

BROOKLYN COLLEGE
POLICY COUNCIL
Minutes of the
March 23, 2022 General Meeting
5:00pm via Zoom

Present: President Michelle J. Anderson, Provost Anne Lopes, Vice President Ronald Jackson, Chief Diversity Officer Anthony Brown, Chief Legal Officer Tony Thomas, Dean Kenneth Gould, Dean April Bedford, Dean Maria Conelli, Dean Qing Hu, Dean Peter Tolia, Professor Tim Shortell, Professor Beth Evans, Professor James Lynch, Professor Jennifer Basil, Professor Sophia N. Suarez, Professor Jennifer Cherrier, Professor Mark Kobrak, Professor Mobina Hashmi, Professor Namulundah Florence, Professor Louise Hainline, Professor Jeff Suzuki (alt), Professor Myles Bassell (alt), Iqura Naheed (USG), Aharon Grama (USG), Louis Di Meglio (GSO), Chika Otisi (USG), Sarali Cohen (USG), Flavia Shyti (USG), Amina Tariq (USG), Jana Taoube (USG), Robert Adler (USG), Yisroel Shulman (USG alt), Chavi Barth (USG alt), Adriana Zeinc (USG alt),

Absent: Senior Vice President Alan Gilbert, Associate Provost Tammy L. Lewis, Professor Douglas Cohen, Professor Maria Contel, Thomas D. Santiago (GSO), Maria Jose Romero (USG), Enmanuel Valdez (USG)

Non- voting: Zunera Ahmed

1. President Anderson called meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.
2. President Anderson provided updates on the return to campus and the efforts to support students impacted by war in Ukraine.
3. Aharon Grama (USG) moved to approve the Minutes of the February 23, 2022, meeting. Sarali Cohen (USG) seconded. 34 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain.
4. The Faculty/Student Relations Committee presented the “Brooklyn College COVID 19 Absence” Policy. Members discussed the proposed language and potential appeal process. The policy is referred to Faculty Council with a recommendation to call on departments to discuss this on departmental level. The Faculty/Student relations committee will consider a campus-wide policy.
5. The Faculty/Student Relations Committee presented a petition for Eid holiday with supporting documents. 29 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain
6. Robert Adler (USG) moved to adjourn the meeting. Professor Jennifer Basil seconded.

Adjourned 6:10 p.m.

Policy Council Fiscal, Infrastructure, and Planning*March 2022*

The Committee discussed the Cleared4 process and the challenges we continue to have with individuals not having accurate contact information in Cleared4. Since CUNY just created a QR code that can be used to access individual accounts, we discussed the document we are putting together to explain the process. We would disseminate in multiple ways to reach as broad an audience as possible.

We also discussed how we can improve the ways we can reach more students.

Policy Council External Relations Committee Meeting

March 8, 2022

1. Tony Thomas joined the meeting to present findings from the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) working group exploring Brooklyn College's reputation and morale on campus. The group focused especially on what is currently strong and where there are opportunities for improvement.
 - Bright spots include:
 - A universal, sincere dedication to our students and mission
 - Pride in the diversity on our campus
 - Long-serving faculty and staff creates a feeling of home among many
 - Focus for improvements include:
 - Many areas relate to insufficient resources – e.g., lack of support for faculty research, lack of office space for adjuncts, understaffed for workload, feeling of having to do more with less
 - Many faculty and staff want greater recognition for their service
 - Bureaucratic runaround affects morale

The findings from this working group will be considered in the final Strategic Enrollment Plan that is current under development.
2. Mara McGinnis gave an update on the redesign of the College website. The redesign work by Ologie is continuing, and the new site is on target for launch this summer.

Brooklyn College COVID 19 Absence Policy

Prior to arriving on campus each day or attending an in-person class, students must receive a Cleared for Access pass or have a green check in their BC Navigator app. Students who test positive or are a close contact to someone who tested positive must notify the College through the [COVID-19 Case Collection Form](#). If access to campus is restricted based on COVID-19 protocols, students must notify the instructor of their absence by email within 48 hours, if possible. Students are not required to provide the instructor with documentation of COVID-19 symptoms. Students will not be penalized for absences or late course assessments unless they are unable to complete course learning outcomes. Faculty will work with students to identify ways to complete course requirements which may include remote participation. Students should confirm that their access to campus is granted prior to coming to campus. Absences or lateness due to failing to follow proper procedures are not excused. However, faculty should have leniency when students are late due to system failures at the gate.

