

LaGuardia Community College
Minutes for the College Senate Meeting
September 13, 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), Erika Correa (Division of Adult & Continuing Education), Claudette Davis (Natural Sciences), Donniece Davis-Cooper (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), Lucie Mingla (At-Large Instructional), Margaret O'Sullivan (Non-Instructional Staff), Anthony Pappas (Alumni Association), Sabine Rospide (President's Office), Tara Scales (Health Sciences), Leslie Scamacca (Business & Technology), Patricia Sokolski (Division of Academic Affairs), Sandra Sze (MEC), Charis Victory (At-Large Instructional)

Present and Non-Voting

Seurette Bazelaïs, Maria Cook, Alexa Duque, Shahir Erfan, Marisa Klages-Bombich, Lloyd Klein, Marta Kowalczyk, Alexis McClean, Dionne Miller, Cristina Natale, Maritza Pritsos, Luis Restrepo, Jaime Riccio, Sandra Ribeiro, Lilla Töke, John Toland, Nayelli Valencia

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:34pm by Chairperson Cristy Bruns.

II. Approval of Agenda

Senator Busch moved to approve the September 13th meeting agenda. This was seconded by Senator O'Sullivan. The Senate unanimously approved the agenda for the September 13, 2023 Senate meeting.

III. Approval of Minutes from the June 7, 2023 Meeting

Chairperson Bruns asked if there were any modifications to the June 7, 2023 minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

IV. Invitation of VP for Administration Shahir Erfan to Present Upcoming Facilities and Capital Projects

VP for Administration Shahir Erfan delivered a presentation on the college's capital construction projects including funding sources and timelines. Currently, the replacement of the library glass storefront, the C building façade, and the E building roof repairs are in the construction phase. The construction of new science, occupational therapy, and physical therapy labs on the 3rd floor of the E building, phase two renovations for the 1st floor of the Library, a fire alarm upgrade of Shenker Hall, a C building infrastructure

upgrade, and various campus-wide energy conservation projects are in the planning phase. Renovations of pool facilities and the Poolside Café, upgrading the Mainstage Theatre's lighting, construction of a student plaza, IT infrastructure upgrades, and the creation of workforce development labs are all in the funding phase. Capital requests and priorities for the 2025 fiscal year are to: (1) perform critical repairs to the existing ceiling structure of the pool facility; (2) upgrade elevators campus-wide; (3) upgrade the HVAC system in the M building; (4) replace the single ply membrane roof of the M building; and (5) replace façades of the M and E buildings. VP Erfan will return to the Senate in the Spring for additional updates.

Senator Capuano-Vella asked how priorities were set for non-critical projects. VP Erfan replied that architects and engineers set priorities for structural projects. VP Erfan's office, the President's Cabinet, and college governance also offer input. Budgets set by City Council and the Borough President influence the feasibility of capital projects.

Senator Correa asked how enrollment targets impact capital project decisions. VP Erfan replied that facility usage, including how many classrooms are utilized, is factored into capital project decisions. Furthermore, government financial determinations are likely influenced by enrollment as politicians take into account how many of their constituents are impacted by budget decisions.

V. Presentation of the Governance Plan Article VIII Revision by the Personnel & Budget Article Committee

The Personnel and Budget Article Committee reviewed the proposed revisions to Article VIII of the Governance Plan including changes to who can vote for and serve as Departmental and Divisional P&B Committee members, Departmental and Divisional P&B Committee membership size and composition, College P&B Committee membership, and the P&B Committee election process. The document provided by the Personnel & Budget Article Committee detailed each proposed change and the rationale for making the change. Senators discussed how the proposed changes allow for improved representation and better reflects the current functioning of the college.

Committee Chair Sokolski added that after consulting with PSC Grievance Counselor Evelyn Burg, the committee would like to make a minor change to the language of the proposed article. Using the term "Vice President of Academic Affairs" instead of "Provost" allows for more flexibility in case the college does not have a Provost in the future. Senator Inukonda moved to vote on Article VIII with Evelyn Burg's suggested change of language. This was seconded by Senator Capuano-Vella. The Senate approved Article VIII unanimously and the ad-hoc Personnel & Budget Article Committee was disbanded.

