

The City University of New York  
Bronx Community College  
Committee on Governance and Elections

Minutes of the Meeting of November 2, 2021 via Zoom

**Members Present: Ekinadose Elizabeth Asemota, Augustin Garcia Flores, Nikole Knight, Grisselle Nadal, Charles Maliti, Seth Offenbach, Jonathan Scott, Goldie Sherr, James Webb**

**Guests Present: Grisel Acosta, Roni Ben-Nun, Sara Brady, Laurence Brenner, Peter Kolozi, Franklin Moore**

- I. **Call to Order:** 12:05 PM by James Webb.
- II. **Approval of Agenda** (approved unanimously)
- III. **Approval of the Minutes from October 5, 2021** (approved unanimously)
- IV. **Announcements**
  - a. Please do not use the zoom chat to make formal remarks. Remarks should be addressed to the chair so that they can be officially recognized.
  - b. On the BCC calendar, the December G&E meeting is set for Thursday, December 2, 2021. This may be an error since meetings are typically scheduled for Tuesdays.
    - i. James Webb makes a motion to change the December meeting date to Tuesday, December 7, 2021.
    - ii. The motion is seconded and passes unanimously (9-0-0).
  - c. Future G&E meeting dates overlap with certain days that NYC schools are closed. This may pose an issue for members with school age children.
    - i. Seth Offenbach makes a motion to change the G&E meeting date of February 1, 2022 to February 8, 2022.
    - ii. The motion is seconded and passes unanimously (9-0-0).
  - d. There are currently several vacancies in the senate. James Webb shares a tentative schedule to hold special elections (please see attachment at the end of these minutes).
    - i. As part of the outlined election schedule, our committee will need to meet on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 to certify the nominees.
    - ii. Charles Maliti makes a motion to have a special meeting on November 16, 2021. The motion is seconded and passes unanimously (9-0-0).
    - iii. Jonathan Scott makes a motion to accept the drafted election calendar. The motion is seconded and passes unanimously (9-0-0).
  - e. This is a reminder that the newly adopted rules of procedure for grievances were adopted and approved by the senate on February 25, 2021.
- V. **First Presentations**
  - a. Voting Members of the Committee on Community Events – presented by Grisel Acosta.
    - i. The purpose of this proposal is to ensure that all members of the committee can vote during committee meetings.
    - ii. Currently, the Director of Administrative Services serves without vote (the governance plan states that this member “shall serve without vote”). Dr. Acosta is proposing that this phrase be removed.
    - iii. This item will come back to the committee before it is voted on.

- b. Committee on Budget and Financial Planning as a Standing Committee of the Senate – presented by Peter Kolozi.
  - i. The purpose of this committee is to disseminate information to the college community regarding the college budget.
  - ii. The Committee on Budget and Financial Planning would be a completely advisory committee.
  - iii. This item will come back to the committee before it is voted on.
- c. Integrity of Department Chair Elections – presented by James Webb.
  - i. The purpose of this proposal is to amend BCC’s Governance Plan to codify that all department chair elections be conducted by representatives of BCC’s Legal and Labor Offices.
  - ii. The proposed language would include that “All elections for Department Chairperson shall be conducted by representatives of the College’s Labor and/or Legal Offices.”
  - iii. This item will come back to the committee before it is voted on.
- d. Powers of the Executive Senate Committee: “Appoint” vs “Elect” – presented by Jonathan Scott.
  - i. The original proposal had aimed to amend the BCC Governance Plan and replace the word “appoint” with the word “elect” regarding the functions of the senate executive committee. There were four instances in the Governance Plan where the word “appoint” was used regarding the functions of the senate executive committee.
  - ii. However, changes to the governance plan were made last semester. The Committee on Community Events and the Committee on VPs and Deans now no longer have members appointed by the executive committee.
  - iii. There are currently still two instances in the Governance Plan where the word “appoint” should be replaced with the word “elect”.
  - iv. This item will come back to the committee before it is voted on.
- e. Statement on Shared Governance
  - i. The purpose of this proposal is to add a statement on shared governance as a preamble to the BCC Governance Plan.
  - ii. The proposed language has been included at the end of these minutes.
  - iii. This item will come back to the committee before it is voted on.


