

Baruch Faculty

Senate Plenary

February 2, 2023

Minutes

A total of 76 members of the faculty senate, general faculty, staff, and students logged into the Zoom meeting.

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

- I. Approval of the Agenda:** The agenda is approved by assent and without additions.
- II. Approval of the Minutes:** The minutes of the December 1st, 2022 meeting is approved by assent.
- III. BFS Reports**
 - a. Chair's Report: Professor Terry Martell**
Professor Martell defers to President Wu for his report.
- IV. Report from President Wu**

In his opening remarks, President WU notes that the college has been closely monitoring the situation surrounding George Santos—the recently elected Republican to the House of Representatives and his claims to have graduated from Baruch College—and its potential to cause damage to the college's reputation. In the past week, however, this sentiment has gradually shifted. The New York Times and The Washington Post published stories about Baruch and its students that were generally positive. This has allowed us to indirectly reference the situation in public without further damaging the college's reputation.

Vice Chancellor for Government Affairs at CUNY

Jeff Rhodes, an alumnus of Baruch and former adjunct faculty member, was recently appointed as the Vice Chancellor for Government Affairs at CUNY. As a Baruch alumnus, Jeff is proud of his alma mater and has already had conversations with him. We are proud to have a Baruch alumnus representing CUNY in Albany.

The Budget

The Governor's State of the State address was followed yesterday by the release of her executive budget, which marks the beginning of the budget process. As one of the many lobbyists, I am now leading a detailed analysis of the executive budget to understand how it might impact

Baruch College and the CUNY system as a whole. Last year, the budget improved significantly after being reviewed and amended by both houses of legislature. Hopefully, this year will be no different. However, there is a unique dynamic at play, as the federal stimulus is set to end in the spring and enrollment at Baruch College is stable but not expanding rapidly. Overall, CUNY enrollment is down 3.5%, but there is a bit of good news in that spring enrollment at senior colleges was up by 0.4%. CUNY Central has mandated a 2% target savings for FY23, totaling 75 million dollars across all county campuses. This savings target is expected to increase to 175 million in 2024, meaning that budget cuts could be on the horizon. The success of these efforts will depend on the budget request CUNY makes to Albany.

In light of the current budgetary climate, there is a central mandate for budget-saving measures that must be adhered to. Fortunately, there is a senior college allocation model and a general consensus that colleges should maintain their own tuition revenue. This is a message that has been continually advocated for. The real question is whether they are able to implement the recommendations and when they can do so. At Baruch and Hunter College, the budget is balanced and enrollment is healthy, so the priority is to keep them out of harm's way. There is good news in the form of the 17 Lex renovation project, which is estimated at 35 million. It was recently approved by the Facility Planning Committee of the Board and is expected to be passed by the Board in January. Additionally, it is important to plan for swing space in order to accommodate classrooms and offices during renovation. Finally, in order to convert engagement reports into actual priorities and actions, the campus community is encouraged to participate in the strategic plan exercise and the townhall meeting.

Question and Answer

Michele Doney noted that at Faculty Senate and Town Hall meetings last year, the University announced that it was conducting a comprehensive study of commuting patterns of faculty, staff, and potentially students. Additionally, the University was working with space consultants to assess the University's current space needs. Will President Wu make these studies public? President Wu will inquire as to the status of these studies, with the results also being potentially useful for informing future decisions about remote work policies. Thomas Heinrich proposed the idea of making the gym available to faculty and staff at no fee to improve the University's benefit structure, which President Wu stated was a reasonable request and worth further exploration. Art King noted that the University was currently offering free yoga classes to faculty and staff. Thus, there is potential for the University to explore offering free gym memberships to faculty and staff in the future.

III. BFS Committee Reports

a. Professor Andreas Grein, Chair Education Policy Committee and BFS representative on the Strategic Planning Committee.

The Baruch faculty senate Educational Policy committee met on 12.21.22 to discuss and vote on the proposal for the new department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Zicklin School of Business. The meeting was attended by the voting committee members as well as Provost Linda

Essig and Vice President Kathy Cobb who are ex-officio members. Professor Scott Newbert participated to answer questions about the proposal.

The committee asked many questions and thoroughly discussed the proposal. It was noted that the proposal has been shown to other audiences (e.g., the Zicklin department chairs), and has been modified based on those suggestions. Key points are the strong demand for these kinds of programs and skills, both in the broader educational market and within CUNY. The department will serve its own students as well as collaborate with other Zicklin departments and Baruch schools. Finally the department will work closely with the Field Center for Entrepreneurship.

The committee voted in favor of creating the new department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Vote to approve the new department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

The proposed new department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation is approved by assent.

