

Student Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate  
February 5, 2020 meeting minutes  
2-4pm in S738

1. Approved November and December 2019 minutes.
2. MSA Prayer room:
  - a. We had a lengthy conversation about current efforts to improve the “reflection room” space and equity in terms of student groups and current projects to offer spaces to groups that necessitate them.
  - b. The committee agreed to reach out to other CUNY campuses to compare interfaith centers around the city.
  - c. The idea of expanding the college conversation from just “fixing” the reflection room to thinking about this as an opportunity to make a BMCC Interfaith center and a place for community was appealing to the group.
  - d. We need a more concrete update about what is happening in the currently proposed and ongoing renovation.
3. Retention and “probation” plans:
  - a. See “appendix a” for results of brainstorming for plan to offered faculty driven cohort program.
4. Menstrual supplies :
  - a. Maureen shared documents from SUNY-wide effort to offer menstrual products in all restrooms and reported on her conversations with groups who had lead that effort.
  - b. We came to the consensus that we too should be making an effort to make menstrual products available in every restroom on campus.
  - c. And perhaps create a campus campaign or awareness around this issue.
  - d. We have multiple reports of students who cannot/will not ask for supplies from a special office. And reports from gender non-conforming and trans students for whom there are no supplies nor disposal receptacles they can use.
5. Campus events we could support/sponsor:
  - a. Support for Asian students dealing with the implications of Corona virus including support to families and networks abroad and dealing with harassment here and on campus.
  - b. National Period day is October 19. Our conversation here was abbreviated by the end of our meeting but there seemed to be a strong desire to pursue hosting an event in the Fall of 2020.

Minutes submitted by benjamin haas 2:00 pm 2/11/2020

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Appendix A:

1. Language:
  - a. We seek language that that does not reify the “school to prison pipeline” and/or the carceral state. Here we mean that words like “probation” and “fine” should cease to be used in describing any student, student status, and/or response to student action for any reason.
  - b. Alternatives to “probation”: audit, appraisal, assay, canvass, gauge, “promise”
2. Cohort program:
  - a. We want to create an alternative pipeline for students who are either being put on academic “probation,” being academically dismissed from the college, and/or are at “risk” of falling into either of these statuses.
  - b. Designing for Success presentations and the studies conducted by the Office of Institutional effectiveness and analytics have demonstrates that demographic categories (for example black and Latinx men and students entering BMCC with a CAA (college Admissions Average) below 70 have an over-determining force in predicting current student success and so this cohort program would seek to focus on populations that most need support first. This is equity.
  - c. We discussed a curriculum that would include a liberal arts, creative focus. We suggest this because many students come to college not knowing what they want to do or what options are available to them. Students who come from financial security have the luxury of time, providing space for them to figure out their interests and foster them. This program is not just more remediation for core subjects, but instead a place to help students find purpose and set long term goals. Designing for Success presentations and the studies conducted by the Office of Institutional effectiveness and analytics have demonstrated that students who have purpose at the college are more successful. And while we might quibble about definitions about “purpose” this program seeks a truly liberal arts model of helping students to find purpose in their lives and in the college.
  - d. We hoped to create an environment that totally does away with “deficit model” of students, and helps students to discover how their unique talents fit into collegiate life.
  - e. We want to find what works in programs like BLA and ASAP and use those (perhaps advisor ratio, cohort classes, tutoring and/or mentoring support), but not replicate the parts that are not as or less successful.
  - f. Students should attend classes in their cohorts.
  - g. The program should be administered by faculty or at least guided by a majority faculty voice.
  - h. Due to the threat GPA faces these students courses should consider progressive, contract, or “ungrading” models, and should be sufficiently credit-bearing to get students out of the infinitely regressive loop of never being able to earn enough credits in a single semester to be fully readmitted to the college (i.e. 3 or 6+ hrs)

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i. We saw that there is perhaps a triangle of support that students need:

i. Faculty

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Advisers      Counselling

j. Many faculty and staff have signed up for the Panther Partners Program. We would hope that many faculty would likewise get involved in this one.