If COVID-19 related illness results in any missed course work (face-to-face or online), students should proactively work with the instructor to plan make-up work. It remains the student's responsibility to complete any missed work such as assignments, tests, quizzes, labs, or projects outside of scheduled class time. But please realize that class will continue, and students may find themselves in the situation where they are unable to complete all work by the end of the semester. In such a case, students should consider a late withdrawal, medical release from classes, or an incomplete grade. If students have COVID-19 disability related risk factors that may affect attendance, students are strongly encouraged to register with the Center for Student Disability Services to receive necessary accommodations. If students believe the instructor has not made reasonable and appropriate accommodations for absences, or makeup assignments, projects, labs, or exams due to COVID-19, students have the right to submit a complaint to the department chair during the term as well as to appeal a final grade to the Faculty Council Committee on Course and Standing.

Faculty should make every effort to accommodate students who must miss class due to COVID-19 and ensure that they feel safe to report their status to the College. Keeping our community healthy relies on sick students staying home.

Petition for CUNY to cancel classes for Eid

Consistent with New York State Education Law § 224-a, the City University of New York has a policy regarding religious accommodations which state, “students who are absent from school because of a religious belief will be given the equivalent opportunity, without any additional fee charged, to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements missed because of such absence on any particular day or days.” However, not all religious beliefs are treated equally. Currently, classes are not scheduled on some key religious holidays providing students who hold those beliefs the opportunity to observe the holiday while not missing any class time. However, for other religious beliefs, students who hold those beliefs are excused from class, but burdened with the task of making up missed work which could include examinations. Because classes aren’t canceled, some students must make a choice of observing the holiday or attend class. Given the high percentage of Muslim students at Brooklyn College and the City University of New York, the Brooklyn College Policy Council supports the USG Joint Proposition 018b: Accommodating Muslim Students for Eid and acknowledges the CUNY University Student Senate Resolution entitled, Accommodating Muslim Students for Eid-Al-Fitr, which also reflects the decision made by the New York City Department of Education in 2015.



Undergraduate Student Government, Brooklyn College, Spring Semester

JOINT RESOLUTION

To: USG Executive Cabinet, USG Student Senate

From: Senator Amina Tariq, Club Director Samia Ahmed, Vice President Iqura Naheed

Date: Thursday, November 4th, 2021

Title: USG Joint Proposition 018b: Accommodating Muslim Students for Eid

1. WHEREAS, CUNY Central regularly honors the holy month of Ramadan every year through official communications, and publicly stated in May and July 2021 “As the holy month of Ramadan comes to an end, we send our warmest greetings to all those celebrating Eid al-Fitr”¹;
2. WHEREAS, CUNY recognizes the importance of this holiday to publicly celebrate it on social media and official communications;
3. WHEREAS, the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding estimated in 2018 that approximately 22.3% of Muslims² in the United States live in New York City;
4. WHEREAS, the New York State Health Foundation states that Muslims are the fastest-growing religious community³ in New York City;
5. WHEREAS, the City University of New York is one of the largest public urban universities in the nation and serves over 500,000 students⁴ across 25 campuses across NYC including 275,000 degree-seeking students;
6. WHEREAS, in 2009 Councilmember Tony Avella introduced Res. 21425 to the New York City Council Committee on Higher Education calling upon CUNY to incorporate the Muslim holidays of Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha;⁵
7. WHEREAS, as of May 2021, CUNY has still not taken action to respect the significant and growing Muslim student population in the academic calendar;
8. WHEREAS, on March 11th, 2021, USS passed the Resolution “Accommodating Muslim Students for Eid-Al-Fitr, Thursday May 13th.”
9. WHEREAS, a petition was created by CUNY students in Spring 2021 supporting cancelling classes for Eid that accumulated over 15,000 signatures.⁶
10. WHEREAS, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced in March 2015 that all public schools in NYC, the largest public school system in the United States, will close in observance of Eid-al-Adha and Eid-al-Fitr⁷;
11. WHEREAS, Mayor Bill de Blasio asserted that the change in policy was a change that respects the diversity of our city;

