

BROOKLYN COLLEGE  
OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
FACULTY COUNCIL

February 11, 2014

- (6048) Call to order      The fifth meeting of Faculty Council for the 2013-20134 academic year was called to order at 3:30 pm in the Woody Tanger Auditorium by the chair, Professor Langsam (CIS).
- (6049) Roll call      The roll call was taken at the door. Department Chairs and Representatives: Grayson (Acct), Bankoff (Anthro & Archeao), Ciszkowska (Chemistry), Shannon (ECAE), Alonso & Chang (Modern Lang.), Miyano (Physics), Currah & Law (PoI Sci); School Delegates: were absent (-9); Trivedi (Philosophy.) were excused (-1); Administrators: Gilbert, Hewitt, Fitzgerald, Gold, Joyner & Ali were also absent and excused. All other members were present.
- (6050) Minutes of December 10, 2013      Professor Langsam presented the minutes of December 10, 2013. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- (6051) Steering Committee      On behalf of Faculty Council and the Steering Committee, Professor Langsam declared that all were very pleased to see that Provost Tramontano had returned to campus. We wish him continued health and welcome him back.
- Professor Langsam stated that the Steering Committee had nothing to report.
- (6052) Communications from the Administration      President Gould stated that she was pleased to have the Provost back. We are all thrilled, she declared.
- President Gould introduced Assistant Vice President for Communications and Marketing Carey. AVP Carey comes from the Brooklyn Public Library. At Brooklyn College, he has a large portfolio, which is very impressive. Especially important is that he is very knowledgeable about new media and has interesting ways of thinking about disseminating information. President Gould encouraged faculty members to send e-mails to AVP Carey about any good news or about getting their ideas out there. His e-mail is [jcarey@brooklyn.cuny.edu](mailto:jcarey@brooklyn.cuny.edu).
- President Gould spoke about meeting the incoming Chancellor Milliken in the past week. She stated that he is very approachable, articulate, friendly, and responsive. He seems to be down-to-earth and straight-shooting. President Gould met him at the Council on Foreign Relations meeting in New York. Incoming Chancellor Milliken participated and asked very intelligent questions. He is dedicated to international education, accessibility, and diversity. Prior to being President of the University of Nebraska, he was Senior Vice President for University Affairs in the University of North Carolina system. President Gould stated that she thinks he will bring new ideas, fresh awareness, and good listening skills.
- President Gould turned to the budget. She will be in Albany twice this month and will return in March, because New York State Governor Cuomo likes to get his budgets done early. We will be back making a pitch for Roosevelt Science Commons, a large and critical project, she said. The design is complete, though the construction design module is not. Brooklyn College needs additional funding and will ask for at least \$50 million to advance the next

phase of the project. It is likely that there is a lot of support among the Brooklyn delegation, both at the assembly level and the senate level, but the Governor doesn't seem terribly motivated for construction jobs. It could be a slim year for CUNY and SUNY in the construction arena. Last year, for example, was unexceptional in that regard. Nonetheless, Brooklyn College will press ahead. In addition, Brooklyn College will support CUNY in its pitch to raise TAP funding. Again, there is a lot of skepticism about the extent to which the Governor will invest, but Brooklyn College will push forward.

