

BROOKLYN COLLEGE
OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
FACULTY COUNCIL
November 12, 2013

- (6024) Call to order The third 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).
- (6025) Roll call The roll call was taken at the door. Department Chairs and Representatives: Bankoff (Anthro & Archeao), Green (Africana Stud.), Ciszowska (Chemistry), Li & Shannon (ECAE), Powell (E&ES), Chang (Modern Lang.), Trivedi (Philosophy), Elizalde-Utnick (SPCL); School Delegates: Murrow (Education), Chalmers, Davenport & Perdikaris (Nat & Behavior. Sci.), Grubbs (Music) were absent (-14); Okome (Humanities & Social Sci.) were excused (-1); Administrators: Tramontano, Psarris, Gilbert, Hewitt, Fitzgerald, Gold, Mirotznik & Ali were also absent and excused. All other members were present.
- (6026) Minutes of September 10, 2013 Professor Langsam presented the minutes of October 8, 2013. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- (6027) Steering Committee Professor Langsam wished Provost Tramontano a speedy recovery and looked forward to his return to campus.

Professor Langsam announced that an election two members for the Committee on Committees will take place at the December Faculty Council meeting.

On behalf of Steering, Professor Shortell (Sociology) introduced the Special Resolution on Faculty Governance:

**Special Resolution on Faculty Governance
Steering Committee**

Whereas, according to the Governance Plan of Brooklyn College (Article II), the faculty “shall be responsible for the formulation of policy relating to the admission and retention of students, including health and scholarship standards; student attendance, including leaves of absence; curriculum; awarding of college credit; granting of degrees”; and

Whereas, Faculty Council is “the legislative body of the Faculty and shall have all the responsibilities of a faculty”; and

Whereas, Faculty Council, at its meeting of April 3, 2012, voted not to “implement a [CUNY] Pathways curriculum under the current guidelines,” and again, at its meeting of May 8, 2012, reaffirmed that stand, and since that time has not approved any Pathways-related curricular changes; and

Whereas, the College administration, without approval by Faculty Council, and in violation of the College governance plan, changed the general education requirements in the 2013-2014 Undergraduate Bulletin,

Be it therefore resolved that the Faculty Council of Brooklyn College directs the College administration to restore the general education requirements approved by Faculty Council,

as stated in the 2012-2013 Undergraduate Bulletin.

Professor Shortell stated that the Brooklyn College administration changed the general education language in the Brooklyn College Bulletin without Faculty Council approval in violation of the Brooklyn College governance plan. The resolution directs the administration to correct the Bulletin so that no degree requirements that have not been approved by Faculty Council are included. Professor Shortell stated that the governance plan is not optional and that the faculty and the administration alike are bound by it. The governance plan is clear: faculty are responsible for curriculum and degree requirements. As Brooklyn College undertakes a year-long process of general education review, it is quite possible that changes in curriculum and degree requirements will come about, but they will follow the governance process. Professor Shortell stated that the call to return the general education requirements is not symbolic but a sincere request, because the current Bulletin is in error. Professor Weis (Film) asked about impact of the resolution on Brooklyn College students. Professor Shortell stated that since the Bulletin is in error, we should make sure that our students understand current degree requirements and should advise them accordingly. Professor Entin (American Studies) stated that faculty should be vigilant on the issue of governance. If we give up the rights and privileges of governance, we will never get them back. The Special Resolution on Faculty Governance passed with a vote of 80 yeas, 3 nays, and 2 abstentions.

Professor Langsam introduced the Proposed Amendment to the UFS Charter. He explained the procedure by which the UFS must change its governance and how the amendment would change that procedure. The amendment passed with a vote of 82 yeas, 3 nays, and 2 abstentions.

Professors Brooks (English) and Kellogg (Classics) reported on the Ad Hoc Committee for the Review of General Education. The committee has met twice and has begun the review the data obtained from previous iterations of the Core curriculum and general education. It has begun to compare the Brooklyn College general education with national models at comparable institutions within and outside of CUNY. It has had several meetings with staff and administrators, which is a continuing process. Long-range plans include surveys of faculty, alumni, and students, the analysis of data from those surveys, focus groups, and a maximum of three focused town hall meetings during the spring 2014 semester. Faculty members are urged to contact Professors Brooks and Kellogg if they have suggestions for the committee. The goal is to have a report by May.

