

**Shared Governance Review and Recommendations**

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## Executive Summary

Shared governance offers Kingsborough Community College a way of living its values and achieving the mission, while also describing ways in which members of the college community can engage in institutional decision-making. Dr. Allison Buskirk-Cohen was selected to facilitate a review of shared governance at the institution. During the spring and summer of 2021, she evaluated perceptions of shared governance through focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys. At the start of the fall 2021 semester, a shared governance task force was developed, which included members of the student body, faculty, staff, and administration at Kingsborough Community College. A member of another CUNY college also participated in the task force, providing an external perspective. Throughout the fall semester, the task force met as a group and individually with members of the college community to formulate recommendation and gather feedback.

The recommendations to improve governance at Kingsborough are divided into two sections: modifications to College Council and additions to governance. Recommended modifications to College Council include holding monthly meetings; developing a charge, policies, and procedures for the Committee on Elections; developing a charge and filling the role of Parliamentarian; and expanding the charge of the Students Committee to be more holistic and to include seats for advisory staff. Recommended additions to governance include development of a Constitutional Committee and a Shared Governance Committee; limiting terms and multiple roles; and establishing a task force to examine benefits of a faculty-only governing body. These recommendations are described more fully in the main report.

Moving the recommendations from theoretical ideas to practical implementation will require additional work from the institutional community. Institutional challenges may make this work more difficult. The report describes how the campus climate; communication and decision-making; and low participation in the shared governance review process pose additional challenges. To meet them, the institution must prioritize creating a safe and supportive environment. Resources are provided to assist in this transition. Shifting the cultural environment is not an easy task, but one that will provide new opportunities for growth at the institution. The report also contains references and appendices with the survey results and comparisons of committees at other CUNY community colleges.

Throughout the review process, efforts have been made to be highly inclusive. Members of the student body, faculty, staff, and administration are acknowledged for their participation in the process, with gratitude towards the members of the shared governance task force: Lubie Grujicic-Alatrisme, Judith Cohen, Jessica Corbin, Mary Dawson, Beth Douglas, Andres Escobar, Matthew Gartner, Diane Lake, Kwame Nyanin, Rick Repetti, Benjamin Stewart, and Paul Winnick.

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*The Review Process*







exercise fair and impartial judgement and behaviors. Human resources may be an appropriate resource for consultation in how to best manage multiple roles at the institution.

**Task Force for Faculty-Only Governing Body.** A review of the CUNY bylaws and of Kingsborough survey results demonstrated conflicting information on a faculty-only governing body. Article VIII Organization and Duties of the Faculty, Section 8.10 University Faculty Senate states

There shall be a university faculty senate, responsible, subject to the board, for the formulation of policy relating to the academic status, role, rights, and freedoms of the faculty, university level educational and instructional matters, and research and scholarly activities of university-wide import. The powers and duties of the university faculty senate shall not extend to areas or interests which fall exclusively within the domain of the faculty councils of the constituent units of the university. Consistent with the powers of the board in accordance with the education law and the bylaws of the board, the university faculty senate shall make its own bylaws providing for the election of its own officers, the establishment of its own rules and procedures for the election of senators, for its internal administration and for such other matters as is necessary for its continuing operations.

adopted college governance plans shall supersede any inconsistent provisions contained in any other college governance plan. The Borough of Manhattan, Bronx, and LaGuardia community colleges have college-wide governing bodies and faculty-only governing bodies. Both Hostos and Queensborough community college have college-wide governing bodies with faculty-specific committees. Thus, the CUNY system seems to encourage the development of unique governance bodies at each individual institution.

Survey results were mixed regarding the creation of a faculty-only governing body. When provided with the statement "A faculty-only governing body is necessary for the best interests of the college," 58% of respondents "strongly disagree" or "disagree." The same percent responded with *no opinion*. In contrast, 64% of faculty responded with *agree* or *strongly agree*.

It is also important to note that 12% of respondents responded with *no opinion*.



