

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

COMMITTEE ON COURSE AND STANDING

A STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

**A GUIDE FOR
COMMITTEE ON
COURSE AND STANDING
MEMBERS**

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Committee on Course and Standing. Briefly, the job of the Committee is to:

- a. Recommend and formulate to the Academic Senate policies pertaining to the academic standards of Queensborough Community College including scholastic requirements for graduation, retention standards, probationary limits, and grading systems.
- b. Consider individual student appeals, interpreting and in some cases waiving, existing College Policies.

2. Committee Composition

The Committee is composed of nine members of the faculty and is assisted by Registrar's staff.

The faculty members are elected in the spring to one-year terms by the Academic Senate through its Committee on Committees. The Committee on Committees has adopted the policy that no member of a standing committee serves more than three consecutive terms. The President of the College and the Chairperson of the Academic Senate's Steering Committee, or their designees, are ex-officio members of the Committee on Course and Standing who do not vote. In addition, the Committee has others attend its meetings as invited guests. Others who express an interest in attending the Committees meetings are also sent notices of its meetings. The Student Government appoints 1-2 student members. If they are appointed and identified, they must be afforded full voting rights as members. However, due to the sensitive nature of reviewing student appeals, the student members are not present at the monthly meeting of the reading of appeals.

[See *Attachment 1 - Academic Senate Bylaws Relating to the Course and Standing Committee* for dates of election, quorum information, and other Bylaws governing the Committee.]

[See *Attachment 2- Welcome letter to Student Members.*]

[See *Attachment 3- Welcome letter to Elected Members.*]

[See *Attachment 4- End of Term Thank You Letter to Participating Members.*]

Any member of the instructional staff may be present and request permission to speak at a meeting of any Academic Senate committee. [Art. VII, Sec. 2d]

3. General Operation

The Committee operates by general review and consensus. Group members are divided into small groups when permissible. The appeal is read or the case is presented, and the records and documentation are reviewed. Anyone who so desires may comment on the individual case. A decision is based on a majority vote. The Committee will base its decision in the overall welfare and education of the students and the integrity of the College by utilizing an impartial academic process.

The Committee serves as an intermediary party between individual departments and the departments and the Administration. It may arrive at recommendations to the Academic Senate that are impartial and in the best interests of the College as a whole. Although the faculty members are appointed into particular academic departments, they do NOT represent those departments at the Committee meetings. This should be made clear by the Chairperson to both the Committee members and their respective department chairpersons. Committee members should not be relied upon as sources of information from or conduits for communications to their departments.

The Committee should have a conversation at least once each academic year with the Committee on Admissions to discuss any items of common interest and concern and then make appropriate recommendations to the appropriate college officers to address any problems, if needed.

The Committee must prepare an agenda, take minutes of the meetings, and prepare an annual report. [Refer to the GUIDE FOR STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS on the QCC website and see *Attachment 5 – Sample Format for Annual Report to the Academic Senate.*] Meetings should follow Robert's Rules of Order.

Documents generated by and received by the Committee should be forwarded to others on a timely basis. E-mail should be used whenever possible. See *Attachment 6 – Mailing List*, for the Committee's mailing list for distribution of meeting dates, agenda, meeting minutes, and documentation for review.

When issues of voting must take place within the Committee, even when electing a new Chairperson, within the meeting members are to vote via closed ballot, initial their vote, and submit their ballot to the Committee Secretary, who at that time can announce the outcome. The ballots are then put in a dated sealed envelope (*with a note as to what the vote was for*) and forwarded to the Senate Archivist.

4. Communications with College Committees Related to the Standing Committee

There are standing committees of the Academic Senate that have committees of the College not formed by the Academic Senate acting in areas related to their charge. Such committees are expected to send a communication to those College committees requesting information such as the following:

- current membership of the College committee
- current charges assigned to the committee
- date of the last meeting of the committee
- any information the committee cares to share with the standing committee of the Academic Senate that may be helpful to the work of the standing committee

The standing committees that have such cognate committees will be informed of such in the Activities form and in the Guide for Committee Members.

Article III. POWERS OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE Section 1. Through its Steering and Standing Committees, the Academic Senate shall have the power to request and receive information appropriate to or necessary for the performance of its duties, from the President and members of the administration, from students and student organizations and from such other sources as may be appropriate

Section 3. Committees' Jurisdiction The primary function of an Academic Senate committee shall be: to study the subjects referred to it by these bylaws or by the specific action of the Senate; to formulate appropriate policies thereon; and to propose such policies to the Senate for action. Every Academic Senate committee shall maintain a continuing review of College policy in its area. “

To assist committees to maintain a continuing review they are empowered to receive information related to their charge.

