The meeting was called to order at 12:50 p.m. in the Newman Vertical Campus Room 14-220 by President Kathleen Waldron.

I. The following members of the Baruch College faculty and administration were in attendance: (sign in sheets).

II. Approval of the minutes: Minutes of the meeting of March 8, 2007 were approved without alteration.

III. Approval of Agenda: The agenda was adopted with no objections.

IV. Oral Report from President Kathleen Waldron. The president introduced the new Secretary of the General Faculty, Professor Arie Harel. She also introduced the new Provost, James McCarthy.

President Waldron then took a moment to point out that this meeting would be Myrna Chase’s last as Dean of the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences. The president commended Dean Chase on her many years of service to the College and her leadership in various administrative posts on behalf of the students and faculty.

President Waldron then delivered a presentation on the State of the College (see Appendix).

V. Written Reports from College Officers.

Provost’s Report
Questions and Comments: Professor Burt Hansen commended the Provost’s Office for providing two valuable services: first, Dennis Slavin, for the rich contents of the online Faculty Handbook, and second for providing faculty with the ability to is Turnitin.com for detecting student plagiarism, though he asked that this opportunity be communicated more widely.

Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management
Questions and Comments: Professor Glen Peterson asked why the hard copy course rosters had been discontinued without faculty consultation and expressed concern that no explanation of this decision had been forthcoming from the administration. He added that the Weissman P&B Committee had passed a resolution against the discontinuation of the hardcopy course rosters. President Waldron agreed that the administration ought to be willing to explain any decision, but suggested that the issues pertaining to the change had been discussed at the Faculty Senate in both the spring semester and earlier this term. Vice President D’Aleo, who chairs the committee charged with bringing the College into compliance with federal aid requirements, explained the history of the federal financial aid issue that prompted the change. The College had failed a previous audit of recordkeeping and is in danger of forfeiting all federal aid for students if we fail again. The move to electronic record-
keeping was believed to be an important step toward remedying our records shortcomings. Another faculty member pointed out that the discontinued attendance rosters were different from the certification rosters previously used to document attendance for federal aid purposes. Dean Birdsell, who also serves on the committee, explained that it was believed that a proliferation of rosters contributed to the inaccurate and inconsistent records and that the goal was to provide a single electronic point of record-keeping. He also pointed out that the electronic rosters were printable and that faculty members who preferred to keep a hardcopy record of attendance could produce a reasonable facsimile of the discontinued attendance rosters on their own. Professor Peterson thanked Dean Birdsell for his understanding of the problem at hand, but did not feel the suggested solution was adequate. Professor Martell, Chair of the Faculty Senate, reiterated that the decision had been discussed at length and on more than one occasion at the Faculty Senate. Several faculty members expressed their preference for the old cardboard rosters. President Waldron agreed to add more faculty representatives to the R2T4 Compliance Committee. Professor Glenn Peterson and Professor Anne Swartz volunteered to serve.

Professor Susan Locke raised an objection to a change in the policy regarding the number of AP credits students can be credited with upon enrolling in the College. AVP Murphy assured the group that no such policy change had taken place.

VI. Oral Report from Student Government President
Anthony Hernandez, President of the Undergraduate Student Government, delivered an oral report, as follows:

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you some of the initiatives of the Undergraduate Student Government and also some of the concerns of undergrad students as they have been expressed to us.

Undergrad Student Government:
This year’s student government has gotten off to a strong start. In mid August the government went in force to the Annual University Student Senate leadership retreat, and made large inroads with CUNY board of trustees, Policy makers, and the Chancellors. We had a freshmen social that was partnered with the freshmen seminar program to help the incoming class become comfortable within the Baruch Community. The Government has made student representation a key initiative by working to place engaged students in various committees on campus. So when you see a new face at a committee, please reach out to them to make them feel welcome. Additionally, we are working on initiatives to register record numbers of Baruch students to let policy makers see that the Baruch College Community is united. Going forward we are working with clubs and organizations to increase the amount of events on campus and increase student activism.

Learning Communities
Baruch College’s Learning Communities have been an annual success story for our students and Professors alike. The Communities create a more holistic and supportive experience for freshmen. That has created a group of students who do better than their peers, participate in more extracurricular activities, and generally report a smoother integration into College life. In the halls of Baruch College yells of LC09 or LC22 can be
heard throughout. The interdisciplinary course work and non-traditional aspects helps the freshmen have a one of a kind introduction to Baruch which is only possible when faculty, administration, and student leaders work together. The Student Government is in strong support of seeing this program grow and would like to encourage the Faculty to volunteer for these programs. To take it further, while learning communities are succeeding reaching freshmen, 50% of most graduating classes are composed of transfers. There are talks of creating a program for transfers students similar in structure to Learning Communities, I encourage you to support this.

Faculty Engagement
In speaking of the success of learning communities I highlighted the part faculty play in making the experience the best it could be. On campus there are opportunities for professors to serve as mentors and advisors to students. The clubs and organizations in Baruch College play an essential part in creating the student life for a commuter college. In the struggle to achieve tenure, and get published, and the emphasis on research, it is easy to see the students not as the future and potential leaders of our community, but as a revenue stream, or a burden, or a delay to the metro north at the end of the day. While I support and agree with Baruch College’s goals of increasing its rankings, I still don’t want to forget our CUNY foundation of creating an affordable, relevant, and quality education for our students. While reaching for the stars I would hate to see Baruch College’s faculty forget the 15,000 students who call this building home.

The concept of engagement is one that is central to creating an environment conducive to academic growth. Remember, you did not all start your professions in academia with simply a book. I challenge you all to look at your syllabi, course documents, and teaching strategies and ask “Am I relevant to my students. Is this going to be tool that they will know how to use?” With the raising the standards of Baruch and the diversity of thought, you will be surprised at how your courses come alive. Finally, there are opportunities to reach out to clubs and organization that provide students a way to develop contacts and participate on campus. A way to reach out is to go to the office of student life and simply look for a club that peaks you interest and attend meetings or suggest ideas. The ability to interact with Faculty in an informal setting is something that is coveted by many students. Equally rewarding is being part of our student life, from a club that goes to see Warren Buffet, to one that competes and wins at the Model UN session, or one that organizes students to raise over $70,000 over the past 3 years for the American Cancer Society.

Thank you for your attention.

VII. New Business – None.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Arie Harel
Associate Professor of Operations Research