

BROOKLYN COLLEGE
OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
FACULTY COUNCIL
November 17, 2020

(6661) Call to order The third meeting of Faculty Council for the 2020-2021 academic year was called to order at 3:30 pm by Professor Langsam (CISC) via Zoom.

(6662) Roll call The roll call was taken at the door. Department Chairs and Representatives: Staniczenko (Biology), Longtin (CASD), Shannon (ECAE), Childers (MLAN), Weston (PSYC), Marsh (Theatre); Delegates: O'Connor-Petruso (EDUC), Muth (NBS), & Nissenbaum (Prog Dir) were absent (-9); Administrators: Conelli & Scharron Del Rio were also absent and excused. All other members were present

(6663) Minutes of October 20, 2020 The minutes of October 20, 2020 were approved unanimously.

(6664) Steering Committee Professor Langsam announced that two members of the Committee on Committees will be nominated and elected at the next meeting of Faculty Council. He reminded chairs that each department's undergraduate curriculum must have a student member. He encourage all of the chairs to invite Chief Diversity Officer Brown to deliver an anti-bias presentation.

(6665) Communications from the Administration President Anderson apologized for stating that her office had consulted with the Secretary of the Faculty, Professor Florence (SEED) about the cancellation of the fall Stated Meeting of the Faculty. In fact, Professor Florence had no notice of the cancellation. President Anderson indicated that she is working to have the spring Stated Meeting of the Faculty be a live event.

President Anderson discussed her work to support transfer students. She chairs the University-wide Transfer Steering Committee, which is developing dashboards about the acceptance of transfer credits and transfer student performance at senior colleges across CUNY.

President Anderson stated that fundraising efforts at this time are focused on carrying out our Strategic Plan and anti-racist agenda.

Fundraising at this time of year is in the grassroots phase, included mail appeals, a phone-a-thon, and Giving Tuesday. She reported on new supports for students: new psychological counselors for mental health support, the opening of the campus health center for free prescription medicine and flu shots, increased access to the food pantry, the opening of computer labs and study spaces in the WEB Building, the enhancement of academic support hours, and new childcare options.

Provost Lopes spoke about concerns about faculty mental health and isolation and listed efforts to address this: community-building activities, a discussion groups for faculty struggling with research, and a discussion group for caregivers, and other events. A group of CUNY provosts is recommending efforts to help faculty across the university. Provost Lopes spoke about the anti-racist work in academic affairs and mentioned the work being done by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Senior Vice-President for Finance and Administration Gilbert reminded Faculty Council about his monthly town hall. He stated that he hopes to share a video of the unveiling of the cupola at that meeting. He stated that there hasn't been much change about the budget and that Brooklyn College has received some CARES allocation, which is neither budget nor payroll relief.

A discussion about the following issues following: the changes in academic work caused by the pandemic, their impact on promotion and tenure in the coming years, and recommendations about this issue; the use of CARE funds; and faculty hiring.

(6666)
Committee on
Committees

The Committee on Committee reported one vacancy and called for nominations.

(6667) Liaison
with the
University
Faculty Senate

Professor Cohen (MUSC) reported on the latest University Faculty Senate (see Appendix A).

(6668) Degree
Lists

Degree Lists 2021/4 was approved with a vote of 96 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention.

(6669) Reports
of Standing
Committees

Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and Degree
Requirements: Curriculum Document 408 was approved with a
vote of 94 yeas, 0 nays, and 1 abstention.

Committee on Graduate Curriculum and Degree Requirements
Curriculum Document 259 then passed with a vote of 92 yeas, 0
nays, and 3 abstentions.

Committee on Review of Programs: The annual report was
presented and accepted.

(6670) Old
Business

There was no old business.

(6671) New
Business

Professor Davis (English) presented "DEFEND US, DON'T
DEFUND US: A Resolution from Brooklyn College Faculty and
Professional Staff" (see Appendix B). A motion to divide the
motion failed with a vote of 24 yeas, 69 nays, and 2 abstentions.
The resolution passed with a vote of 84 yeas, 8 nays, and 3
abstentions.

Professor Tremper (English) announced that Senior Vice
President for Enrollment Management O'Reilly has been at
Brooklyn College for 19 years. All congratulated her on this
achievement.

(6672)
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Yedidyah Langsam
Chair

Martha Nadell
Secretary

Appendix A
UFS Report to the November 17, 2020 Faculty Council Meeting

The 420th CUNY University Faculty Senate Plenary Session

Tuesday, October 27, 2020

Budget concerns were the primary focus of the meeting, with Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer Matthew Sapienza as guest.

From his report:

New York State is withholding 20% from the budget state wide, including to the universities. This includes NYS financial aid, which could be a problem for the Tuition Assistance Program if the cut cannot be restored.

CUNY had been withholding 20% to the colleges as part of the month-to-month budgets under which the schools were operating, then in October the Board of Trustees passed a budget through January 2021 (7-months) that continues the 20% cuts. The hope is that by January there will a better understanding of the financial climate.

