

LaGuardia Community College
Minutes for the College Senate Meeting
May 14, 2025
2:15-4:30 pm
E-500 and Zoom

In-Person Votes

Aowshaful Alam Jafin (Student), Cristy Bruns (English), Jean Buckley Lockhart (Counseling), Luke Cardaio (At-Large Instructional Staff), Miguel Carvajal (Community, Health, and Wellness), Tara Coleman (Faculty Council), Erika Correa (ACE), Donniece Davis-Cooper (Division of Student Affairs), Annette Hamilton (Division of Enrollment Management), Abdul Hashim (At-Large Instructional Staff), Sada Hye Jaman (Business & Technology), Givanni Ildefonso-Sanchez (ELA), Elizabeth Jardine (Library), Albert Jimenez (At-Large Instructional Staff), Karamvir Kaur (Division of Administration), Jill Kehoe (Social Science), Kelly Levy (Student), Jiale Lin (Student), Thomas Onorato (Academic Affairs), Margaret O’Sullivan (Non-Instructional Staff), Anthony Pappas (Alumni Association), Roman Senkov (Natural Sciences), Helen Skirchak (President’s Office), John Smith (Student), Patricia Sokolski (Humanities), Karma Sonan (Student), Elizabeth Streich (Division of Communications and External Affairs), Zofia Tubin (Student), Lakshmi Vidyasagar (MEC), Odin Wright (At-Large Adjunct)

Online Votes

Lisa Flores (Health Sciences), Naomi Marajh (At-Large Instructional Staff)

Present In-Person

Caterina Almendral, Loretta Capuano-Vella, Jasmine Edwards, Shahir Erfan, Anthony Garafolo, Liz Iannotti, Lloyd Klein, Evelyn Lowmark, Carmen Luong, Rejitha Nair,

Present Online

Nicolle Fernandes, Clementina Jose, Maritza Pritsos, Derek Stadler, John Toland, Regina Varin-Mignano, Dilrukshan Wijesinghe

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 2:23PM by Chairperson Cristy Bruns.

II. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved without any corrections. Chairperson Bruns noted that curriculum was not included on the agenda as the only items provided by the Curriculum Committee were informational and did not require a vote.

III. Approval of the Minutes from April 9, 2025

The minutes were approved with no corrections.

IV. Vote on the Creation of an Ad-Hoc Instructional Staff Handbook Revision Committee

In light of the PSC's successful grievance challenging LaGuardia's addition of

leadership as a requirement for professorial promotion, the Provost and the Chair's Council provided revised language for the Instructional Staff Handbook. Governance questioned why it was not included in this process. Upon further examination, governance leaders noticed that the Instructional Staff Handbook needed additional revisions and updates. Senator Cardaio moved to create an ad-hoc Instructional

Staff Handbook Revision Committee. Senator Sokolski seconded the motion. The Senate unanimously approved the motion to create an ad-hoc Instructional Staff Handbook Revision Committee. Senators noted that the committee should have members from Academic Affairs, Human Resources, Legal, and the Union. Chairperson Bruns named Rochell Isaac, former Faculty Council President, chair of the new ad-hoc committee.

V. Presentation on the Faculty/Staff Ombuds Proposal

Senator Sokolski, Alternate Senator Coleman, Rejitha Nair, and Liz Iannotti presented their proposal to introduce a faculty/staff ombudsperson to the college. A faculty/staff ombudsperson can serve as a confidential, neutral resource to talk through professional concerns, mediate between two parties, and direct faculty and staff to other campus resources. Advantages include resolving issues before they escalate, building an awareness of resources, relieving some of the workload of Union reps and Chairs, and making general observations about patterns of concerns to facilitate structural changes.

Potential concerns include financing the salary of the position, overlapping responsibilities with other college employees, protecting confidentiality while adhering to mandated reporting requirements, and questions of supervision and assessment of job performance. Resolving these concerns will require further discussions with President Adams and the President's Cabinet. The Senate agreed that the proposal was worth pursuing, acknowledging the potential benefits of the position. Senators also requested that if this position is introduced on campus, the ombudsperson report to Senate on trends (use of the position, use by constituency, types of campus problems) while strictly maintaining confidentiality. The ombudsperson proposal will be posted on the Senate webpage.

VI. Budget and Finance Committee Presentation on the LaGuardia Budget

Senior Director of Budget and Financial Planning Anthony Garafolo presented LaGuardia's fiscal year 2025 year-end financial position and fiscal year 2026 projected financial position. LaGuardia's decreased deficit is largely due to increased enrollment, improved collection rates, and PEG restorations. The budget presentation will be posted on the Senate webpage.