(6028) Communications
from the Administration

President Gould read the following statement:

This week, the College and several departments are once again the focus of media attention, expressed alumni concern, and some student consternation because of the scheduled lectures hosted over the next two days by one of our student clubs. That is the context for the following remarks:

Brooklyn College supports academic freedom, which means that the College will protect speech, including matters that touch on a range of public concerns and debate, even if we strongly disagree with the content. The binding principles of the First Amendment and Academic Freedom are the bedrock of American higher education, where “the robust exchange of ideas” can be encountered and debated.

As I stated last February, departments and interdisciplinary programs have the right to inform students about a student-hosted event by lending their name to an event, as they do at many other institutions around the country and in CUNY. In itself, this does not constitute, nor is it meant to constitute, an endorsement of the views presented at a particular event. Moreover, in the interest of constitutionally-protected free speech, we are not in a position to censure or ban speakers who have been invited by a recognized student organization, even

if we strongly disagree with the content.

Faculty departments and other units do indeed have the right to lend their name to a student-hosted event, but this right should be exercised with considerable care and with an informed awareness of the impact this gesture may be interpreted to mean among members of our remarkably diverse student body and particular groups of students. Our unique history as a college, our proud and accomplished alumni, and our ties to the borough whose name we carry all matter. Departments that elect to support student-hosted events need to do so with care and compassion for all the students on our campus, particularly when the topics of events are controversial and may pull at the fabric of our diversely woven campus community, which I know we all cherish.

Brooklyn College has more than 130 registered students clubs and organizations active on campus during this fall semester. These student organizations have hosted nearly 100 events to date, including guest speaker lectures, club socials, cultural awareness events, movie screenings, charitable events, and recreational activities. As is typical, there will be a variety of speakers with different points of view scheduled by student clubs during the academic year; a few of these events may be viewed as controversial. We expect all participants in such events to comply with college rules of conduct, which will be enforced, to be respectful of our diverse college community, and to engage in civil discourse at all times.

Professor Shapiro (Judaic Studies) asked if we can be assured that efforts have been and will be made to ensure that students involved in organizing and running these activities are actually Brooklyn College students. Professor Gould responded in the affirmative and stated that the names of students organizing all events have been required, a process that the Office of Student Affairs is overseeing. This is part of the new guidelines for student-hosted events. Professor Fox (English) asked if there were a plan to present another side of the issue. President Gould replied that this question had come up a number of times. She stated that the administration has been involved in an enormous body of work since last February and that it is in the middle of renewed work, because it is committed to these principles. She asked faculty, as advisors and mentors, and students to encourage other points of view, as it is not the place of the administration to organize these events. She stated that the Israel Club would host events in the next few weeks. If anyone is interested in helping, especially the departments that decided to sign on, one thing that can be done is helping our neighbors understand the responsibilities and rights to ensure that these debates are civil, that we are respectful of one another, and that we model this for our students. President Gould stated that she had come to love the remarkable complexity and diversity of the Brooklyn College campus and our student body in particular. She said that we should not take the way that this complicated fabric has been woven together for granted. We need to cherish and take care of it, so that our students don't become the playing ground for large world events that are very challenging. We need to remind ourselves of our responsibilities as teachers, leaders, researchers, scholars, and as those that care. She asked for help, mentoring, and support of all of our students during these troubled times as they encounter tough issues that are raw and at the surface of their lives.

(6029) Committee on Committees

Professor Shortell (Sociology) presented the updated nominations list for committee assignments for the 2013 -2014 academic year with changes. The nominations passed with 83 yeas, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions.

(6030) Liaison with the Faculty Senate

Professor Fox (English) read the following about the most recent University Faculty Senate

meeting:

Before the meeting, UFS members received several documents. One was a Management Council report, which mentioned Chancellor Kelly's "Diversity Initiative," which is "an attempt to increase black and Hispanic enrollment at the most selective senior colleges, where it has fallen off substantially." This is especially true at Hunter and Baruch.

We also received a draft of *The City University of New York Policy on Expressive Activity*, which seems to put serious limits on the student/faculty right to demonstrate, and which would be extensively discussed at the plenary meeting.

