

LaGuardia Community College
Minutes for the College Senate Meeting
April 26, 2023
2:15-4:30 pm
E-500 and Zoom

Present and Voting

Cristy Bruns (English), Jean Buckley-Lockhart (Counseling), Cindy Busch (Division of Communications and External Affairs), Aimeelyn Calandria (Division of Institutional Advancement), Loretta Capuano-Vella (Division of Enrollment Management), Lucia Chavira (SGA President), J. Elizabeth Clark (At-Large Instructional), Erika Correa (Division of Adult & Continuing Education), Claudette Davis (Natural Sciences), Donniece Davis-Cooper (Division of Student Success), Douglas DiCarlo (At-Large Instructional), Dianne Gordon Conyers (Library), Gentjana Gurraj (Student), Sumanth Inukonda (Humanities), Rochell Isaac (Faculty Council), Rebekah Johnson (ELA), Karamvir Kaur (Division of Administration), Jill Kehoe (Social Science), Theresia Litvay-Sardou (Division of Information Technology), Lucie Mingla (At-Large Instructional), Margaret O’Sullivan (Non-Instructional Staff), Anthony Pappas (Alumni Association), Sabine Rospide (President’s Office), Patricia Sokolski (Division of Academic Affairs), Sandra Sze (MEC), Charis Victory (At-Large Instructional)

Present and Non-Voting

Kenneth Adams, Gail Baksh-Jarrett, Lara Beaty, Rosemay Chaperon, Tara Coleman, Maria Cook, Hugo Fernandez, Anthony Garafola, Kristjana Gurraj, Lori Hughes, Shahir Erfan, Charles Keyes, Lloyd Klein, Marta Kowalczyk, Evelyn Lowmark, Carmen Luong, Ian McDermott, Bindu Pillai, Luis Restrepo, Maria Ribas, James Richardson, Benjamin Rohdin, Suraj Singh, Derek Stadler, Jennifer Ward

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:28pm by Chairperson Cristy Bruns.

II. Approval of Agenda

Senator Gordon Conyers moved to approve the agenda for the April 26th meeting. This was seconded by Senator O’Sullivan. The Senate unanimously approved the agenda for the April 26, 2023 Senate meeting.

III. Approval of Minutes from the March 29, 2023 Meeting

Chairperson Bruns requested that the Secretary make minor revisions to the Chair’s Report portion of the draft minutes. The draft minutes stated that key changes to the Vacancy Review Board process include that “CUNY Central VRB submission is not required for positions that are either budget-neutral or result in cost-savings.” While this statement accurately reflects the change in policy, LaGuardia does not intend to follow this procedure. Even though it is not required, LaGuardia intends to submit budget-neutral and cost-saving hires to CUNY Central’s VRB. As the college is in a significant deficit, LaGuardia administration views submitting all hires to the VRB as a demonstration of financial accountability. The minutes were approved with these minor revisions.

IV. Chair's Report

Chairperson Bruns revisited the procedure for submitting vacancies to the VRB discussed earlier during the approval of the minutes. She emphasized that LaGuardia's intention to submit all hires to the VRB will hopefully foster trust and support with filling vacancies.

Chairperson Bruns apologized for forgetting to record the March 29th meeting for the Senate YouTube channel. The current meeting is being recorded and will be uploaded to the Senate YouTube channel.

The Governance Plan Revision Committee report recommended the creation of a LaGuardia Governance Leaders Council including leaders from the existing governing bodies at the college (Senate, Faculty Council, and Student Government Association) and leaders from proposed governing bodies (Department Chairs Council and Staff Council). The Department Chairs Council was recently created with Business and Technology Chair Michael Napolitano acting as Chairperson. Department Chairs will rotate as Council Chairperson in the future. The Senate's Committee of Staff and Alumni (COSA) discussed the creation of a new Staff Council and believed it to be a difficult undertaking. COSA suggested appointing one of its own members to the LaGuardia Governance Leaders Council instead of creating a separate Staff Council. The Executive Committee discussed this approach, agreeing that a Staff Council is currently unnecessary due to the perceived arduousness of its development and functioning. It supported the idea that COSA should appoint a representative to serve on the LaGuardia Governance Leaders Council to voice the interests of their constituents.

With COVID policies coming to an end, the college will need to revisit its visitor's policy. Long-term Senators are encouraged to look at their records to find previous visitor's policies to help inform the development of a new policy. Please notify Chairperson Bruns of any findings.

