

M-147

April 5, 2016

Meeting of College Council Volume 43 Number 2

There were present:

Mr. Alvarez	Prof. Ferretti	Prof. Murphy
Prof. Arenas	V.P. Fox	Prof. Nanin
Prof. Barnhart	Prof. Furay	Prof. Nicosia
Prof. Bassen	Prof. Garcia-Osuna	Prof. Pierre
Ms. Blauvelt	Mr. Gordon	Prof. Repetti
Prof. Borgese	Dr. Harewood	V.P. Rios
Ms. Castro	Prof. Howard	V.P. Russell
Mr. Chatiburus	Prof. Hume	Prof. Segal
Prof. A. Cohen	Prof. Kates	Prof. Sokolow
Ms. J. Cohen	Prof. Lax	Ms. Sutton-Young
Ms. Daly	Ms. Loeza	Prof. Taras
Prof. Dawson	Prof. Martin	Prof. Weeks
Ms. Driscoll	Prof. McDevitt	Prof. Wood
Prof. Farrell	Prof. Miranda	Prof. Yarmish

President Herzek called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM.

I. The minutes of the meetings of November 17, 2015 were approved by acclamation.

II. Reports

A. President's Report

The President began with an update on the New York State budget. Currently there is no line item for funding the CUNY contract. The State legislative session has not ended, and approximately 5 to 6 weeks are left. It has been indicated that the State will continue to work with CUNY, and both sides are still meeting.

Our Chancellor really wants a contract to be passed in a big way. Whatever efforts we can put forth will be useful during this window of time while the Legislature is in session. There is currently a surplus in the State budget, so achieving a contract now is important. Both CUNY and the Union have a great deal at stake here, and wish to get everything resolved to everyone's best interests.

The community college part of the budget is very good, with base aid increased by \$100 per student. There is growth within some community colleges. Ed Rios has been asked to take a hard look at the community college allocation formula, to see how the additional money could be used for all the community colleges.

The State did not pass “rational tuition” – community colleges weren’t going to raise tuition next year, but the four-year colleges now cannot do so. This may cause some tightness for them, but not for us.

Sixty million dollars citywide and a matching figure for the State is being allocated for maintenance projects, and we will be in the queue for this as well. So we did very well.

Next week the Middle States team arrives on Sunday night on April 10th. Our Middle States chair is a very bright, very fair person. Tasheka Sutton-Young has worked tirelessly to schedule meetings with many of us at the Middle States team’s request, to meet their time and scheduling constraints on Monday April 11th and Tuesday April 12th, before a short day on Wednesday April 13th, when they will present us with their preliminary exit report.

Their final report will go through several edits before the final version is finished in a few months.

So this is an opportunity for us to shine and not hold back, drawing attention to everything we accomplish in addition to our classroom programming. At times their questions are very structured, but this is the time to put our best foot forward. This is extremely important, and it is our face to the public. It is also a teaching moment, as we show our students that we too are evaluated by our peers.

Additionally, the team asked to meet with the College Council, so we will hold a special meeting on Tuesday April 12th at 3:00 PM.

Over the last few weeks, Kingsborough Community College has come under increased scrutiny from the New York State Assembly and the State Senate. In a letter to Chancellor Milliken, State Assembly Members Dov Hikind and David Weprin wrote:

Dear Chancellor Milliken: As you are undoubtedly aware, recent events at several colleges have fostered a feeling of pervasive fear among Jewish and pro-Israel students and faculty members due to the environment and hate created by a group of students under the banner of the Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP). The continued actions of this group in its incitement and vile behavior directed towards fellow students and faculty has no place at the City University of New York...

Actions and statements at Brooklyn College, Hunter College, John Jay College, the College of Staten Island, and Kingsborough Community College as well as at universities and colleges throughout the country have shown the true nature and belief of SJP – nothing short of the total destruction and elimination of the State of Israel...

Jewish students have cause to fear for their personal safety and well-being. Unfortunately, rhetoric has at times taken a violent turn, and physical confrontations have taken place on campuses. Students have reported being pushed, spat upon and having objects thrown at them...

[signed by] Dov Hikind, David Weprin, and 12 additional members of the NY State Assembly

This letter is extremely damaging to all of Kingsborough. It sends a horrible message about our student body. I meet regularly with Muslim members of our student body, and they are a wonderfully nice group of students.

There has never been a report of a Jewish student at Kingsborough Community College suffering this sort of treatment. None of these acts have happened on our campus. This club [SJP] does not meet on our campus, sanctioned or unsanctioned. I meet regularly with our Jewish students and Muslim students, and this [SJP] does not exist on our campus.

I have spoken personally with the Assembly Members, and I told them how inaccurate this statement is for our campus. I asked them why they did not call us or ask about these accusations in advance, but they had no answer. I cannot speculate about the reasons for this letter or the situation at other CUNY campuses. In fact, David Weprin apologized yesterday.

In addition to these letters, there have been published accusations against several senior members of our Administration, accusing them of anti-Semitic policies and treatment. I cannot speak to certain matters under litigation, but I did send out a public statement addressing this issue.