¹ <https://twitter.com/cuny/status/1288950015470247942?s=21>

² <https://www.ispu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MAP-NYC-Report-Web-3.pdf>

³ <https://nyshealthfoundation.org/grant-outcome/harlem-hospital-center-muslim-clinic/>

⁴ <https://www.cuny.edu/about/>

⁵ <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=465025&GUID=C26BE6CC-1913-4477-95A0-E98B66CC2320>

⁶ <https://www.change.org/p/demand-cuny-to-cancel-classes-for-eid>

⁷ <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/nyc-schools-close-muslim-eid-holidays-article-1.2137025>



12. WHEREAS, CUNY's current academic calendar⁸ accommodates a number of religious holidays including Lunar New Year, Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, and Easter, but excludes Muslim holidays;
13. WHEREAS, New York State Education Law EDN §224-a, subsection §3⁹ states: "It shall be the responsibility of the faculty and of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his or her religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements which he or she may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days";
14. WHEREAS, in the Academic Year of 2021-2022, Eid-Al-Fitr falls on Tuesday, May 3rd, 2022 and Eid-Al-Adha falls on July 10th - 11th, 2022.
15. WHEREAS, the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Student Government joins the University Student Senate and the Brooklyn College Muslim Student Organizations in solidarity alongside Muslim Student Associations across the CUNY system to affirm that our students should not be forced to choose between faith and education;
16. WHEREAS, that for CUNY to demonstrate their commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity, Muslim students must have their voices heard¹⁰;
17. WHEREAS, that there is a growing call amongst Muslim Student Associations across the CUNY system and ally organizations to include our Muslim students and provide them relief to freely practice their most holy holiday amidst a devastating and on-going global pandemic.
18. RESOLVED, that when passed this should supersede and replace Joint Resolution 018;
19. RESOLVED, the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Student Government supports the current bill S5279 in the New York State Senate which "Provides that the Muslim holidays of Eid Ul-Fitr and Eid Ul-Adha shall be school holidays in the city school district of the city of New York"¹¹;
20. RESOLVED, the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Student Government stands with Muslim students and calls on the CUNY wide Administration to recognize Eid-al-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha as a religious holiday in 2021-2022 academic calendar, and recognize Eid-al-Adha and Eid-al-Fitr every following academic calendar;
21. RESOLVED, the Brooklyn College Undergraduate Student Government calls on the Brooklyn College administration, the CUNY administration, and the CUNY Board of Trustees to make Eid Ul-Fitr and Eid Ul-Adha days where no classes are in session.

Presented to the USG Executive Cabinet and Student Senate for consideration and action on November 4th, 2021.
USG Joint Proposition 018b: Accommodating Muslim Students for Eid, is hereby Approved and Enacted into Law as Joint Resolution 018b.

Aharon Grama Aharon Grama
USG President

Iqura Naheed Iqura Naheed
President of Student Senate

Enmanuel Valdez
Attested

⁸ <https://www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-calendars/>

⁹ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/224-A>

¹⁰ <https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/education/2021/05/08/muslim-students-petition-for-cuny-to-cancel-classes-for-eid-al-fitr>

¹² <https://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/147-15/transcript-mayor-de-blasio-chancellor-fari-a-designate-eid-al-fitr-eid-al-adha-official#0>

¹¹ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2021/s5279>



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RESOLUTION

To: Senators, CUNY University Student Senate

From: Amber Rivero, University Student Senate Vice Chair Senior

Colleges, Hunter College Muslim Students Association

Date: March 11, 2021

Title: Accommodating Muslim Students for Eid-Al-Fitr, Thursday May 13th

WHEREAS, CUNY Central regularly honors the holy month of Ramadan every year through official communications, and publically stated in [May and July 2020](#)¹ “As the holy month of Ramadan comes to an end, we send our warmest greetings to all those celebrating Eid al-Fitr”;

