RESOLVED, That the proposed amendments to the Governance Plan of Bronx Community College be adopted, effective January 31, 2017.

EXPLANATION: The proposed amendments to the Governance Plan of Bronx Community College (“BCC”) were approved by the University Faculty Senate on May 23, 2016 (after being approved by a referendum of full-time instructional staff conducted between May 5-May 20, 2016), except for two amendments that were approved on November 19, 2015. The BCC Senate is comprised of the Faculty Council and the Student Government Association. All of the proposals are recommended by the College President.

Many of the amendments codify existing practices at the College. They would effectuate changes to the composition and function of the Faculty Council, principally by removing members of the College administration from the Council; this amendment reflects decades of past practice in which administrators have not participated in Faculty Council deliberations. The amendments further specify the functions of the Faculty Council to reflect past practices and clarify language that currently could be interpreted to restrict the number of Council meetings held each semester.

The amendments eliminate divisional coordinators from membership in the Senate, effectively eliminating divisions within the College. Currently, division coordinators hold ex officio seats in the Senate; eliminating these seats would allow for three additional at-large seats to be added to the Senate. Eliminating divisions would end the practice of divisional voting in the Personnel and Budget process, which has never been codified in the Governance Plan.

The proposals increase the voting membership of both Higher Education Officers (“HEOs”) and College Laboratory Technicians (“CLTs”). HEO membership would be increased from one to three, reflecting the greater numbers of HEOs at the College and their increasingly vital roles. CLTs would be granted full voting rights, rather than fractional voting rights.

The amendments also make several changes relating to the Council’s standing committees. They add a new Committee on Academic Freedom, in recognition of the importance of academic freedom at BCC. They specify that the President’s designee to the Academic Review Committee, who is a non-voting member of that Committee, should serve as an impartial intermediary between the Committee and the College’s Personnel and Budget Committee. They also change the function of the membership of the Committee on Governance and Elections and the name, function and membership of the Committee on Community Relations and Special Events.

Other amendments alter the procedure for the filling of vacancies, allowing for special elections by the Senate for at-large seat vacancies and special departmental elections for departmental seat vacancies.

The procedure for the naming of buildings and physical spaces would be revised to include the namings of chairs, deanships, departments, parts of buildings, or other college subdivisions. As the Plan acknowledges, these procedures are subject to the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, pursuant to which the Board has final authority to authorize such namings.
The proposed amendments also introduce timelines for Governance Plan amendments to ensure that such amendments may not be held indefinitely in committee and must instead be brought back to the Senate with a recommendation in a timely manner.

Finally, the amendments assign the responsibility for adopting Rules of Order to the Faculty Council, clarify language, and correct typographical errors.