

Borough of Manhattan Community College/CUNY

Student Affairs Committee

Annual Report 2011-2012

Committee Members: Betty Copeland, Marva Craig, Sidney Eng, Anthony Gronowicz, La-Dana Jenkins, Carmen Martinez-Lopez, Colin Persaud, Kerry Ruff (excused: member of a College Council standing committee).

Officers: Chair, Betty Copeland; Secretary, Colin Persaud; Liaison to the Executive Committee, La-Dana Jenkins.

Guests: Daniel Ambrose, Jamell Henderson

Non-committee members who contributed to the work of the committee: Daniel Ambrose, BMCC Office of Student Affairs; Cristina Cross, NYPIRG at BMCC; Robert E. Diaz, BMCC VP for Legal Affairs/Faculty & Staff Relations; Sussie Gyamfi, BMCC Office of Student Affairs; Jacob Kramer, prior chair of the Student Affairs Committee; Tasheka Sutton-Young, Director, Office of Student Life, Kingsborough Community College; Brian Mitra, Director, Office of Career Development, Transfer, and Scholarship Opportunities, Kingsborough Community College; Gisela Rivera, Director of Student Activities, Queensborough Community College.

The Student Affairs Committee met this year on the eight Wednesdays designated for meetings of Standing Committees of the Academic Senate. The minutes for these meetings are available online.

At the beginning of the 2011-2012 Academic Year, the committee considered its charge and possible tasks the members might work on this year. Copies of reports and resolutions from the past few years were reviewed, as was information obtained from the prior chair. Several forms were also studied. There was the recognition that there was some unfinished business to look into and the decision that the committee's major focus for new business would be research in the area of community service with the objective of developing community service related opportunities for BMCC students.

The research involved both academic and co-curricular areas and was carried out through searches on the internet/websites, meetings, and phone and email contacts. An initial list of about thirty questions was created to guide the committee's research. This was later consolidated into five areas: volunteer activities, service-learning, internships, leadership, and funding for all programs. Research investigating these areas at BMCC, other colleges, and related organizations was undertaken with emphasis placed on CUNY community colleges. A matrix focusing on BMCC and the other CUNY community colleges was designed to present and compare findings in the five areas of research. Features of existing programs at

BMCC and gaps, strengths and weaknesses were considered. The committee considered the development of new programs and ways to build upon and improve existing programs.

During this academic year, the committee also reviewed several forms. This resulted in a resolution and a report.

A resolution recommending the change in name of the Student Affairs Assistance Request Form to the Student Behavior Form (SBF) was presented to the Academic Senate and was approved unanimously. (See 4/25/12 Academic Senate Minutes, Appendix B.) This name change more accurately describes the form's intended use and helps to avoid confusion between that form and the Student Assistance Request Form, a very similarly named form with a different intended use.

A report, written in response to a request in a resolution passed last year (5/25/11 Academic Senate Minutes, Appendix B), was presented to the Executive Committee on May 9, 2012. For their report, the Student Affairs Committee reviewed the use of the Student Assistance Request Form and sought to address the concern of some faculty over the use of this form by students to report complaints against faculty. The form, generated by the Office of Student Affairs, was not intended for this use. The advice of Robert E. Diaz, VP for Legal Affairs was requested. He and VP Craig consulted and proposed a revision to the form. At the May 2, 2012 meeting of the Student Affairs Committee, a quorum of the committee voted that the proposed revision to the Student Assistance Request Form satisfactorily addressed its concerns and recommended the use of this revised form. (See 5/23/12 Academic Senate Agenda, Appendix B.) The revised form will include an addition clearly stating that the form is not to be used to register complaints about faculty conduct and it will provide information directing students to CUNY policy and procedures intended to address this type of complaint. The revised form will be used by the beginning of the fall semester.

Another issue the committee addressed (as did all standing committees, at the request of the chair of the Academic Senate) concerned the Pathways resolution. The Student Affairs Committee devoted their entire November 2, 2011 meeting to a discussion of the CUNY Task Force's draft for Pathways and agreed that the date for the completion of the final draft should be postponed. A summary of the committee's response was presented at the November 9th meeting of the Executive Committee, a meeting that chairs of all standing committees were requested to attend for this purpose. The Student Affairs Committee also, as requested, spent part of their February 1, 2012 meeting discussing the AAUP letter regarding Pathways.

Some additional things the committee considered this year included the use of the co-curricular transcript, aspects of the design of the college's website, counseling services at BMCC, the Freshman Year Experience, the role of NYPIRG at BMCC, several local volunteer organizations, national organizations concerned with community service and academia, forms used at other colleges, and the issue of Stop and Frisk related to an article in the NY Times written by BMCC student Nicholas K. Peart.

The committee thanks the non-committee members who contributed to the work of the 2011-2012 Student Affairs Committee and offers recommendations for next year.

Recommendations

1. Promote discussion, in all academic departments, considering ways service-learning might be incorporated into the curriculum. (A FIG of the CETLS at BMCC is currently exploring service-learning.)
2. Look further into existing service-learning programs at two other CUNY Community Colleges: Queensborough Community College and Kingsborough Community College.
3. Promote faculty and student awareness of the existence and use of the co-curricular transcript.
4. Consider ways to make the BMCC website more user friendly for students and to provide more direct access to several co-curricular opportunities.
5. Consider whether BMCC should become a member of Campus Compact. Current affiliated CUNY Colleges are City College, Lehman, and Queensborough Community College. Campus Compact describes their organization as follows:
Campus Compact is a national coalition of almost 1,200 college and university presidents—representing some 6 million students—who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education. As the only national higher education association dedicated solely to campus-based civic engagement, Campus Compact promotes public and community service that develops students' citizenship skills, helps campuses forge effective community partnerships, and provides resources and training for faculty seeking to integrate civic and community-based learning into the curriculum.
6. Learn more about information and opportunities that might be provided by the federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service. They describe their organization as follows:
The Corporation for National and Community Service is a strong partner with the nation's colleges and universities in supporting community service and service-learning. Last year, CNCS provided more than \$200 million in support of institutions of higher education . . . CNCS is a catalyst for service-learning programs nationwide that connect community service with academic curricula."
7. Promote greater faculty and incoming student awareness of specific information related to the Freshman Year Experience (FYE) and provide an explanation of the importance of registering for that experience.
8. Consider the use of the Academic Warning Form in relation to student progress and improved retention.
9. Consider issues of importance to BMCC students that might be addressed by NYPIRG in collaboration with the SGA or other student organizations and request suggestions and feedback from NYPIRG and student organizations. (For example, NYPIRG indicated that they would be pleased to participate and work with the SGA to address the current issue of Stop and Frisk.) NYPIRG is New York State's largest student-directed research and advocacy organization.
10. Promote greater faculty and student awareness of services available for students, such as counseling. Include location, hours and contact information for these services.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Copeland, Chair