We also received a *UFS Executive Committee Response to recent CUNY-AAUP Dialogue* about Pathways. This report indicated that "Many of former Chancellor Matthew Goldstein's statements about Pathways are inaccurate or misleading. For example, the Chancellor said Pathways was faculty driven, but "no University-wide or campus faculty organizations or governance bodies were the initiating or driving forces behind Pathways, nor have any been supportive of Pathways at any time." The Chancellor said "a bare majority of the full-time faculty voted against Pathways," but "Over 92% of the more than 60 % of the eligible full-time faculty who participated in a no-confidence vote, cast their vote against Pathways." Furthermore, "Many faculty who worked on the Pathways curriculum at their colleges report that they did so because they believed they had no other option, because they were told and believed that if they did not do so, administrators or outside consultants would create the courses, or because they were threatened in some way." Finally, about transfer problems at CUNY, the Chancellor said "Until recently, faculty governance bodies did not even acknowledge the problem," but "The UFS participated in the approval of University policies from 1965 to 1999 that addressed transfer issues. In fact, despite explicit instruction in 1999 by the CUNY Board of Trustees to the Chancellory to enforce these University policies, no action to do so was taken by the Chancellory. These Board of Trustees resolutions had been posted on the CUNY website but have recently been removed by CUNY; nonetheless, they can be found on the UFS website.

At the plenary meeting, we had two guest speakers: Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget Matthew Sapienza and SUNY Faculty Senate President Peter Knuepfer.

VC Sapienza spoke about the current CUNY budget request and about TAP. In the current budget request, the highest priority is to increase the number of full-time faculty, but it includes other requests mentioned in a questionnaire given at our last BC Faculty Council meeting, such as to improve facilities, to increase faculty research support, to increase student counseling support, to increase budget for student support programs, and to increase student scholarships. About TAP, VC Sapienza said that the maximum TAP award used to equal the CUNY tuition of \$5000, but has not changed while tuition has been increasing. The current request is for the maximum TAP award to be raised to equal the Fall 2015 SUNY tuition of \$6500.

SUNY Faculty Senate President Knuepfer reported that like CUNY, SUNY has been working to develop "a seamless transfer system," but that there has been less controversy and more faculty involvement in this process than at CUNY. The SUNY Chancellor wants SUNY to offer more opportunities for students to take online courses and to get online degrees. The SUNY Board recently passed a resolution that would require higher standards of entry into teacher preparation programs. Faculty were not consulted about this and are concerned that it could cause a decrease in the diversity of students admitted to these programs.

Also at the meeting, the reps voted to support a change in procedures for amending the UFS charter, which will be sent to all college governance bodies for a vote of approval.

Chair Martell reported that a CUNY-wide Doctoral Steering Committee, which includes the Brooklyn College President, is working on changes in graduate school doctoral programs, and also that there will be a UFS Fall Conference on "The Future of Doctoral Education at CUNY" on Friday, Dec.6, from 9 to 11 at Baruch College, for which registration is required. Please contact me if you want information for registering for this conference.

A good deal of time was spent on discussing the draft of *The City University of New York Policy on Expressive Activity*. There is a strong negative feeling about this draft and a feeling that it is aimed at limiting the student/faculty right to demonstrate at CUNY. Before the plenary, the UFS Academic Freedom Committee had discussed the document, and feels that the language is too broad and vague, and places too much control in the hands of college administrators. For example, administrators could deny the student/faculty right to demonstrate based on a claim that "adequate security is not available." The UFS Student Affairs Committee had also discussed this document, had expressed concern about inappropriate, unnecessary violence being used by security forces against students in recent demonstrations, had expressed concern that some CUNY students had recently been arrested at student demonstrations, and had passed the following resolution, which was read at the plenary meeting:

Whereas, Recent events at CUNY raise issues of protest, dissent, and public safety officers' actions; now therefore be it

Resolved, That the University Faculty Senate Student Affairs Committee reaffirms the democratic right of students and faculty to engage in peaceful protest and express the full range of their views; and be it further

Resolved, That the Committee calls on local and Central administrators to refrain from actions that threaten the free expression of ideas.

The University Faculty Senate plans to try to work with CUNY to revise this document in such a way that it will not allow unreasonable prevention of free speech and freedom of assembly, and will not allow inappropriate and unnecessary use of force against students and faculty at CUNY.

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| (6031) Degree Lists | Professor Bowdoin (Library) presented Degree List 2014/5, was approved with a vote of 81 yeas, 0 nays, and 2 abstentions. |
| (6032) Report of Standing Committees | Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum & Degree Requirements: Professor Tenenbaum (CIS) presented Curriculum Document 365 with changes. It which was approved with a vote of 80 yeas, 0 nays and 1 abstention.

Committee on Course and Standing: Professor Cohen (Music) presented the annual report, which was accepted after a discussion of the recommendations made in the report. |
| (6033) Old Business | There was no old business. |
| (6034) New Business | There was no new business. |
| (6035) Adjournment | There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm. |

Respectfully submitted,

Yedidyah Langsam
Chair

Martha Nadell
Secretary