V. Invitation of Vice President of Enrollment Benjamin Rohdin

The Senate welcomed new Vice President of Enrollment Benjamin Rohdin who has been at the college for approximately five weeks. He is in the midst of a listening tour, gathering information about LaGuardia and its enrollment-related endeavors. He discussed his experience working at CUNY and is excited to work at LaGuardia because of its strong commitment to innovation. VP Rohdin will develop a strategic enrollment plan, aiming to make LaGuardia more competitive in the enrollment market while ensuring that enrollment management is aligned with the college's core objectives.

Senator Pappas wondered if sending electronic acceptance letters was an impediment to enrollment efforts and suggested sending hard copies as well. Student Senator Chavira reminded the Senate about the environmental impact of sending out paper acceptance letters.

Senator Isaac questioned how LaGuardia intends to be competitive with other CUNY and SUNY colleges. VP Rohdin asserted the importance of conveying the great work happening at LaGuardia to the right audiences as well as the need to differentiate ourselves from our CUNY counterparts.

Senator Johnson asked VP Rohdin what he felt was the most pressing issue with regard to enrollment. VP Rohdin stressed the need to communicate more with prospective students and to collaborate with Academic Affairs to create better student experiences that promote retention.

VI. Presentation by the Budget and Finance Committee

The Senate's Budget and Finance Committee started the presentation by summarizing its responsibilities to develop expertise on LaGuardia and CUNY's budgets, review and consult on aspects of the college budget, and regularly report to the Senate on the state of the college's budget. The two goals of the presentation were to educate the college community about budgets and to foster a culture of transparency. Committee members reviewed the college's budget and finance structure including the tax-levy, self-funded (Technology Fee, ACE), non-tax levy (Auxiliary Enterprises, College Association, Alumnus Association, Early Childhood Learning Center, Education Fund), LaGuardia Foundation, and Research Foundation budgets.

The committee presented the following information regarding the college's budget and finances:

- LaGuardia's Fiscal Year 2023 Financial Positions including its estimated tax levy revenue of \$128,965,000, estimated tax levy expenses of \$135,123,000, and projected deficit of \$6,158,000.

- LaGuardia's Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Positions including its estimated tax levy revenue of \$113,527,000, estimated tax levy expenses of \$140,611,000, and projected deficit of \$27,084,000.

- LaGuardia's 7% savings plan including projected revenue through increased FTEs (\$1,399,000) and collection rates (\$1,872,000) and expense saving across personnel (\$3,238,000) and non-personnel (\$1,000,000) categories.

- LaGuardia's Fiscal Year 2024 Budget by division and by expense category, with each division and expense category budget broken down into its tax-levy base budget and budgets for restricted programs.

- Distributed PSC Travel funds across divisions totaling \$102,240.

President Adams clarified that the City of New York pays a substantial amount of LaGuardia's expenses including employee non-salary payroll costs (ex. health insurance, pension), approximately \$8 million to rent the B Building, and the electricity bill. President Adams articulated that it costs approximately \$200 million per year to run LaGuardia. Senators requested that future budget presentations include these numbers as well as data on non-tax levy, LaGuardia Foundation, Research Foundation, and self-funded budgets.

Senators inquired about the Executive Compensation Plan portion of the budget, questioning if this segment of the budget could play a larger role in the 7% savings plan. President Adams explained that the function of ECP positions is not dependent upon

enrollment, with a decrease in enrollment not indicative of less administrative workload. President Adams also explained that ECP positions play a significant role in fundraising assistance for the college. Chairperson Bruns added that a previous recommendation to combine Enrollment and Student Affairs divisions across CUNY colleges to reduce ECP budgets proved unsuccessful.

Senators requested clarity on how accessibility, accommodation, and interpreting services fit into the budget. Budgets for the Office of Accessibility and the Program for Deaf Adults are included in the Student Affairs budget, with interpretation services costing approximately \$600,000 annually. LaGuardia operates its interpretation services at a financial loss as reimbursement awards have not been adjusted to properly account for inflated costs.

Senators inquired whether tenure track positions would be reduced or if tenure would be more difficult to achieve due to budget cuts. Anthony Garafola summarized that, at CUNY's directive, LaGuardia initiated three rounds of faculty hiring. Including both lecturers and tenure track positions, LaGuardia will hire \$1.7 million in faculty. This is the result of CUNY Chancellor's push to hire more full-time faculty and his successful lobbying of Governor Hochul to award CUNY financial assistance to do so.

