

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, QUALITY OF LIFE AND DISABILITY ISSUES of the
ACADEMIC SENATE**

TO: Dr. Joel Kuszai, Chairperson, Academic Senate Steering Committee

FROM: Profs. Leah Anderst and Dominic Hull, Co-Chairs, Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Issues

SUBJECT: Annual Report of the Committee on Environment Quality of Life and Disability Issues for September 2016-May 2017

DATE:

Committee Members:

Prof. Leah Anderst, Co-Chair
Prof. Dominic Hull Co-Chair
Prof. Sara Danzi Engoron, Secretary
Prof. Edward Davis, Member
Prof. Jonathan Funk, Member
Mr. Benami Freier, Member
Prof. Wei Lei, Member
Prof. Julia Rothenberg, Member
Prof. Weier Ye, Member

Chong Jue, Liaison to the Committee on Committees
Sheila Beck, Liaison to the Steering Committee
Vice-President William Faulkner, Liaison, President's Designee

Mr. Mel Rodriguez, Environmental Health and Safety, Committee Liaison
Mr. John Triolo, Office of Campus Safety, Committee Liaison
Ms. Isabel Hocesvar, R.N., Office of Health Services, Committee Liaison
Victor Silva and Sherice Leggette, Student Members

Number of Committee Meetings: The Committee on Environment, Quality of Life and Disability Issues met four times during the 2016-2017 academic year.

During 2016-2017, Vice President William Faulkner served as the President's Designee to the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues.

Space Allocation/Utilization/Facilities

Science Building Renovations and Concerns

The Committee held discussions regarding safety concerns surrounding the slipperiness of the concrete at the entrance to the Atrium. Initially, large mats were placed at the entrance to alleviate slip and fall concerns. Bill Faulkner informed the committee that the construction company will be sand blasting the entrance area to rough-up the surface. This was completed during the fall semester.

The committee discussed the leaking observed in the Science Building Atrium. Bill Faulkner informed the committee that emergency work has taken place to remedy the leaking in the Atrium. Additionally, the committee discussed enclosing the Atrium during the winter months to make it more user friendly for students. Bill Faulkner informed the committee that enclosing the Atrium is part of the second phase of the project. The second is scheduled to begin in June 2018. Until then it may be possible to add temporary barrier reduce airflow during winter months.

Parking Concerns

At the beginning of the semester, the committee chairs brought parking questions to the committee from members of the FEC and the Steering Committee that remained from parking discussions last year. Discussions focused on parking passes, who received them and plans for making them available for purchase online or by credit card in person. Parking lot 2, where mostly students park (though the lot is open to all of the QCC community for a daily fee), was discussed as far as making it limited to faculty and staff, but the committee was not in favor of this. In the final meeting of the semester, a draft document for parking improvements was discussed by committee members. The draft included an increase in yearly parking fees for staff and faculty as well as a comparison of fees on other CUNY campuses and explanations of what the increased fees might fund. Committee members expressed concern with the high percentage increase (from \$60 to \$100), but overall the committee did not object to the proposals in the draft document, which would be voted on by the Auxiliary.

Computer Classrooms and Hallway Crowding

Over the year, and together with the computer resources committee, the committee discussed the issue of hallway crowding between peak class meeting times. Students must wait outside locked “smart classrooms” until their professor arrives and unlocks the door. The committee discussed the reason for the locked rooms and possible alternatives which would reduce crowding as well as demonstrate a sense of trust to our students. The committee agreed that certain labs should remain locked until the professor arrives. It was concluded that faculty members should discuss implementing an informal policy within their departments to make logical and practical arrangements between faculty members that are using the same classroom back to back. Podiums and many hallways are already monitored by surveillance cameras. After attending a meeting of the computer resources committee, co-chair Prof. Anderst found that it did not seem possible to create one policy that fits each department. After some discussion, our committee decided that since individual departments have different needs, each department should decide on its own policies for student access to classrooms. As an example, in English the CLTs have been opening lab doors to ease hallway crowding and allow the students into the classrooms early.

