

Undergraduate Student Government

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Meeting Date:	October 13, 2020	Meeting Time:	5:32PM - 8:32PM
Location:	Zoom Call	Note Taker:	Genesis Calle

Attendees:	
Tony Chen President	Briana Staten Executive Vice President
Nancy Sea Executive Treasurer	Genesis Calle Executive Secretary
Taji Sanders VP of Academic Affairs	Richard Reyes VP of Legislative Affairs
Steven Le VP of Campus Affairs	Yam-Yu Li VP of Student Affairs
Irine Thomas Chair of Appeals	Kristina Khabarov Chair of Arts
Alison Lee Chair of Clubs and Orgs	Lesli Cuamani Chair of Finance
[Absent] Cindy Chen Chair of Graphic Design	Christine Gajdos Chair of Marketing
Oswaldo Garcia Chair of Philanthropy	Laiba Hussain Chair of Public Opinion
Tomasz Horczak Representative Senator	Raphael Berdugo Representative Senator
Alex Cuanal Representative Senator	Erika Cumbe Representative Senator
Zariana Gonzalez Representative Senator	Mayer Estinville Representative Senator
Vacant Representative Senator	

Passing of the Minutes

1. Motion to pass Senate Meeting #5 minutes. Motion passes, 15-0-1

Reports

1. Nancy Sea | Treasurer
 - a. Nancy: Just a couple of updates. First, this goes out to my money team and everyone else as well. Due to failure to complete SPARC training, BOLT non-compliance, or other issues, some clubs have been deemed inactive for this semester. They can't hold events or use any of their budget. The clubs are Environmental Cooperation Organization, Women in Islam, Muslim Business Association, Muslim Student Association, Women Improving Next Generation Society, Financial Quants and Engineers, and The Grid. Next, I have received some questions concerning the use of our budget and programming from table members who are organizing events. OSL is going to send out the list for what we can and can't buy by the end of this week, so that means for next week if you want to plan an event, you can start thinking about giveaway logistics so we can start processing the paperwork. If you are planning an event and want to use our budget, talk to me at least 3 weeks before your planned date, and I can go over the process with you. This is because you have to register your event at least 2 weeks in advance with OSL.
 - b. Damali: This is not OSL policy, but the new CUNYfirst policy, which explains the additional steps.

2. BLS Academic Committee

- a. Osvaldo: Hello everybody. We are the Black and Latinx Committee, including myself, Taji Sanders, Teona Pagan, Laiba Hussain, Miriam John-Sandy, and Zariana Gonzalez. Our agenda today consists of us talking about the history of Baruch in terms of race relations, past events that have happened over the summer in terms of racism and police brutality. I'll also talk about the progress we have made so far, attention areas, and next steps as USG and our overall goals. When it comes to talking about the history of race relations at Baruch College, in terms of professors, there are 297 professors with tenure, 14 of which are Black which is 5% and 13 are Latinx which is only 4%. In the Zicklin School of Business, we have 116 professors with tenure. 2 are Black, which is 2%, and that same number applies for the percentage of Latinx, which is also 2%. Within the Marx School of Public and International Affairs, we have 33 professors with tenure. Only 1 Black professor, which is 3%, and 3 Latinx, which is 9% so there's a clear lack of representation in terms of professors of color here at Baruch. This is something that we need to address and needs to be fixed. In the 1990s, Baruch's accreditation was actually suspended over a lack of diversity by the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges, resulting in the Baruch President at the time, Joel Segel, to resign from office, according to a New York Times article published on April 5th 1990. The CUNY Board of Trustees brought in an African American president, Dr. Joyce Brown, who is currently the president of the Fashion Institute of Technology, as an interim president and she was the second black president of Baruch after its founding president, Dr. Robert Weaver, and she served for a year. Now we're going to talk about recent events that happened over the summer. There were major protests all throughout the world and reactions to the atrocities committed against Black Americans in the United States by police officers. New York City was the host for many of these large demonstrations in light of the Black Lives Matter movement. With that being said, Baruch should not avoid talking about topics of racism but instead educate their students on the unique circumstances of race in context of American society. Teona wrote an open letter as a direct reaction to Baruch delayed response and as a "call for action" for the administration to take immediate action and tackle the racial issues within Baruch. A Black and Latino Studies (BLS) major was one of the demands that Teona presented in her letter and as USG, it's our responsibility to help push this forward and lead Baruch into becoming a more egalitarian institution.
- b. Laiba: In terms of progress, we've been working on this project since July and we began by contacting professors from the BLS Department. We learned that both the President and the Provost are the main people that have the overall power in helping push both the curriculum and the major forward. However they didn't discourage us from reaching out to other connections and other areas at Baruch that could help us as well, when it comes to imbedding the curriculum and major within Baruch itself. From the before mentioned information gathered, Baruch does have a documented history of discrimination towards black faculty and students. This makes it as important as ever to have this curriculum and major in place to create more opportunities for people of color at Baruch. Not only in terms of a platform, but in terms of making sure that the voices of our people of color are being heard by both the student body and Baruch faculty. One of the things that these professors stressed to us was the importance of having a presence when it comes to the continuous work in activism and pushing forward the major and curriculum. I feel like we shouldn't just have this presence as a subcommittee itself but actually expand it towards making this a goal for USG.
- c. Erika: Just on the stats part, you mentioned the numbers for Marx and Zicklin, so the number that didn't account for them is that accounting for professors from Weissman?
- d. Osvaldo: We didn't include the statistics for Weissman, only for Baruch as a whole.

