

BROOKLYN COLLEGE
OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
FACULTY COUNCIL

September 9, 2014

- (6094) Call to order The first meeting of Faculty Council for the 2014-2015 academic year was called to order at 3:30 pm in the Woody Tanger Auditorium by Professor Perez y Gonzalez, as the chair, Professor Langsam (CIS), was unable to attend.
- (6095) Roll call The roll call was taken at the door. Department Chairs and Representatives: Day (Africana), Bankoff (Anthro & Archeao), Ciszkowska (Chemistry), Li (ECAE), Balk (H&NS), Tung (Physics); School Delegates: Childers & Lewis (Humanities & Social Sci.) were absent (-8); Langsam (CIS) & Lewis (Humanities & Social Sci.), were excused (-2); Administrators: Gould, Sillen, Joyner, Carey, Wagner, Gilbert, Fitzgerald, Hewitt, Gold & Ali were also absent and excused. All other members were present.
- (6096) Minutes of May 6, 2014 Professor Nadell (English) presented the minutes of May 6, 2014 with changes. The minutes were approved with a vote of 79 yeas, 0 nays, and 3 abstentions.
- (6097) Steering Committee Professor Perez y Gonzalez welcomed returning and new members of Faculty Council. She led a moment of silence for former Chair of the Math Department, Professor David Stone. Professor Stone earned his M.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton and his B.A. from Harvard, all in Mathematics. He joined the Brooklyn College faculty in 1974. He was a gifted mathematician, who was the author of numerous articles. He was a dedicated educator and caring mentor.
- Professor Perez y Gonzalez announced that the General Education Report will be discussed at the October Faculty Council meeting.
- (6098) Communications from the Administration President Gould was unable to attend Faculty Council, as she was part of an international group of women college and university presidents attending a conference in China. Provost Tramontano stated that she sent her regrets.
- Provost Tramontano welcomed members of Faculty Council. He stated that he hoped for a wonderful, calm academic year. He welcomed new Department Chairs and new members of the administration, including the Dean of the School of Education Bedford, the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences Greenwald, and the Associate Provost for Faculty and Administration Moore.
- The Provost stated that Brooklyn College received its initial Middle States report in August. The report was, for the most part, very good. A response from Brooklyn College is due to Middle States. In November, the Middle States Executive Board will meet and decide if Brooklyn College should go forward until the next evaluation (2019) or if Brooklyn College should follow a number of intermediate steps in response to its recommendations. These recommendations include the following: Brooklyn College should determine the efficacy of its new graduate program review process. This includes an evaluation of documented uneven quality of enrollment, mission alignment, functionality of the articulated learning outcomes, and systematic use of assessment data to impact curriculum planning, student

learning, and resource allocation. Currently, Brooklyn College is operating with approximately 3,000 graduate students and 14,000 undergraduate students. The review must take place this year. Middle States also recommended that Brooklyn College articulate the efficacy of its assessment plan with respect to implementation and systematic adoption of activities. The assessment should focus not only on academic side but also on the administrative side. Middle States also recommended that Brooklyn College report on its efforts to create greater consistency in its determination of credit hours assignments, which is the one place Brooklyn College was found out of compliance. Middle States found that there were a number of courses that exhibited a credit mismatch, which can affect financial aid. Brooklyn College will have to take a hard look at all of its courses. The Provost stated that we owe a great debt to Assistant Provost for Special Projects Wagner. He reported that Middle States has come up with new standards, which will be in place for the 2019 report.

Provost Tramontano discussed the hiring that has taken place in the past year. Thirty two new full time faculty are starting this year. There are thirty-two sublines. There are at least forty searches for the coming academic year. Middle States reported that Brooklyn College, is bucking the trend for public universities. It is putting more funds into instructional staff than other public institutions. He also reported on the "CUNY Trifecta;" Brooklyn College is rated the best bang for your buck, by the Washington Monthly, as have Queens College and Baruch College. Brooklyn College was included on the list, because it now graduates more than 50% of its undergraduates in six years. It is imperative that Brooklyn College do everything it can to effect retention and graduation rates. The goal is to get up to 60% (the New York State graduation rate is around 65%).

Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Giovannelli spoke. He extended his welcome for the new academic year. He reported on the prior year (2013-2014), which ended on June 30, 2014. The budget of \$116 million of tax-levy dollars was divided between the New York State base allocation and CUNY Compact funds, which is driven by enrollment. He stated that, last year, there was deficit of \$1.2 to \$1.3 million. CUNY maintains a reserve fund for each college. The reserve fund is roughly \$3.5 million; it had been added to in the last three or four years; Brooklyn College will draw from it for the past year. The reserve fund will go to roughly \$2 million. The deficit is a shot across the bow, he stated; it is a revenue problem rather than an expense problem. Brooklyn College fell short of its tuition targets by roughly \$4.3 million. The shortfall was due, in large part, to declines in summer and graduate enrollments. This was offset by strong undergraduate enrollments, but the net was a decline. Brooklyn College took expense side action, and pulled back on certain things, including a lower summer payroll and energy savings.