College Health and Environment Issues

Water Testing - DH

Thus issue was initiated by the FEC at the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester. The FEC requested that the committee examine how often water quality was tested at the water fountains on campus and what are the

results of these test. Initially the committee was informed by Mel Rodriguez (Environmental Health and Safety Office) that water quality tests were not mandated at QCC except for when a daycare facility is on campus. Furthermore, as per Bill Faulkner, there were no plans, initially, to study water quality as no issues to date had been reported. Additionally new water fountains were being installed campus. The committee was subsequently informed by Bill Faulkner that water quality on campus will be tested in each building. Information on conducting the water quality tests was being gathered from various companies. Water quality is routinely evaluated by NYC however testing at QCC will assure that no local contamination has occurred. Water quality test will be the same as the NYC public schools with standards set by the NYC Department of Health. This summer water quality was assessed by ATC Group Services and found to meet the applicable US EPA threshold for lead and copper. ATC Group Services recommends no further sampling of water quality at QCC. The issue of water quality is now currently resolved until future reevaluation is needed.

Bathroom Signage and Gender

In our first meeting, Mary Jane Shaw, the former Title 9 Coordinator, visited the committee meeting to discuss the new executive order from the NYC Mayor's office. The order designates the use of "all gender" uniform signage on campus single occupancy restrooms. This will also include signage inside restrooms that supports the use by anyone who identifies with the gender designated on the door. While it technically does not include CUNY, CUNY Central intends to comply with the order and QCC will implement the recommendation. In our final meeting, it was noted that bathroom gender notification signs were up in all of the bathrooms on campus. A committee member pointed out, however, that the signs are extremely small. We made an inquiry with Administration for an explanation since larger signs might be more effective.

Safety and Security Issues

Annual Security Report

The 2016 security report (the Clery Report) was provided to the committee. The co-chairs noted a decrease in reported crimes from 2014 to 2015 (the most recent year reported on in the document). The report was not formally discussed in a meeting.

Security Cameras on Campus

The committee looked into the maintaining of security cameras and footage during the 2015/2016 academic year and wrote up a report on the issue. A few concerns remained this year, which the committee continued to discuss, particularly the methods for storing and requesting access to footage. Security cameras are in smart classrooms and are aimed at the podium. ACC keeps the videos and department Chairs can request to review them if necessary. In our third meeting of the year, Bill Faulkner clarified a new policy: no videos will be released to anyone without his permission.

Sanctuary Campus

The committee received via email a request from a student seeking support for the Sanctuary Campus movement on campus and throughout CUNY. The committee initially intended to draft its own resolution in support of Sanctuary Campus at QCC. However, since the Steering Committee of the Academic Senate was simultaneously drafting their own resolution, we instead decided as a committee to lend our support to Senate's resolution. The committee reviewed the Sanctuary Campus resolution generated by the Senate and conducted a vote via email. A majority of committee members approved the Senate's resolution. Subsequently, the Academic Senate passed the Sanctuary Campus resolution. A similar resolution was adopted CUNY wide so thereafter.

Health and Safety Data

The committee received a report on QCC Campus Issues spanning from September 2015 to February 2017. This report was presented to the committee by Clara Wajngurt. The committee reviewed the campus issues report and offered suggestions for future reports. Some of the issues on the campus issue report that have been specifically addressed by the committee. These issues include parking, security camera footage usage and quality of drinking water. The committee suggested that the campus issues report should be subdivided into categories with summaries for each category to facilitate easy dissemination of the information. Additionally, a comparison of issues from year-to-year should be generated in order to identify persistent problems that either reoccur or that has not been satisfactorily addressed.

Recommendations for 2017-2018

The following are the members of the Committee on Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues for 2017-2018:

Continue to discuss parking and transportation solutions
Advocate for larger inclusion bathroom signage
Continue to consider the best ways to address campus safety concerns
Advocate for a campus environment that communicates openness and trust to the student body

Prof. Dominic Hull, Chair
Prof. Sara Danzi Engoron, Secretary
Prof. Edward Davis, Member
Mr. Benami Freier, Member
Prof. Jonathan Funk, Member
Prof. Wei Lei, Member
Prof. Patricia Kinneary, Member
Prof. Weier Ye, Member
Prof. Tony Monahan, Member
Vice-President William Faulkner, Liaison, President's Designee

Mr. Mel Rodriguez, Environmental Health and Safety, Committee Liaison
Mr. John Triolo, Office of Campus Safety, Committee Liaison
Ms. Isabel Hocevar, R.N., Office of Health Services, Committee Liaison

At our May 10, 2017 meeting, Prof. Dominic Hull was elected as committee chair for the 2017-2018 academic year, and Sara Danzi Engoron was elected as secretary.

Plans for the 2017-2018 academic year:

- to continue to consider solutions for the parking issues on campus
- to respond to the quality of life needs and queries of campus community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Leah Anderst, Co-Chair
Dominic Hull, Co-Chair