Charlie Prancel for his outstanding service to the Academic Senate, and to wish him the very best in retirement. We also wish the very best to Dr. Sheena Gillespie, outgoing and retiring chair of the Department of English, as well as Dr. Linda Stanley, also of the Department of English. We welcome Dr. Linda Reesman, new chair of the Department of English, and welcome Dr. Todd Holden, Department of Physics, who will be joining the Academic Senate as a new representative; Dr. Chong Jue of the Department of Biological Sciences and Geology, who will be replacing Senator Linda Stanley, Professor of English, who is retiring from the college; and Dr. Andrew Nguyen, who replaces the retiring Dr. Francis Cotty, whose service was valued not only in the Senate, but as the Chair and member of several Academic Senate committees, including the Committee on Curriculum, and the Committee on eLearning, during its years at the Committee on Distance Education.

We hope all retiring Senators will accept the Steering Committee's warmest and most sincere wishes for a fulfilling and pleasant retirement.

The Steering Committee would also like to welcome Dr. Jannette Urciuoli (Counseling), who returns from leave this Spring, as well as the new representatives of Student government, whose names were not available as of this writing, but whom we are hoping will be introduced at the February 8, 2011 meeting of the Academic Senate.

2. Committee Matters: Composition and Membership

Membership on committees of the Academic Senate is stable at this time.

2. Committee Matters: Activities

- As members of the Academic Senate may be aware, on 24 January, 2011, the City University of New York Board of Trustees passed a new policy which prohibits the use of tobacco on all grounds and facilities under CUNY's jurisdiction — indoor and outdoor— as well as tobacco industry promotions and marketing on campus properties, and tobacco industry sponsorship of athletic events and athletes. (A full press release on the policy is available at the CUNY website, at <http://www1.cuny.edu/mu/forum/2011/01/24/cuny-trustees-expand-policy-prohibiting->

[use-of-tobacco-making-cuny-the-largest-smoke-free-public-university-system-in-the-united-states/](#)). Many members of the Queensborough Community College community will hail the smoking ban, which our own Academic Senate anticipated in a fall, 2010 vote to ban smoking on our own campus; but the next challenge lying before us is Chancellor Goldstein's mandate that each campus craft an implementation policy by June, 2011 that would go into full effect no later than 2012. Those members of our community who follow our own college's Community Dialogue and other CUNY-wide listserves will be aware that several of our senators and campus colleagues have advanced suggestions concerning implementation, while the Professional Staff Congress has queried issues regarding implementation of the new policy, as well. The Steering Committee is inviting all members of the campus community to join their colleagues in considering these matters, and forwarding all suggestions to the chair and members of the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues. We are asking this committee to incorporate these suggestions into a document of recommendations to be forwarded to Queensborough's administration by our April meeting, if possible, so that any matters suitable for resolution might be considered by the Academic Senate for a vote.

- Those who have been reading the Queensborough Community College Community Dialogue notices and the listserve for members of the University Faculty Senate may also be aware of an initiative, discussed at CUNY's Council of Presidents (COPS), whereby students who showed evidence of significantly inadequate preparation in all three remedial areas of reading, writing, and mathematics--are being steered to a new, intensive program known as CUNY Start, or the "College Transition Initiative" (CTI). Currently in place as an option for "triple remedial" students at Borough of Manhattan Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Hostos Community College, and Kingsborough Community College, this CTI program operates similarly to the CLIP program in being a shorter, more intensive immersion program.

There are some members of faculty who are genuinely disturbed by this development, which appears to supersede certain aspects of the current system of remediation that have traditionally been associated with the preservation of CUNY's Open Admissions policy at the two-year colleges—a crucial commitment, given the elimination of remediation at the senior colleges that was implemented at the end of the 90s. It is, meanwhile, being argued by CUNY Administration and several supporting organizations—particularly faculty and administrators involved in the Black Males Initiative (BMI)--that the CTI program is more efficient and more effective. Only approximately 5% of students requiring triple remediation ultimately graduate after four years. Many consume all their TAP-eligible funds unsuccessfully attempting remedial courses. The CTI immersion, by contrast, although not TAP-eligible, is offered at an affordable price. Preliminary data is suggesting that pass rates for students undertaking this immersion is considerably higher, at 70-75%. CTI programs are being offered during the day and evenings and weekends, for non-traditional students.