5. New Member Preparation

New members are invited to observe, question and participate to become acclimated to the workings of the Committee over a period of a year or so.

What new members should do to prepare to work on the committee:

- read this Guide and familiarize yourselves with the pertinent policies and documents.
- speak with the current Committee Chairperson.
- ask their department chair not to schedule classes for them to teach during the Committee on Course and Standing meeting time [Fridays] and Academic Senate meeting time [Tuesdays between 3 and 5pm].

6. Committee Chair Preparation

The Committee Chair should become familiar with the GUIDE FOR STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS. A copy can be obtained from the Academic Senate area of the QCC website at <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/governance/academicSenate/sc/documents.html> or from the Steering Committee.

7. Ordinary matters

The Committee should seek input from the College community concerning the matters related to its charge. This can be done in a variety of ways including e-mail, memoranda and newsletters.

The Committee should seek input from the parties who are involved with or related to matters under its consideration. It may be prudent to invite such parties to attend Committee meetings on matters of possible controversy or where faculty, departments, and the administration may not be in agreement.

8. Meetings of Committees, Subcommittees, and Special Committees

The public has the right to attend any meeting of committees and sub committees and special committees. Any time a quorum of any such committee gathers to discuss business, the meeting must be held in public, subject to the right to convene an executive session under certain limited circumstances. In addition, there must be prior notice of the meeting; the business of the meeting must be recorded in written minutes; and a record must be maintained of the final vote of each member of the committee on all matters on which a vote is formally taken. Non-members must conform to the usual requirements of parliamentary procedure; the Parliamentarian will interpret and enforce the rules which include that no non-member of the body may speak without the permission of the body.

9. Procedures

During the year, the Committee meets ten to twelve times to consider appeals made by students. These include:

- a. Late withdrawals
- b. Retroactive withdrawals

- c. Medical/mental health withdrawals (*in conjunction with the Office of Health Services and Counseling Center.*)
- d. Extension of INC grade (*paperwork is submitted to CCS, but decision is made by the individual professor who awarded the INC grade. Contact and paperwork is made by CCS secretary.*)
- e. Deletions (*paperwork is submitted to CCS but forwarded to the appropriate persons for review.*)

These appeals are heard at the monthly meetings and by the Chair of the Committee in between meetings if the Committee empowers the chair to do so.

Twice a year, usually in January and July, the Committee meets to evaluate transcripts reflecting probation status and eligible for academic dismissal. The Committee will then review appeals for those academically dismissed for consideration of immediate re-admission. In all appeals the complete transcript of every student is reviewed. Factors such as progress of remediation, GPA (cumulative and individual semesters), number of prior appeals, credits completed, past academic performance, and potential to graduate are considered. All appeals must also be accompanied by sufficient documentation for the evaluator. It should be noted that students granted continued probation may be assigned a credit limit.

Due to issues of privacy and confidentiality, Medical withdrawals *requesting action for an entire semester* are forwarded to the Office of Health Services. The Committee will review only those medical appeals that are selective of courses within a semester(s).

For the same reason noted above, all Mental Health appeals are forwarded to the Counseling Center. The Committee will only review mental health appeals for dismissals. Appeals of this nature will not include documentation for CCS review. A request for further information can be obtained by CCS by contacting the Counseling Center.

Students are informed about the decision of their appeal through an email and/or call from the secretary of CCS within the registrar's office on behalf of the Committee.

Every semester, usually within the week that the withdrawal period begins, the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, will alert all QCC students about the withdrawal period and procedures via tigersmail. Assistance with this has been through the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs. See *attachment 7-Withdrawal Letter to Students*.

10. Recommendations and Policy Proposals to the Academic Senate

Either form of report (monthly or annual) might contain recommendations that would be made to various units of the college, including other Senate bodies. It is expected that the committees would be sending these recommendations directly to the units involved as well as reporting them to the Senate.

Recommendations made to units of the College are to be followed up by the Committees who make them and responses reported in subsequent reports to the Academic Senate. If there is no response or no adequate response, as determined by the Committee, the Committee may report this to the Academic Senate after consultation with the Steering Committee. The current disposition of each recommendation should be noted in a monthly report and also in a summary of all items in the annual report. See *Attachment 5 – Sample Annual Report*.