VI. Vote on Senate Year-End Report 2022-2023

Senator Capuano-Vella moved to accept the Senate's year-end report for 2022-2023 with gratitude for all the hard work done throughout the year. This was seconded by Senator Victory. The motion passed unanimously. The year-end report will now be shared with the President's Cabinet.

VII. Chair's Report

The October 11th Senate session will function as a transition meeting. No official business will be conducted. Please encourage faculty, staff, and students to run for Senate seats.

Chairperson Bruns represented the Senate at meetings of the President's Cabinet and Vacancy Review Board throughout the summer.

The Senate will continue utilizing a hyflex model as it allows for increased attendance and participation from Senators and guests. In-person quorum is still needed to conduct business.

The Committee of Staff and Alumni (COSA) agreed that the formation of a staff governance body was a good idea, projecting that it would take approximately six months to create. A planning committee will decide how to conduct elections so that staff constituencies are properly represented.

The Division of Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) is discussing whether they should create a body similar to the Chairs Council, comprised of ACE Directors. If such a body is created, it may seek to join the Governance Leaders Council to voice the concerns of ACE staff and students.

Thank you to Senator Busch for working on a graphic to explain LaGuardia's governance bodies and how they relate to one another.

The next meeting of the Governance Leaders Council is currently being scheduled.

VIII. Invitation of President Kenneth Adams

President Adams discussed the recent news that the LaGuardia bookstore will close on Friday September 22nd. Barnes and Noble does not want to continue its partnership with CUNY. LaGuardia, along with the majority of CUNY schools, will transition to using Akademos for purchasing textbooks. The new platform will still allow students to use financial aid to purchase textbooks and will have a system for returns, textbook buy backs, rentals, and purchasing e-books. Negotiations are ongoing. LaGuardia is still figuring out how it will sell merchandise, such as notebooks and other supplies, at the college. The Committee on Campus Affairs would like to be involved in these decisions as they are made.

Senator Sokolski questioned whether stakeholders were asked to provide feedback during the decision-making process to switch to Akademos. VP Erfan encouraged faculty, staff, and students to provide feedback on the transition process. President Adams assured Senators they would look to other CUNY colleges that already transitioned to Akademos to see what works and what doesn't.

Senator Davis-Cooper requested that the former bookstore be used as a space for students.

IX. Committee Reports

a. Standing Committees

i. Committee on Committees (Charis Victory, Chair)

Thank you to Senators Gordon Conyers and Scales for joining the Committee on Committees. The committee is prioritizing recruitment for the Committee on Campus Affairs and the Committee on Elections.

ii. Curriculum Committee (Dilrukshan Wijesinghe, Chair)

The Curriculum Committee met eleven times throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, reviewing and passing new and revised courses and revised curricular from academic departments. A range of informational items passed through the committee ranging from information on discontinued courses and programs, changes in transfer policy, and details of articulation agreements with senior colleges. A new Course Proposal Form was created and adopted.

iii. The Academic Standing Committee (Lilla Töke, Chair)

This year the Academic Standing Committee passed the Exemption Credit policy, the Attendance policy, and started work on creating new policies related to online learning. The committee will offer its academic policy workshop on October 16th. Look for the Academic Standing Committee's updated and expanded website with a new section on policy updates. The committee plans to examine the Academic Forgiveness policy this upcoming year to assess the need for changes.

iv. Committee on Campus Affairs (Evelyn Lowmark and Anthony Pappas, Co-Chairs)

The Committee on Campus Affairs drafted and passed the Children on Campus policy after eliciting college-wide feedback. The committee also passed the E-bike policy and intends to take a look at how this policy is being enforced on campus. The committee has also been involved in efforts to bring back the cafeteria.

v. The Committee of Faculty (Dianne Gordon Conyers and Claudette Davis, Co-Chairs)

The Committee of Faculty conferred degrees for 1,300 Spring 2022 and 782 Fall 2022 graduates. Co-Chairs Gordon-Conyers and Davis met with members of the Online Learning Committee to create a handbook for LaGuardia faculty teaching in various online modalities. Faculty were invited to give feedback about the new Advising 3.0 model and how to streamline communications between academic advisors and faculty mentors. The Academic Freedom Subcommittee members continued efforts to compile resources for a LaGuardia academic freedom webpage and develop a formalized process for

handling potential violations of academic freedom. They partnered with Faculty Council to organize a live online presentation hosted by the University Faculty Senate's Academic Freedom Committee.