- e. Laiba: These statistics were provided to us from the professors that we talked to in July and information that we wanted to redirect to USG. We can find out more statistics regarding POC representation amongst Weissman faculty.
- f. Erika: Yeah I just felt it was important to include Weissman in the statistics as well. Thank you for clarifying it for me.
- g. Taji: Next is the progress with Success Network. We talked with Robert and Natalie and they explained how things worked for the chain of command, with the lower level being the department heads, the curriculum committees, the President, then Chancellor, then Board of Trustees. One of the things they pointed out was at the end of the day, the faculty curriculum committees would have to decide on this new BLS curriculum. They advised us to talk with the chair of the BLS department, Professor Evansely, who is also actively involved in the Provost committee. They would also be willing to work with us moving forward and at the meeting.
- h. Laiba: Moving forward, we contacted the BLS department as well. We spoke with the BLS chair as well as with 2 of their new full-time professors. These new hires were actually a really big accomplishment for the department since the events that happened in March. There's been a lot of progress within the BLS Department but there is still a long way to go and I feel like there's still a lot of work that we as a USG could possibly partner with the BLS department to make sure they're going on the right track and that we can help further the development of the BLS department in general. It was actually revealed by the faculty that BLS is often an area of study that is overlooked within Baruch, which is more or less expected since more attention does get directed towards the business courses. Currently all the courses available in BLS are being rebranded as classes that fall more in line with an up-to-date narrative of the Black and Latinx community. The main reason why we decided to have this presentation was because although a lot of rebranding and renovation is going on within the BLS department, there isn't a large influx of students taking these courses in the first place so if we were to push forward a new BLS curriculum and major for the future, it wouldn't really make sense if we don't have a population to cater to in the first place. right so one of the things. There were some things requested on our part as well to have some of these courses include topics that correlated with more issues regarding race relations. They also hoped we could help with their outreach and to help make sure that we're reaching the student body when it comes to promoting and publicizing these BLS courses and because of the lack of enrollment. That's why we wanted to branch it out to the rest of the table and get everyone's opinion on what we should do next in terms of figuring out how we can get more people to enroll in these courses so we can move forward with both the curriculum and the major.
- i. Irine: Do you know what the syllabus of these courses look like?
- j. Laiba: As of now, no. I believe they are still rebranding them. We had received some blurbs about the courses from them beforehand. I'm not sure when they're launching their new website page, but once it does, it will have a bunch of new courses available for the people of color community.
- k. Briana: Is BLS currently available as a minor?
- l. Laiba: It is, but one of their biggest problems is that there's not too many students pursuing it. This is why we are aiming to help increase the number of students enrolled in these BLS courses.
- m. Briana: If the major were to be created, my question is since there are already a number of BLS courses, do you think the curriculum would have to add new courses or do they have enough to sustain it?
- n. Osvaldo: We have been talking with the committee on those topics. I don't have the answer for that, so we will have to go back to the chairs and department for more clarification. They definitely want to implement those courses into the major and that's why they're rebranding it.