From time to time the Committee may determine that it is necessary to have the Academic Senate consider a Policy for the College. In this case the Committee frames a proposal and sends it to the Steering Committee. See *Attachment 8– Sample Policy Statement*, for an example of a policy statement. Actions for the Academic Senate to approve, including policies of the College, are to be

so designated in reports sent to the Senate. Such actions, recommendations and policies as are approved by a vote of the Senate are to be followed up by the committees of origination and the Steering Committee. If there is no response or no adequate response, as determined by the Steering Committee, the Committee may report this to the Academic Senate for a further discussion of the matter and a determination by the Academic Senate as to the appropriate course of action for the Senate to take on the matter. Of course, at any time, any member of the Senate may request a report on the status of previous Senate resolutions and policies.

Through the process of making and reporting on recommendations, the role of the Academic Senate in Governance is effectuated.

11. Chairperson's Presentations to the Academic Senate

As the Committee sends its reports and recommendations to the Academic Senate, the Chairperson of the Committee should be prepared to present the matter to the Steering Committee and be prepared to answer questions concerning such reports and recommendations.

If the Steering Committee submits a matter to the Academic Senate, the Chairperson of the Committee should arrange with the Steering Committee the manner in which the Committee Chairperson would participate in the presentation to the Academic Senate. The Committee Chairperson might make the principle presentation or simply respond to questions. If the Chairperson is in dissent from the matter forwarded from the Committee to the Academic Senate, then the Chairperson might ask to present a dissent, as is the right of any member of the minority faction of the Committee. The Committee Chairperson should be present to answer questions from the Academic Senate concerning the matters placed before the Academic Senate by the Committee. The Committee Chairperson might invite other members of the Committee or the college faculty or staff to be present at the Academic Senate meeting in order to respond to specific matters. If they are not members of the Academic Senate, either the Committee Chairperson requests permission for the nonmembers to speak, knowing that they want to do so, at the start of the Committee presentation or when nonmembers raise their hands to respond to or question the report, they need to have permission to speak.

It is best for the Chairperson to prepare the way for the Academic Senate to act on whatever measures are being sent to it. The Chairperson should contact the principle parties and apprise them of the matter. If there is opposition to the measure expected, the Chairperson should discuss this with the Steering Committee and those affected.

12. Concerns and Cautions

CCS Committee Decorum

Committee members are asked, out of deference for their fellow members, to consider the following suggestions:

1. Do not act on academic conditions on a student's transcript that you have not been requested to review or for which there is no documentation.
2. Earned grades cannot be appealed to the Committee. In the case of open INC grades, this request is for an extension only, and it is recommended the student speak to the professor before submitting the appeal. Instructors must give their approval for all grade changes.
4. When you make a commitment to attend a meeting, try to be available. Attendance records have been requested and will be sent to the Committee on Committees.
5. If you have a bias for or against a particular student, because of your personal experience, recuse yourself from the vote. If asked, supply professional guidance to committee member's regarding student's academic performance

6. Requests should be evaluated based on their documentation and merit not on the writing quality of the appeal letter.

13. Final Remarks

The decisions of the Committee on Course and Standing require a combination of intellect, compassion, integrity and responsibility, and an impartial academic process.

ATTACHMENT 1 – ACADEMIC SENATE BYLAWS RELATING TO THE COMMITTEE ON COURSE AND STANDING

Members of the Academic Senate standing committees shall function from the date of election until September 1st of the calendar year following their election. During the changeover period from the April Senate meeting to the September first next following, the various committees shall consist of members of both the retiring committees and the new committees. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the committee size as of September first. Those who will constitute the new committee shall elect one chairperson before the last day of classes of the semester in which the committee is elected. The new chairperson shall serve beginning September first, the retiring chairperson shall be responsible for the preparation and submission of the annual report as stipulated in Article VII, Section 7b, of these Bylaws.

(Article VII, Sec. 3b)

Charge:

A. General

The primary function of an Academic Senate committee shall be: to study the subjects referred to it by these bylaws or by the specific action of the Senate; to formulate appropriate policies thereon; and to propose such policies to the Senate for action. Every academic Senate committee shall maintain a continuing review of College policy in its area.

(Article VII, Sec. 3a)

Each standing committee shall distribute to the members of the instructional staff an annual written report and a copy filed with the secretary of the Academic Senate prior to the first Senate meeting in September. The secretary shall inform the Academic Senate of the names of the committees, which have not filed such reports.

(Art. VII, Sec. 7b)

B. Specific

The Committee on Course and Standing shall consist of nine (9) members of the instructional staff and, in accordance with the Governance Plan, there shall be two (2) student members who shall participate and vote only on matters of policy.

