

M-146/147

November 10, 2011

Meeting of College Council Volume 39 Number 3

There were present:

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| Prof. Arliss | Prof. Gale | Prof. Miranda |
| Prof. Barnhart | Prof. Garcia-Osuna | Prof. Nicosia |
| Dean Basile | Prof. Gerwin | Ms. Palmieri |
| Prof. Bassen | Prof. J. Graziano-King | Prof. Pollack |
| Prof. Beeber | Mr. Hermida | Prof. Ryan |
| Prof. Borgese | Prof. Hume | Prof. Sokolow |
| Ms. Cohen | V.P. Keller | Mr. Soloviev |
| Dean Dalpes | Prof. R. King | V.P. Suss |
| Dean DiLorenzo | Prof. Kraljic | Mr. Troutd |
| Mr. Dominique | Prof. Lax | Prof. Yarmish |
| Prof. Farrell | Prof. Martin | |

Vice President Suss called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM.

The Vice President opened the meeting by informing the Council that this is intended to be a meeting of information and consultation regarding the CUNY Pathways Report from the university-wide Task Force. The College is expected to formulate a response to the draft proposal for a common core curriculum by November 15, 2011, and the President asked for input from the College Council as the official response is prepared.

The College's Gen-Ed committee met earlier to formulate its response to the Task Force Report. Now seven years old, with representation from each of the College's Academic departments, the Gen-Ed committee worked hard on its response. The Vice President then introduced Associate Dean Loretta DiLorenzo to present the findings of the Gen-Ed Committee.

Dean DiLorenzo began her remarks by thanking the members of thirteen Academic departments who turned out for the Gen-Ed Committee meeting on the Pathways Report. She also expressed the committee's her appreciation to Professor Michael Barnhart, the College's representative to the Pathways Task Force, who made the time to attend the meeting and share his knowledge of the Task Force recommendations and process. She also stated that the College's response to the report will reflect the input of a broad and inclusive group from across the campus, including members of the Academic departments, the College's governance body, and University Faculty Senators.

The Gen-Ed Committee's response to the Pathways Report consists of five essential points, as follows:

1. The 15-credit flexible core recommended for all associate in arts (AA) and associate in science (AS) curricula, prescribes a balance of disciplines and basic skills. The flexible structure allows each college the opportunity to continue

- offering existing courses that are popular with students as well as appropriate for a broad foundation in the liberal arts and sciences.
2. Several A.S. curricula will need to add 3-6 credits to their current General Education requirements in order to satisfy the proposed 30-credit common core. With the exception of a small number of them, the majority can use available elective credits or make other relatively minor adjustments in the major.
 3. KCC associate in applied science (A.A.S.) degree curricula will need to increase from a 6-credit to the 7-credit English and from a 3-credit to the 4-credit mathematics requirement. This addition in liberal arts and sciences credits will override State Education regulations, which do not require more than the minimum twenty credits in liberal arts subject matter for this degree type.
 - a. Recently, KCC added college mathematics and a laboratory science requirement to all degrees, including AAS career programs. To accommodate the additional credits, Freshman English I (ENG 01200) was reduced to three credits from four. Several AAS career programs opted to require a three-credit mathematics course, either College Algebra (MAT 00900) or Statistics (MAT 02000). The Pathways initiative as conceived in the Task Force draft, will cause these AAS curricula to take credit(s) either from the major or perhaps one less course from the flexible core from which AAS degrees are exempt.
 4. In order for language study to satisfy the flexible core, existing KCC Language I and II courses must be reduced to three credits from four. The College must address either the loss of a semester hour of instruction in language study or the additional cost of providing four semester hours of instruction for three credits.
 5. In conclusion, the Committee has concluded that the 30-credit common core, as designed, should benefit CUNY students as they transfer from one institution to another, particularly those who transfer from associate to baccalaureate institutions. Given the significant percentage of CUNY baccalaureate graduates who began their studies at a CUNY community college, Kingsborough faculty will take up the work necessary to accommodate the 30-credit common core for all degrees.

