

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

1. Senate Matters: Composition and Membership

As of this writing, a nomination petition has gone out to the College Laboratory Technicians and Department chairs, requesting the nomination of a College Laboratory Technician who can be elected from the Senate Floor to join Pedro Irigoyen as the second of two CLT Senators, elected to replace Charlie Pranci, who will be retiring from the College. The Committee on Committees and the Steering Committee are delighted to report that we have received a nomination for this representative, Mr. John Luby, Senior College Laboratory Technician in the Department of Business.

The Steering Committee would like to thank Charlie Pranci for his outstanding service to the Academic Senate, and to wish him the very best in retirement.

The Steering Committee also wishes to welcome Dr. Chong Jue, of the Department of Biological Sciences and Geology, who will be replacing Senator Linda Stanley, Professor of English, who is retiring from the college.

2. Committee Matters: Composition and Membership

Membership on committees of the Academic Senate is stable at this time.

3. Committee Matters: Activities

- Shortly before the holiday, the Departments of Mathematics and Computer Science and Basic Educational Skills, acting in concert with the Office of Academic Affairs, contacted the Committee on Curriculum, as well as the chairs of the Committee on Course and Standing and Admissions, regarding a policy change that would affect students enrolled in remedial courses in Mathematics and courses in Basic Educational Skills. Henceforth, students who have completed these courses successfully, but have failed to pass the exit from remediation examination (the “COMPASS” examination) would be assigned an “NC” grade that they will be allotted one year to remedy. The purpose of this change would be to encourage students to participate in twenty-hour test preparation workshops and/or a second remediation class close upon the heels of their first, in order to successfully complete their COMPASS examination. Some students have been allowing the interval between a first and second COMPASS examination attempt to lengthen to the point where it makes successful completion of the examination highly unlikely. The one-year limit upon the NC grade would not constitute a limit upon remediation—students would be given

additional opportunities to re-enroll in subsequent remediation classes in order to master material necessary to pass the COMPASS examination.

Because the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Chairs of these Departments, would like to see these changes ratified at the next meeting of the CUNY Board of Trustees, there was a considerable time pressure in reviewing these items, but the Steering Committee is happy to report that all the affected committees of the Academic Senate rose to the challenge, by taking time out during their holiday weekend to engage in several preliminary e-mail communications, followed by emergency meetings of the Curriculum Committee on Tuesday, November 30, 2010, and the Committee on Course and Standing on December 3, 2010. The members of the Curriculum Committee concluded that *“because the matter at hand involves “retention standards”, “grading system” and a certain category of “probationary limits”, the Committee on Curriculum recommends that the Committee on Course and Standing meets to deliberate about the appropriateness of the proposed changes and their impact on the students, and that the outcome of this deliberation be submitted to the College Senate in a timely fashion.”* The Steering Committee then forwarded these conclusions to the Chair of the Committee on Course and Standing, whose committee met, and voted to advance the recommendation included in this agenda for the review of the Academic Senate.

The Steering Committee would like to thank Vice-President Steele, Drs. Fabricant and Kurnit, as well Dr. Borrachero, Professors Capozzoli, and Colalillo, and all the members of the Committee on Curriculum, Course and Standing, and Admissions, for their attention and exceptional efforts in this regard.

- In another excellent demonstration of committee collaboration, the Committee on Distance Education has worked successfully with the Committee on Bylaws to engineer a name change for this committee, which it proposes to rename “the Committee on e-Learning.” The Steering committee supports this name change, which we believe captures the substance of on-line courses—not just an option to conquer distance, but a new way to deliver course content. The Steering Committee wishes to thank the various members of these committees for their cooperation.
- Finally, the Steering Committee would like to renew its thanks to Dr. Philip Pecorino, who has very generously agreed to represent our members, and the members of the Committee on Assessment, in a presentation that President Call, Dean Corradetti, and Professor Edlin will be making at the forthcoming Middle States Conference in Philadelphia this December, entitled “Culture of Collaboration: Cultivating a Campus Environment for Assessment.” This presentation, which will follow up from the talk Dean Corradetti and the chair of the Steering Committee gave at the conference sponsored by the University Faculty Senate on Queensborough’s response to the Middle States Accreditation Process last April, will give Dr. Pecorino an opportunity to speak about how the Assessment Committee has fared in its first year of existence: what sorts

of concerns it has addressed; what sorts of reports it has received, and how it has supported the construction of a “culture of assessment” on our campus. The Steering Committee would also like to extend its warm congratulations to President Call and Dean Corradetti for the receipt of notice that Queensborough’s monitoring report was favorably received.

