

BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

DIRECTORY OF POLICY STATEMENTS

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Subject: Community Advisory Councils

Community Advisory Councils can be an extremely valuable source of support for college programs and departments. Such councils already exist in support of many departments on campus (i.e., Business, Technology, EOP, Intercollegiate Athletics, Dietetics, Computer Information Systems, Performing Arts). While curriculum and standards remain the clear responsibility of the faculty, these councils provide professional and community insight and advice as well as valuable contacts for student recruitment, job placement, internship opportunities, and fund raising. In addition, community advisory council members often become enthusiastic and highly effective advocates for Buffalo State College generally, as well as candidates for future positions on the College Council or the College Foundation's Board of Directors.

Generally, the department chair, program head or designee serves as liaison officer to the council, maintaining contact with the membership, proposing an agenda, and organizing meetings. Two to four meetings a year may be sufficient. Important principles that must be followed if community advisory councils are to succeed are:

1. Councils should have a purpose, clearly understood by the college department or program and the community membership of the council.
2. Councils must be "used" not just "met with." Council members must be asked for their advice or help on specific questions or projects of importance to the program. It is the responsibility of the liaison officer (e.g., department chair) to set the agenda that will provide both the fact and the appearance of constructive participation to the council.
3. Council members should know, or soon come to know, the department or program and the Buffalo State College faculty and staff membership thoroughly. While all members of the department need not (probably should not) be a part of each meeting, there should be occasions when the council can become well acquainted with all of the members, and some of the students, of the department or program.
4. Where a council is advisory to an academic program, the Dean should play an active role and attend meetings whenever possible. Coordination with the appropriate Dean and Vice President is the responsibility of the liaison officer.
5. The Buffalo State College liaison officer must take the responsibility for keeping in touch with council members between meetings through newsletters, email, memoranda, invitations to events, etc.
6. Procedural logistics are extremely important in determining the success of an advisory council. For example: length of terms should be clear, incoming members should be thoroughly briefed and warmly received, and outgoing members always graciously acknowledged. A chair of the council may be chosen who has the respect of his or her colleagues. Meeting dates should be set far in advance and at times convenient to the members. Because council members are always busy in their community and profession, parking should be arranged. Membership on a Buffalo State College Council must be fulfilling, pleasant, and usually "fun." A dormant,

discouraged, or otherwise “sour” council does much more harm than good, and councils should not be started without our commitment to make them work.

7. All councils are coordinated by an adviser to the President and/or Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Proposed names for membership or chair should be communicated to these offices. Invitations to serve should be sent by the President on behalf of the appropriate faculty, Dean, chair, etc. The President and Dean should generally be invited to all meetings and should be kept informed of meeting agenda and activities.
8. The liaison officer of all councils and other appropriate representatives will constitute a coordinating group for the purpose of periodically reviewing membership lists, guidelines, etc. Newly proposed council will be assisted by the coordinating group and the President.