- vi. The Committee on Professional Development (Deborah McMillan-Coddington and Derek Stadler, Co-Chairs)
The Committee on Professional Development's six independent subcommittees provided various in-service training seminars and workshops, successfully organized and executed Opening Sessions and the Ruhma Choudhury Research Colloquium, oversaw the EDIT Grant Program, and developed a mission statement for the newly created Faculty and Staff Excellence Awards subcommittee.
- vii. The Budget and Finance Committee (Patricia Sokolski, Chair)
The committee met monthly to discuss the college's budget and finances and provide feedback to administration. The committee organized a town hall to share the budget and educate members of the college on budget and finance related issues.
- viii. The Committee of Staff and Alumni (Cindy Busch and Donniece Davis-Cooper, Co-Chairs)
The committee met monthly focusing on campus policies impacting staff and alumni. The committee elicited feedback from their constituents and hope to implement the Employee Engagement Survey next year. Concerns included low morale amongst staff, understaffing, low salary, limited promotional opportunities, and slow technology. The committee sent representatives to the Governance Leaders Council and will start the process of creating a Staff Council this Fall.
- ix. The Committee of Students (Gentjana Gurraj, Chair)
The Committee of Students was actively involved in conversations and decisions surrounding children on campus, class size, academic advisement, and financial obstacles to student success and would like to encourage future committee members to continue advocating for LaGuardia students.
- x. The Committee on Elections (Seurette Bazalais, Chair)
The Committee on Elections will organize and oversee Senate elections this Fall including the election of three At-Large Senators and three At-Large Alternate Senators.
- xi. The Executive Committee (Cristy Bruns, Chair)
See Chair's Report and Senate Year-End Report.
- xii. Transfer Committee (Alexa Duque and Misun Dokko, Co-Chairs)
The Transfer Committee welcomed new co-chair Misun Dokko and is actively looking for new members. The committee met with the University Faculty

Senate to discuss transfer facilitation and are planning a workshop to help faculty navigate the transfer dashboard.

xiii. Food Insecurity, Justice, and Community Need Committee (Rebekah Johnson, Chair)

The FIJCNC continued to provide support to students and is concerned about the impact the new Airbnb's policy will have on student housing vouchers.

b. Ad Hoc Committees

i. IT Advisory Committee (Jaime Riccio and Ian McDermott, Co-Chairs)

The IT Advisory Committee met monthly, liaising with the IT department and communicating student needs. The committee consulted with departments on technology updates related to Microsoft 355, Outlook, security measures, attendance, and remote printing, and with the Online Learning Committee for their handbook. They are also working on providing sample materials to assist faculty in the transition from Blackboard to Brightspace.

ii. History Committee (Loretta Capuano-Vella and Charles Keyes, Co-Chairs)

No report.

iii. Online Learning Committee (J. Elizabeth Clark and Sandra Sze, Co-Chairs)

The Online Learning Committee submitted its report, including 43 recommendations, which was approved by the Senate after a town hall for Q&A. Of note, the recommendation to lower class sizes of online courses was implemented, reducing course caps to 20.

iv. Personnel & Budget Article Committee (Patricia Sokolski, Chair)

See above discussion and vote on the Governance Plan Article VIII revision

v. Senate Assessment & Review Committee (Leslie Scamacca, Chair)

The Senate Assessment & Review Committee continued to review the Governance Plan and plans to identify senate goals and the metrics that they can be measured by for future assessment efforts.

c. Non-Senate Committees

i. Advising Council (Jean Buckley Lockhart, Senate Representative)

IX. Unfinished Business

None.

X. New Business

None.

XI. Announcements

After serving for 20 years, Senator Capuano-Vella will not seek reelection. She will focus her work on the new Staff Council and would like to remind everyone of the value of institutional memory.

President Adams reminded everyone of his upcoming Friday September 29th Fall Report at 10am.

XII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:38pm.

Next Meeting: October 11, 2023