## VI. **New Business**

- a. BCC Heating Issue and the Pivot to Remote Learning
  - i. Many people were concerned that the move from in-person learning to remote learning was not effectively communicated to faculty members.
  - ii. While this is an important topic, this may not be a governance issue.
- b. There are a number of items that Senate Chair, Roni Ben-Nun, asked our committee to address. They include:
  - i. Considering the HEO Registrar Seat as an ex officio voting member.
    - 1. Jonathan Scott will research this request.
    - 2. The findings will be brought back to the committee and discussed at an upcoming meeting.
  - ii. Considering the VP of Advancement, Communications and External Relations for an ex officio Senate voting member seat.
    - 1. James Webb and Grisselle Nadal will research this request.
    - 2. The findings will be brought back to the committee and discussed at an upcoming meeting.

- iii. Considering GP language on prohibiting a person from holding more than one standing committee membership, except by the approval of Senate Executive Committee.
  - 1. Seth Offenbach will research this request.
  - 2. The findings will be brought back to the committee and discussed at an upcoming meeting.

VII. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 PM.

VIII. Respectfully Submitted,

  
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Goldie Sherr

**SPECIAL ELECTION FOR COLLEGE SENATE AND UFS VACANT SEATS**

**FALL 2021**

- 11/03/21** Call for nominations for College Senate & UFS seats  
(broadcast sent and repeated 11/8 and 11/12)
- 11/13/21** Nominations closed at 11:59 p.m.
- 11/16/21** Nominations certified by Committee on G&E
- 11/17/21** Public announcement of nominees on BCC Broadcast
- 11/22/21** Polls open at 12 noon (Broadcast sent; Repeated 11/29 and 12/6)
- 12/06/21** Polls close at 11:59 p.m.
- 12/07/21** Election certified by Committee on G&E
- 12/08/21** Report with election votes sent to College Senate Chair
- 12/08/21** Public announcement of election results
- 12/09/21** December BCC Senate meeting with newly elected members seated

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GOVERNANCE PLAN:**  
**COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**PURPOSE:**

This proposal seeks to change a non-voting member of the committee to a voting member. The purpose of this proposed change is to ensure that when the Committee meets, all members present are able to vote, especially the member who is most affected by the actions of the committee. The Committee on Community Events is a very small committee, and it is difficult to meet quorum if any voting members are absent. This change will allow the Director of Administrative Services and Events Management, or that office's designee, to be a voting member. This change will not only facilitate meeting quorum but also allow this member, who is most likely affected by the actions of this committee to have a voice in changes that affect his/her office. This proposal also seeks to correct a grammatical error in clause 2(a)(ii).

**PREVIOUS LANGUAGE:**

2. Committee on Community Events

a. Functions of the Committee on Community Events:

- i. To serve as an advisory body for college events and activities.
- ii. **To liaison** between the various college entities responsible for community relations and events.
- iii. To help guide community outreach efforts and can advise faculty and staff on the creation of events.

b. Membership of the Committee on Community Events:

- i. One representative from the Office of the President.
- ii. Four members from the Instructional Staff: two elected by the Faculty Council; two appointed by the Executive Committee.
- iii. Two student members to be elected by the Student Government Association from the student body.
- iv. **The Director of Administrative Services and Events Management, or designee, who shall serve without vote.**

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- iii. Two student members to be elected by the Student Government Association from the student body.
- iv. **The Director of Administrative Services and Events Management, or designee, who shall serve without vote.**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GOVERNANCE PLAN:**  
**COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND FINANCIAL PLANNING**

**PURPOSE:**

This proposal seeks to establish a Senate Advisory Committee on Budget and Financial Planning. The purpose of this committee is to improve and ensure budgetary transparency; improve budgetary understanding and knowledge among all college constituencies represented at the Senate (students, staff, faculty); and to institutionalize a forum, where on the basis of improved budgetary transparency and knowledge, the Senate may hold substantive discussions and provide advice to the administration about the college's budgetary and fiscal plans. The proposed advisory committee fills a void in the BCC Governance Plan. The Governance Plan states that among the advisory responsibilities of the Senate is to "advise on long range planning to achieve the goals of the college" (I, B, 2, c) and "advise college administrative officers on the formulation and allocation of the college budget..." (I, B, 2, e). Presently, the Senate lacks a committee by which the Senate can effectively do the above. This proposal institutionalizes a committee whereby the Senate, as a whole, may more effectually fulfill its stated responsibilities. This committee has precedence in CUNY. Similar committees exist at a number of CUNY colleges including Hostos, BMCC, Lehman, John Jay and others.