The Committee on Course and Standing] shall:

- a. Formulate and recommend to the Academic Senate policies pertaining to the academic standards of Queensborough Community College including scholastic requirements for graduation, retention standards, probationary limits, and the grading system.
- b. Consider individual student appeals, interpret, and in some cases, waive existing College policies.

(Art. VII, Sec. 16)

Attachment 2- Welcome Letter to Student Members (mail or email)

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York
Committee on Course and Standing**

Date _____

Dear _____ and _____,

I wanted to welcome you both to the Committee on Course and Standing as our student representatives. As you may know, our committee is responsible for reviewing appeals of students applying for late withdrawals, retroactive withdrawals, and immediate return to QCC upon academic dismissal.

Due to the sensitive nature of our committee involving student records and information, we unfortunately cannot invite you to a meeting when we are reviewing appeals. However, please know that if there are any voting decisions to take place as part of the committee, you would be contacted to join us for that process. You are also more than welcome to contact me to discuss or ask any questions you may have concerning the committee.

Thank you once again for volunteering your time to us,

Sincerely,

_____, Chair, Committee on Course and Standing
(extension)

Attachment 3- Welcome Letter to Elected Members (mail or email)

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York
Committee on Course and Standing**

Date _____

Dear Committee Members,

I wanted to take a moment to welcome you to the Committee on Course and Standing. As a standing committee within the Academic Senate, I hope you find the time that you serve with us interesting, fulfilling, and meeting your expectations.

Feel free to visit the Governance website to review the guide for our committee. This guide will give you an overview of what we do and our responsibilities. You can locate the guide at <http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Governance/AcademicSenate/CS/default.asp>. On the bottom of the page, please click on *Documents and Articles*, where you will find the Committee Guide.

Finally, as a new member you are invited to begin with the committee immediately. Our next CCS meeting will be held on _____ at _____ am in the _____. Please confirm your attendance with the CCS secretary, Ms. Meera Chowdhry at mchowdhry@qcc.cuny.edu. If you are unable to attend this meeting I will look forward to meeting you when you join us in _____.

If you have any questions or concerns about the committee or meeting, please do not hesitate to contact me either by email or my direct line listed below.

Thank you and congratulations once again.

Sincerely,

_____, Chair, Committee on Course and Standing

(extension)

Attachment 4- End of Term Thank You Letter for Participating Members (mail or email)

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York
Committee on Course and Standing**

Date _____

Dear Committee Members,

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you all for serving on the Committee on Course and Standing this past academic year. We definitely faced some new challenges, especially with the onset of CUNY first. However, with your support, patience, and understanding, we managed to work through everything for the sake of our students.

For those of you leaving CCS, thank you for your time, energy and the care you put into reviewing the many appeals we received. You will be missed, but I look forward to seeing you on campus, and hopefully working with you again in some capacity in the future. For those remaining with us, I am happy you are willing and able to continue. Your seasoned experience is so very important on this committee, and I am thrilled to continue working with you.

I look forward to seeing you all for our final meeting to be held on _____ at _____. As always, Ms. Chowdhry will be sending you a reminder and update you in the event of any changes.

Sincerely,

_____, Chair, Committee on Course and Standing

(extension)

ATTACHMENT 5 – SAMPLE FORMAT FOR ANNUAL REPORT TO THE ACADEMIC SENATE

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York**

ACADEMIC SENATE

COMMITTEE ON [NAME]

Telephone
Fax
Email

To: _____, Secretary, Steering Committee, Academic Senate

From: _____, Chairperson

Date:

Subject: Annual Report of the Committee on _____ for 201__/201__

- . Committee members
- . Date committee met and times it meets regularly
- . Narrative summary of committee work
- . New Recommendations
- . Former Committee Recommendations/Actions of the Academic Senate /Strategic Plan items/Middle States Items/Steering Committee Charges
- . Current Disposition of all items acted on by the Committee, by the College, or by the Academic Senate
- . New Committee Members
- . New Chairperson and Secretary
- . Thank members and others that have provided assistance during the year

ATTACHMENT 6 – MAILING LIST FOR COMMITTEE MATERIALS

Documents generated by and received by the Committee should be forwarded to others on a timely basis.