As far of the current, 2014-2015, year, Brooklyn College is flat with the New York State budget. New York State will pay for for some increases, including mandatory fringe benefits, but Brooklyn College will have to pay for other increases itself. The Compact piece presumes that enrollment overall will be steady. But Brooklyn College is cognizant of problems with summer and graduate enrollments, which will require continued attention. Brooklyn College's significant faculty recruitment, as well as other programmatic efforts, are funded by the Compact, which is in its fifth and final year. After the election, we will see if next year's budget addresses funds that will replace the Compact, which has been very beneficial to CUNY. On balance, the Compact has represented a strengthening of the institution.

Professor Okome (Political Science) asked the Provost to address the manner in which lines are awarded to departments, following retirements or resignations. She also stated that Brooklyn College faculty go above and beyond the call of duty for students and that the Brooklyn College administration is not doing enough to make sure that faculty feel valued

and appreciated. Provost Tramontano responded by stating that serving as a faculty member is a calling or vocation. He declared that the question of lines is a very important one. Brooklyn College took a big hit with the Early Retirement Initiative and is only now beginning to recover after five years. At the same time, the student body has shifted in terms of their representation in different schools, and so, when a department loses a faculty member, he must examine if the line is best placed in the original department or reallocated. Professor Okome then raised the issue of faculty morale. She called for a serious reexamination of and conversations about faculty contributions and morale.

(6099) Committee on Committees

Professor Shortell (Sociology) announced that the Committee on Committee's motion that changes the number of members of the Committee on Honors, Citations, & Awards would take place at the October meeting of Faculty Council. He presented the nominations for Faculty Council committees, with changes. The nominations were approved with a vote of 82 yeas, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions.

(6100) Liaison with the University Faculty Senate

Professor Fox (English) read the following statement about the May 13, 2014 Meeting of the CUNY University Faculty Senate :

The invited guest speaker was Muhammad Arshad, Chair of the CUNY University Student Senate. Muhammad is pleased that the University Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee has reached out to the USS by sending members to some of the USS meetings to learn about USS concerns.

Muhammad raised the issue of student advisement. He said that he himself had good student advisement experiences at CUNY since he was in a small program where students frequently spoke to each other and had the opportunity to frequently speak to faculty, but that he has heard from many students and did a survey where he heard that there are only a few student advisors at CUNY, that students mainly go to advisors to remove stops that block their registration, and that students get lists of courses they must take but would like more opportunity to communicate and interact with faculty about both academic advisement and career planning. He suggested that it would be good for students to speak more often not only to faculty but also to upper class students about such matters. A UFS member suggested that just as there have been past "faculty satisfaction surveys" conducted at CUNY, there have also been past "student satisfaction surveys," and that we should look at the results of these surveys, consider taking steps that would increase student satisfaction, and conduct such student satisfaction surveys on a regular basis. Another UFS member suggested that the USS should discuss and submit to the UFS a list of three main areas in which faculty could help students more than they currently do. A UFS member from Lehman said that the Lehman student government had expressed concern about the negative effects on students of Pathways, and he wondered to what extent the USS is in communication with and listens to the concerns of the individual college student governments. Muhammad said that representatives from all the individual college student governments attend USS meetings and the USS does try to consult with them and to respond to their concerns. Finally, Muhammad expressed his appreciation that the UFS has reached out to the USS more this year than in the past, and said he hopes that this stronger partnership will continue in the future.

Previous Discussion at the meeting of the Student Affairs Committee

About the issue of student advisement, there had been a discussion about this before the plenary at the meeting of the Student Affairs Committee, which has been discussing this issue all year. The members of this committee would like to learn more about what happens CUNY-wide with student advisement in order to be able to make recommendations about best practices in this area. We have heard that at some colleges, many faculty are involved

in student advisement at the beginning of the semester, and sometimes, faculty have specific students assigned to them as advisees. On the other hand, we have heard that many faculty do not participate in student advisement and that sometimes a department has only one main student advisor who cannot adequately advise all the students majoring in the department. We know that colleges have some academic advisors, but we have heard that these advisors sometimes do not have sufficient knowledge about a specific department or a specific major to advise students as well as faculty, and that these advisors may have too many students assigned to them to adequately advise all of the students. We know that what is happening with student advisement probably varies a lot from one college and from one department to another and would like to find out especially about the practices of colleges and departments who seem to be handling this matter more effectively. It is important to know that student advisement is part of the responsibility of the faculty according to the CUNY contract, although it is debatable how much student advisement can be expected of faculty since faculty have a heavy teaching load and research and publication responsibilities. It is also important to recognize that a lot of teaching at CUNY is done by adjunct faculty, who cannot be expected to spend much time advising students. Nevertheless, the importance of faculty advisement of students is widely recognized, for example in a recent New York Times editorial by Charles Blow*, in another more recent editorial by Thomas Friedmann** and by such college policy statements as the following:

Faculty advisers anchor the College's commitment to students' academic development. By virtue of their commitment to and close interaction with students, faculty are best positioned to understand their students' academic potential and needs, and how to best cultivate the students' academic and professional promise. At Lafayette, faculty academic advising is an integral part of teaching (from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania).

By the time a student at Columbia earns 30 credits towards the completion of a degree, the student will work with a Faculty Advisor in his or her declared major department. The Faculty Advisor is an expert in the field and is responsible for assisting students with their transition into the major and concentration requirements. The Faculty Advisor will assist students with the major requirements as well as industry and professional expectations beyond graduation (from Columbia College in Chicago, Illinois).

In recognition of the College's dedication to student growth, each academic year students are offered the opportunity to take advantage of extended academic advisement services on Thursdays during the months of January, June, July and August. During these periods, faculty and professional advisors provide evening and limited telephone academic advising services to students to support their curriculum and experiential learning (from the College of Staten Island of CUNY, where faculty mentors are available from 10 am to 4 pm during specified times of the year).

*http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/08/opinion/blow-in-college-nurturing-matters.html?emc=edit_th_20140508&nl=todaysheadlines&nliid=34982766&r=0

**http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/10/opinion/thomas-friedman-it-takes-a-mentor.html?emc=edit_th_20140910&nl=todaysheadlines&nliid=34982766

In considering this situation, one might suggest that perhaps more faculty should be more involved in student advisement. Perhaps more release time should be given to some faculty who do a lot of student advisement. Perhaps upper class students should be more involved in student advisement as peer advisors. The UFS Student Affairs Committee would like its members to look into what is happening with student advisement at their colleges and to report back to the committee. Optimistically, one might hope that we might learn about and

copy best practices that we discover, that faculty might be willing to get more involved in student advisement, and that faculty might in fact find this to be very meaningful and satisfying part of their job.

Most of the meeting was taken up with the election of UFS officers and members at large. UFS Chair Terry Martell and a number of other officers were elected without an opposing candidate and ballots were filled out for the position of Secretary of the Executive Board and for members at large.

Chair Martell reported that there is not much happening at CUNY Central as everyone is waiting for the new Chancellor. Upon being asked about Pathways, Chair Martell said that a Pathways Review Committee is being appointed and he hopes that the new Chancellor will be willing to make some changes, just as Interim Chancellor Kelly did. He recalled that there was a time when a joint UFS/PSC faculty committee suggested to Chancellor Goldstein that adding about 6 credits to Pathways would make it acceptable to the CUNY faculty, and he regrets that Chancellor Goldstein rejected this suggestion. He agrees with the majority of CUNY faculty that the process of imposing Pathways was improper, that Pathways is not good for our students, and that we must continue to work toward having a gen ed curriculum that we believe to be good for our students and that is arrived at in a way that recognizes the proper role of faculty governance at CUNY.

(6101) Degree Lists

Professor Perez y Gonzalez reported that Degree Lists 2014/14 & 15 were approved over the summer by Faculty Council Steering. Degree Lists 2015/1 & 2 were approved with a vote of 82 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention.

(6090) Report of Standing Committees

Committee on Graduate Curriculum & Degree Requirements: Professor Whitlock (CIS) reported that Curriculum Document 221 was approved over the summer. However, New York State rejected it, as the "artist's diploma" is not a recognized degree. Faculty Council voted to approve Curriculum Document 221 with changes with a vote of 82 yeas, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions. She presented Curriculum Document 222 with changes, which was approved with a vote of 78 yeas, 2 nay, and 3 abstentions. She presented the annual report, which was accepted.

Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum & Degree Requirements: Professor Cohen (Music) presented the annual report, which was accepted.

Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards: Professor Rawson (History) presented the annual report, which was accepted.

Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics: The annual report was presented and accepted.

Committee on Research: Professor Suarez (Physics) presented the annual report, which was accepted.

Committee on Review of Student Records: Professor Bowdoin (Library) presented the annual report, which was accepted.

(6091) Old Business

There was no old business.

(6092) New Business

There was no new business.

(6093) Adjournment

There being no further business, Professor Perez y Gonzalez declared the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Perez y Gonzalez
Acting Chair

Martha Nadell
Secretary