Lastly, President Adams reminded the Senate that the New York State budget has not yet been passed so precise state aid figures are unavailable. An increase in SUNY and CUNY tuition is still possible despite the Chancellor's efforts to resist these increases. With regard to the city budget, Mayor Adams has issued a series of PEGs (programs to eliminate the gap), cutting funding to CUNY community colleges by \$61 million (\$11.5 million to LaGuardia). We will find out in July whether City Council will restore money to CUNY to compensate for the PEGs. CUNY support in city and state budgets are crucial, especially given the end of pandemic-related federal aid.

Budget and Finance Committee Chair Sokolski thanked administration for working with them to foster transparency and encouraged everyone to reach out to the committee with questions and concerns.

VII. Invitation of President Kenneth Adams

Senator Kehoe asked if LaGuardia is encouraging the development of exclusively online programs. President Adams noted that CUNY Central is pushing to develop online programs, which may cause competition between colleges. He suggested following up with Provost Gastic Rosado for further discussion about online programs at LaGuardia and the types support they will be offered by the institution.

Senator Pappas expressed concern over the number of staff members working at the college and its impact on college's ability provide services. President Adams confirmed that the college has 110 fewer staff members now as compared to before the pandemic. The college is trying to fill critical vacancies to lessen the strain on current staff.

Alternate Senator Restrepo conveyed concern about projected national enrollment declines coupled with low retention rates at the college. President Adams thinks that community colleges are in a unique position to offer education, skills, and upward

mobility without oppressive tuition payments. LaGuardia should not rely solely on graduating high school students as potential enrollees, but should look to nontraditional student populations as well.

Senator Capuano-Vella maintained that part-time employees are grossly underpaid, yet are essential to the functioning of the college given the high number of full-time staff vacancies. She asked if there was any intention to address this issue. President Adams said he would look into it.

VIII. Committee Reports

a. Standing Committees

- i. Committee on Committees (Charis Victory, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- ii. Curriculum Committee (Dilrukshan Wijesinghe, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- iii. The Academic Standing Committee (Lilla Toke, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- iv. Committee on Campus Affairs (Evelyn Lowmark and Anthony Pappas, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- v. The Committee of Faculty (Dianne Gordon Conyers and Claudette Davis, Co-Chairs)
The Committee of Faculty will meet following the Senate session.
- vi. The Committee on Professional Development (Deborah McMillan-Coddington and Derek Stadler, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- vii. The Budget and Finance Committee (Patricia Sokolski, Chair)
See above for Budget and Finance presentation.
- viii. The Committee of Staff and Alumni (Cindy Busch and Donniece Davis-Cooper, Co-Chairs)
COSA will meet following the Senate session to select a representative to serve on the LaGuardia Governance Leaders Council.
- ix. The Committee of Students (Gentjana Gurraj, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- x. The Committee on Elections (Seurette Bazelais, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- xi. The Executive Committee (Cristy Bruns, Chair)
See Chair's Report.

- xii. Transfer Committee (Alexa Duque and Misun Dokko, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- xiii. Food Insecurity, Justice, and Community Need Committee (Rebekah Johnson, Chair)
Please watch for information on the LHI Student Conference on May 24 from 10:30am-3:00pm, including a new "Creative Build" event, using donated materials to create pieces of art.

CUNY is partnering with the NYC Department of Social Services (DSS) to collect donations to assist asylum seekers. Please consider donating the following items: Sneakers, flip flops, sandals, and rain boots; Light coats & raincoats; Sweatshirts; Short & long sleeve t-shirts and button ups; Shorts, jeans, slacks and ¾ pants; Dresses, tank tops (appropriate length); Bathing suits (appropriate style) & rash guards; Onesies (newborns and babies); Underclothes; Essential items such as toiletries, sunscreen, diapers, etc.; and Backpacks/supplies (for all school-aged children). The requested items are needed for all age groups (newborns – adults). Gender neutral clothing is always best (for adult clothing - all sizes up to 4X.) All donated items must be new as we cannot accept used or gently used items. Drop off location: C107 Near Front Desk. Deadline: May 26, 2023.

b. Ad Hoc Committees

- i. IT Advisory Committee (Jaime Riccio and Ian McDermott, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- ii. History Committee (Loretta Capuano-Vella and Charles Keyes, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- iii. Online Learning Committee (J. Elizabeth Clark and Sandra Sze, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- iv. Personnel & Budget Article Committee (Patricia Sokolski, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- v. Senate Assessment & Review Committee (Leslie Scamacca, Chair)
Nothing to report.

c. Non-Senate Committees

- i. Advising Council (Jean Buckley Lockhart, Senate Representative)
Nothing to report.

XII. Unfinished Business

None.

XIII. New Business

None.

XIV. Announcements

None.

XV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:24pm.

Next Meeting: June 7, 2023