4. University and College Wide Matters with Direct Bearing on the Senate

- At the last meeting of Faculty Governance Leaders on November 19, 2010, Chancellor Goldstein reiterated the need for administrators and governance bodies to work together across CUNY campuses in confronting the key challenge that lies before us all: the budget reductions. With Chancellor Goldstein’s assent, the University Faculty Senate is recommending that each campus form a budget committee.

At Queensborough, two possible courses of action have been suggested:

President Call has indicated that one way to address the challenge of communication around the budget would be to form a subcommittee of the College Advisory Planning Committee (CAPC) that would specifically work with the President and Vice-President Newcomb to act in an advisory capacity in reviewing budget issues. Such a committee would reflect the composition of the CAPC in including representatives from the Faculty Executive Committee, the Steering Committee of the Academic Senate, the Committee of Chairs, the administration, and the students.

Another means to address this crisis, however, would be for the Steering Committee to form an Emergency Budget Advisory Committee as a Special Committee of the Academic Senate, as per Article VII, Section II of the By-laws of the Academic Senate:

The Academic Senate may establish such standing and ad hoc committees as it determines. Each committee shall elect a chairperson, secretary, and such other officers as may be appropriate.

1. Special Committees:

Special committees may be created by action of the Academic Senate for specific purposes. Special committees shall be elected by the Senate

The Steering Committee is inclined to recommend this committee as a special committee because we understand the formation of this committee to represent an essential experimental response to an extraordinary crisis. We are hoping that the budget crisis we currently face will be resolved in two years time. Should it not be, the administration and the Academic Senate could deliberate at a later time to determine whether or not the constitution of a permanent budget advisory committee would be called for, based both upon the budget situation during the

Academic year 2012-2013, and the contribution such a committee may or may not have made to the smooth functioning of our college.

As of this writing, and after lengthy consultations with Interim President Call, and the members of the CAPC on December 1, 2010, the Steering Committee, in consultation with the Administration, would be prepared to recommend that this committee be titled the “Special Advisory Committee of the Academic Senate on Queensborough’s Resource Allocation Process.” The Steering Committee and the Administration are in agreement that such a Committee would have one representative from the Steering Committee of the Academic Senate; one representative from the Faculty Executive Committee; one representative from the Budget Committee of the College Personnel and Budget Committee (incidentally, a representative from the Committee of Chairs), and one representative from Student Government, who would meet with the Vice-President for Finance and Administration. The Steering Committee is prepared to recommend that this committee be titled “advisory” as this would be consistent with its CUNY governance analog. The transactions of this committee would, moreover, be confidential, except where reports to the CAPC and/or the Academic Senate might be agreed upon in advance, by both the Senate and Administration.

The Steering Committee would like to thank President Call and the members of CAPC for their close and thoughtful discussion of these proposals. We would also like to invite members of the Academic Senate to comment upon the options before our college at the forthcoming meeting of the Academic Senate on December 14. Should the members of the Academic Senate, the Faculty Executive Committee, and the Committee of Chairs be in support of the course of action the Steering Committee has proposed, the Steering Committee would be willing to offer a resolution to this effect at the February, 2011 meeting of the Academic Senate.

- The University Faculty Senate is also in receipt of a report, authored by Dr. Julia Wrigley on behalf of the Working Group on Transfer and Articulation, established by Executive Vice-Chancellor and University Provost Alexandra W. Logue of the CUNY Office of Academic Affairs, entitled “Improving Student Transfer at CUNY.” The purpose of this report is to outline the difficulty that the 67% of CUNY students who complete their degrees after transferring between at least one institution and another encounter on their path to the baccalaureate. Many are obliged to complete far more than 120 credits—not, as might be imagined, in the course of exploring exciting new academic paths, but simply because courses they took at one institution may not count toward the requirements for a chosen major at a second.