President Gould lamented the scheduling snafu of the beginning of the spring semester. She stated that Brooklyn College will make sure that this will never happen again. In order to do so, we have to understand what went wrong, which Brooklyn College has been doing in the past few weeks. Last week, there was a very respectful and positive discussion with Chairs. Vice President for Enrollment Management Services Joyner made an effective presentation about the ways that the Registrar and Scheduling will address these issues and change business practices. This will mean that spring semester scheduling will start earlier and that software challenges with regard to the CUNY First environment will be recognized. Assistant Vice President for ITS & Chief Technology Officer Gold will establish scheduling software that will aid us, and issues of technology will be addressed. President Gould has asked for answers within the month. Last fall, we didn't experience these problems, but for spring poses particular challenges given time constraints and given the fact that summer scheduling is underway simultaneously, she said. Other factors include changes in enrollment: Brooklyn College's enrollment is not growing in leaps and bounds, but it is growing at the undergraduate daytime level. More and more undergraduates want to take courses during the day at prime times. Faculty members want to deliver those classes at prime time, and there is a limited number of smart classrooms. The pressure points for some days (Tuesdays and Thursdays during the day and Mondays and Wednesday at 11:00 am) have become untenable. This means that we are going to have to change some of the scheduling practices. We will have to add smart classrooms, to which President Gould has committed. Now, we have the green light to convert 25 current classrooms to smart classrooms. In the following two semesters, a total of 50 more smart classrooms will be available. Even with additional smart classrooms, there won't be enough. Faculty requests are mounting, so there will have to be a scheduling process that is more rational, in terms of days, departments, and schools, so that it isn't a first-come, first-serve systems. Chairs and Deans will have to establish priorities for the smart classroom. We will all work very hard on this, so that we are more in control of scheduling.

Senior Vice President for Planning and Administration Giovannelli has submitted the report for the task force on campus technology. There are two consultant reports and one committee report. President Gould stated that she appreciates all of the hard work of the faculty involved. This was important work, which will not be shelved. The next step is for cabinet to fully digest the reports. In addition, the reports will be posted on the portal, and e-mail will be sent to the Brooklyn College community about the location. There will be an ad hoc, two-year implementation committee to hold our feet to the fire and make sure that we are moving in the direction, in a timely manner, of implementing the established goals. Reports will be presented on a semester basis in Faculty Council and elsewhere. Technology availability, usage, and quality, and customer service matter greatly to the Brooklyn College campus.

Provost Tramontano stated that he is thrilled to be back and is grateful to his office and to everyone that pitched in during the fall. He declared that he has one agenda this semester: Middle States and the Periodic Review Report. Assistant Provost for Planning and Special Projects Wagner is working with the Periodic Review Working Group on the mid-stream report that takes in all of the areas of the college, including academics, finance, and other

arenas. The Provost hopes that the report will be available on the portal sometime during the month of March. He urged faculty members to respond to members of the working group if contacted. The creation of an assessment council is also part of Middle States. There is a new assessment document, with the work of a number of faculty and others. Within the next few days, the document will be available on the academic assessment website. It must be submitted with PRR. Although this document must be delivered to Middle States by June 1, 2014, it must be submitted to CUNY's Office of Academic Affairs prior to that.

(6053) Committee on Committees

Professor Shortell (Sociology) stated that the Committee on Committees had nothing to report.

(6054) Liaison with the Faculty Senate

Professor Fox (English) read the following report:

The main business of the meeting was reports by some the UFS Standing Committees.

The Academic Freedom Committee has been trying to rewrite the proposed CUNY "Policy on Expressive Conduct" in a way that could be acceptable to faculty. A UFS member pointed out that the PSC has written a resolution that totally rejects and demands the withdrawal of this document on the grounds that it is unnecessary and aims to limit free speech at CUNY. The member also reported that the Brooklyn College Faculty Council voted to support this PSC resolution. Some UFS members expressed concern about incidents where some CUNY administrators have tried to interfere with the academic freedom of some CUNY faculty, especially at Queensborough Community College.

The Libraries and Information Technology Committee reported that they have had discussions with the CUNY administration about the future of MOOCs (massive open online courses), about making textbooks available online through cunyfirst (since it's been working so well for everything else), about the possibility of having virtual computer labs at CUNY, about making greater use of CUNY digital commons, and about making greater use of "the cloud." About MOOCs, it might be noted that according to a recent New York Times article "A study of a million users of massive open online courses, known as MOOCs, [released](#) this month by the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education found that, on average, only about half of those who registered for a course ever viewed a lecture, and only about 4 percent completed the courses" ([http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/11/us/after-setbacks-online-courses-are-rethought.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit\\_th\\_20131211](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/11/us/after-setbacks-online-courses-are-rethought.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20131211)). About "virtual computer labs," when asked "What is a virtual computer lab?" the committee chair responded "It's not a facility but something in the cloud." Personally, I found this report very interesting since it sounded very "futuristic," although I basically didn't understand what they were talking about. Perhaps we could ask our colleagues in the library or in computer studies what this all means. I did however gather about "virtual computer labs" that students might not have to go to real computer labs but could somehow have access to computer lab software through their own personal computers, ipads, iphones, and other such devices. During the question and comment time, UFS members asked about virtual computer labs such questions as "Is the main goal to save money? Will current computer labs be closed and the staff be fired? Why do some colleges have good computer facilities and others do not?" and "Will there be meaningful faculty input into these proposed changes?"