VII. Vote on the Hunter Mutual Defense Resolution and the University Faculty Senate's Together We Stand Letter

The Hunter Mutual Defense Resolution and the University Faculty Senate's Together We Stand Letter are responses to federal government actions and their impact on higher education. These letters aim to make a statement, specifically to Chancellor Matos Rodriguez and Governor Hochul about CUNY's intention to stand together amidst threats to higher education. Recommendations include legislative advocacy, coalition-building, and pooling resources to support institutions under attack. Senator Hashim moved to adopt the Hunter Mutual Defense Resolution. This was seconded by Senator Pappas. The Senate unanimously voted in favor of the motion. LaGuardia will adopt the Mutual Defense Resolution as its own, giving credit to Hunter College for drafting the resolution. Alternate Senator Skirmak moved to endorse the UFS's Together We Stand Letter. This was seconded by Senator Buckley Lockhart. The Senate unanimously voted in favor of the motion. The LaGuardia Senate will add its name to the list of governance bodies endorsing the UFS letter.

Of note, CUNY Chancellor Matos Rodriguez, President Adams, and several other CUNY leaders are amongst the over 500 signatories to the American Association of Colleges and Universities's (AAC&U) A Call for Constructive Engagement statement opposing the government overreach and political interference endangering American higher education.

VIII. CUNY's Constructive Dialogue Initiative

Alternate Senator Skirchak and Jasmine Edwards presented the Constructive Dialogue Initiative, a CUNY-wide program designed to enhance our ability to engage in respectful and productive conversations across difference. Each constituency met separately to answer a set of questions to assess campus climate and readiness for the initiative. Alternate Senator Skirchak is open to receiving additional feedback outside of the Senate session.

IX. Chair's Report

Public Safety Director Yvonne Gaul will attend the June 4th Senate session. Please look at President Adams's recent email detailing changes to Public Safety protocols. Effective immediately, Public Safety will only remove a student from a classroom when there is an immediate threat of potential harm to a member of the campus community, including other students in the class, the instructor, or the student themselves. In addition, Public Safety officers will no longer wait outside classrooms to question students in non-emergency situations.

Faculty Council will oversee the election process for new Faculty Student Discipline Committee and College Association members.

For the revised Governance Plan to be approved by the CUNY Board of Trustees, the Senate must provide a resolution and a redlined copy detailing all proposed changes. Thank you to Senator Scamacca for working on these items.

The Executive Committee continues to discuss the modality of Senate meetings, exploring options for the 2025-2026 academic year. To avoid posting recordings of Senate proceedings on YouTube, all voting members must be present in person. Guests may still attend virtually. Chairperson Bruns will investigate how long recorded Senate meetings must remain available to the public.

X. Committee Reports

a. Standing Committees

- i. Committee on Committees (Elizabeth Streich, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- ii. Curriculum Committee (Dilrukshan Wijesinghe, Chair)
Two articulation agreements were provided by the Curriculum Committee as informational items.
- iii. The Academic Standing Committee (Caterina Almendral, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- iv. Committee on Campus Affairs (Evelyn Lowmark and Anthony Pappas, Co-Chairs)
Nothing to report.
- v. The Committee of Faculty (Lakshmi Vidyasagar, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- 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)
Nothing to report.
- viii. The Committee of Staff and Alumni (Karamvir Kaur, Chair)
Nothing to report.
- ix. The Committee of Students (Mehedi Hassan and Jiale Lin, Co-Chairs)
The Committee of Students is looking into the possibility of (1) bringing back a physical space dedicated to providing transfer services; (2)

streamlining scholarship information in a centralized online location; (3) providing more inclusive seating in classrooms; and (4) providing sufficient space for prayer/reflection on campus.

x. The Committee on Elections (Vacant, 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)

Nothing to report.

b. Ad Hoc Committees

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

Nothing to report.

ii. History Committee (Charles Keyes, Chair)

Nothing to report.

iii. Online Learning Committee (Joshua Tan and Michele De Goeas-Malone, Co-Chairs)

Nothing to report.

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

Nothing to report.

XI. Unfinished Business

None.

XII. New Business

Members of the college community reported that the pride flag is missing from the E-Atrium. Chairperson Bruns will follow up.

XIII. Announcements

None.

XIV. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30PM.

Next Meeting: June 4, 2025