- o. Laiba: Most of the current BLS courses have outdated information, which explains the rebranding and how they are going to contribute to the bigger picture of the issue.
- p. Damali: I think one important question to ask when doing your research is to not just find out many courses there are, but how often they're being offered, because if a course is being offered every 3 years, then is it realistic for the major? Look into what number of courses are being offered on a regular basis.
- q. Irine: Right now BLS courses are flexible courses right?
- r. Laiba: The intro courses can satisfy the "U.S. and Diversity" requirement for the flexible core, but these are more or less mandated for most students. The department wants to shift their focus past the introductory courses to ensure that students who are taking them will be interested in pursuing higher level BLS courses in the future.
- s. Irine: Gotcha, so my suggestion is for these intro courses to take their students to museums and promote that, so they can learn more about their Black and Latinx community. It would entice them, and make it more interactive for them. Another thing is maybe as USG, we can promote all majors at Baruch and highlight them so more people are aware.
- t. Laiba: That's an amazing idea. Thank you for that, Irine.
- u. Briana: I know we have a majors and minors fair, but perhaps as a USG we can host an alternative event to that, for those who aren't interested in pursuing business majors at Baruch, and frame it so we're exposing students with not just business interests, and open their eyes to other areas as well.
- v. Laiba: That would be a great opportunity for not only the students body but also the faculty of courses that are more overlooked at Baruch.
- w. Tomasz: You mentioned the flexible core. Do you know how popular the higher level BLS courses are, compared to other alternatives within that U.S. Experience in its Diversity requirement?
- x. Taji: We don't, but we do know that the introductory BLS classes are pretty popular to satisfy the requirement. The problem itself is getting students to pursue the higher level BLS courses, and even just knowing those classes exist.
- y. Tomasz: But do we know how many people decide to take it? Do we happen to have those statistics?
- z. Taji: Statistics wise, no, but we do know it's a popular option for that category.
- aa. Laiba: Under the U.S. Experience in its Diversity requirement of the flexible course, it includes BLS and other history courses. However, I feel like BLS isn't a topic that just revolves around history. Racism isn't just a thing of the past and not just something that has to do with history because it's an ongoing issue that people are dealing with in the present. One of those things we mentioned in a previous meeting with the faculty members was that we didn't feel like BLS was being accurately represented under the flexible core because it was labeled as a history course, although it did go under the diversity aspect of it.
- bb. Briana: Would they be allowed to change the name of the requirement themselves?
- cc. Laiba: I believe it would have to go through CUNY, based on our discussions with them, and because the flexible course curriculum is mandated CUNY wide, not just in Baruch.
- dd. Tomasz: I have a suggestion. In terms of educating students about the higher level BLS courses, how about having students who took them provide testimonials on social media for them to raise awareness?
- ee. Briana: I like that. I also have another idea. Because Black History month is around the same time as Fall registration for the Spring semester, we could help advertise the BLS department and courses, and use Tom's idea to help spread the word and awareness of that to the student body.
- ff. Laiba: That's an amazing idea. The main issue they've been struggling with is overall awareness of the BLS courses so this would definitely help them out.
- gg. Taji: Thank you all for the ideas. I think I saw Osvaldo writing them down, too.

- hh. Osvaldo: I think Genesis is also writing it down, and putting it in the minutes, too, so thanks. For the attention areas, we want to utilize the FYS program as a way to get the conversation about race getting started in the Baruch classrooms, as well as encouraging the promotion of the BLS courses. There is also a survey that was designed by a Baruch student, Andrea Gonzalez, that covers issues that people of color face in our community and their experiences. For next steps, besides the promotion of these courses, we were also thinking about inviting clubs and organizations to the next curriculum meeting.
- ii. Steven: Regarding more courses, do you think we should also look into getting more non-Baruch professors to come and teach a course here?
- jj. Taji: That would be a concern that the chair of the department would have to consider, taking into consideration the budget and additional staff they have already added.
- kk. Erika: I think inviting clubs to the next curriculum meeting would be the best way to garner student engagement and involvement in this issue. It would be great to contact these POC clubs' eboards and have that student representation in these curriculum meetings.
- ll. Briana: Before inviting clubs for any meeting, it's best to meet with the club leaders beforehand and inform them of what you've been doing and give them all the necessary details and updates before asking to hear their own input.
- mm. Laiba: Our last thing is to go over our overall goal. Our expected delivery date for the curriculum and major to be made available is August 2023. It's not set in stone, but we are just putting a realistic timeline. Through pushing forward this curriculum and major, our committee hopes to move towards a society that actively fights issues that stem from the conflict of race, such as racism, discrimination, talking about the "privileged class," and how all those different aspects are interlinked within race. Education is one of the main weapons students can empower themselves with to dismantle systemic racism not only within our Baruch community, but in others as well, and to use the knowledge they learn from these courses to become more actively involved in these issues, and put that knowledge into practice, too. We've also assembled teams within the committee to deal with research, and contacting the BLS department for more updated information and aspects involved in the project. Thank you all for listening and for the ideas and input you've given us.
- nn. Osvaldo: We will definitely keep you all updated with anything new we hear.