Queensborough’s involvement in this task force was largely positive; our own Interim President Call served as a member; and page 9 of this report specifically mentions Queensborough’s Mathematics 210 as a course that “transfers many different ways” across CUNY. However, because some colleges, and especially

community colleges, cannot boast such portability, the University is reviewing models for transferability at SUNY and the University of Georgia to see if there is a way that CUNY could streamline this process for students. One possible approach would be to create a “core curriculum” that would transfer across CUNY. Because this might be disruptive to the integrity of programs at individual colleges, another approach, which the UFS favors, would involve the revival, and possible the extension of “disciplinary committees with representation from senior, comprehensive, and community colleges (p. 27).” The Steering Committee has asked Mr. Moretti, our campus webmaster, to place this report on the Queensborough governance website for the review of Senators at <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/transfer-report.asp>. We welcome comments on these various approaches which we would propose to forward to our colleagues in University faculty governance.

- At the UFS Plenary of November 16, 2010, the University Faculty Senate voted to support the CUNY Compact and to urge Albany to fully fund it. The Senate also voted to urge Albany to return all of the proceeds of any tuition increases in the future to CUNY for support of academic programs and student services. The vote was 40 in favor, 15 opposed, with 6 abstentions.

The Steering committee is including, at the close of this report, the full text of this resolution, although it would like to note that, at the last Board of Trustees meeting, Chancellor Goldstein amended his original tuition resolution to insert a request for approval to raise tuition an added 3% in the fall—representing a larger increase that the University Faculty Senate voted to support.

Preamble

The Executive Committee of the University Faculty Senate, with the unanimous advice of our Budget Advisory Committee, invites the plenary at this meeting to endorse the following resolutions regarding CUNY’s funding and fiscal future.

We move these resolutions because of

- the fiscal condition of the city, state and nation;
- the recent history of damaging budget reductions;
- the outlook for further drastic cut backs; and
- our obligation to provide academic programs and support services that our students require.

We urge that the University Faculty adopt the following:

- **Resolutions on the Compact**

Whereas, the CUNY Compact calls for a shared responsibility for funding among the State, the City, CUNY, private philanthropy, and students, and

Whereas, the CUNY Compact calls for complete State and City coverage of mandatory costs and calls for the implementation of a rational tuition policy, and

Whereas, a rational tuition policy mandates small, annual increases no more than the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) to avoid the need for erratic spikes in tuition, and

Whereas, the Compact also calls for the safeguarding of full student financial aid and for expansion of TAP to be directly correlated with tuition increases,

Therefore, Be it Resolved, that the UFS calls upon the State Legislature and Executive to fully fund the CUNY Compact, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the UFS calls upon the Legislature and Executive to return to CUNY, for expenditure by CUNY in the areas of academic programs and student support services, any tuition monies henceforth generated by the raising of tuition.

Explanation

The State budget for CUNY in Fiscal Year 2011 – that is, the current year – includes a cut to CUNY’s senior colleges of \$84.4. million in its operating budget. Combined with the reductions of the past two fiscal years, CUNY has now sustained more than \$205 million in State cuts since Fiscal Year 2009.

The CUNY community colleges received a cut of \$285 per student FTE, which is approximately \$20 million. Last year, in FY2010, the community colleges sustained a \$14 million mid-year cut, half of which came directly from college base budgets. In 2009, State aid per FTE was \$2,675 but this year it is only \$2,260. As a result of these cuts, the FY2011 community college allocation model is funded at only 90% (whereas the FY 2010 allocation, for example, covered 99% of model expenditures). Furthermore, the \$42.8 million in Federal Stimulus funds that the CUNY community colleges now receive is set to expire in Fiscal Year 2012.

The State and City budget outlooks are grim: the estimated State shortfalls for the next three fiscal years are as follows:

<> FY2012 – \$8.2 billion

<> FY2013 – \$13.5 billion

<> FY2014 – \$15.6 billion

A large portion of the shortfalls in the State’s fiscal outlook emanates from the sun setting of the Federal Stimulus Program.

Estimated City shortfalls for the next three fiscal years are as follows:

<> FY2012 – \$3.7 billion

<> FY2013 – \$4.6 billion

<> FY 2014 – \$5.3 billion

All State Financial Aid awards, that is, Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) awards, were reduced by \$75, as a result of the Governor’s vetoes. TAP is no longer available to graduate students and new satisfactory academic progress standards have been established. The City adopted budget reduced funding for the Vallone Scholarships program from \$9.5 million to \$6 million. On the other hand, the maximum Federal Pell Grant award for FY 2011 is \$5,550, an increase of \$200 from the FY2010 award.