

Minutes of the Meeting of the
Committee on the Environment, Quality of Life, and Disability Issues
Wednesday May 20th, 2015
Room Lib-302, 2:00-3:30pm

Present: Leah Anderst, Ben Murolo, Sheila Beck, Sara Danzi-Engoron, Julia Rothenberg, Weier Ye, Wei Lai, Dominic Hull, Clara Wajngiurt, Ben Freier, William Faulkner, Paul Tellers, Elizabeth Arcuri

- I. The meeting began and the minutes of April 1, 2015 were discussed. A couple of questions were made regarding the wording of our discussion with Peter Bales on the committee's charges. It was suggested that we make a few adjustments to the minutes to provide more clarity into the context of our discussion. Following this adjustment, the minutes were approved.
- II. Paul Tellers introduced Elizabeth Arcuri who will be taking over his role as director of Facilities Planning after he leaves next month.
- III. The committee chairs turned to a discussion of the upcoming summer renovation of the English Department faculty offices in H-428. Leah Anderst, co-chair of the committee as well as a member of the English department, provided some context about the rationale for bringing this topic to the committee. Some members of her department feel that the new renovation does not allow for privacy in meetings with students or with colleagues. Bill Faulkner noted that the plan for the English renovation, which has been under discussion for a couple of years, is the standard for renovations of departments including Foreign Languages and Speech, Communication and Theater Arts. He also noted that an initial plan would have used the space in H-428 to seat more faculty members than the current plan which will be executed. Both Dr. David Humphries, the English department chair, as well as President Call preferred the desk configuration that was less dense than the initial plan.

Paul Tellers noted that privacy is generally considered in two levels: a day-to-day, less sensitive level, and a more rare but more sensitive level. He encourages the use of multiple smaller conference spaces that accommodate 2-3 people only for faculty to use for more sensitive conversations with students or with other faculty members. He noted that Dr. Humphries has requested such spaces for the English department.

A question was posed about extending the walls fully to the ceiling in departments that are now organized on an open plan. Paul Tellers explained that such a move would require costly changes to wiring in the ceiling as well as heating and cooling. Ben Freier noted that the space in S-132, Services for Students with Disabilities, has such a configuration, and it does not block out all of the sounds from adjoining offices. His department invested in white noise machines for each office to use when meeting with students, and this offers some additional audio privacy.

The committee concluded the discussion on faculty and department spaces, on the English renovation, and on privacy by noting that because individual faculty offices are not possible for all full time faculty at QCC, continuing discussions are needed, especially to promote greater awareness about privacy in shared spaces.

- IV. The committee co-chairs noted that they would be completing the 2014-2015 annual report over the next few weeks and would share it with committee members as well as the Steering Committee early in the summer.

- V. Clara Wajngurt, chair of this committee's subcommittee on anti-bullying, shared the news regarding the senate's passing of the anti-bullying statement that this committee approved during our April 1, 2015 meeting. The question remains now whether the sub-committee should continue in the coming academic year. A brief discussion took place regarding what the sub-committee would work on in the coming year. Following discussion, a motion was made to vote for the continuation of the sub-committee with the following results: 6 committee members voted in favor and 1 member abstained. The sub-committee will continue during the 2015-2016 academic year.
- VI. The committee members discussed elections for the coming academic year. Leah Anderst and Ben Murolo both expressed their willingness to continue to serve as co-chairs. They asked for nominations for others to stand for election for chair or co-chairs. No other nominations were made. Patricia Kinneary, secretary for the 2014-2015 year, who was absent for today's meeting expressed her willingness to serve as secretary again in the coming year by email to Leah Anderst. She was nominated for Secretary in absentia, and no others were nominated. The co-chairs distributed paper ballots to committee members. The committee members unanimously re-elected Leah Anderst and Ben Murolo as co-chairs and Patricia Kinneary as secretary for the 2015-2016 academic year.
- VII. No new business was brought to the meeting. The meeting was adjourned.