3. Steven Le | VP of Campus Affairs

- a. Steven: Updates on Homecoming. We're close to finalizing the events. Had to modify some things because of the new updates I got. I made a Google form for any table or USG members that are interested in helping or volunteering for any of the events. The form will be going out tomorrow night. I'm also going to create a schedule to promote our events and the times the promotions for each will be going live. I also wanted to provide an update on Big Sibs. Several table members have responded that they will be attending our meeting next week on October 22nd to introduce themselves. I would love it for the table and E-board to attend this event. It's important to show that support for this new mentorship program. I'm going to create the slides, in a similar fashion to how Yam-Yu made them for Welcome Week, and you can add in your own little fun facts as well.

4. Briana Staten | EVP

- a. Briana: Last week, we talked about the issues concerning the CUNY proctoring system. I had a meeting this past Thursday with the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Allison Lehr Samuels. I asked when exactly do they plan to implement the system, despite the previous rumors it would be going

into use mid-October through November. Alison doesn't know exactly when either, and CUNY is currently looking to appoint a liaison to help out the schools. I also raised the point that because it is a new system, professors shouldn't be implementing it on midterms and instead try it out on quizzes as a form of practice. She said she would reach out to faculty to implement that. I also made a point that within the document itself, it says that faculty have to provide alternatives to the system, and students are not required to oblige to the proctoring. This has been sent out to faculty. There is a point person within the Dean of Students' office that students can reach out to with questions or concerns. At the moment, department chairs are coming up with their own practices for their system. She posed the question of how we as a student body can promote trust and academic integrity in light of these proctoring systems, and to ensure that academic honesty is being maintained.

- b. Osvaldo: You're asking about types of alternatives for proctoring?
- c. Briana: More so how can professors ensure students are being academically honest.
- d. Tomasz: Didn't we already send our alternatives to Tony?
- e. Tony: Yeah, I received from Tom and Kristina, and will forward them to you as well.
- f. Briana: For my accounting midterm, we have to submit our scrap paper with all our calculations in order to get credit for taking the test. This can be something that professors can look into using, too.
- g. Erika: My accounting class is looking to do something similar. This could be a great idea.
- h. Briana: I see a question in the chat from Nicole, "A student reached out to me asking if professors have access to student data and cookies via BlackBoard and if this activity is legal if they are doing it. Wasn't sure how to answer them or if there was anything on this point I can clarify for them." Damali or Savanna do you happen to know?
- i. Damali: You mean their non-Baruch personal data?
- j. Nicole: I think so. The student who messaged me wasn't super clear with that. I just figured I would bring it up to get more information on it and relay it back.
- k. Damali: I highly doubt it, but I can definitely look into it.
- l. Raphael: I have been doing some research into Proctor Track, the software CUNY was looking into. I have a few questions about it. First of all, when it advertises itself, it says there's 4 different levels of Proctor Track. Each increasing level is more secure and it says that the company and the institution agree on what level of Proctor Track to use for the institution and I was wondering which level Baruch was planning on using. Second question is when you go and you look up the different features of the Proctor Track within their website, they have a "Features Matrix" which is a list of all the things the software does to make sure you're not cheating and monitor you. Kind of building off of other people's questions about data and privacy, on that list, the things that are listed seem okay as far as that stuff is concerned but then when you scroll down that there's like 3 times that amount of entries that are purposefully obscured by the CSS on the website. Obviously they don't want the average person seeing what the software does. They're keeping those details only for the institution. As someone who will be affected by the institution of this software, I think it's only fair that we as the students have a right to know what the rest of those features are.
- m. Briana: During my talk with Alison, she wasn't fully aware of what level that CUNY would be using.
- n. Raphael: I guess it might depend on what the liaison recommends.
- o. Briana: My last thing is right after midterms end, I will be doing check-ins for the month of October, and will be sending out a sheet from me next week. Just to catch up with you all, any goals or event ideas you have and want to pursue.

