

**LaGuardia Community College**  
**Minutes for the College Senate**  
Meeting: December 9, 2020  
(Zoom Meeting) 2:15-4:30pm

**Present and Voting**

Shawn Blackman (Student), Allie Brashears (Natural Sciences), Cristy Bruns (English), Jean Buckley Lockhart (Counseling), Cindy Busch (Division of Institutional Advancement), Fay Butler (Student Affairs), Loretta Capuano Vela (At-Large Instructional Staff), Kerlin Chen (Student), Maria Cook (President's Office), Erika Correa (Adult & Continuing Education), Eva Espinoza (Student), Carlos Freire (Marketing and Comm.), Dianne Gordon Conyers (Library), Sumanth Inukonda (Humanities), Rochell Isaac (Faculty Council), Rebekah Johnson (ELA), Jayashree Kamble (At-Large Instructional), Jill Kehoe (Social Sciences), Evelyn Lowmark (Division of Administration), Lenore McShane (Non-Instructional Staff), Shoma Nahar (Student), Anthony Pappas (Alumni Association), Yasmeen Qureshi (Student), Eneida Rivas (At-Large Instructional Staff), Justin Rodriguez (Student), Maria Rodriguez (SGA President), Tara Scales (Health Sciences), Leslie Scamacca (Business and Technology), Patricia Sokolski (Division of Academic Affairs), Sandra Sze (Math, Engineering and Computer Science), Charis Victory (Division of Student Affairs).

**Present Non-Voting**

Douglas DiCarlo, Debra Engel, Crystal Franklin, Carlos Freire, Ana Lucia Fuentes, Chris McHale, Cheryl McKenzie, Margaret O'Sullivan, Alexandra Rojas

**Guests and Visitors (non-voting)**

President Kenneth Adams, Hugo Fernandez, Nancy Santangelo

- I. Call to Order**  
The meeting was called to order at 2:16 pm by Chairperson Cristy Bruns.
- II. Approval of Minutes of October 28, 2020**  
Chairperson Bruns asked if there were any modifications to the November 25, 2020 minutes. Hearing no suggested modifications, the minutes were approved.
- III. Vote on Curriculum Committee Consent Calendar Items from November 19, 2020**  
A motion to approve the curriculum committee consent calendar items from November 19, 2020 was made by Senator Pappas. This was seconded by Senator Butler. **Vote: Aye-27, Abstain-0, No-0.** The Curriculum Committee consent calendar items from November 19, 2020 were approved.
- IV. Chair's Report**  
*Senate Communication Strategies*  
Chairperson Bruns raised the issue of how Senate members connect with their constituencies. Senators with larger constituencies and/or Senators that do not have regular meetings often have difficulty communicating with their constituencies on a consistent basis. Faculty Senate representatives report back to their constituents during monthly department meetings,

but other Senators do not have this opportunity. Chairperson Bruns asked Senators to think about ways to improve two-way communication (from Senators to constituents and from constituents to Senators) during both on-campus and distance learning. This matter will be discussed at the January Senate meeting. Chairperson Bruns hopes to develop a list of best practices to help Senators in this regard.

#### *Credit/No Credit Policy*

Chairperson Bruns introduced President Kenneth Adams to discuss the recent change to Fall 2020 semester grading. President Adams reviewed how in Spring 2020, upon the transition to distance learning, the CUNY Board of Trustees passed a Credit/No Credit policy for all CUNY institutions. Fall 2020 was supposed to return to standard grading. However, due to the second wave of COVID-19 and formidable action taken by student governance, Chancellor Matos Rodriguez met with all CUNY Presidents to discuss the possibility of reinstating a version of the Credit/No Credit policy for the Fall 2020 semester. Each CUNY institution had the ability to localize the policy by choosing one of the following three options: (1) Allow the use of the CR/NC grades for all Fall 2020 courses as in the Spring 2020 term; (2) Allow the use of CR/NC grades for all Fall 2020 courses except those the college designates to be excluded; (3) Do not allow the use of CR/NC grades in Fall 2020 but expand access to the college's existing flexible grading policies by using the University's P/NC grading framework. Based on conversations with governance and the academic chairs, LaGuardia chose the second option, extending the CR/NC policy to Fall I and II 2020 classes except clinical phase courses in Nursing, OTA, PTA, Rad Tech and Vet Tech (course prefixes SCR, SCL, SCT, SCO, SCX, SCV). Despite concerns over a loss of academic rigor, the policy was widely supported for Fall 2020. Students will have a period of time, after receiving their semester grade, to speak with an advisor. In addition to the announcement posted on the LaGuardia website, an FAQ document is being developed to help guide advisors, students, and faculty.

Senators raised the following concerns/questions/suggestions:

- Nancy Santangelo (Student Information Center) suggested distinguishing between new and returning students with regard to whether they are able to make use of the CR/NC policy.
- Senator Correa expressed concern over how credits will transfer for nongraded courses, especially at non-CUNY institutions.
- Senator Sokolski asked for clarification with regard to the difference between W, NC, and F.
- Senator Capuano Vela reminded the Senate that nongraded course credits transfer as “general credits” and students may have to retake certain classes for a grade depending on the institution and the major. She also requested additional communications between LaGuardia and students beyond email, possibly utilizing the website, phone communications, social media, Blackboard, and CUNY Alert messaging.

