Accomplishments

Since our Fall 2015 General Faculty report was released, the Undergraduate Student Government of Baruch College has followed through on many of the plans we discussed in our previous report and are happy to disclose the results of those plans here. One major accomplishment is that we took a record number of students with us on our annual trip to Albany for the New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators 2015 Caucus. A second accomplishment has been maintaining our philosophy of hearing out student concerns and addressing them as elected student representatives. Some of these concerns--which are mentioned in this report--we feel are very relevant to our College and would like to work members of Administration to make our community a better place.

Academic Initiatives

Bearcat Awards 2015

As part of our campaign for U.S.G. in April 2014, we vowed to expand the size of the Bearcat Awards program which was started by the U.S.G. in the Fall 2013 semester. The purpose of the program is to award students for excellence in four categories:

1. Academic Excellence
2. School Spirit
3. International Students
4. “Unique” Bearcat

Each of these awards are designed to award students that have demonstrated exceptional academic abilities, contributions to the community on campus, involvement as an international student, and contributing something to the community by themselves that is truly unique to our diverse array of students, respectfully.
In an effort to better allow students from all classes to apply (e.g. Freshmen, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, etc.), we didn’t debut this program until the Spring 2015 semester. This enables first semester transfer students and freshmen who enrolled in the Fall 2014 semester to be considered for these awards.

We encourage all members of the General Faculty to tell their students about this opportunity. The deadline for all applications is Friday, April 10 (during Spring Break). Prizes will be awarded at $500.00 per student per category. One student will be awarded per category.

**Center for Teaching and Learning and Hybrid Classes**

In our previous report, we mentioned our support for the Center for Teaching and Learning and how we feel hybridization best represents the direction that this College is moving toward. We are happy to announce that we continue to work with Dr. Luke Waltzer and his staff as the CTL works toward better educating students and members of the General Faculty with regards to how truly the options of online learning can be implemented.

One of the major items we have been working with Dr. Waltzer on has been decreasing the number of students who register for hybrid classes but are unaware--at the time of registration--that the course meets partly online. In our view, this can be best minimized by 1) listing of all the hybrid courses in a separate location on CUNYfirst so that students can view them in one location, 2) automatically sending an email to students the moment they register for a hybrid course alerting telling them that they have in fact registered for a course that meets partly online, 3) hosting a "Hybrid Learning Interest Meeting" before registration season to help students know the benefits of hybrid learning, and 4) running a quick advocacy campaign that encourages student to look over their schedules with an advisor.

**EVENTS**

**Mental Health Awareness**

As part of the Mental Health initiatives mentioned in our Fall 2014 General Faculty report, the Undergraduate Student Government--in conjunction with Health & Wellness and the Office of Student Life--has prepared a series of events that we plan on continuing through this Spring 2015 semester to provide a better atmosphere for students in the midst of midterms and finals. For a full list, please see the following page:

1. **Snaptivity**
   With the rise of Snapchat and #selfies, the U.S.G.’s Arts Committee put together a campaign of featuring student photography across campus, tagging them with positive quotes and messages to be hung up and distributed around campus. These photos are being framed and placed in various areas of the College, preferably in areas where art isn’t being showcased at the rate the Committee feels it should.
2. **ExSTRESS Shops**
   During weeks when midterms were given in November, we provided coffee and snacks to students on their way to class on the 2nd floor of the Vertical Campus and on the first floor of the Library Building. This activity will continue through the Spring 2015 semester but will focus on more highly-trafficked areas across campus.

3. **Midnight Breakfast**
   “Midnight breakfasts” are communal meals served at colleges and universities across the United States. USG hosted two of these events last year at the end of each semester during finals week, where we were able to supply tasty waffles to students outside the Library Building as a way to destress from often intense studying and emphasize the importance of community on our campus. Last semester, we had Provost Christy to serve students food before they went back to the library to continue studying.

4. **Napping stations**
   In coordination with Health & Wellness, one of the most exciting events we’re bringing to campus this semester is the availability of napping stations. Starting on Thursday, April 2 at 11:00 a.m., students will be able to nap on blow-up mattresses just as midterms season is coming to an end. The purpose of this six-hour event is to act as a test run in anticipation for heavier usage in May when finals season comes about.

We ask the faculty and departments here today to help advertise these events and remind students about important resources available for their Mental Health.

**New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators 2015 Caucus**

Part of the U.S.G.’s mandatory spending is spent on lobbying New York State Legislators on behalf of the students at Baruch College alongside the College’s Director of Government Relations, Eric Lugo. This year, the U.S.G. took eighteen students to attend the conference, including up to five representatives from the U.S.G, all of which were selected via an application process administered by Vice-Presidential Senator for Legislative Affairs Abraham Albarracin.

The goal of the trip is to win further support of N.Y.S. Legislators with regards to higher education and the City University of New York, in addition to allow students to learn about social, political, and economic issues through workshops, networking events and receptions hosted by prominent legislators in local, city, and state politics.

During the trip, students met with U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer, Kirsten Gillibrand, N.Y.S. Assemblyspeaker Carl Hastie, N.Y.S. Senator Bill Perkins, and N.Y.S. Assemblyman Gary Pretlow.