Recess starts at 6:32PM

Recess ends at 6:35PM

Executive Session

1. Motion to enter executive session at 6:36PM.

Unfinished Business

1. Yam-Yu | VP of Student Affairs
 - a. Yam-Yu: The Lip Sync Battle sign-up form is out. There will be a total of 3 winners. It's open to clubs or individual teams. To be completely honest, because of the virtual setting, I don't have high expectations for this event, but nonetheless I do want to encourage everyone to promote this event to their friends and other clubs. There will be co-sponsorship prizes for clubs, and other prizes to be determined for students. USG can create their own team as well, you are just not eligible to win any of the prizes. I sent out an email regarding transfer week, and for my sake, for future emails that I sent, I will be utilizing the "read receipt" feature. Thank you for those who signed up. There are different zoom links for each session.
 - b. Savanna: When is transfer week?
 - c. Yam-Yu: From October 19th to the 23rd.
 - d. Ally: I'm looking at the sheet right now; I see that most of the spots are filled by you, so would you want us to fill in for you instead?
 - e. Yam-Yu: I had to send in the list of names to Robert, one of the associates of the Transfer Center, by Sunday. I assumed that most people wouldn't be available, so I took most of the spots.

New Business

1. Tony Chen | President
 - a. Tony: I got an email from Damali about the new Student Center winning an award.
 - b. Damali: Savanna and I went to do one of the almost final walkthroughs of the student center last week. It looks amazing. The designers got a design award during their regional conference for the student center. We talked with facilities and they said once we get the temporary occupancy certificate, around January or February, we can schedule some of the table members to come in groups of 2-3 to do a walkthrough.
 - c. Briana: When we do come back, it is going to be a quiet space, or more like the cafeteria?
 - d. Damali: It would be more cafeteria than club suite. It will be a reservation-based space because the max occupancy is 150, before COVID. No word yet if eating will be permitted, which explains the lack of vending machines at the moment.
 - e. Steven: Would this be for next semester or next year? I also want to thank whoever implemented gender-neutral bathrooms.
 - f. Damali: Whenever we return to campus.
 - g. Ozzy: Will we be able to host events there?

- h. Savanna: It is more of a lounge space. Perhaps a few mini pop-up events but the goals of the student center is for it to be more of a space for students who just need a place to rest and socialize. There's also small conference rooms in the space that students can reserve.
- i. Damali: When we first started talking about the space, we put out a questionnaire in our newsletter, where the majority of students who responded were very vocal about wanting a lounge space.

2. Steven Le | VP of Campus Affairs

- a. Steven: Wanted to talk about my sharing schedule for Homecoming. I curated a calendar of the events and times. I will be sharing this with my committee and with the table as well.
- b. Taji: Wouldn't Facebook market it as spam because you're sending out a lot of stuff?
- c. Steven: We do it for the engagement. I have divided my homecoming committee into different teams. I'm asking my members to share the details for the schedule.
- d. Taji: I'm saying that Facebook itself would market it or see this as a spam issue. There's been issues with them seeing official USG posts as spam in the past so that was my concern.
- e. Ally: Is Facebook shadowbanning posting a lot of things and Facebook thinks it's suspicious activity?
- f. Taji: Kind of but it deals more with the messages and posting.
- g. Ally: What Steven was trying to say is that in his multiple teams, he has multiple people who are posting. It's not just Steven posting, which I feel would avoid that issue.
- h. Tomasz: I think Taji is talking about the Facebook algorithm. Like if you post a lot, then it won't go to the top of your feed or it might go unnoticed.
- i. Steven: Like Richard said, the content distribution will be diversified. I had it divided between 9 different teams. If it happens to come up as an issue, we will resolve it then. It shouldn't shadow ban or block us from posting anything.
- j. Taji: It's more of an advanced marketing tactic. I should've been more clearer with that.
- k. Erika: Us vice chairs would be posting, too, with committee members posting on certain days as well. It could be segmented for 4 different people for each event. We probably saw this on Monday when we changed our banners. We all reach different people on social media, and those people reach others, so that's most of our outreach right there.

Adjournment

- 1. Motion to adjourn Senate Meeting #6 at 8:32 PM. Motion passes, 17-0-0