

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

COMMITTEE ON VENDOR SERVICES

TO: Dr. Emily Tai, Chairperson, Academic Senate Steering Committee

FROM: Johannes Burgers, Larisa Honey, and Paul Sideris, Co-Chairs and Secretary, Vendor Services Committee

SUBJECT: Annual Report of the Committee on Vendor Services, September 2015-- May 2016

DATE: June 20th, 2016

Committee Members:

Prof. Johannes Burgers, Co-Chair
Prof. Larisa Honey, Co-Chair
Prof. Paul Sideris, Secretary
Prof. Li Xu Li, Member
Prof. Kathleen Pechinka, Member
Prof. Cheryl Tokke, Member

Prof. Jean Murley, Liaison to the Committee on Committees
Vice-President William Faulkner, Liaison, President's Designee

William Parrinello, Student Representative

Number of Committee Meetings: The Committee on Vendor Services met four times during the 2015-2016 academic year.

During 2015-2016, Vice President William Faulkner served as the President's Designee to the Committee on Vendor Services.

Creating a Plan for Vendor Services Assessment

Building on our committee reboot from last year, we continued to try to enhance our institutional presence. We did so through a two pronged approach. First, we created a designated e-mail for our committee so that people with potential questions could reach us. Before the e-mail address, people were only lodging complaints and feedback through social media posts that were forwarded to the committee intermittently, if at all. Now there is a centralized hub for anything related to the vendor services on campus.

The second, more long-term approach, will be to implement a college-wide vendor services assessment. We have spent a large part of the year liaising with the student senate and VP Faulkner regarding the feasibility of implementing a substantial student experience survey regarding the food and drink services available on campus. After discussing the roll-out of the new eating space and kitchen in the Science with VP Faulkner, we are hoping to have our survey up and running somewhere in the Fall of 2016. The goal will be to establish what kinds of vendors students are seeking and what their potential spending patterns might be.

Vendor Assessment Pilot

As a way to great a framework for the larger survey, Vendor Services Committee Cheryl Tokke created a Service Learning project that tasked her students to do a small scale experience survey of the vending machines on campus. The results were revealing.

On May 11, 2016, the Vendor Services Committee, along with student liaison, William Parrinello, and Vice President William Faulkner, observed class presentations in Cheryl Tokke's Marketing 401 course.

Six groups of students presented the results of market research they conducted on the vending machines over the course of the semester. In the presentations, students provided brief summaries of their findings, concerns and recommendations for increasing the usage of the vending machines on campus. As part of their research, students conducted an inventory of the number of vending machines in each building, their locations, types of snacks or drinks offered, and the types of machines that were available. They also interviewed potential customers who were in the areas around these vending machines and analyzed QCC demographic data in order to cater their recommendations to the specific clientele on campus.

In total, the students surveyed vending machines in six campus buildings: The Technology building, the Student Union, the Administrative Building, the Science building, the Humanities building, and the Kennedy building.

Findings:

Total vending machines on campus: 50-54

Technology Building: 2

Student Union: 3 (1 snack and 2 drink)

Administrative Building: 5

Science Building: 9 (all in same area)

Kennedy Building: 4

Humanities Building: 19 (12 on the first floor)

Products: Mostly chips and soda

Machines: Some with lights, some without; some take credit cards, some do not

Users: Primarily millennials (16,182 students vs 618 faculty). Many interviewed did not use the vending machines. According to one survey, 8 out of the 10 did not use the vending machines at all.

Concerns: Survey respondents were concerned about the nutritional value of the products, the cost, the length of time the inventory remained in the machines and the confusion with accessing the different types of machines on campus.

Suggestions: Each group provided suggestions for increasing vending machine usage on campus and developed marketing strategies geared specifically toward millennials. These recommendations focused on inventory, the vending machines, social media and rewards/incentive programs.

1. Inventory: A top suggestion was to increase the variety and amount of health snacks and drinks offered, including dried nuts, baked chips, protein bars and health shakes.

2. Vending Machines: A greater uniformity of machines was suggested, as was a shift to only machines that could take cards. In terms of location, it was suggested that the machines be better dispersed throughout the buildings. A map with locations of the vending machines was also suggested. Better maintenance of the machines was also recommended as people were hesitant to use machines that looked like products had been abandoned there and were possibly expired.

3. Social Media/Technology: Because students use social media on a regular basis, this was viewed as a way to encourage greater vending machine use. Students suggested setting up an Instagram account that could offer coupons or other types of deals. QCC Connect and email were also suggested as ways to engage students and increase their vending machine purchases.

4. Rewards/incentives: Several of the groups suggested rewards programs that could incentivize vending machine purchases. It was suggested that when used in conjunction with the One Card or Tiger Card that these rewards programs could also help the vendors track users vending history in order to develop targeted marketing campaigns. One group suggested using QCC Connect to offer monthly promotions via email. The One Card could be used with the app, offering extra points for certain types of products. Another group suggested that a point system could offer rewards toward a free snack along with a snack rating system. A third group suggested using the One Card to create a vendor's lottery and donation program to support students with disabilities. In this system, 3 cents of each dollar spent would go toward a scholarship for students in the disabilities program at QCC. At the end of the school year, 5 students would be chosen for the scholarships. In addition to the scholarships, students who participated in the One Card purchases would be eligible for lottery proceeds. A presentation for all winners would help advertise the program on campus at the end of the year.

Recommendations for 2015-2016

The following are the members of the Committee on Vendor Services for 2016-2017:

Prof. Johannes Burgers, Interim Chair
Prof. Paul Sideris, Interim Secretary
Prof. Li Xu Li, Member
Prof. Kathleen Pechinka, Member
Prof. Miguel Quiroz, Member
Prof. Cheryl Tokke, Member

Prof. Jean Darcy, Liaison to the Steering Committee
Vice-President William Faulkner, Liaison, President's Designee

We were not able to hold elections by the end of the term. This will be done in September 2016. For the time being Johannes Burgers will function as interim Chair.

Recommendations to Prof. Burgers for year 2016-2017 would be—

- Evaluate the results of Cheryl Tokke's pilot.
- Develop a statistically sound student experience survey.
- Create an implementation plan for deploying the survey.

Respectfully Submitted,

Prof. Johannes Burgers, Co-Chair

Prof. Larisa Honey, Co-Chair

Prof. Paul Sideris, Secretary