

**LaGuardia Community College
Minutes of the Senate Meeting
13 April 2005 (Amended)**

Present: R. Bandelt, J. Cantwell, D. Davidson, P. Dillon, F. Egger-Sider, C. Feng, J. Gao, M. Glick, A. Harrigan, J.G. Ianni, E. Johmann, T.M. Tsao (for H. Johnsen), J. Karlen, W. Kurzyna, G. McCormack, J. Michello, C. Still (for E. Murray), R. Octaviano, J. Oh, A. Pappas, G. Rhodes, G. Richmond, P.J. Ryoo, L. Teplin, S. White

Absent: None

Excused: C. Baldonado, T. Litvay-Sardou, E. Rivas

Guests: P. Arcario, R. Aziz, A. Belkharraz, VP J. Bihn, L. Cohen, F. Dura, L. Fluk, L. Forrester, M. Frank, K. Hajallie, J. Heitner, R. Henry, President G.O. Mellow, G. Meyer, M. Rodriguez, L. Shohat, J. Williams

Chairperson Ianni called the meeting to order at 2:22 p.m. in room E-501.

I. Approval of Minutes for 23 March 2005

It was moved and seconded to approve the draft version of the minutes of the Senate meeting held on 23 March 2005 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Report from the Chairperson

A. The final two regular meetings of the College Senate during the Spring I 2005 session will be on Wednesday, 11 May 2005, and Friday, 10 June 2005. In addition, the Senate has scheduled a Calendar Report Feedback meeting on Wednesday, 25 May 2005.

B. On 23 March 2005, the Senate postponed action on the syllabus template until the meeting of 13 April 2005. However, due to a very tight agenda, Chairperson Ianni reported that the item has been further postponed to 11 May 2005. Prof. Louise Fluk, Acting Chairperson of the Collegewide Curriculum Committee, agreed to this postponement because other curricular items require more immediate Senate consideration. Dr. Ianni noted that the Senate must agree to this postponement as well. By general consent, the Senate affirmed the postponement of consideration of the syllabus template until the meeting of 11 May 2005.

C. The total number of applications for student leadership positions for 2005 – 2006 were as follows: 51 for the Student Government Association, 40 for the College Senate, and 35 for the Student-Faculty Review Board. However, after the conclusion of all the orientation sessions for the campaign, many students decided to withdraw their applications. As a result, there are only 19 students running for the Student Government Association, 14 students for the College Senate, and 12 students for the Student-Faculty Review Board. Chairperson Ianni reported that recommendations on how to address this situation are in preparation by the Division of Enrollment Management & Student Development.

D. Prof. Susan Kopp has requested that the Senate review LaGuardia's policy on class scheduling for the evening of Holy Thursday. The Executive Committee is currently engaged in initial discussions about this issue. A more extensive report will come at a later date.

III. Old Business

By general consent, the Senate decided to consider Old Business at this point in the meeting. Chairperson Ianni brought up the issue of the current vacancies for student senators. This matter

had been discussed during the 18 February 2005 Senate meeting without formal action. After some discussion, it was moved and seconded to attempt to fill some of these vacancies by extending invitations to the 2005 – 2006 senators-elect to begin service immediately with full rights of Senate membership. It was stipulated that attendance at the 11 May 2005 Senate meeting would be required in order for a senator-elect to accept the invitation. All senators-elect that do not attend on 11 May 2005 would begin service in the College Senate in October 2005. It was further stipulated that this action should not be deemed to be setting a precedent. The motion passed by a majority voice vote.

IV. Calendar Study Group Report Open Forum Discussion

Chairperson Ianni began the discussion by referring to some material on pp. 33 – 36 of *An Examination of the Academic Calendar at LaGuardia Community College* that suggests different usage patterns for the College's 6-week sessions than for its 12-week sessions. After presenting this background, he stated the question for today's forum: **“Suppose that the Division of Academic Affairs offered two consecutive 3-week mini-sessions concurrently with a larger 6-week session. How would this schedule impact the college community? Describe specific advantages and/or disadvantages.”** Chairperson Ianni reported that Hofstra University offers 3-week sessions and restricts students to one course for each of these sessions. As a further prompt for discussion, he asked whether certain types of courses are more suitable than others for short sessions and longer class periods.