The President concluded his remarks.

B. Instructional Committee Report

The Instructional Committee presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS, a central repository for the administration of final examinations – commonly known as the “Vault” --is a crucial resource for ensuring that such exams are administered in the case of instructor absence; conflict exams; and the retrieval of exams by the Office of Testing for the reconciliation of incomplete grades; and

WHEREAS, the Vault allows for Access-Ability Services to format exams to reasonably accommodate students' needs in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and

WHEREAS, the current process of submitting paper copies of examinations well in advance of the final exam testing date causes difficulty in instructors' preparation of examinations that are reflective of the entire course's discussion; therefore be it

RESOLVED, the College Council requests that the College explore the development of a secure digital alternative procedure for the timely and expeditious submission and archiving of final examinations to the Vault. This option shall be developed as a voluntary alternative to the current mechanism for submitting examination originals to the College.

Committee Chair Caterina Pierre explained: A concern brought to us was the timing of when Final exams must be submitted to the Vault a month in advance. Some instructors also use computerized exams which are not submitted in hard copy to the Vault.

We wish the College to think about setting a later date for a digital copy to be submitted to the Vault somehow. This would also help the Conflict Room, Office of Testing, and the Vault to have digital copies.

A lively discussion followed:

Professor Weeks raised the issue of concern over the security of digital exams. Prof. Pierre replied that this arrangement would be opt-in for faculty, and no one would be required to do this. Departmental Finals would also like be better served by printing up hard copies.

Prof. Martin suggested that, rather than offering this as a Council Resolution, the Instructional Committee may go forward to act on this issue as part of its own mandate.

Prof. Segal proposed getting rid of the Vault system entirely, and asked if any other colleges have this system.

Prof. Pierre replied that there are some issues regarding the elimination of the Vault which would need to be considered first.

Prof. Martin added that there exist some State requirements regarding student identities and copies being preserved in the Vault, as verification that students actually took their own exams.

Vice President Fox spoke in favor of tabling the matter. He added that administrative questions may be paramount rather than technological ones.

Professor Barnhart also spoke in favor of tabling the Resolution and sending it back to committee. He suggested that the committee also examine the legal ramifications and practices at other CUNY colleges.

Prof. Repetti stated that CIO Asif Hussain says that the College can meet technological needs and security.

Vice President Fox recommended that we bear in mind that [in our existing semesters] we are treading close to the edge of the minimum minutes required by the State for a 3-credit course, as well as faculty pay.

The Council voted by acclamation to table the resolution.

C. Legislative Committee and Secretary's Report

a. The Instructional Faculty members of the Council voted to select six (6) Faculty Nominees from different disciplines to serve on two CUNY Common Core Course Review Committees. The instructions transmitted to us by the Provost stated:

- Subcommittee One: "English Composition," "Creative Expression," "World Cultures and Global Issues," and "U.S. Experience in its Diversity." (3 faculty members nominated)
- Subcommittee Two: "Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning," "Life and Physical Sciences," "Scientific World," and "Individual and Society." (3 faculty members nominated)

Each college will have the opportunity to have one representative on each of the two subcommittees. [CUNY will choose two from the list of six nominees submitted by KCC.] They will serve a two-year term from Fall 2016 through Spring 2018.

Committee members will review courses via the CUNYfirst course review system (training will be provided) and discuss/vote on courses remotely or in person. The committee may also be asked to review courses submitted via the student appeals process.

Each committee member will receive one course release for the two-year term.

Nominations were held separately for each subcommittee. In order of votes received, the results were:

Subcommittee One: Profs. Barnhart, Pierre, and Wood. Profs. Cates and LeComte were also nominated but were not elected.

Subcommittee Two: Profs. Dawson, Barcena, and Echols. Profs. Yarmish and Reddy were also nominated but not elected.

b. There will be a special College Council meeting with the Middle States Evaluation Team during its site visit to KCC. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 12 from 3:00 – 4:00 PM in M-240, the MAC Rotunda.

In the absence of any New Business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Sokolow

Michael Sokolow, Secretary

ADDENDUM:

A special meeting of Council Members with members of the Middle States team (Dr. Kathleen McColgin and Nayyer Hussain) was held on April 12, 2016 in the MAC Rotunda from 3:00-4:00 PM. The discussion focused on the structure and role of the Council and its Committees, with some questions about general college and university governance as well. The meeting was informational in nature.

In attendance were members Arenas, Barnhart, Bennett, Blauvelt, Chatiburus, A. Cohen, J. Cohen, Daly, Dawson, Driscoll, Farrell, Fox, Harewood, Howard, Kates, Klein, Loeza, Martin, McDevitt, McKinney, Miranda, Murphy, Pierre, Repetti, Rios, Rooney, Russell, Sokolow, Sutton-Young, Taras, Troudt, Wagstaff, Watson, Weeks, Winnick, and Wood. There were also many non-Council observers in attendance as well.