

Baruch Faculty
Senate Plenary Minutes
March 4, 2021

A total of 100 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 February 4, 2021 meeting is approved by assent and without additions
- III. Report from the Chair, Professor Sam Johnson:**

Professor Johnson welcomes everyone to the March senate plenary. He congratulates all members of the faculty and staff for the for highly successful operations in such difficult times. Enrollment is up and Baruch is setting the performance standard across CUNY. Professor Johnson acknowledges the difficulty that everyone is experiencing regarding the lack of a physical presence and the need for social contacts required for a healthy working environment. The issue of intellectual property rights in connection with the planned delivery of online instruction will be the subject of discussions with Olga Dias, Assistant Vice President and Legal Counsel to the President. Professor Eliot Axelrod, Chair of the Academic Freedom and Responsibility Committee has been charged with leading those discussions.

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

President Wu reaffirms the expressed sentiments of Professor Johnson and thanks everyone for their resilience and hard work. Baruch continues to deliver impressive student outcomes under the challenging circumstances. The following is a summary of President Wu's remarks:

- Women's History Month will be celebrated at the college through a number of planned events
- A Virtual College Town Hall Meeting is planned for March 9th (Staying Connected During Uncertain Times)
- The Presidential Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has organized 40 [Listening Sessions](#) during the month of March—to engage the voices and experiences of the College's diverse stakeholders. President Wu hopes that you will take this opportunity to participate in this important community engagement activity. The findings of these Listening Sessions will help inform

- decisions, policies, processes, and structural changes that will contribute to intentional and meaningful institutional transformation.
- A National search for the Provost and Senior Vice President is on schedule and doing well. Over 80 diverse and highly qualified candidates have already applied.
 - Interim Provost Myung-Soo Lee has had a dynamic and successful start. The President has asked him to put together a Working Group to implement the Taskforce for the Future recommendations, with a specific focus on Hybrid/Online Programming.
 - The President has charged this Hybrid/Online Instruction Working Group on February 22 to
 - **Create up to 25% of instructional options and capacity online**
 - Create Existing Practice Inventory
 - Develop/Expand Cross Campus Online Learning Communities
 - Engage Faculty and Students for Feedback
 - Scale Training and Instructional Design
 - Build Online Student Support
 - Strengthen/Build Technical Support Systems

Question and Answer

Professor Karl Lang asks if there is any data or information that attempts to measure student expectations for a post covid learning environment. Are there any changes that we should be anticipating or adapting to? President Wu suggests that any changes in student expectations may not be as drastic as we might imagine but that we should be prepared to adapt to any change and utilize the advances in technology especially in the delivery of online modalities for instruction. President Wu also notes the increasing demand for online professional education with a 30-50% shift in demand for such coursework at Zicklin. For undergraduates however, this is a different matter and these students should be supported across the board. Professor Glenn Peterson notes that there has been a long history at Baruch of collecting information about faculty interests, attitudes, and degrees of satisfaction with their workplace environment. However, the information gathered through these surveys is no always shared in a transparent manner. Will the information gathered through the listening sessions, especially since these are divided up into various interest groups, be shared with everyone? This assumes of course that the identities of those participating are assured anonymity. President Wu defers to the Co-Chairs of the *The Presidential Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion* (PACDEI) Professor Sam Johnson and Director of Graduate Programs Leslie Ann Hunt. Professor Johnson notes that listening sessions are a form of focus groups, and they will be asked three questions. It is the intent to use those questions to lay out the framework for the advisory council's activities going forward. All data gathered from these sessions will remain anonymous. Leslie Hunt notes that the intention is to widely and publicly share the anonymized data that we receive so that the campus really has an opportunity to also hear what has been heard. While there is no date yet scheduled for a campus-wide meeting on the topic once the information is collected there is every intent to have one.