There were concerns regarding TAP awards, and whether the division of the 6-week session in this way would affect payouts to students. The considerations regarding administration of PELL grants were thought to be more complex. It was generally concluded that these issues would need to be scrutinized by the specialists from Financial Aid and Enrollment Management.

A. Pappas questioned whether the workload in a course of this time frame would be practical and fair to students. There were also concerns about the impact of absences. D. Davidson compared this format to 6-8 hour per day intensives that have already been offered, showing that a precedent existed. L. Teplin indicated that 6-week sessions worked well for students wishing to return to their home countries. It was suggested that experimental honors courses might work well in 3-week mini-sessions. J. Karlen expressed doubts that many students would come back to register for the second 3-week mini-session if they did not do it up front. She also pointed out that there might be problems in room assignments caused by the large blocks of time needed for such intensive courses. In addition, the logistics regarding grading, retesting, and so forth, could be difficult. J. Cantwell stated that there was no possible way of scheduling a CO-OP internship in a 3-week mini-session. Both Chairperson Ianni and guests from ESL and Modern Languages suggested that language immersion courses might profitably use 3-week mini-sessions. It was generally concluded that the academic impacts for this calendar option needed further study.

V. Curriculum Committee Report

Prof. Louise Fluk presented several curriculum items to the Senate. Listed below are the items along with corresponding Senate action. Whenever the phrase “with some technical corrections” appears, it refers to minor adjustments in the written presentation of the proposal. It does not refer to substantive changes in the proposal.

- It was moved and seconded to approve the revised course proposal MAT115, College Algebra and Trigonometry, as presented with some technical corrections, and to approve

the change in prerequisite for MAT200, Precalculus, from MAT096 to MAT115. The motion passed unanimously.

- It was moved and seconded to approve the new course proposal SCC210, Foundations of Chemistry, as presented. The motion passed unanimously. It is anticipated that this new course will replace SCC140 after some further programmatic changes proceed through college governance in the fall of 2005. Tentatively, SCC210 will first be offered in the Spring 2006 semester.
- It was moved and seconded to approve the revised program proposals for the Liberal Arts: Social Sciences and Humanities Curriculum and the Liberal Arts: Mathematics and Science Curriculum with the following revisions:
Social Sciences and Humanities Core. The second sentence should be “One course must be taken in 4 of the following areas”. The course title for SCC210 should be “Foundations of Chemistry”.
Mathematics/Natural & Applied Sciences: 24 credits. The two-sentence description should be changed as follows: “At least one math course numbered MAT115 or higher and one laboratory science course must be included. Students may follow one of the suggested ...”. Several math courses were listed twice. They should only be listed once. The motion passed unanimously.
- It was moved and seconded to approve the changes in Social Science distribution requirements, the changes in Social Science course requirements for Liberal Arts AA and AS degree programs, the changes in prerequisites for Social Science urban studies courses, and the changes in prerequisites for SSS102, Social Movements, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Proposal to Create a Department of Education and Language Acquisition in the Division of Academic Affairs

President Mellow introduced the proposal by outlining the memo and vision statement that had already been prepared in support of it. She spoke of the proposed new department as an innovation that would help position LaGuardia at the forefront of answering the call for teachers who understand the needs of New York City’s highly diverse educational communities. She stressed that she wanted to consult with the Senate about this reorganization that held such potential, particularly in its mission to produce more teachers who are inspired to teach multi-lingual learners who were not native-English speakers. This, she said, made it necessary to create a new department, which would be reinforced with the hiring of faculty to teach education courses. She saw the impetus for this change coming from the lack of coordination between existing education programs, and the low level of students who articulate education courses at Queens College. In addition, she pointed out that our paraprofessional program is no longer in compliance with Board of Education standards, so this new department could revive the program and serve a key need. The President also discussed an aspect of the work of the proposed new department that centers on preparing students to apply for academic credit for their life experiences, giving them recognition towards degrees for the languages they know. Another benefit would be the resolving of the ESL Program’s status, which she said had been in “limbo” for too long. President Mellow ended her presentation by placing the proposed new department within a long list of innovations achieved at LaGuardia, among them contributions to GEARUP, College Now, the Excel program, and Virtual Interest Groups.