## Challenges to Shared Governance

### *Campus Climate*

Survey responses to items assessing views of campus climate demonstrate a split in perceptions. Just over half of those surveyed (51% of faculty, 54% of staff and administration) reported they *disagree* or *strongly disagree* that the current campus climate fosters success for the members of the faculty body (58%) reported that they *agree* or *strongly agree* that the current campus climate fosters success for the members of staff or administration (47%). A larger percentage of faculty (65%) compared to staff and administration (52%) also reported they *disagree* or *strongly disagree* with the current campus climate. Finally, more faculty (60%) than staff and administration (47%) reported they *disagree* or *strongly disagree* with the current campus climate. The final item on campus was altered slightly for the campus groups. In the faculty survey, 54% reported they *agree* or *strongly agree* that the current campus climate fosters success for the members of the faculty body. Among

### ***Low Participation***

Participation rates in the shared governance review were lower than anticipated. Focus groups had strong representation from members of the faculty, staff, and administration. However, there were not many students who participated (n=3). Also, as stated earlier, there were not enough students who responded to the survey link for it to be considered a representative sample. Of those faculty members who responded to the survey, 70% indicated they *agree* or *strongly agree* with that statement. The percentage was lower among members of the staff and administration, but still positive with 52% reporting they *agree* or *strongly agree* with that statement. Unfortunately, regarding office hours, there were low levels of participation from students, faculty, staff, and administration. Shared governance task force members help office hours on a bi-weekly basis. Times varied along with format (virtual and in-person), and an email reminder was sent regularly with contact information. Despite these efforts, only about 20 people attended office hours across the entire fall 2021 semester. The low participation across the institution is worrisome and poses challenges for implementing the recommendations proposed





<i>Departmental Shared Governance Items</i>	<i>Does Not Apply/ No Opinion</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Overall, my department is functioning effectively.	2	11	15	40	26
My department chair does not demonstrate favoritism.	5	12	12	34	31
My department chair communicates priorities clearly.	4	12	4	43	31
My department chair does not support adaptation to change.	6	39	32	7	10
My department chair does not ensure diverse faculty input.	9	36	31	7	11
My department chair does not cultivate new faculty leaders regularly.	14	34	24	9	13
<i>College Council Shared Governance Items</i>	<i>Does Not Apply/ No Opinion</i>	<i>Strongly</i>			

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*Items on Potential Changes*

*Does Not Apply/  
No Opinion*

*Strongly  
Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Agree*

*Strongly  
Agree*









## Appendix D. Comparison of Committee on Committees

### Committee on Committee at Hostos Community College

Retrieved from: <https://www.hostos.cuny.edu/Administrative-Offices/College-Wide-Senate/Standing-Committees/Committee-on-Committees>

#### A. Membership:

1. The Committee on Committees shall be composed of nine (9) Senate members, including two (2) student members and one (1) member from the non-teaching instructional staff, elected by the members of the Senate.
2. Student members will be elected every year at the first meeting of the Senate. Other members will be elected at the first meeting of each newly formed Senate.

#### B. Function:

1. To assign members from different College constituencies to the specific Senate standing committees before the second meeting of the Senate for the academic year.
2. To determine the number of members to be assigned to each committee, unless otherwise specified in the Charter of Governance.
3. To advise all Senate Committees in the development of internal operating procedures and to submit these procedures to the Senate for ified /-omv1

## Section 8. Committee on Committees.

### Organization

1. The Committee on Committees shall consist of nine (9) persons. These persons shall be voting faculty as defined in Article IV of the Bylaws of the Faculty.
2. Only one member from any department may serve at any time on the Committee on Committees. In an election where more than one member from a department is elected, the person having the most votes shall be eligible to serve. The other will then be automatically deemed ineligible. In the case of a tie, a run-off will be conducted. A hiatus equal to the number of years of service must exist between terms for a person re-elected to the Committee on Committees.
3. Nominations and elections for the Committee on Committees shall be conducted directly from the floor at the duly convened May meeting of the Senate except in the case of the first Senate body.
4. Except as provided in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of this subsection d, the term of office of each member of the Committee on Committees shall be three years commencing from the time of his or her election. For the first committee, however, the members shall be elected and serve as follows:
5. The nine (9) individuals receiving the greatest number of votes shall be deemed elected;
6. Of the nine (9) individuals elected to the committee, the three (3) receiving the greatest number of votes shall serve for a term of three (3) years; the three (3) receiving the next three (3) highest number of votes shall serve for a term of two (2) years; and the three (3) receiving the fewest number of votes shall serve for a term of one (1) year.
7. A person elected to fill an unexpired term shall serve only to the end of the term to which he/she was elected to complete.

### The Committee on Committees shall:

1. Prepare a list of committees, their structures and functions for adoption by the Academic Senate.
2. Present to the Senate a slate of all nominations to standing committees, including those nominated by petition.
3. Fill all vacancies on standing committees other than the Committee on Committees which occur between annual elections and report all such actions to the Senate at the meeting immediately following such action.
4. Conduct the election of members at large to the Academic Senate as provided hereinaf