IV. Reports from College Officers

a. Report from Provost Essig

This week and next week, Zicklin School of Business Dean candidates are visiting the campus and the community is highly encouraged to participate in the evaluation process. Additionally, feedback forms have been provided. Furthermore, the student vs. faculty/staff basketball game is being organized and a link to the form has been provided in the chat and can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-ZYyukR_zi1Mbi7fVZTqo8nJS_aQsA6ptqINMKC_7uFVIGg/viewform

It is also important to note that 20-25% of course sections are not making use of the electronic grade book in the learning management system inside Blackboard, and faculty are encouraged to provide feedback along the way to students in order to ensure each student receives the grade they deserve. Additionally, the transition from Blackboard to BrightSpace is being managed by CUNY Central with a third-party provider to move the data and is expected to take place in Fall 2024. Furthermore, new staff members have recently joined or are about to join the Digital Learning Hub, and all Masters Degree requests to add distance education as a teaching modality have been approved. Finally, the Faculty Planning Committee of the Board has approved the renovation 17 Lex and swing space is being organized to accommodate classrooms and offices during the renovation. The campus community is encouraged to participate in the strategic plan exercise and a townhall meeting to convert engagement reports into actual priorities and actions.

Earlier this week, screenshots of Beta tested pro faculty profile pages were presented to the Senate executive. A few volunteers from the group, including Stephen and Rick, beta tested their own pages. The delay was due to unexpected data transfer errors found while transferring data from one platform to another. These errors, such as a lack of a comma between the issue and the volume of a journal, were easy to fix but had to be found first. The team is now in a hopefully

short beta testing phase and a few other members of the Senate have been asked to Beta test their pages as well. Additionally, teaching and grant data had to be manually uploaded, so the team is updating the data with the most recent teaching and grant data. The goal is to ensure that there are no error filled pages before the profile pages go public.

Question and Answer

Professor Bellamy presented an argument for using Top Hat as a learning platform at Baruch University. She conducted a survey of her student's satisfaction with the platform and found it to be excellent. In response to an additional question around funding RRT Provost Essig noted that it would cost close to one million dollars to support research-active faculty with research release time. Terry Martell also argued for the importance of providing faculty support due to the fact that quality of faculty is paramount to the long-term success of the university.

b. AVP Mary Rivers Presentation on All Funds Budget

See [here](#) for the table depicting the *FY23 December 2022 Baruch College All-Funds Operating Budget*.

Professor Martell offers a few opening remarks around the directive from CUNY to engage in budget-saving measures and asks where exactly are these savings to be made. Provost Essig notes that salaries for new hires will not be started until September of 2023 and that we have a sizeable CUTRA balance both of which will serve as a float. AVP Rivers presents from the table above and explains the array of allocations and expenditures in the all-funds budget for Baruch College. Discussions revolve around the following issues: (1) Tax-Levy funds from the state operating budget; (2) College non-tax-levy funds coming primarily from executive programs, conferences (registration fees), and BPAC rental fees that have performances (3) Philanthropy and gifts from donors that go into the Baruch College Fund and distributed to the school that was designated by the donor (if applicable); and (4) the Zicklin Business School faculty and their supplemental salaries drawn from the BCF. With regard to (4) Professor Petersen asks the discrepancy in faculty salaries between the Zicklin School of Business and the Arts and Sciences department and is curious if this information is publicly available or classified. It appears that faculty in Zicklin receive additional supplements, and Professor Petersen wonders if there is a specific amount allocated to this purpose. The Provost responds that salary range for Zicklin faculty is determined based on national market salary, as per the standards set by the accrediting organization for business schools, the ACSBE. The 7.5 million budgeted amount of PCF funds for Zicklin encompasses all funds derived from endowments for the centers and institutes based in Zicklan, which may not necessarily be for faculty supplements but could cover research, travel, or other purposes. Therefore, the specific amount allocated for faculty supplements is not easily quantifiable or disclosed in a straightforward manner.

c. VP Mary Gorman Spring Enrollment at Baruch

VP Gorman's update on enrollment at Baruch College can be found [here](#).

Professor James Rich asks about acceptance rates in the current admissions process. VP Gorman notes that students are applying to many different colleges and so the application rate is much higher than in previous years in addition to the college moving to SAT/ACT test optional policy for next year. Our GPA

bench-marks are markedly higher and these too demonstrate a higher predictability for success rates in college.

V. **Old Business**
None

VI. **New Business**

Professor Martell recognizes VP Kathy Cobb and wishes her well in her retirement.

8. Adjournment

Adjourned at 2pm