Vice President Bihn gave his strong support for the creation of the department, which he said could strengthen the College and make Bilingual Education its niche for decades to come. He added that the concept had been approved by all those consulted thus far.

Chairperson Ianni framed an investigative period by stating that he had both sought feedback and received unsolicited feedback on this proposal from several members of the college community. His interviews included individual discussions with several Chairpersons, a group discussion with the Chairpersons, individual discussions with other faculty and with a professor emeritus. He said that his questions were derived from concerns expressed during these consultations as well as from his own analytical reading of the proposal.

He began by speaking from what he called an historical perspective, noting that the College had begun with several disciplines joined together and gradually evolved in the more specialized directions. In the proposal for the creation of the Department of Education and Language Acquisition, he inquired whether this trend was being reversed by combining several disciplines, Education, Modern Languages, and ESL into one broad area, though he did see a focused rationale for doing this.

Dean Paul Arcario responded that the proposed new department continued the movement towards specialization. He added that the proposal had received the approval of outside consultants.

Chairperson Ianni then inquired about the structure of the vision statement and how it addresses the present need. He asked if the need for such teachers in the city was direct; were ELL teachers specialists or generalists? He also asked whether the new department would produce only ELL-trained teachers. Would it make sense to create two new departments, one for education and one for language acquisition, that would be charged with designing some joint programs while retaining independent departmental identities?

Dean Arcario responded by saying that the need did exist. He did not see any particular level of student identified. He said that the program could produce science teachers with ELL sensitivities. He emphasized that this is an emerging field and that supporting scholarship to show the efficacy of such a program was only now developing. He added that this department would also provide education for those interested in working outside ELL populations. The new faculty would grow through working with the expertise already here, especially through co-curricular activities. He also noted that, on a practical level, it is difficult to align the goals of two separate departments to effectively foster the development of joint programs.

A few additional responses came from the floor. L. Cohen stated that sensitivity to English language learners was a debated issue in current education scholarship, with dual-language education being controversial. M. Rodriguez stated that dual-language programs are few but that interest in this modality of instruction is growing around the nation, since it addresses the academic and linguistic needs of both native and non-native speakers of English. They both saw graduating teachers with ELL sensitivities as an important goal. Professor Cohen made the point that ELL is a Master's level specialization; Prof. Rodriguez said that there are B.A. programs as well. He sees the goal of these programs as training to enhance a pedagogy that will nurture language skills that students already possess.

Chairperson Ianni asked whether any research existed to suggest the efficacy of this level of training. Dean Arcario repeated his statement that this was new territory and that there is little research available to show the relationship between community colleges and education instruction. He linked the endeavor to LaGuardia's tradition of pioneering work. VP Bihn said that scholarship exists to show that this approach will help and attract students.

Chairperson Ianni referred to item 3 on p.5 of the proposal to ask about articulation concerns. Dean Arcario said that articulation would continue to be guided by strict articulation agreements. In reply to a question involving prior learning credits in item 5, Dean Arcario explained that the model was very tentative and can't be demonstrated specifically at this time.

Chairperson Ianni asked that the RESOLVED language in the first Board of Trustees resolution be amended to include three lines from the explanation section that describe which programs are being transferred in order to clarify what is being created. There was also a brief discussion about the seniority provisions in the second Board of Trustees resolution. VP Bihn reported that all impacted faculty are satisfied with the wording of the provisions.

