

Academic Freedom Committee Final Report 2019/2020 AY

In October, the committee brought the following resolution to the Academic Senate:

Whereas, the AAUP's document "On the Relationship of Faculty Governance to Academic Freedom" states: "the faculty's voice should be authoritative across the entire range of decision making that bears, whether directly or indirectly, on its responsibilities."

Whereas the same document further states that "academic freedom of faculty members includes the freedom to express their views... on matters having to do with their institution and its policies...."

Whereas in order for faculty to express their views, they must be informed about those policies.

Whereas a significant portion if not the entirety of BMCC's institutional policies are established in the Cabinet meetings;

Whereas, decisions purportedly related to budgetary constraints, have been made without consultation with faculty and outside of college governance (i.e. class size cap raised from 35 to 37)...

Whereas the AAUP's central document on shared governance (The Statement of Government of Colleges and Universities) states that "Agencies for faculty participation in the government of the college or the university should be established at each level where faculty responsibility is present."

Whereas the faculty of the university are represented on the Board of Trustees by the University Faculty Senate president as a non-voting member;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Academic Senate Chair shall be a non-voting member of the BMCC Cabinet in order to fully represent and inform the faculty on relevant decisions.

In the course of the academic year, four issues came before the committee:

- 1) A faculty member complained they were asked about the agenda for a meeting before being granted a room. The matter was closed to the satisfaction of all parties.
- 2) An adjunct faculty member complained that someone else changed the content of their online course shell. They withdrew their question.
- 3) A faculty member complained about the connect to success letter that went out to their students. Administration has been working closely with the Student Affairs Committee of

Academic Senate regarding these letters which may be altered by individual faculty and are optional. It was determined there is no violation of Academic Freedom.

4) A faculty member complained that they were being forced to allow a student to record their classroom. The Academic Freedom Committee researched this issue and concluded that students must be allowed to record the class if it is an accessibility issue. We recommended that the Accessibility Office supply a recorder in the same way they supply a notetaker. We also informed the entire faculty body that they are legally allowed to make their own classroom policies regarding recordings.

Respectfully submitted,

Hollis Glaser, chair.