

BROOKLYN COLLEGE  
OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
FACULTY COUNCIL  
October 17, 2023

Minutes of September 12, 2023

- (6901) Call to order      The first meeting of Faculty Council for the 2022-23 academic year was called to order at 3:30 pm by Professor Shortell (SOCY).
- (6902) Roll call      The roll call was taken at the door. Department Chairs and Representatives: Reed (CBSE), Cox (CIS), Shannon (ECAE), Lopez (FGSW), Peterburgsky (FINC), Maumus (PHIL), Hardin (PSYC); Delegates: Hainline (NBS) & Menser (PROG DIR) were absent (-9); Fischer (ACCT), Day (AFST) Thibodeau (CLAS), Langsam (CISC), Estey & Okome (POLS), Mena (PRLS), Kozbelt (PSYC), Raphael (HUMA), Rabin (NBS), Arlig (PROG DIR) were excused (11); Administrators - Cumming, Connell, Eaton, McGinnis, O'Reilly & Tolia were also absent and excused. All other members were present.
- (6903) Minutes of May 9, 2023      The minutes of May 9, 2023 were approved unanimously.
- (6904) Steering Committee      Professor Brodsky (JUST) read a minute to mark the passing of Professor Sara Reguer (JUST). Professor Yarrow (CLAS) spoke about Professor Gail Smith (CLAS) to mark her passing and announced a memorial service for Professor Smith will take place Wednesday, September 11, 2023.
- Professor Shortell (SOCY) announced that the election for a vacancy on the Committee on Committees will take place at the next Faculty Council Meeting. In addition, he announced that the Faculty Council governance theme for the 2023-2024 academic year will be belonging and discussed the importance of Faculty Council committees

engaging with the theme of engagement and community building among students, staff, and faculty.

(6905)  
Communications  
from the  
Administration

President Anderson discussed the current fiscal situation. She welcomed Interim Provost Bedford, Interim Dean of the School of Visual and Performing Arts Jensen-Moulton, Interim Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences and Interim assistant vice president of Enrollment Management for Recruitment Coombs.

President Anderson then discussed the current fiscal situation, addressing how it developed, including the following: attacks on higher education from the far right and their impact on thinking about higher education across the nation; the sharp decline of high school graduates due to declining birthrate in the Great Recession; the impact of COVID on student learning and preparation, on staffing, and on regional institutions; the New York context; Brooklyn College's local challenges, including its reputation and scheduling issues, and its location in Brooklyn, which was the epicenter of COVID and the home to the largest concentration of essential workers in New York City. She linked these issues to the rapid decline in enrollment during the COVID years and spoke about current enrollment. Senior Vice-President for Finance and Administration Gilbert discussed how we understand the current fiscal situation. He alerted members to the materials on the BC Portal and addressed lost enrollment and its impact on Brooklyn College funding, the work and composition of the Fiscal Review and Advisory Committee, the four-year Brooklyn College financial plan and efforts to get CUNY to approve it, the overall structural deficit, and challenges to making further budget cuts. President Anderson then turned to current plans. She spoke about the following: her meetings with the Chancellor Matos Rodriguez and other members of the CUNY Central administration; CUNY's overall deficit; the New York State budget context (including the possibility of future deficits); the importance of enrollment growth of 3.2 % per year over the next four years; the successes of the Strategic Enrollment Management plan; a new strategic plan, focused on fiscal strength and enrollment growth through recruitment and retention and guided by the mission, visions, and values of Brooklyn College and developed through extant committees; innovation in curricular programming; enrollment goals by school and program; decreasing costs through attrition; and the Vacancy Review Board. She

then spoke about the pause in the lines for the Women's Center. She returned to the strategic plan and discussed the following: prioritizing work and increase efficiency; growing revenue through lobbying efforts for full funding for CUNY and Brooklyn College; the new PSC-CUNY contract, and operational and capitol support; enhanced fundraising; the importance of collaboration and upcoming opportunities to help enhance enrollment and support the college fiscally; the importance for faculty to connect with students and help foster a community at Brooklyn College; and our shared commitment to Brooklyn College and its mission.