**PROPOSED LANGUAGE:**

**H. Standing Committees With Advisory Functions**

6. Committee on Budget and Financial Planning

- a. Functions of the Committee on Budget and Financial Planning
  - i. Review, inform, and make recommendations to the Senate on financial and budgetary matters on a continuing basis.
  - ii. Receive complete and timely information from the College Administration regarding college budgets and the budgets of affiliated organizations including, but not limited to, Auxiliary Enterprises, BCC Inc., and BCC Foundation.
  - iii. Research and inform the Senate about the financial and budgetary affairs of the college including, but not limited to, enrollment, staffing, revenue and expenditures.
  - iv. The committee may seek additional related information and/or institutional data.
  - v. Maintain a Budget/Financial Documents Archive as a resource for documents provided in current and in prior years. The Archive shall be curated by a faculty member designated by the committee.

- b. Membership of the Committee on Budget and Financial Planning:
  - i. President of the College, or designee.
  - ii. Vice President of Administration and Finance, or designee.
  - iii. Eight members elected by the Faculty Council from the Instructional Staff at-large.
  - iv. Four students: President of the Student Government Association; the Treasurer of the Student Government Association; two students elected by the Student Government Association from the student body.



**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GOVERNANCE PLAN:**  
**DEPARTMENT CHAIR ELECTIONS**

**PURPOSE:**

This proposal seeks to amend BCC's Governance Plan to codify President Thomas Isekenegbe's Spring 2020 recommendation that all department chair elections be conducted by representatives of BCC's Legal and Labor Offices, which has been done successfully for the past two years.

**PREVIOUS LANGUAGE:**

Section III of the BCC Governance Plan would read as follows:

- III. DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND AFFAIRS
- A. All full-time members of the Instructional Staff appointed in a department, including College Laboratory Technicians, shall have the right to vote on department matters, including the election of members of elected department committees, college committee representatives, and for Department Chairperson.
  - B. All adjunct Instructional Staff members appointed in a department shall have the privilege of the floor, and the right to participate without vote, in all discussions at department meetings.
  - C. There shall be five members of the Personnel and Budget Committee of each department, including the Department Chairperson. Departments shall elect one additional committee member for each fifteen fulltime members above 40. The maximum membership of such committee shall be nine. An elected Alternate shall serve with vote in the absence of a regular member.
  - D. At the discretion of each department, and to the extent determined by the department, there may be student participation in department committees, except the Personnel and Budget Committee. Also at the discretion of the department, and the extent determined by the department, students may participate in the department meeting without vote.
  - E. All practices associated to divisions, including the election of division coordinators and divisional Personnel and Budget Committee votes recommending faculty for reappointment and promotion, shall be discontinued.

**PROPOSED LANGUAGE:**

- III. DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND AFFAIRS
- A. All full-time members of the Instructional Staff appointed in a department, including College Laboratory Technicians, shall have the right to vote on department matters, including the election of members of elected department committees, college committee representatives, and for Department Chairperson.

- B. All adjunct Instructional Staff members appointed in a department shall have the privilege of the floor, and the right to participate without vote, in all discussions at department meetings.
- C. There shall be five members of the Personnel and Budget Committee of each department, including the Department Chairperson. Departments shall elect one additional committee member for each fifteen fulltime members above 40. The maximum membership of such committee shall be nine. An elected Alternate shall serve with vote in the absence of a regular member.
- D. At the discretion of each department, and to the extent determined by the department, there may be student participation in department committees, except the Personnel and Budget Committee. Also at the discretion of the department, and the extent determined by the department, students may participate in the department meeting without vote.
- E. All practices associated to divisions, including the election of division coordinators and divisional Personnel and Budget Committee votes recommending faculty for reappointment and promotion, shall be discontinued.
- F. **All elections for Department Chairperson shall be conducted by representatives of the College's Labor and/or Legal Offices.**

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GOVERNANCE PLAN:**  
**REPLACE “APPOINT” WITH “ELECT”**

**PURPOSE:**

This proposal seeks to amend the BCC Governance Plan to replace the word *appoint* with *elect* where appoint is inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees and the rules of conduct for elections as established by the College Senate.