As communications from our Academic Senate Parliamentarian have argued, a case for the CTI program can, and might be made. Indeed, it might even be argued that such an innovation would uphold, rather than threaten, the spirit of Open Admissions. And yet, it

is the Steering Committee's contention that any introduction of the CTI program on to our campus—a move, we have been informed, contemplated for Fall, 2011--needs to be considered within the context of our faculty governance system, which variously locates purview over standards of admission, academic programs, and curricular rigor under the various auspices of the Committees on Admission, Curriculum, and Academic Development, as per the City University By-laws, and the Queensborough Governance Plan, as noted by our Senate parliamentarian, Dr. Pecorino:

CUNY Board of Trustees Bylaws (Section 8.13): *“There shall be a university faculty senate, responsible, subject to the board, for the formulation of policy relating to the academic status, role, rights, and freedoms of the faculty, university level educational and instructional matters, and research and scholarly activities of university-wide import.”*

The QCC Governance Plan (Article I.C.4): *“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. In granting of degrees student members of the Senate shall not vote. “*

The Steering Committee would therefore like to request that instructors and administrators responsible for the introduction of any CTI program on to Queensborough's campus submit all relevant materials to these three committees for review. We would also like to recommend that the faculty of our Department of Basic Educational Skills be given an opportunity to review these programs, so that there may be cooperation among all faculty involved in developmental education at Queensborough. To the extent that these immersion programs may involve new, innovative, pedagogical practices, we believe that an open discussion of any such strategies would be valuable both to our faculty and to our students. We moreover believe the Academic Senate to be the appropriate place for any discussion of the implications of immersion and semester-long remedial options for the realization of Queensborough's institutional mission.

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

As per our December meeting of the Academic Senate, and Chancellor Goldstein's November 19 meeting of CUNY Faculty Governance Leaders, it was determined that the best response to the agreement of the Chancellor's office and the University Faculty Senate that governance bodies should be involved in the resource allocation process was for the Academic Senate to create a special committee, as per Article VII, Section II of the By-laws of the Academic Senate:

The Academic Senate may establish such standing and ad hoc committees as it determines. Each committee shall elect a chairperson, secretary, and such other officers as may be appropriate.

1. Special Committees:

Special committees may be created by action of the Academic Senate for specific purposes. Special committees shall be elected by the Senate

The following resolution is accordingly offered by the Steering Committee for vote by the Academic Senate

RESOLUTION: to create a Special Budget Advisory Committee of the Academic Senate

Whereas, Article VII, section II of the Bylaws of the Queensborough Academic Senate empower the Senate to create and elect special committees;

Be it resolved that the Academic Senate creates a special Budget Advisory Committee that will operate from Spring 2011 to the end of the 2011-2012 Academic Year.
and

Be it further resolved that the Composition of this Budget Advisory Committee would be as follows:

- One representative from the Steering Committee of the Academic Senate;
- One representative from the Budget Committee of the College Personnel and Budget Committee/Committee of Chairs;
- One representative from the Faculty Executive Committee;
- One representative from Student Government;
- Queensborough's Vice-President for Finance and Administration, acting in an ex-officio capacity

and

Be it resolved that, the Academic Senate Budget Advisory Committee be charged:

* to serve in an advisory capacity to the President on matters of the College budget in its entirety including the Resource Allocation Process

* to hold the discussions and transactions of this Budget Advisory Committee confidential

* to report to the College Advisory Planning Committee (CAPC) and the Academic Senate any recommendations of this special committee, if needed

* to issue a report to the Academic Senate at the end of its duration as to its continuation as a standing committee albeit perhaps with some changes to its composition and charge if thought needed

RATIONALE: The budget shortfalls at the state and municipal level are imposing the strong possibility of drastic cuts upon the CUNY Community Colleges (with Mayor Bloomberg's latest proposed cut amounting to a reduction of 15.4% in city funding. Several million dollars may also be cut from the state budget for City University institutions for fiscal years 2011 and 2012. CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein has urged campuses to work together to face the current environment of fiscal challenge.

