

Baruch Faculty  
Senate Plenary  
February 4, 2021  
Minutes

A total of 116 members of the faculty senate, general faculty, staff, and students logged into the Zoom meeting.

Professor Samuel Johnson, Chair, Baruch College Faculty Senate, convenes the meeting at 12:30 p.m.

- I. Approval of the Agenda:** The agenda is approved by assent without additions
- II. Approval of the Minutes:** The minutes of the December 3, 2020 meeting is approved by assent and without additions
- III. Report from the Chair, Professor Sam Johnson:**

Professor Sam Johnson commends everyone for resilience in these trying times. Given the full agenda Professor Johnson calls on President Wu to offer his remarks.

- IV. Reports from College Officers**
  - a. President Wu**

President Wu thanks everyone for their resilience and hard work. Baruch continues to deliver impressive student outcomes. In particular and worthy of note, is the improvement of Baruch's six-year graduation rate from 69.9% to 72.5%.

The following were noted by the President:

*CUNY 2022 Governor's Executive Budget* (subject to legislature approval)

- The CUNY budget that was subject to a 20% withholding has been cut to 5%
- However, the budget does not fund increases in fringe and rental costs, which may translate into deeper than 5% cut

*Federal Stimulus Packages for Higher Education: CARES Act* (first) and *CRRSSA* (second)

- CRRSSA is \$9B larger than CARES
- Will be distributed by the end of March 2021, and will be subject to spending it over the single fiscal year
- CRRSSA has enhanced flexibility than CARES, e.g., defraying expenses associated with Covid, including lost revenue (subject to further interpretation by U. S. Dept of Education)
- CRRSSA rules apply to unspent CARES funding (incurred after December 22, 2020)

### *Enrollment Increase*

- There was a 5.8% increase in enrolment for the fall and roughly 5% increase for the spring
- This increase in enrollment has helped to stabilize our revenue stream
- We went from a potentially disastrous situation to a manageable situation. The key is to stabilize our finances and make appropriate investment in preparation for our short-term (fall) as well as long-term future
- Given the financial outlook, the President has approved a faculty hiring plan with 32 new hires.

### *Outlook for Fall 2021 and Priorities for Spring 2021*

- Vaccine distribution and social distancing will be the primary driver
- CUNY HR is working on remote work policy and a reopening plan was developed in fall 2020
- Likely scenario for the progression of instruction modality over the coming year: 100% online >> 50% online (e.g., 70% hybrid, 30% f-to-f) >> 25% online
- By March pre-registration, we will need to classify every single fall course at Baruch
- We will need to build a robust online and hybrid instruction infrastructure so that over the long-run, beyond pandemic, we are able to expand our capacity by 20-25% via online instruction (~5,000 students)
- How do we do that? (the provost office will take the lead)
  - Following the great work by the *Taskforce for the Future*, the President has asked the Provost to put together a working group to implement the taskforce recommendations, and to get us ready for the post pandemic world
  - Similar to the taskforce for the future, the working group implementation will be an inclusive and transparent process, with representations across the College
  - We will repurpose the *Office of Continuing and Professional Studies (CAPS)* and Ann Clarkson will serve as the Project Management Team coordinating the activities under the direction of the Provost
  - A primary goal is to build appropriate support infrastructure for faculty, staff, and students, allowing us to function efficiently in the new reality, where up to 25% of our instruction capacity will be online or hybrid (e.g., support infrastructure include technical resources, student support systems, training and instruction, instructional design, learning resources, learning assessment tools, etc.)
- Six College Focused Goals announced in fall 2020 will remain our focus:
  1. Launch multifaceted institutional transformation to elevate and enhance equity, diversity, and inclusion
  2. Complete institutional planning for an Integrated Student Success Center: increase student engagement, academic momentum, degree completion, and post-graduation success

3. Initiate multiyear effort to expand instructional modalities: move judiciously and deliberately toward an efficient infrastructure supporting high-quality online and hybrid instruction
4. Engage and support faculty and staff in the rapidly changing work environment
5. Initiate multiyear effort toward an incentive-based budget model: align institutional priorities and resource allocation; create incentive for collaboration and entrepreneurial program innovation
6. Expand visibility and philanthropy while strengthening and building external partnerships