Currently, the following possible changes are still being considered: (1) Extending W date from end of classes to end of term (last day of exams); (2) Not allowing students to convert A, A- (maybe B+) to CR; (3) Allowing students to convert W to NC (either case-by-case, or for all, by policy). This is because now NCs will not count as an “attempt” for Federal Financial aid (this was the case in spring, was not supposed to be the case for fall, now it is

the case). Whether this will count for state aid is still being considered; (4) We have to decide what happens in prerequisite courses that require a minimum grade to move on (but student takes a CR). Fortunately, there are only 5 such courses.

Conversations will continue with regard to whether or not this policy will continue in Spring 2021. The goal is to make a decision before the Spring semester begins. President Adams reminded the Senate to think about whether a “course cap” limiting the number of ungraded courses should be implemented. If a course cap is employed it will reflect the data on student use of CR/NC (how many students used CR/NC option, number of ungraded classes, etc.).

#### *Student Interventions*

Chairperson Bruns reminded faculty and staff to utilize the C2C intervention option to identify at-risk students. Identified students can be offered advisement and other support services.

#### *PAR*

Chairperson Bruns and Faculty Council President Rochell Isaac met with Provost Arcario and other administrators involved with LaGuardia’s PAR initiative. Chairperson Bruns emphasized the need for faculty to prioritize communication with advisors in order to ensure that advisors follow the specific recommendations of each program. Lists of electives with course descriptions would help advisors with PAR enrollment.

#### *Advisement*

The idea of creating an advising committee was raised by several Senators. Currently, an Advising Council exists at LaGuardia. The membership and purpose of the Advising Council should be clarified before deciding whether a Senate advising committee is necessary or if there is a way to work with the existing Advising Council.

#### *Middle States*

Steering Committee Co-Chairs Reem Jaafar and Justin Rodgers-Cooper presented an overview of the Middle States process at November 25, 2020 meeting. We will continue to engage with the question of the Senate’s involvement in Middle States during the January Senate meeting.

## **V. Committee Reports**

### **a. Standing Committees**

#### **i. Committee on Committees (Charis Victory, Chair)**

Nothing to report.

#### **ii. Curriculum Committee (Debra Engel, Chair)**

Nothing to report.

#### **iii. The Academic Standing Committee (Alexandra Rojas, Chair)**

Chairperson Rojas informed the Senate that the Academic Standing Committee was asked to meet with academic advisors to assist them with preparing academic appeals documents for students.

iv. Committee on Campus Affairs (Eneida Rivas, Chair)

Nothing to report

v. The Committee of Faculty (Leslie Scamacca, Chair)

Chairperson Scamacca related that the Committee of Faculty is working through its wish list. The Committee of Faculty plans to address PAR at its December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting at 4:45pm and invited anyone who wished to participate in that discussion.

vi. Committee on Professional Development (Deborah McMillan-Coddington and Christopher McHale, Co-Chairs)

Nothing to report.

vii. Budget and Finance Committee (Fay Butler, Chair)

Nothing to report.

viii. Committee of HEO/Alumni/Civil Service (Erika Correa and Eneida Rivas, Co-Chairs)

Co-Chairperson Rivas stated that the Committee of HEO/Alumni/Civil Service will have more to report once the staff survey progresses with its data analysis and action plan development.

ix. The Committee of Students (Justin Rodriguez, Chair)

Chairperson Justin Rodriguez recounted the success of the students' successful campaign to reinstate the Credit/No Credit grading policy. The Committee of Students met with Senator Jean Buckley Lockhart of the Wellness Center to discuss accessibility and visibility on the MyLaGuardia webpage. They will meet with Vice President for Student Affairs and Associate Provost Nireata Seals to further discuss the MyLaGuardia webpage and the dissemination of the Credit/No Credit policy details to students.

x. The Committee on Elections (Seurette Bazelais, Chair)

Nothing to report.

xi. The Executive Committee (Cristy Bruns, Chair)

Update included in the Chair's report.

xii. Transfer Committee (Andy Ka-chun Chuang and Ana-Lucia Fuentes, Co-Chairs)

Nothing to report.

b. Ad Hoc Committees

- i. Food Insecurity and Community Need Committee (Nicolle Fernandes and Rebekah Johnson, Co-Chairs)  
Co-Chairperson Johnson stated that the Committee will draft a mission statement and will likely pursue action to become a Senate Standing Committee. It intends to change its name to the “Food Insecurity, Justice, and Community Need Committee.” Of note, the Committee raised over \$9,000 in its virtual food drive.

**VI. Unfinished Business**

None

**VII. New Business**

Senator Sokolski raised the issue of the most recent reduction in reassigned time for Program Directors. Vice President Seals previously indicated that they would not cut reassigned time. The Budget Advisory Committee was not consulted on this decision. Senate members agreed that Vice President Seals should be invited to the Senate to discuss this issue in more detail.

**VIII. Announcements**

Senator Mary Rodriguez announced that the Student Government Association would be holding a virtual townhall at 4pm on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

Senator Johnson offered an update on the search for a new Human Resources Director, announcing that candidate interviews had begun.

**IX. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Senator Scamacca. This was seconded by Senator Busch. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm.

**Next Meeting:** January 13, 2021