**PREVIOUS LANGUAGE:**

The Governance Plan’s language for the Functions of the Executive Committee, in Section I (G) (3) (a) (v) (vii), is as follows:

a. Functions of the Executive Committee:

v. Appoint members of Standing Committees of the Senate as required by this document.

vi. Appoint members of other committees when requested by the President, the Senate, or any other administrative officer of the College.

The Governance Plan’s language for Membership of the Committee on Community Events, Section I (H) (2) (b) (ii), is as follows:

b. Membership of the Committee on Community Events:

ii. Four members from the Instructional Staff: two elected by the Faculty Council; two appointed by the Executive Committee.

The Governance Plan’s language for Membership of the Committee on Vice Presidents and Deans, Section I (H) (3) (b) (iii), is as follows:

b. Membership of the Committee on Vice Presidents and Deans:

iii. Two members of the Instructional Staff appointed by the Executive Committee.

**PROPOSED LANGUAGE:**

a. Functions of the Executive Committee:

v. ~~Appoint~~ Elect members of Standing Committees of the Senate as required by this document.

vi. ~~Appoint~~ Elect members of other committees when requested by the President, the Senate, or any other administrative officer of the College.

b. Membership of the Committee on Community Events:

ii. Four members from the Instructional Staff: two elected by the Faculty Council; two ~~appointed~~ elected by the Executive Committee.

b. Membership of the Committee on Vice Presidents and Deans:

iii. Two members of the Instructional Staff ~~appointed~~ elected by the Executive Committee.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE GOVERNANCE PLAN:**  
**STATEMENT ON SHARED GOVERNANCE**

**PURPOSE:**

This proposal seeks to add as a preamble to the Governance Plan a statement on shared governance at BCC. According to the BCC Governance Plan, one of the primary functions of the Senate Committee on Governance & Elections is to “[r]eview the process of governance of the College on a continuing basis” (I, G, 2, a, i). This task can be difficult in the absence of clearly defined language that expresses how we govern at BCC and from where the powers of our shared governance emanate. So, this past academic year, the Governance and Elections Committee created a four-person task-force, comprised of two faculty members, one student, and one designee from the Office of the President to study the literature on effective governance, examine the shared governance practices of other institutions, and consult with the American Association of University Professors, to ultimately produce a statement of shared governance for BCC.

**PROPOSED LANGUAGE:**

**Bronx Community College’s Statement on Shared Governance:**

At Bronx Community College, shared governance means that deliberate and systematic efforts have been made to consult and engage all College stakeholders in decision-making processes.

Shared governance calls for the dutiful involvement of all essential constituencies: administration, faculty, students and staff. These stakeholders engage in multiple methods of collaboration and channels of communication to exchange ideas, information, advice, and recommendations before reaching final decisions.

As delegated by the CUNY Board of Trustees and articulated in the CUNY Bylaws and Manual of General Policy, the powers of shared governance are expressed as follows:

- The President, serving as chief executive officer, “shall have the affirmative responsibility of conserving and enhancing the educational standards and general academic excellence of the college” (CUNY Bylaws, Article XI, Section 11.4).
- The Faculty, serving as guardians of academic quality, “shall be the primary body responsible for formulating policy on academic matters” (CUNY Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 8.6), such as curriculum, subject matter, methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process.
- The Students, having primary responsibility of student activities, “should have primary control and decision-making authority in these areas” (Manual of General Policy, Article II, Policy 2.08, Section 3.3).

Subject to the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor's directives, the President has final decision-making authority.

In such cases where faculty and students hold primary responsibility and the President's final decision overrules their advice or recommendations, the President, out of mutual respect, shall communicate his/her reasoning with transparency.