### *Question and Answer*

Carla Bellamy notes the ongoing campaign in the State Legislature to impose a *Stock Transfer Tax*. Given the steep budgetary shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic, state lawmakers are debating whether or not to introduce a bill here that would tax certain financial transactions. While still in effect the tax has been largely dormant for the last 40 years when it was previously used to fill budget gaps similar to the ones posed by the covid crisis. Professor Bellamy asks that we lobby our local representatives and advocate for the reinstatement of the tax to offset our budget deficits. The President notes that the issue has not yet been brought up at the *Council of Presidents* but will be sure to monitor the situation. The PSC Cuny Baruch College chapter chair Vincent Digirolamo seconds Professor Bellamy and notes that it is important that the we press the trustees and legislation in Albany. Professor Digirolamo also asks if there is any news on the delay in the 2% in the raises. The President notes that the increases are not included in the Governor's budget and so CUNY will have to make these decisions. While Baruch is the exception, the other CUNY colleges are in significant decline and the overall budget crisis is still looming large. The President suspects that something will be communicated by March as the 2021 budget will be settled.

Links posted in the chat session on the stock transfer tax bill:

Stock Transfer Tax full bill (see item xi for CUNY 2.5% allotment)

[https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default\\_fld=&leg\\_video=&bn=A03353&term=&Summary=Y&Text=Y](https://nyassembly.gov/leg/?default_fld=&leg_video=&bn=A03353&term=&Summary=Y&Text=Y)

Find your assemblyman/assemblywoman

<https://nyassembly.gov/mem/search/>

Stock Transfer Tax one page information sheet

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kWUhZW3ItwfISALz7HtEJ8-FSj8msXV/view?usp=sharing>

Why firms won't move to NJ to avoid the stock transfer tax

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SAHlyWzAYmhL1F-6qvrC7NtaOaMikUOX/view?usp=sharing>

Why the stock transfer tax won't hurt your pension  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rujT4sc1QIndSrddr3n2-13ZsuuHZ1xE/view?usp=sharing>

Glenn Peterson notes that at a previous senate plenary, senators voted 21-2 to remove the *CIA Signature Program* recently established at the college. Professor Peterson asks if the President is aware of this ongoing issue at the college. The President thanks Professor Peterson and promises to look into it. Gisele Regatoe notes that the cut of 5% in the budget still reflects a significant shortfall and will the President update us on how best he will manage the shortfall. The President notes that he has yet to receive the details for the bottom line numbers. Terry Martell asks if these numbers will have to go through a *position control review*. The President notes that yes, we will be subject to a review but that we are currently in a favorable position with sufficient flexibility to manage the shortfall and that have more than enough to cover our positions if we maintain some measure of discipline.

**b. Provost Lee**

Provost Lee introduces himself as the new Interim Provost. Provost Lee joined the faculty of the Zicklin School of Business's Allen G. Aaronson Department of Marketing and International Business in 1990. His scholarship focuses on consumer information research. He has served as chair of the Aaronson Department and associate dean for academic affairs and interim dean of the Zicklin School. He has also served as the vice provost for global strategies for three years. He thanks the outgoing Provost McCarthy and thanks President Wu for the opportunity to serve as interim provost. Provost Lee reaffirms the intent to start the rehiring process with 32 new positions which include 23 faculty lines. He also expresses his commitment establishing a working group tasked with developing structure—both short and long term—for the various learning modalities in the online learning environment.

V. Teresa Hurst, Director of the Counseling Center, *COVID-19 and Student Mental Health*.

The slide show presentation can be found on the Faculty Senate website on the agenda page.