- A. Related to the regular meetings of the Committee: agenda, minutes, memoranda
 - Members and ex-officio members of the Committee
 - Guests who attended/participated in the meeting
 - Office of Academic Affairs
 - President's designee
 - Academic Senate Steering Committee designee
 - Liaison from Committee on Committees
 - Academic Senate website (webmaster@qcc.cuny.edu)
 - College Archives (cwilliams@qcc.cuny.edu)
 - Student Government - if no student members attend

- B. Other Materials: annual report, assessment requests etc.
 - Pertinent parties – e.g., Secretary of the Steering Committee
 - College Archives

- C. Copies of materials should be sent to the Academic Senate Steering Committee as they are deemed significant and leading to possible actions by the Academic Senate

ATTACHMENT 7 – WITHDRAWAL LETTER TO STUDENTS

Dear QCC Student,

Welcome to a new semester at Queensborough Community College. We hope you are ready to begin your path to a successful academic semester with us.

Now that the official withdrawal period has begun (**XXX – XXX, XXXX**) it is important for students to be aware of the withdrawal process. In the event you can no longer attend one or more courses during the official withdrawal period, you should do the following:

- Obtain a withdrawal form from the Registrar’s Office (A-104) or the Counseling Center (L-422).
- Complete all required areas of the withdrawal form, including instructor’s signatures for all courses noted.
 - Math/ Computer Science, Business, Social Sciences and Art Departments do not require Instructor’s signatures.
 - If withdrawing from ALL courses, you must also obtain a counselor’s signature from the Counseling Center upon full completion of the withdrawal form.
- If you are receiving financial aid and would like to know what impact withdrawing from classes will have on your aid eligibility, consult with the Office of Financial Services (L-409).
- Feel free to visit a counselor in the Counseling Center to discuss these withdrawal procedures as well as any issue that may be impacting your academic and/or personal success.
- Submit the completed form to the Registrar’s Office to complete the process.

Please know that failure to officially withdraw from a course during the withdrawal period will result in a “WU” grade, which is equivalent to an “F” in your grade point average.

We wish you a wonderful, successful and fulfilling semester at QCC.

Sincerely,

Committee on Course and Standing

ATTACHMENT 8 – SAMPLE POLICY STATEMENT

**QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York**

Academic Senate
Committee on Course and Standing
Memorandum

TO: Academic Senate Steering Committee
FROM: Committee on Course and Standing, XXX, Chairperson
SUBJECT: Proposed Change to NC Grade
DATE: XXX

Purpose:

To provide continuous and immediate intervention to students who receive NC grades to ultimately assist them in optimizing their chances to pass the CUNY Exit from Remediation tests.

The Committee on Course and Standing has approved the following change to the NC grade policy effective for Spring 2011 applicable to MA-005, MA-010, BE-112, BE-122, BE 205, and BE-226. The Committee forwards this for the consideration of the Academic Senate:

Current (page 47, QCC Catalog 2009 – 2011)

NC Assigned to students in remedial courses when the coursework has been satisfactorily completed, but the CUNY Exit from Remediation Test has not been passed. Students may not progress to credit-bearing classes before the related CUNY Exit from Remediation Test has been passed. The NC grade is also assigned to students who do not complete the Introduction to Student Life (ST-100) course in a satisfactory manner.

Proposed

NC Assigned to students in remedial courses when the coursework has been satisfactorily completed, but the CUNY Exit from Remediation Test has not been passed. Students may not progress to credit-bearing classes before the related CUNY Exit from Remediation Test has been passed. If the student does not satisfy the exit from remediation requirement within one (1) year, the NC grade becomes an R.* The NC grade is also assigned to students who do not complete the Introduction to Student Life (ST-100) course in a satisfactory manner.

*All students who received an NC grade before Spring 2011 will have until Spring 2012 to satisfy the NC grade requirement.

Rationale:

Students are required to pass both the coursework and CUNY exit exams in remediation in order to progress to credit bearing courses. Students can successfully pass the coursework in remediation without passing the exit exam, requiring an intervention before a student can re-test on the exit exams. This intervention has been in the form of a 20 hour workshop, as the University requires at least 20 hours of intervention. The workshop is designed to build test preparation skills not overall developmental skills. Unfortunately without a time limit students tend to put off the workshop, often allowing one or more semesters to pass without any interventions. With the passing of that much time, students have little chance to pass the exit exams, and may need more than a 20 hour workshop to prepare for it.

Providing a time limit for the NC grade will encourage students to immediately move forward with the intervention to prepare them to take the CUNY Exit from Remediation Tests. This proposed one year limit may also help students who need more work and time on developing their overall skills vs. simply preparing them for an exam. Retaking the course will allow those students in need to continue building their skills which they will carry forward with them in their credit bearing courses.

Finally, this grade change will be similar to the current policy of the INC grade in which students have a one semester requirement to successfully complete the coursework. The one-year requirement for the NC grade however, will allow more flexibility for students without leaving the intervention open-ended.

