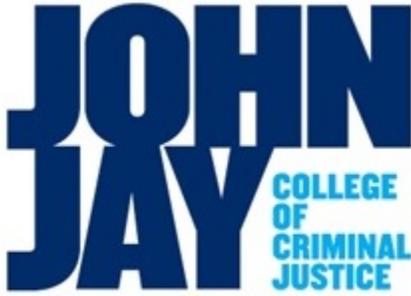


From: Important Announcements from President Travis
Sent: Wednesday, April 05, 2017 1:59 PM
To: Important Announcements from President Travis
Subject: Important Announcement from President Travis
Attachments: Mandated Committees at John Jay College by group Appendix B.DOCX; Copy of Copy of Mandated Committees Appendix A.XLSX; Mandated committees report FINAL October 2016.pdf



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April 5, 2017

To the John Jay College Community:

I am pleased to present to the College community the attached Report on Mandated Committees. This Report was developed by a Task Force that I created as part of an overall review of our governance structures. The goal of this effort, and the goal of the related faculty-led study of best practices in shared governance, is to prepare the way for a robust discussion in the coming months about the best way for John Jay to carry out its mission.

A community forum will take place on May 4 during community hour, for us to discuss the findings of this Report. You are encouraged to attend and bring your ideas for improving our committee practices.

The decision to create the Task Force grew from the recognition that we spend an enormous amount of time working in committees. Now is a good time to ask whether our committees are efficient, transparent, and reflective of the values of our college.

The Report represents the first step in that discussion. In 2015, the Task Force conducted two surveys eliciting information about committees at John Jay. They created a database and analyzed the data that were collected. This report focuses on only one category of committees- those that are mandated by CUNY bylaws, CUNY policy or the John Jay College Charter of Governance. As you will see, the Report includes two appendices that list, by committee and by source of authority, the mandated committees.

The Report includes surprising and noteworthy findings:

- There are 197 mandated committees at John Jay College.

- Each year, the college devotes approximately 10,000 person hours to participation in mandated committees.
- Approximately 40% of those hours are devoted to service on five mandated committees: Faculty Senate (1,056 hours); Council of Undergraduate Program Coordinators (900 hours); College Council (828 hours); Undergraduate Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee (675 hours) and Council of Chairs (675 hours).
- Over 62% of the 197 mandated committees are required by the College Charter and Bylaws; the remainder are required by the University or Related Entities.
- Faculty members represent 65% of all seats on committees mandated by the College Charter and Bylaws; staff representation makes up 25% and student representation is 10%.
- Small academic departments are disproportionately burdened by committee work.
- Each faculty department is required to have three standing committees, highlighting the overall burden on small academic departments.
- Department chairs must participate in at least four major committees: The Budget and Planning Committee; the Faculty Personnel Committee; the Provost Advisory Council; and the Council of Chairs. The Task Force estimates that each department chair spends approximately 140 hours--or 20 seven-hour days--per year on mandated committees.
- Mandated committees frequently do not operate according to best practices: many do not keep minutes; those required to operate in accordance with Robert's Rules often do not; meetings do not have start and end times.

In the course of carrying out its work, the Task Force received numerous comments from faculty, staff and students who were eager to take a fresh look at the role of committees in the life of the college. Some individuals have reported confusion and discontent regarding committee operations and responsibilities. In short, there is a strong sentiment on our campus to ask the tough questions and make the hard decisions to streamline our decision-making processes.

In the coming weeks, I will be writing to the chairs of these mandated committees to encourage them to ask whether their committee would recommend any changes in its composition or its operations. Perhaps some committees can be eliminated, or consolidated with others. Perhaps the membership can be reduced or meetings held less frequently. In any event, as recommended by the Task Force, in the fall semester we will provide guidance to the chairs and members of these committees to ensure that they operate under the proper principles of transparency and accountability. We can create momentum toward reform in very concrete ways.

I hope I will see you on May 4 and that you will bring your ideas for improving our committee practices.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Travis
President