The Status of the Faculty Committee discussed the status of adjuncts at CUNY. An important goal is to have more full-time faculty at CUNY (Acting Chancellor Kelly supports this goal). However, there also should be more of an attempt to include adjuncts in the academic community since they play such an important role and do so much of the teaching

at CUNY. For example, they could be listed as members of the faculty, along with their bios on college webpages. Perhaps they should be invited not only to attend meetings, but to sit on committees, with a vote, including on faculty councils, should participate in decisions on curricula for the courses they are teaching, and should be compensated for activities done in addition to just teaching classes. Concern was expressed however that adjuncts might be afraid to express their opinion due to their job insecurity. Concern was also expressed that non-tenured faculty might be afraid to express their opinion due to job insecurity. Ironically, this would suggest that perhaps the majority of CUNY faculty might be afraid to express their opinion about anything.

This committee is also concerned about "PMPs," the statistical data used to evaluate the success of colleges and of college presidents. For one thing, it was suggested that there are too many PMPs. Acting Chancellor Kelly agrees that there are too many PMPs and plans to reduce the number. Concern was also expressed about if the PMPs are all valid criteria and if they are used in an appropriate way. For example, the Brooklyn College English Department was recently criticized because we have an 85% pass rate in our freshman composition courses, while some other college has a 95% pass rate. It was suggested that we should improve our pass rate. However, our current pass rate might reflect that we have appropriately high standards, and perhaps the other college should reduce its pass rate to 85%. At any rate, since the PMPs are going to be revised, faculty and especially faculty councils should have input into changes in the PMPs and into how they will be used.

The Student Affairs Committee has been inquiring about best practices in student affairs across CUNY. So far, the committee thinks that there should be a greater effort to include students on committees, that there should be leadership training for student leaders, that individual faculty should get involved in mentoring students for leadership roles, and that the CUNY University Faculty Senate should have more contact and communication with the CUNY University Student Senate. Concern was expressed that it is difficult to get students involved in college affairs. Concern was also expressed by UFS members that it is difficult to get faculty involved in college affairs.

After the committee reports, Chair Martell said that he considers the two new members of the CUNY Board of Trustees, James Molinaro and Barry Schwartz, who are gubernatorial appointees, to be improvements over the retiring members, Jeffrey Wiesenfeld and Kathleen Peslie. Wiesenfeld was known for his effort to block the playwright Tony Kushner from receiving an honorary degree from CUNY. Peslie was known for supporting the curb on remedial classes promoted by Governor George Pataki. Martell also mentioned that CUNY Board members are supposed to serve a maximum of 14 years (two seven year terms) and that the current Chair, Benno Schmidt, has served for 15 years, so we might expect that he will be replaced soon.

Finally, Martell reported that NYU and Columbia are accepting fewer students into their doctoral programs, so stronger students are applying to the CUNY doctoral programs. He also reported that in the future, CUNY faculty will have to submit applications and to be certified or re-certified to teach in CUNY doctoral programs. Audio recordings of the talks at the Dec. 6, 2013 conference on "The Future of Doctoral Education at CUNY" are available on the website (at <https://sites.google.com/site/universityfacultysenatecuny/senate-action/conferences-events>) of the CUNY University Faculty Senate.

(6055) Degree Lists

Professor Bowdoin (Library) presented Degree Lists 2014/8 & 9, which were approved with a vote of 95 yeas, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions.

