

**LaGuardia Community College
Minutes of the Senate Meeting**

March 10, 2010

Present: S. Adhikari, A. Aguirre, R. Ahmad, A. Allen, C. Baldonado, F. Egger-Sider, H. Fernandez, M. Glick, U. Hidle, M. Johnson, R. Kahn, J. Karlen, R. Levine, E. McCormick, L. McShane, S. Mettler, J. Michello, H. Motoike, E. Murray, P. Nicolov, A. Okomba, A. Pappas, J. Park, E. Ponnio, O. Richard, S. Sanchirico, E. Santiago, C. Sterling-Deer, A. Tardy, L. Teplin, A. Wambugu Cobb, J. Wynn

Absent: T. Albright, M. Garcia, R. Johnson, A. Lazo, G. McCormack, P. Pinero, M.D. Rana, L. Ricketts, Z. Yang

Excused: P. Sokolski

***Nota Bene:** For each action summarized in these minutes, the set consisting of those senators who participated in the action forms a subset of those listed as “Present”. The specific vote of each senator that participated in an action is contained in the summaries.*

Chairperson Kahn called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. in room E 500.

I. Approval of Minutes for January 27, 2010

By general consent, the Senate approved the draft version of the minutes of the Senate meeting held on January 27, 2010 as presented. All senators listed as present for the meeting participated in this action.

II. Report from the Chairperson

Chairperson Kahn informed the Senate that the meeting cancelled due to the snowstorm on 2/10/10 would not be immediately replaced on the year’s schedule, by decision of the executive committee.

With regard to financial matters reported on to the Senate by Thomas Hladek, Mr. Kahn said that there remains a question about a currently yet unused reserve fund totaling \$1.6 million. There needs to be some resolution of how this sum is to be used.

The Chairperson gave an update on the progress of the Registration Calendar; it is moving through the various steps needed to make it fully functional. In addition to its listing all important dates pertinent to the registration process, making deadlines for changes and withdrawals, etc., there is an effort being made to have it reflect which classrooms are designated “smart classrooms,” provisional until the converting of all classrooms into this category.

Mr. Kahn reported on the latest enrollment numbers, which continue to rise significantly.

III. Curriculum Committee Report

There was a unanimous vote to approve the following group of new curriculum items, with one minor change requested:

New Course Proposal, ENG 289, Introduction to Literary Study—English Department

New Course Proposal, ENG 296, Classical Literature-- English Department

Revised Course Proposal, SCR 200, Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing—Department of Health Sciences

Revised Course Proposal, SCR 210, Medical Surgical Nursing I—Department of Health Sciences

New Course Proposal, SCG 150, Introduction to Geographic Information Systems—Department of Natural Sciences

New Course Proposal, SCG 250, Environmental Science—Department of Natural Sciences

New Course Proposal, SCB 265, Fundamentals of Ecology—Department of Natural Sciences

New Course Proposal, SSN 202, Environmental Sociology—Department of Social Science

IV. Discussion of Textbook Pricing Issues

The issues regarding the pricing of textbooks and ideas that the Senate might generate to relieve students of the burden being created by the steep rise in textbook prices over the past several semesters was discussed in greater detail, to satisfy the demand for a deeper analysis that several senators made at the last meeting. The discussion was grounded in documents that had been distributed to senators prior to the meeting, one by the legal spokesperson for CUNY Central, Frederick P. Schaeffer which detailed the efforts being made by CUNY to place stronger textbook legislation into effect, measures that might give some protection to our students from the type of price inflation that has characterized the recent period. Such possible remedies as allowing earlier editions of revised textbooks to be used in courses and the improvement of buyback policies and the speeding up of the process students follow to obtain their book vouchers.

V. Adjunct Concerns

As a general way of framing the wide-ranging discussion that took place on the issues that apply to adjunct instructors as a special constituency, these seven points served as a starting point: 1) Adjuncts need to be more connected; 2) have opportunities to observe classes taught by full-time faculty; 3) there should be regularly scheduled meetings for adjuncts; 4) need for more adjunct storage space; 5) more access to offices and support staff services; 6) there should be a structured seniority system; and 7) there should be more time spent in interactions with full-time faculty.

The academic departments voiced their individual responses to this set of concerns in the following way:

English Department—They employ 75-100 adjuncts from semester to semester. Faculty meetings are open to adjunct faculty. Adjuncts participate in departmental activities, and feel welcome to them. There has been increased access to learning community assignments for adjuncts. There is a spirit of encouragement for adjuncts to participate in forms of professional development. Adjuncts have the same copying privileges as full-timers. Office space problems experienced by adjuncts are expected to be alleviated when the Department occupies its new offices on 8th floor of the C building in 2012.

Social Science—Invite adjuncts to department faculty meetings and give access to learning communities. Will invite more adjuncts to faculty development programs. Plan more adjunct space, with lockers, in C Building.

Library—Will address space problem

Health Sciences—Full-timers are mentoring adjuncts. Adjuncts are more concentrated in the evening schedule. Adjuncts have one professional hour (paid); they have to attend a department meeting. There have been space issues, but the Department recently freed up more space for adjuncts. Adjuncts have access to e-mail service.

Business—Are working to resolve space issues existing in new B Building facilities. The Department is housed on the third floor, while adjuncts are in the Atrium, causing less contact. They suggest that adjuncts sit in on classes taught by full-time faculty. No seniority system for adjuncts in place. Courses in learning communities are taught by adjuncts, mainly.

Communication Skills—Adjuncts should attend full-timer's class. Professional hour is used once each semester for a detailed meeting for adjuncts conducted by regularly appointed full-time faculty liaisons. Goal is to clear more space in adjunct room, install new computer. Every adjunct is given personal file space. There is a system allowing close communication between adjuncts and designated full-time faculty mentors.

Humanities—Are addressing issue of copy turn-around time. Need to have an overall Department strategy for creating better channels of communication to adjuncts. There is limited space available for adjuncts, and what space does exist, e.g., in the basement, is not always used to full advantage. They can observe classes taught by full-time faculty. The issue of assigning courses based on seniority is an issue.

ELA—Good support system in place for encouraging adjuncts to engage in professional development. These PD activities are available on a continuing basis. Offer a self-help program. For example, adjunct faculty is invited to present at a yearly PD event. The adjunct pool is growing in the Department. Most modern language courses are taught by adjuncts. Space is a problem. They do occupy an open area conducive to making contact with the full-time faculty.

Counseling—Several full-timers do adjunct work. There is a problem having students form ongoing relationships with adjuncts who teach New Student Seminar. Space is an issue for adjuncts.

Natural Sciences—Adjuncts outnumber full-timers. Space is an issue for adjuncts. There is no established seniority system for assigning courses to adjuncts. There is mentoring, conducted by course coordinators. The Department is working to expand space for both adjuncts and full-timers, and to offer more PD opportunities for adjuncts.

Robert Kahn ended this segment of the meeting by summarizing the common issues that came up in the individual reports. He asked the Senators to give thought to what the Senate might do in the future to alleviate some of these common problems.

VI. Update on the Implementation of the Brainstorming List.

The Chairperson reviewed some of the items that had been generated early in the semester and placed on the list of issues that were to guide the month-to-month activities of the Senate. He asked Senators to prepare to revisit these issues at the next meeting, when he hoped the committees would meet individually once more to develop new directions to take in implementing the list.

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The meeting adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

William Kurzyna
Secretary
College Senate