After Dean DiLorenzo concluded the Gen-Ed Committee's report, the Vice President then opened the meeting to questions and comments from the floor.

Professor Yarmish stated that the Mathematics Discipline Council met to discuss the Pathways proposal, and that group resolved to recommend that the area titled "Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning" be retitled "Mathematical Reasoning."

She further reported that the Computer Science Discipline Council also met to discuss the Pathways proposal, and that group notes that the flexible common core includes 15 credits with only four groups or areas listed. They recommend that the flexible common core be augmented to ensure that an additional required course be added where students deal meaningfully with technology itself and how the global maturing society is impacted by technology, and not just as an abstract social phenomenon.

Professor Pollack noted that it was reported that there was a ‘consensus’ at the Gen-Ed meeting. She stated that she is the Foreign Language department’s representative to the Gen-Ed Committee, but that she was unable to be present for the entire meeting. She was not present to participate in the consensus vote of the committee on its response to the Pathways Report. Had she been present, she would not have agreed with the consensus, particularly on the changes to foreign language courses [point 4, above].

V.P. Suss pointed out that the consensus view of the committee did not, in fact, necessarily represent total unanimity among all of its members.

Prof. Garcia-Osuna reported that the Foreign Languages Discipline Council met to discuss the Pathways proposal, and that group proposes that a foreign language requirement be added to the required Common Core credits, raising its total from 15 to 18 credits.

Prof. Hume asked how the A.A. degrees would be affected by the new plan.

Dean DiLorenzo replied that the A.A. degrees would not really be impacted at all because there is so much flexibility in what they can offer that they can easily fit into the categories.

V.P. Suss added that this is the beginning, not the end. We are a long way from this being implemented and a number of individuals from the College have been asked to serve on the discipline committees that will review which courses will satisfy these requirements. Kingsborough is well-represented on committees in seven areas. They did that by the number of transfer students from Kingsborough to the senior colleges, and that is how the distribution occurred. The College has representatives in Business, Accounting, and Psychology, among others.

Prof. Bassen clarified that the letter being sent by the College is the President’s response to the Task Force, and that she would look at the minutes of the meetings of the Gen-Ed Committee and the College Council.

V.P. Suss said he would recommend that she take seriously consider the issues raised at these individual meetings as she writes her response.

Prof. Bassen said he was uncertain as to how many of those present were aware of comments raised at other colleges in the university. He asserted that most or all of these, as part of a general consensus, urged the Board of Trustees to defer action on the current proposed framework, and that they undertake to address problems of degree completion and course transfer through a careful and consultative process that is better suited to the complexities of the issues and in keeping with the principles of faculty governance.

V.P. Suss replied that that is a senior college response that denies the quality of the education students receive at the community colleges from our professors, an attitude that has been a problem for all the years that he has worked at the College. They are continuing to do this with their obstructionist response. The Pathways solution recognizes the quality not only of the students but also of the education provided by the faculty at the community colleges, which faculty at the senior colleges continue to deny.

Prof. Barnhart concurred, and pointed out that some of the comments received by the Task Force have been frankly embarrassing in this way.

V.P. Suss reiterated that this injustice has gone on for more than 50 years. With Brooklyn College, for the most part, we have achieved parity. But the other colleges are a long way off.

Prof. Bassen admitted that comment was, in fact, from a senior college. But other schools are pointing out that perhaps the question of what constitutes Gen-Ed be on a homogeneous Gen-Ed curriculum throughout the university, or one which allows schools, whether two-year or four-year schools, to retain some sense of identity or uniqueness in what they have to offer. It seems to be very flat across the board. For example, computer science has been left out of this completely. There is one area where computer science is indicated, and that is included with psychology, sociology, and religion, which is in the fourth category of the curriculum, "The Individual and Society." He stated that the last time he looked, we don't offer anything in computer science here or anywhere else in the university that would fit into that category. This is one of the reasons the discipline council seeks to add its requirement to increase the required common core.

