

Final Report
By-Laws and Elections Committee
2005-6

The College Senate By-Laws and Elections Committee had three major tasks this academic year, two of which were standard (conducting elections for the at large senators and conducting elections for the slate of College Senate officers and chairs of standing committees for the up-coming academic year). The other task was a carry-over from the previous year -- to rethink the College Senate By-Laws, including representation on the Senate of the members of the campus community, and to propose revisions consistent with perspectives of many campus members.

Revision of the College Senate By-Laws

In 2004-5, Buffalo State College was reorganized to replace three Faculties with four Schools. The College Senate By-Laws and Elections committee explored alternative ways to address this reorganization, and other issues during 2004-5, and this work was continued during 2005-6.

By Laws: The revision of the by-laws expanded into a re-conceptualization of the College Senate, through the following activities of the committee:

- Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee focused on re-conceptualization, which included all members of the Standing Committee and four additional senior members of the campus community (two of whom are currently College senators). This committee worked from October through February to gather information, and craft proposed revisions to the by-laws.
- Held three open forums, attended by approximately thirty members of the campus community.
- Posted summaries of the forums, and testimonials received, on the College Senate web site.
- Sent letters to all past chairs of the College Senate, inviting them to participate in the forums, and three did: Stan Dickson (2nd chair of the College Senate), Jan Ramsey and Howard Reid.
- Analyzed governance structures at 16 SUNY institutions; shared results with the College Senate and posted analysis on the College Senate web site.

- Based on input at the forums, developed and posted an on-line survey. A total of 187 responses were received. Results of the survey were posted on the College Senate web site.
- Taking into account all the input gathered, and discussions a dozen committee meetings, the committee developed eight by laws recommendations.
- The recommendations were presented to the College Senate at the March 1, 2006 meeting, and voted on at the March 31 meeting. Seven of the eight were approved by the Senate.
- A by-laws referendum was prepared in a format following previous votes on by-laws changes – a paper ballot, distributed to all eligible voters. A distinctive color of paper was used, so that ballots could not be duplicated. The ballot contained two motions approved by the 2004-5 Senate, as well as six of the eight motions from the March 31 meeting (the seventh was a recommendation that did not involve a by-laws change).
- 146 votes were received, and all eight motions were approved. The specific results were as follows:
 - Elimination of Academic Services and International Education as standing committees: Yes: 91.1%; No: 8.9%
 - Reorganization of the college from three faculties into four schools: Yes: 95.9%; No: 4.1%
 - Addition of representation of college support staff to the constituency of the College Senate in the form of one seat: Yes: 87.0%; No: 13.0%
 - Units have the responsibility for resolving any disenfranchisement of voters: Yes: 84.9%; No: 14.4%; Abstain: .7%
 - Revised description of the membership of the College Senate: Yes: 92.5% No: 6.8%; Abstain: .7%
 - Faculty should be the majority on the College Senate: Yes: 75.3%; No: 24.0%; Abstain: .7%
 - Revised definition of “student” as a member of the Professional Welfare committee: Yes: 89.7%; No: 7.5%; Abstain: 2.7%
 - University Senators should be full time faculty members: Yes: 84.2%; No: 14.4%; Abstain: 1.4

- The results of the referendum will be presented to the College Senate on May 5, and forwarded to the President for final approval (as per Articles VIII and IX of the College Senate By-Laws).

Campus elections: A campus elections for three at large senators was conducted via the following:

- Call for nominations was conducted through hard copy distribution of notice as well as electronic notices (in the *College Bulletin* and *The Daily*)
- Eight candidates came forward, and posted information about themselves on the College Senate elections site.
- Maurine Baker-Stein set up the College Senate elections.
- Following the 2004-5 practice, only electronic notifications (in the *College Bulletin* and *The Daily*) were used to notify the campus. No hard copy notification took place. A total of 30 paper ballots were distributed upon request.
- 89 electronic ballots and 9 paper ballots were completed by the end of the two-week election window. The newly elected senators are Lee Ann Grace, Dan MacIsaac, and Ron Stewart.

Communication with the 06-07 College Senate members regarding officers and chairs of standing committees: Via several e-mails, each member of the 2006-7 Senate was notified of the Caucus meeting (traditionally held prior to the last meeting of the College Senate) and the opportunities to serve as officers and chairs. All newly elected senators from all units received this information as well.

Recommendations:

Create new College Senate handbook, reflecting by-laws revisions, and distribute to new members of the senate and other campus members.

Complete By Laws revisions:

If the By-Laws revisions are approved by the President, develop an implementation proposal to consider how to operationalize the faculty majority of the Senate (since the addition of a support staff representative will reduce the faculty members in the Senate to 49% (not including at large members). In so doing:

- Invite Senator Heather Maldonado to share her analysis of the By-Laws survey with the committee, as presented at the March 31 meeting of the Senate.
- Develop a model and present it to the Senate as a by-laws amendment.

Increase participation in the electronic elections of At Large Senators as follows:

- After elections have begun, distribute a paper announcement that contains instructions for using the site, and the URL.
- On the College Senate site, next to the posting of the elections, include log-on instructions.
- Send two e-mails to the college campus, separate from the *College Bulletin* and *The Daily*, containing a link to the site.
- Review the process of developing the list of eligible voters so that a voting list (including all individuals identified by their units, which in some cases includes individuals who are adjuncts) is accurate, and can be used to distribute information about the elections to voters.

Revisit the issue of election of graduate students to the College Senate.

Evaluate the extent to which current standing committees of the College Senate address the important issues which are part of college policy and practice, and make recommendations as appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,
 Sharon Cramer
 Chair, College Senate By-Laws and Elections Committee

Members of the College Senate By-Laws and Elections Committee, 2005-6:

Sharon Cramer, John DeNisco, Marie Ferraro, Ken Fujiuchi, Slade Gellin, Tony Hotchkiss, Yanick Jenkins, Melanie LaFontaine, Bill Mitchell, Mark Warford
 Larry Flood, Administrative Liaison

Members of the College Senate Ad Hoc Re-conceptualization Committee

All members of the standing committee, plus Dick Bihr, Bruce Bryski, Kate Hartman, Judy Miller