BMCC Academic Senate Sub-Committee on Student Affairs
Meeting on September 30, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Present: Matthew Chan, Erik Freas, John Huie (guest), Christine Jacknick, Laurie Lomask, Maureen Matarese, VP Diane Wallaser (guest), Dean Janice Zummo (guest)

1. **Minutes from September 2nd** meeting approved.

2. **Update from Dean Zummo and John Huie regarding Starfish**. Starfish has updated the basic platform, including new features. One is ability to text students when you raise a flag. Another is a dashboard that gives us insight into student needs. We are in the works to create a technology flag, but we're waiting for approval from Student Affairs and VP Spadaro. There is some idea of delaying this because we don't have capacity to provide devices to students. Prof. Jacknick noted it would be helpful for us to know how many students need devices even if we can't provide them at the moment.

   Prof. Matarese asked about the nature of the texts, whether they come in the voice of the professor. Students will see flags if they log in to their Starfish account, but many do not. Prof. Matarese asked about where the funding for device purchasing is coming from. Dean Zummo will look into this and send the information to Prof. Lomask.

   Prof. Lomask noted that it is difficult to know the students individually teaching via Zoom.

   John Huie reported on some recent data on the Blackboard No Activity Flag. 49,000 flags automatically raised for no activity (16,000 unique students). 44,000 flags were cleared; 2251 flags (1397 students) were cleared because students dropped the course and/or out of BMCC entirely. If a student does not log in for 5 days, they will receive an email. Once they log in, the system will clear the flag. The flag was updated on 9/9/20 to automatically raise at 7 days. This is partially because some faculty may use Blackboard simply as a repository and may not require more frequent access. Feedback from advisors suggests that they are receiving too many flags to process. They are considering creating a flag specifically for student on academic probation.
   > -Prof. Matarese related an account of a student she suggested drop her course because of difficulty reading the materials. The student was advised by Academic Advising that they should not drop the course because she needed to maintain 15 credits. Given that fulltime status is 12 credits, this seems misguided in the current climate. John Huie noted that recipients of the Excelsior Scholarship must maintain 15 credits. Faculty with concerns like this can contact Dean Zummo, or directly contact Carei Thomas in AATC.
   > -Prof. Jacknick noted that sending out the Starfish notifications tends to bring an onslaught of contact from students with non-academic issues. Prof. Matarese suggested putting a workshop together with Counseling or Human Services faculty to help faculty learn how to care for themselves while providing this kind

of support. Dean Zummo will reach out to Dean Berg to see if CETLS would like to take ownership of this kind of event. Prof. Lomask suggested including this kind of self-preservation training in new faculty orientation.

Mid-semester feedback period is tentatively scheduled for October 9-19th.

3. **Ongoing concerns about distance learning**
   Prof. Matarese noted concerns with observations of online synchronous classes given that no guidelines for observing this modality exist. She has concerns about the use of these evaluations for any personnel decisions, whether tenure, reappointment, adjunct faculty, etc.

   Prof. Jacknick raised similar concerns about grading participation and attendance. Prof. Matarese suggested revisiting the handout from spring 2019 on trauma-informed pedagogy.

4. **Concern about using students' preferred pronouns in virtual classrooms. We** may want to make a recommendation to the Instruction Committee to add a clause about preferred pronouns to the syllabus template. We could suggest (and model) changing names in Zoom to include pronouns.

5. **Swap-fees charged to bursar.** Many chairs were unaware that this is an issue. Prof. Jacknick will contact Registrar to inquire about the prevalence of this issue, and whether they can help us identify the change trajectories.

6. **Report from VP Walleser regarding enrollment and EAB**
   Navigate is an end-to-end "success platform," so as soon as a student applies and is in CUNYFirst, we can connect them to the platform, and that will follow them through to graduation. We picked this platform because our onboarding is very complicated. Students will complete a survey related to factors that we can't capture in CUNYFirst, e.g., veteran status, whether they are a parent, etc. The platform will also be connected to a career coach.

   Analytics for community colleges were added after we had purchased but before we received access to the product. We were planning on using it only for onboarding, but given these new features, it seems duplicative of Starfish. We will eventually have to make a decision, but Starfish is being subsidized by CUNY at present so we pay only $20,000 yearly. Without this subsidy, this could cost us $70,000-100,000. Starfish has gained traction with faculty. We are on a four-year agreement with Navigate. It has gained traction at the four-year universities.

   In January, VP Walleser will meet with super-user groups to determine what the best way forward is. Navigate could become a hub for students as well, aggregating information from different sources (DegreeWorks, CUNY First, etc.). We have gotten feedback from Middle States that we have too many technology platforms. This also allows students to connect with each other, and faculty to connect with their students. Faculty should

already be enrolled; VP Wallaser will send the info to our committee. She will also invite us to the super-user meeting. Prof. Lomask volunteered to attend, and Prof. Jacknick may be able to join as well depending on dates.

Prof. Matarese asked whether we will be able to follow our students as they move to the four-year colleges if they are already using this platform. VP Wallaser said we have the data but not the access but we can look into this.

Prof. Matarese asked about the tone within Navigate, and VP Wallaser mentioned that the tone within Navigate is lighter and less institutional, but also that the texting function allows it to actually be your voice. She can get some examples of the generic alerts to show us.

There is a notes section in Navigate that would allow you to make notes that may be of use to others, e.g., if a student has a difficult personal situation.

7. Planning for November event on housing insecurity and homelessness
    a. Prof. Lomask will contact Lisa Rose to see if any Human Services classes would be interested in attending, Deborah Hart from Single Stop to see if she will attend, Neda Hajizadeh from Counseling, and Manny Romero about promotion.
    b. Prof. Lomask will circulate a draft of the proposal for the committee's review.
    c. Date and time? We will return to this later.
    d. Name for event? Know your rights; Safety Nets; keep thinking!
    e. Structure / platforms? We will discuss this at our next meeting.

8. Future:
    a. Panther Partners recruiting starting in spring 2021
    b. Updates from Dean Shults and Catarina Mata on Design for Success strategies for promise students
    c. SGA rep
    d. On campus BLM events