

**STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CUNY
MONTHLY REPORT
October 8, 2013**

1. Senate Matters: Composition and Membership

All positions in the Academic Senate are filled but for one with student government.

2. Committee Matters: Composition and Membership

All annual reports are now received or accounted for.

3. Committee Matters: Activities

Of note are the following:

The Committee on Bylaws will be considering a resolution to remove the Committee on Ceremonial Occasions due to the action of the Senate in May , 2013 in which the Senate was opposed ot creating any official College Ceremonies at all and for which the Committee might render service and recommendations and fulfill its charges.

The Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Issues will be considering what if anything is to be done to support a climate of mutual respect and the intolerance for bullying at the College and on parking availability for faculty during peak class meeting times.

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

A. The University Faculty Senate

The 375th Plenary Session of The University Faculty Senate of The City University Of New York , Tuesday, September 9, 2013, 6:30 p.m. adopted no resolutions.

At some point in the near future the faculty of QCC will be asked to ratify a change in the UFS Charter intended to make it less cumbersome to amend that charter. It may look very close to this:

**Proposed Amendment to the UFS Charter
(Section 1 revised Sept. 9, 2013)**

ARTICLE VIII -- AMENDMENTS AND RATIFICATION (matter struck to be deleted, matter underline to be added)

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§1. Proposal. Amendments to the Charter may be proposed by:

- a. majority vote of the Senate;
- b. majority vote of the Executive Committee;
- c. application by one-fifth of the faculty councils (including alternative forms of faculty council bodies as defined in §15) of the constituent units;
- d. petition of two percent of those persons referred to in Article II, Section 1.a. of this Charter, provided the signatures are drawn from at least three of the constituent units

Any such proposal must include the text of the proposed amendment.

§2. Notice. After an amendment has been proposed in accordance with §1, the proposed amendment shall be posted on the UFS website or other then-equivalent electronic platform, with notice pursuant to Charter Art. III. In addition, by the dates specified for notice to Senators and Alternates in Charter Art. III, the proposed amendment will be disseminated electronically to all faculty governance leaders.

§3. Meetings. The proposed amendment will be placed on the agenda of two regularly scheduled plenaries for discussion only and will be voted on at the ~~next subsequent~~ regularly scheduled plenary following the second plenary discussion meeting.

§4. Vote. An amendment is enacted when it is approved by an affirmative vote of 60% of all ~~incumbent~~ members of the Senate and Alternates eligible to vote. For example, if there are 10 delegations, each consisting of 10 Senators and 2 Alternates, 60 votes would be needed, since only 10 members can vote from each delegation, even if Alternates substitute for Senators.

§5. Alternative forms of faculty council. In the absence of a faculty council, an alternative representative faculty body designated under the governance plan of the unit shall be deemed to be equivalent to a faculty council for the purposes of this Article. In the absence of both a faculty council and an alternative representative faculty body, the functions of the faculty council described in this Article shall be carried out either by the entire faculty acting as a collective body or by means of a mechanism designated by the faculty of the constituent unit in consultation with the Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate.

- B. The CUNY BOT met on September 30, 2013 and took several actions. Available here: <http://www.cuny.edu/about/trustees/meetings.html>
- C. The CUNY Office dealing with the university budget has requested some input from the university proposing the budget priorities for the 2015-2016 budget request that the CUNY will send to the state government. The Academic Senate will be polled in this informal process and the results forward to the UFS Budget Advisory Committee for its next meeting with the CUNY Vice Chancellor.

INFORMAL POLL

What would you rank as your highest priority?

- A. More Full-time faculty
- B. Improved Facilities (labs, equipment, space)
- C. Increased Student Support Programs
(Counselors/Academic Advisors, ASAP, Freshman Learning Academies)
- D. More Student Scholarships
- E. Increased Faculty Research Support

5. Actions of the Steering Committee

A. Revision and reconstruction of the Academic Senate website

It will be possible to create both an area to report on activities of the Committees of the Academic Senate and the Senate itself and an area for discussions of matters set before the Academic Senate. We will attempt to bring this about quite soon.

B. Discussions have begun with the chairpersons of the committees of the Academic Senate on September 18, 2013 on the restructuring of the Standing Committees of the Academic Senate. The Steering Committee and Committee on Bylaws will be working to restructure the committees of the Academic Senate and attempt to have them relate to the criteria for excellence of the Middle States Association for Accreditation. The new structure may include some of the present committees intact. Among the aims of this effort are:

- More members on committees
- Staggered terms to insure continuity

- Reducing the workload for MSA accreditation reviews

C. Recording of Votes—once again inviting input from Senators

In order to comply with the Open Meetings Law and the need for a quorum in order to conduct official business, starting in the Fall 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.

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

None for this meeting.

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.