Prof. Barnhart says this comment may be very helpful, which is the reason the disciplinary committees exist to determine how they will address the common core. He noted that many of the senior colleges are becoming aware of the short timeline for implementation that is coming. This is going to happen very quickly if not right away. This goes to the Chancellor by December 1st, and it will go to the Board of Trustees in January. It then will be up to all of the colleges to submit plans on implementation by April 1st, and be followed in the fall of 2012 with lists of courses at all the colleges that satisfy these areas. Full implementation is expected by 2013, so this is not a slow process.

Prof. Rothenberg asked about the percentage of our students who do not intend to transfer to other schools, but instead seek to graduate with a terminal Associates degree.

V.P. Suss stated that the majority of our students, approximately 80 percent of them, transfer.

Prof. Rothenberg said that for the remaining 20 percent of our students, who are taking these A.A.S. degrees to get a job, to get into the business world, many of these courses will not be applicable to them. Other schools are offering very technical and esoteric degrees to get jobs.

V.P. Suss responded that the number of those jobs have decreased dramatically over the past several decades. At Kingsborough, some degrees like Surgical Technology stand out as degrees that lead to the workforce immediately. So we have become predominantly a transfer school. In addition to that, the majority of graduates in the senior colleges are community college transfers, even if they don't admit that. And the majority of community college transfers do as well if not better than the native population, which speaks to the quality of the teaching at the community colleges.

Prof. Pollack raised some concerns of the Foreign Language department regarding the potential of reduced enrollment, perceived quotas, and the attrition of their courses.

V.P. Suss indicated that this should be a separate discussion with the Administration and has taken place in the past as well. But this meeting is meant to discuss the Pathways Report. In addition, there is no quota system in existence or planned, and the Foreign Language department has in fact grown with more courses offered and faculty members.

Prof. Hume asked if proposed faculty or union litigation will affect the timeline for implementation.

V.P. Suss said there is no way to predict how that will affect the timeline.

Prof. Martin added that the timeline may be slowed additionally at the state level, since New York State must approve curricular changes and that process has been quite slow of late, and this may add another six months to a year to the plan for implementation in Fall 2013.

Prof. Bassen cited CUNY Board of Trustees Bylaws in section 8 which places organizational changes to curriculum in the hands of the faculty and their governance bodies on the individual campuses. they are essentially taking away the power and authority from the local campuses.

V.P. Suss and Prof. Barnhart pointed out this has been done before when the degrees were reduced to 60 credits.

Prof. Bassen reiterated his objections to the groupings in the flexible curriculum, and how students might choose to avoid certain course areas because they have so many options to fulfill each area.

V.P. Suss replied that our students are already doing this when they search CUNY TIPPS before registering, and have been taking classes that will transfer to other colleges. Some departments that in the past felt threatened are actually doing very well now because of the transferability of those courses, and the students not wasting time taking nontransferable courses. It is not departments that have been hurt, it is courses that do not transfer that have been hurt, as students do not take them.

Dean Basile said it is critically important to point out that it is not only the transfer of our students to the senior colleges. We are getting students who transfer in, and these credits are not being uniformly accepted as transferable. So we are taking students in who are not being as successful as they could be if these courses were transferring in the way they should.

Prof. Gale raised the issue of course hours and not just credits. V.P. Suss repeated that this is not the forum to discuss that.

Prof. Beeber asked about our students who transfer out of CUNY.

V.P. Suss said that they do not have any of these problems. For the most part, full credits are accepted when they transfer to SUNY schools, and some of the private colleges are even better about that. Dean Fakhari has done a study that indicates that such students get almost entirely every credit. That is why this is being talked about now.

The Vice President thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Sokolow

Michael Sokolow, secretary