The federal CARES Act has been helpful to CUNY. The portion that needed to go directly to students was disbursed directly to the colleges in the Spring which then awarded the funds to eligible students. The portion for the colleges to use to support students had been held by CUNY awaiting a final budget, but with the continuing budget delays, it began to send the funds to colleges to help defray the costs the colleges experienced supporting students during COVID, including student health and wellness and technology expenditures for students. Refunds to students of tuition, fees, and college housing are also covered uses for CARES Act funds. The balance of CARES Act funds held by CUNY will be dispersed in a later cycle. The amount of CARES Act funds a college receives is based on the number of students at that college receiving Pell Grants. As a result, institutions which serve mostly graduate students may receive only a small portion of CUNY's CARES Act funds.

Budget uncertainty will continue until New York State is able to deliver a final budget to the university system. On the positive side, New York City has a completed budget, adding some certainty to the 2-year college budgets.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas Cohen

DEFEND US, DON'T DEFUND US
A Resolution from Brooklyn College Faculty and Professional Staff

Whereas the reluctance of the CUNY and Brooklyn College administrations to advocate more forcefully for CUNY at this time dangerously minimizes the critical nature of the shortfalls we face after years of working under a deficit budget. As austerity policies advance in State and City government, administrators have pre-capitulated to budget cuts when they should be publicly opposing their imposition. Despite acquiring expanded authority over the budget from the legislature in April, the Governor has declined thus far to announce cuts to state agencies, including CUNY. But allocations are being withheld, effectively reducing the operating budget by 20 percent, freezing full-time hires, rendering large segments of the workforce precarious, and centralizing personnel decisions in CUNY's vacancy review board. With an estimated State budget deficit of \$14 billion and the rest of 2020 to act on his new authority, the Governor may still announce deep cuts. Administrators have responded by refusing to take up CUNY's cause publicly or engage the full campus community in budget planning and advocacy; and

Whereas Brooklyn College's administration, apprised of a dire State budget forecast in April, moved immediately to reduce Fall 2020 course offerings by 25 percent, triggering the non-reappointment of many adjunct faculty, including some whose health insurance depended on CUNY employment. The College administration later authorized reappointment of many of these adjuncts, but only after vigorous advocacy from Department Chairs and Interdisciplinary Program directors and a union campaign; and

Whereas Brooklyn College's administration has made the Vice President for Finance and Administration its spokesperson on budget-related matters, while the President has declined to go on record or hold a Town Hall on the budget for the College community; and

Whereas CUNY's Board of Trustees has violated [Article 2, section 1](#), of CUNY's Manual of General Policy, on "Autonomy and Jurisdiction of the University," specifically the provision "that all officers and administrators of the Board of Trustees be directed, exhorted, and admonished that the efforts aimed at the survival and preservation of the University and of its separate identity and mission, and of an appropriate and essential budget from both the State and the City sufficient to meet the vital needs of all present elements of the University shall be the first priority of all such officers and administrators"; and

Whereas CUNY's Board of Trustees has delayed approval a 2020-21 budget and delayed the full disbursement to the campuses of CUNY's \$132 million in institutional CARES Act funding, approved by the Federal government to offset costs associated

with the pandemic, including maintaining employees on payroll “to the greatest extent practicable”; and

Whereas Chancellor Matos Rodríguez has testified in a joint State Senate and Assembly Higher Education committee hearing, and repeated elsewhere, that no full-time faculty members have been fired or furloughed, as at other universities. Setting the bar this low, he has acquiesced to cuts that yield layoffs of other faculty and professional staff. He has conveyed the disposability of the very employees – those on contingent appointments – on whom the university relies to serve students and whose low wages subsidize CUNY’s operation; and

Whereas these derelictions have made Brooklyn College more vulnerable to austerity policies, not more secure. Since CUNY predominantly serves working communities and immigrant communities, and since over 75 percent of CUNY students identify as non-white, they also constitute an abandonment of CUNY’s mission and acquiescence to a racist policy agenda. This policy agenda may not have originated with BC and CUNY, but a failure to confront it directly and publicly serves to reinforce hierarchical, racialized structures when proactive steps should be taken toward a learning community in which every member can thrive; and

Whereas Brooklyn College Higher Education Officers and College Laboratory Technicians consistently cite a lack of transparency on personnel actions, such as promotion, reclassification, and salary differential assignment. Recommendations to the President on professional staff personnel actions come from the Support Staff Screening Committee, a group of Presidential appointees comprised solely of administrators and senior-level supervisors; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Brooklyn College administration take the following steps by December 31 to begin repairing the harm:

1. Provide the resources to departments and interdisciplinary programs that allow chairs and program directors to establish pedagogically appropriate enrollment limits; and
2. Appoint to the Support Staff Screening Committee at least one professional staff employee nominated by other members of the professional staff; and
3. Invite and budget for an external consultant to guide the College’s planning and implementation of anti-racist policies and practices, per the Anti-Racist Coalition’s demand.