WHEREAS, CUNY recognizes the importance of this holiday to publically celebrate it on social media and official communications;

WHEREAS, the [Institute for Social Policy and Understanding](#) estimated in 2018 that approximately [22.3% of Muslims](#)² in the United States live in New York City;

WHEREAS, the New York State Health Foundation states that Muslims are the [fastest-growing religious community](#)³ in New York City;

WHEREAS, the City University of New York is one of the largest public urban universities in the nation and [serves over 500,000 students](#)⁴ across 25 campuses across NYC including 275,000 degree-seeking students;

WHEREAS, in 2009 Councilmember Tony Avella introduced [Res. 2142](#)⁵ to the New York City Council Committee on Higher Education calling upon CUNY to incorporate the Muslim holidays of Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha;

¹<https://twitter.com/cuny/status/1288950015470247942?s=21>

² <https://www.ispu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MAP-NYC-Report-Web-3.pdf>

³ <https://nyshealthfoundation.org/grant-outcome/harlem-hospital-center-muslim-clinic/>

⁴ <https://www.cuny.edu/about/>

⁵ <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=465025&GUID=C26BE6CC-1913-4477-95A0-E98B66CC2320>

WHEREAS, Res. 2142 was *sine die*, or filed at the end of session;

WHEREAS, as of March 2021, CUNY has still not taken action to respect the significant and growing Muslim student population in the academic calendar;

WHEREAS, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced in March 2015 that all public schools in NYC, the largest public school system in the United States, [will close in observance of Eid-al-Adha and Eid-al-Fitr](#)⁶;

WHEREAS, Mayor Bill de Blasio asserted that the change in policy was a change that respects the diversity of our city;

WHEREAS, CUNY is a reflection of the diversity in NYC with [students tracing ancestries to 205 countries](#)⁷ and [38% of undergraduate](#) students speaking at least one other language besides English;

WHEREAS, CUNY's [current academic calendar](#)⁸ accommodates a number of religious holidays including Lunar New Year, Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, and Easter, but excludes Muslim holidays;

WHEREAS, New York State Education Law [EDN §224-a, subsection §3](#)⁹ states:

“It shall be the responsibility of the faculty and of the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his or her religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study or work requirements which he or she may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days”;

WHEREAS, in the Academic Year of 2020-2021, Eid-Al-Fitr falls on Thursday, May 13th, five days before the final examination period begins for the Spring term;

WHEREAS, Ramadan is a month-long religious observance that requires Muslims to neither eat nor drink from sunrise to sunset;

THEREFORE, BE IT SO RESOLVED, the University Student Senate joins the Hunter College Muslim Student Association in solidarity alongside Muslim Student Associations across the CUNY system to affirm that our students should not be forced to choose between faith and education;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Hunter Muslim Student Association implores the Student Governments across the CUNY system to stand with Muslim students in their call for CUNY to recognize Thursday, May 13th as a religious holiday in 2020-2021 academic calendar, and every year following;

⁶ <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/nyc-schools-close-muslim-eid-holidays-article-1.2137025>

⁷ <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/oira/institutional/data/>

⁸ <https://www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-calendars/>

⁹ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/224-A>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that for CUNY to demonstrate their commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity, [Muslim students must have their voices heard](#)¹⁰;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in the event that it is not possible to adjust the 2020-2021 academic calendar, CUNY must institute a blanket protection policy for the 2021 academic year protecting Muslim students who observe Eid-Al-Fitr from all academic penalties until the academic calendar can be changed;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, University Student Senate and affiliates are committed to voicing the concerns of all students within our diverse student body;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that there is a growing call amongst Muslim Student Associations across the CUNY system and ally organizations to include our Muslim students and provide them relief to freely practice their most holy holiday amidst a devastating and on-going global pandemic.

¹⁰ <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/05/nyregion/new-york-to-add-two-muslim-holy-days-to-public-school-calendar.html>