Links posted in the chat on the issue:

CIT link

<https://studentaffairs.baruch.cuny.edu/campus-intervention-team/>

Baruch's Employee Assistance Program as a health & wellness resource

<https://hr.baruch.cuny.edu/eap/>

*Question and Answer*

Glenn Peterson notes the high numbers students dealing with isolation and asks whether or not there are statistics on whether or not students have gone back home or relocated to other parts of the US. Director Hurst notes that there are some students who find themselves stuck in the US and cannot return home. In some instances “home” can also mean the presence of abuse at home and this can make matters worse. Due to licensing issues Baruch is not able to offer services outside of NY or the country. Vincent Digirolamo recognizes the shortfalls in staffing and this should be addressed. He also notes the needs of Veterans in the time of Covid-19. He also asked about the policy of cutting students from the registration process if they have not paid their bills. Director Hurst notes that there has been one recent death in the Veteran community and the importance of managing any incidence of contagion. Cathy Cobb notes that in the fall the bursars office worked with students with any unpaid balances through payment plans. The initial CARES Act offered financial assistance to students should they need it. This spring semester we are also offering payment plans and we anticipate a tweaking in the stimulus package where \$8 million will be offered as student emergency funds. Mary Gorman states that students have not been dropped for lack of payment. Pablo Peixoto notes that current Strategic Plan does not include the goal of increased staffing for mental health services and seems, in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, to be problematic. He also notes of the difficulty that all faculty face in recognizing the presence of mental health issues when staring at what is most often an empty screen of zoom frames. Director Hurst notes that there is a subgoal that staffing is important in the more detailed strategic plan for her counseling center but thanks Peixoto for the observation that staffing is needed in this current context.

**VI.** Rachel Fester and Paquita Davis Friday, *President's Council on Diversity Equity and Inclusion*

The slide show presentation can be found on the Faculty Senate on the agenda page.

Links posted in the chat session:

[https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/diversefutures/files/2020/10/Marxe-Diversity-Committee\\_2020-Report-Final.pdf](https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/diversefutures/files/2020/10/Marxe-Diversity-Committee_2020-Report-Final.pdf)

<https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/diversefutures/files/2020/10/Marxe-Diversity-Committee-2020-2021-Workplan.pdf>

Office of Alumni Relations and Volunteer Engagement has established the following affinity networks:

The Robert C Weaver Society Black Alumni Network

SOMOS LatinX Alumni Network

Baruch LGBTQ Alumni and Allies

Baruch Asian Heritage Alumni Network

We have partnered with several offices across campus on DEI related programs, and have one in partnership with the Black Male Initiative on Feb 17 and with the Black and Latino Studies Program on March 30.

Please join us! :-)

<https://www.alumni.baruch.cuny.edu/events/event-details/~occur-id/11765>

**VII.** Allison Lehr Samuels, Director, Center for Teaching and Learning  
Director Lehr Samuels refers to the following website in her presentation:

<https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/ctl/>

CTL focuses on facilitating the development and adaptation of various teaching and learning models, including hybrid/online delivery modes. Faculty are encouraged to familiarize themselves with setting up appointments, participate in workshops, and consult with the ZOOM guides should they need to.

**VIII.** Carla Bellamy, Intellectual property and teaching online and degree completion initiative

Professor Bellamy rise the issue of intellectual property rights in response to the call on faculty to develop coursework for the degree completion initiative. One of the questions raised is whether or not faculty members have exclusive rights to the content that they produce? The issue seems at present ambiguous and at a minimum faculty who are teaching this program should be presented with a contract that very clearly helps them understand their rights to any materials that they produce. A second issue concerns whether or not departmental and school curriculum committees will be involved in the development of these new programs as their involvement has traditionally ensured quality. We have also just heard that some 20 to 25% of our courses will remain online in the long term. There is need for a much clearer and transparent statement around intellectual property rights going forward. In response to any questions on this topic President Wu notes that faculty own the intellectual property of the course material that the produce, however the institution has the right to use it. It should also be noted that Baruch or CUNY more generally cannot take that material and sell it to somebody else. This has always been the policy and this has not changed given the shift from face-to-face teaching to its online manifestation. However, President Wu will ask the Olga Dias, Baruch's legal counsel to provide a statement at the next plenary.

Professor Bellamy posts the following link to an article on the subject for our interest:

<https://slate.com/technology/2021/01/dead-professor-teaching-online-class.html>

**IX. Adjournment at 2.15pm**

Respectfully submitted  
Richard Wilkins, PhD  
Faculty Senate Secretary

*Richard Wilkins 2/19/2021*