Article VII, section II of the Bylaws of the Queensborough Academic Senate empower the Senate to create and elect special committees which is now the mechanism being recommended in response to the current need.

- The University Faculty Senate is also continuing to work with the Administration to address the Chancellor's concern, as per the report authored by Dr. Julia Wrigley on behalf of the Working Group on Transfer and Articulation, established by Executive Vice-Chancellor and University Provost Alexandra W. Logue of the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs, entitled "Improving Student Transfer at CUNY."

As senators may recall, the purpose of this report is to outline the difficulty that the 67% of CUNY students who complete their degrees after transferring between at least one institution and another encounter on their path to the baccalaureate.

Many are obliged to complete far more than 120 credits—not, as might be imagined, in the course of exploring exciting new academic paths, but simply because courses they took at one institution may not count toward the requirements for a chosen major at a second.

Queensborough's involvement in this task force was largely positive; our own Interim President Call served as a member; and page 9 of this report specifically mentions Queensborough's Mathematics 210 as a course that "transfers many different ways" across CUNY. However, because some colleges, and especially community colleges, cannot boast such portability, the University is reviewing models for transferability at SUNY and the University of Georgia to see if there is a way that CUNY could streamline this process for students.

One possible approach would be to create a "core curriculum" that would transfer across CUNY. Because this might be disruptive to the integrity of programs at individual colleges, another approach, which the UFS favors, would involve the revival, and possible the extension of "disciplinary committees with representation from senior, comprehensive, and community colleges (p. 27)."

The Steering Committee has asked Mr. Moretti, our campus webmaster, to place this report on the Queensborough governance website for the review of Senators at <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/transfer-report.asp>.

As of this writing, the University Faculty Executive Committee has been advised that the CUNY Central Office is most inclined to support a "core curriculum" of 36 credits, which would cover the basic areas of arts and humanities; social sciences, and sciences" by listing courses that meet certain recognized learning outcomes in terms of skill-building and content, along with the possible identification of 3-6 courses in those majors that attract the largest number of students, which the Central Office would like to see become interchangeable and portable across CUNY.

While the latter goal would be met through existing, and, perhaps, newly convened disciplinary councils, the Central Administration may be inclined to support a fresh consideration of “General Education,” such as was undertaken on this campus under the leadership of Drs. Gray and Stanley several years ago, with the new objective of encouraging cross-campus conversations about what a General education core might look like. A specific dimension of this process might be an effort to reconsider the A.A.S. degree, as this is apparently the degree with which students have the most difficulty when they attempt to transfer.

So as we undertake to consider the questions of campus curricula, and credit portability, we may also be challenged to consider: what degrees best serve the long-term interests of our students? Are there ways to rigorously prepare those students who cultivate academic proficiencies and talents for the next stage of their academic careers without compromising their ability to earn their next degree in a timely fashion?

The Steering Committee has already received some comments on these points from various members of our science faculty which we have relayed to our colleagues in faculty governance; but the Steering Committee would now like to propose one additional step, in the creation of a Special Committee on General Education Learning Outcomes, whose charge it would be to conduct and lead campus discussions concerning our current General Education objectives, and learning outcomes, in relation to City University articulation policy. What data/evidence do we have that students are learning what we’ve decided we want them to know? How could we harness thirty-six credits to achieve a true general education across disciplines? What implications might critiques of particular degrees—such as the A.A.S.—have for degree portability? We are imagining this committee as a group that would include representation from Queensborough’s Office of Academic Affairs; the Faculty Executive Committee; members of the Academic Senate (particularly from the Steering Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the Assessment Committee); as well as representatives from different departments and disciplines. We welcome comments concerning this proposal.