A discussion ensued, at which the following was addressed: enrollment at community colleges, the fiscal deficit, the Women's Center, the Vacancy Review Board, facilities at Brooklyn College, what it means to be student-centered, and the cafeteria.

(6906)  
Committee on  
Committees

The latest slate for Faculty Council committees passed with a vote of 74 yeas, 1 nays, and 2 abstentions.

(6907) Liaison  
with the  
University  
Faculty Senate

Professor Cohen (MUSC) provided an update about the most recent University Faculty Senate meeting, at which SUNY Faculty Council President Woods discussed the creating of a system-wide general education curriculum. Also discussed were the CUNY and John Jay Americans with Disabilities Act compliance lawsuit, and the change in the academic integrity policy to address AI.

(6908) Degree  
List

Degree Lists 2023/12 and 2024/1 & 2 were approved with a vote of 76 yeas, 0 nays, and 0 abstentions.

(6909) Reports  
of Standing  
Committees

Committee on Graduate Curriculum & Degree Requirements: Curriculum Document 277 was approved with a vote of 73 yeas, 1 nay, and 1 abstention.

Committee on Admissions: The annual report was delivered and accepted.

Committee on Academic Integrity: The annual report was delivered and accepted.

Committee on General Education: The annual report was delivered and accepted.

Committee on Review of Student Records: The annual report was delivered and accepted.

(6910) Old  
Business

There was no old business

(6911) New  
Business

The Brooklyn College Student Government liaison requested that faculty to refrain from scheduling classes during club hours. A resolution in support of Student Government's request passed with a vote of 70 yeas, 1 nay, and 5 abstentions.

(6912)  
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Shortell  
Chair

Martha Nadell  
Secretary

## Statement Read at Faculty Council

Here are some salient features of the moment in which we find ourselves:

The State of New York, which funds the vast majority of the Brooklyn College budget, is projecting an \$8.7 billion budget surplus in Fiscal Year 2024

(<https://www.politico.com/news/2023/02/01/new-yorks-massive-budget-surplus-gives-hochul-money-to-spend-00080724>);

The New York State Senate, Assembly, and Governor Hochul are all proposing increased funds for CUNY's budget in Fiscal Year 2024;

CUNY has called for pre-emptive cutting from local campus budgets -- for Brooklyn College, it was 7%, a \$6.6 million cut on top of a \$2.7 million cut last fiscal year -- in advance of the Fiscal Year 2024 state budget allocation, and CUNY has implemented central and campus-based review boards to approve all hiring;

CUNY has recently given substantial raises to several senior administrators;

(<https://nypost.com/2022/11/12/two-cuny-honchos-get-fat-90000-raises-as-enrollment-shrinks/>);

In March 2023, over 165 CUNY chairs signed a letter reiterating that “[a]cademic hiring decisions are the purview of the colleges, not of CUNY Central,” and demanding “an immediate end to the interference of CUNY Central in college hiring decisions”;

Brooklyn College received a total of \$56 million in pandemic relief funds, yet the college returned over half of those funds to CUNY rather than using them for repairs and upgrades to our infrastructure;

The conditions of austerity we face are the result of political choices, not economic inevitabilities;

At Brooklyn College, President Anderson and senior administrators have chosen to balance the budget by sacrificing the livelihood of our part-time faculty and staff, by asking our students to accept less than they need and deserve, and by denying departments the ability to flourish in the future.

**We call on President Anderson and her administration to undertake the following, in order to retain our confidence:**

- End the pre-emptive budget cutting on campus and send a message to CUNY that the cuts are jeopardizing the college's core educational mission;
- Approve locally and, if necessary, forward as soon as possible the results of all existing job searches on campus, including the senior hire in Puerto Rican & Latino Studies, to the CUNY central review board with a demand that they be approved;
- Refuse to implement budget cuts in Fiscal Year 2024, regardless of enrollments, and demand compensation from CUNY for the pandemic funds transferred from the college to CUNY Central in order to restore and improve our campus facilities;
- Approve a reduction of general education and elective class sizes where appropriate, as determined by departments not administrators, in an effort to increase students' sense of belonging and improve their educational experience;
- Pause any academic administrative reorganization and continue the current school structure for another academic year in order to have time to fully engage members of the campus community in a potentially profound change to our organization.