Professor Peterson also asks about the current enrollment numbers and the fact that we are currently about 39% over capacity on what the Vertical Campus can hold. What is the

intended balance across the desire for increased tuition revenue and the physical constraints of our campus configuration? President Wu notes that since we are a public institution there are a number of stakeholders that have a say in what our enrollment numbers can be. That being said, there is no intention for us to still grow further in any drastic manner. Professor Marios Koufaris asks about the Fall 2021 semester and the communication with students about coming back to campus and whether or not some classes will remain online. President Wu notes that most departments have submitted their Fall scheduling and whether or not classes are online or in person. Registration has been moved to a later date. If the pandemic gets worse then we will have to once again roll back any classes that are face-to-face. Professor Carla Bellamy returns to the topic of the planned listening sessions and asks about the research protocols that are in place that will ensure both the safety of those participating and their privacy. Leslie Hunt notes that any research protocols regarding the listening sessions have been submitted to Baruch College's *Independent Review Board*. Professor Christina Balboa is the lead PI and the following links are placed into the chat and these reflect the public facing data regarding institutional assessment and planning and also the registration to the listening sessions:

<https://provost.baruch.cuny.edu/academic-affairs/assessment-accreditation-institutional-effectiveness/test-data-driven-decision-making/>
<https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/confluence/display/OAAIE/Baruch+Repository+of+Institutional+Knowledge>
<https://blogs.baruch.cuny.edu/listen/registration/>

Professor Johnson also notes that those leading the listen sessions have also undergone training and this supports their capacity to facilitate discussions and manage conflict. Professor Johnson also acknowledges the work on this project of Rachel Fester and thanks her for those contributions.

V. DJ Dolack, Director, Tools for Clear Speech.

Following up on the presentation on the student mental health presentation given at the last plenary, Director Dolack reminds us of how the pandemic has affected the community of nonnative speakers at Baruch College. About 20-25% of the student body identify as a nonnative speaker of English. That isolation that the pandemic has brought upon these students is a lost lifeline to speaking English. At home many of these students report that they are not speaking that much English at all. The following link is posted to the chat and reflects some of the experiences of the Asian-American community.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/nyregion/asian-hate-crimes-attacks-ny.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Director Dolack also asks that faculty monitor their students carefully and note any unusual reluctance to turn webcams on or a hesitancy to participate in discussion sessions. The following is also posted as a resource to manage any difficulties that nonnative speakers are experiencing.

<https://tfcs.baruch.cuny.edu>

VI. New Business

a. Breakout/Discussion: Faculty Experience

Professor Johnson presents the following prompt:

CUNY has stated a goal of gradually returning to in-person instruction in fall 2021. Please describe the challenges that the uncertainty of the reopening plan at Baruch presents to (1) your career and (2) your job security at Baruch (3) your mental health? (4) Are there any other related concerns?

Faculty are asked to gather in breakout rooms and discuss the proposed plan to return to campus next fall. Participants are asked to write into a google.doc and this document will be revisited at the next plenary.

b. Elections (May 20th, 2021):

- i. Nominations are requested for the positions of Senate Chair, Secretary, five Vice-Chairs, and five Executive Committee Members. Those elected will serve for two years.
- ii. Nominations (self-nominations are encouraged) should be sent to the senate secretary Richard Wilkins (Richard.wilkins@baruch.cuny.edu)

VII. Announcements

Taji Sanders, Vice-President of Academic Affairs for the Undergraduate Student Government, asks about the plans for Fall 2021 and the hybrid and online class offerings. He reiterates what others have said about the communication process and asks that information be relayed to students in a timely manner. Professor Mary McGlynn notes that the campus is working on a reopening plan and that many of the issues regarding instructional modalities will be addressed in that plan. Professor Mangels also notes that these issues will be addressed in the upcoming Town Hall meeting planned for March 9th. Osvaldo Garcia, also a representative of the Student Government asks about the procurement of any proctoring software and if there are any alternatives to a requirement for face-to-face exam taking. Associate Provost Slavin asks that student government take up with him any academic integrity issues with the taking of exams. Allison Lehr-Samuels, Director of CTL, notes that ethics week is coming up and that on March 18 from 3-4pm she will be discussing academic integrity.

VIII. Adjournment at 2pm.

Respectfully submitted
Richard Wilkins, PhD
Faculty Senate Secretary

Richard Wilkins 3/22/2021