J. Michello asked who the actual educational faculty would be. VP Bihn said there would be two new lines, perhaps 3-5 in the future. J. Karlen asked if any other bilingual courses would move into the new department, such as bilingual accounting courses. Dean Arcario said they would not be affected. Vice President Bihn announced that the timetable of implementation was September 2005 and that curriculum would not change immediately. He foresaw no new faculty in bilingual childhood education. J. Michello noted that departments struggle to develop new courses and are often rebuffed due to "turf wars". How would the new department remain free of such struggles? Dean Arcario saw only a limited number of new courses being developed in teacher education. However, some courses would have to be added because of pressures from senior colleges.

Questions arose about the physical location of the department. VP Bihn answered that they would be localized temporarily, but they might transfer to the C-Building eventually.

J. Williams from the Humanities Department then opened a new line of discussion. He asked about the process that had led to this step of presenting the official proposal. He said that faculty affected by the change might have been involved in the process but that departments were not formally involved. He referred to this method of carrying out extensive transformations of the College as "chilling" in terms of what such a secretive process means for the entire LaGuardia community. The lengthy period of time that the project had been in the planning stages without its having been brought to the attention of the College as a whole went against the principles he believed the community stood for. In view of the College's tradition of openness and collegiality, the fostering of such an atmosphere was especially disappointing. He called for a renewal of dialogue on all levels. Prof. Williams also noted the incongruous policy of hiring new education faculty who would ostensibly guide the direction of the new department, while giving them the least seniority. Several other attendees echoed these criticisms of the process followed in this case. L. Shohat reported that she learned of the complete vision only on April 5, at which time it was presented as "possibly creating a Department of Education". In her view, this constituted no consultation. It was the presentation of a *fait accompli*. G. Meyer agreed with the substance of Prof. Williams' statement and asked whether or not other departments might have been considered as candidates for taking on the task of teacher education. W. Kurzyna answered that the Communication Skills Department had several faculty members with Ph.D.s, all experts in reading education. He added that the Department had not been consulted about the creation of the new Department. J. Gao noted that there are a number of Ph.D.s in the Academic ESL program.

In response, VP Bihn told the Senate that a niche education program had been in the Strategic Plan for two years but that it was proving hard to fit the program into an existing department. He and Dean Arcario worked closely with the Chair of the Social Science Department, and gave affected faculty a chance to share their input due to the needs that had to be served and the possibility that the project might be cancelled by a failure to keep it confidential. It had been

moved through the planning stages in this way. Dean Arcario did see some weaknesses in the communication process and offered to work to change it.

Many attendees agreed that the proposed new department was a good idea, with the following concerns being shared by several:

- The question of whether ELL teachers would be specialists. Does such a specialty exist, and how feasible can students transfer credits to other colleges?
- Seniority issues had to be handled carefully, according to the proposal's outline,
- Language in the first resolution should be amended.

The way the process was communicated to all concerned raised many objections and misgivings. Several of the faculty were concerned that no opportunity had been given for them to have discussions of the proposal at their April faculty meetings. A. Harrigan encouraged the Senate to create a process of communication that could function smoothly to avoid such misunderstandings in the future.

It was moved and seconded to postpone action on this proposal until the Senate meeting of 11 May 2005. J. Gao pointed out that the decision making process and the appropriateness of the proposal were two different issues that should not be confused. After some further discussion, a vote was taken by closed ballot. The motion passed by a vote of 16 in favor and 5 opposed.

A question was raised over whether formal Senate approval is needed for this proposal. Chairperson Ianni said that the jurisdictional issues are very complex and that he does not know the answer. A definitive answer might only be obtained through legal proceedings.

VII. New Business

No new business was presented at this meeting.

VIII. General Announcements

G. Rhodes announced that the College Bookstore would introduce an online business component in a few weeks.

IX. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

William Kurzyna
Vice Chairperson
College Senate

Nota Bene: Chairperson Ianni and Scott White prepared supplemental notes that were incorporated into the discussions of the Calendar Study Group Report and the Department of Education and Language Acquisition proposal. Their efforts are greatly appreciated. The Senate approved this amended version of these minutes at its meeting of 10 June 2005. The original action on these minutes occurred at the Senate meeting of 11 May 2005.