

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
of The City University of New York

Report of the President
to the Academic Senate
September 9, 2008

Welcome to the first meeting of the 2008-09 Academic Senate. My congratulations to the newly elected Senators and my thanks to those who served the College so well last year.

The College community has received a great deal of information from me this summer: The Completion Report, my Self-Evaluation letter, my Welcome Back Letter. Those of you who attended last Friday's Welcome Back meeting saw the Performance Indicators and how our College compares with other units of CUNY. We are doing well.

Budget: As I indicated in my Welcome Back letter, Community Colleges were spared the cuts proposed by the Governor. Our base aid allocation remains pretty much the same. The community colleges received a relatively minor cut in rental aid but, for now, we are expecting to have the same expenditure level as last year. We are hopeful that our over-enrollment (enrollment above the CUNY set enrollment target) will be sufficient to compensate for the loss of money in the CUNY Compact and allow for some modest new investments in new initiatives. With careful management of our fiscal resources, I believe that we will be fine this academic year.

Hold of Hiring Administrators: The University has imposed a "hold" on the hiring of administrators. All faculty and positions offering direct services to students are exempt. This causes us to slow down the hiring process as we need to request permission from a Central Office committee before we hire.

New Student Orientation: The Office of Student Affairs did a great job in welcoming the first-time students. A rough count on the three orientations indicates that close to 2000 students participated in an extended orientation. Kudos to all the members of this division who organized students, faculty and administrators to provide a meaningful and enjoyable experience for our incoming students. It will be interesting to see if we impact retention through this activity. We need to do some empirical analysis of retention rates of those students in similar cohorts whose only variable is attendance at Orientation; similar studies should be made for students who attend ST 100 or 101.

New Faculty Orientation: The Office of Academic Affairs had a wonderful program for new faculty members. I urge you to get acquainted with this group of 31 faculty members who are joining our ranks. They are bright, energized, experienced and great additions to what is already an excellent faculty corps.

Learning Academies: We have been working to ensure that the two new Academies, Visual and Performing Arts and Education are a resounding success. The administrative offices for these Academies are located in M-127 for Education and A-204 for Visual and Performing Arts. Secretaries and Student Managers have been identified, but the positions cannot go forward until the hiring hold is lifted. We learned from ASAP that Student Managers make a difference in student retention, and now we are

institutionalizing the concept. I hope that as the year ensues, we can engage in some studies that test the efficacy of the Learning Academies as compared to programs that do not engage in this format. These observations will lead to better service for our students.

Research: We are moving to provide administrative services to promulgate empirical pedagogical research.

As we embark on empirical pedagogical research, I am insisting that our Institutional Review Board be extremely careful in approving research protocols that involve our students. We have a very tough IRB. However, I welcome the rigor of our IRB, for high standards at this time in the development of our research program are an absolute requirement. If we are to conduct experiments with methodologies that impact our students, we must be assured that these trials do no harm.

With the appointment of Paul Marchese, once it is approved by the Central Office “hold committee,” we will have someone in the Office of Academic Affairs that can assist faculty in the preparation of research proposals. Two faculty members will be appointed this semester as research proposal design consultants and will be trained to assist faculty in preparing IRB proposals before the proposals are funded. There is a part-time clerical position that will assist Paul Marchese in the administration of IRB proposals and dispositions.

Commencement: This year, as in 2006, commencement falls on the Holy Day of Shavuot for members of the Jewish faith. Therefore, as we did in the past, we are holding June 5th as the 2009 date for commencement.

Middle States: The Self-Study project is somewhat behind schedule. Almost all working group reports have been submitted, and Dr. Corradetti is now editing the first draft of the Self-Study report. The final version of the document cannot exceed 100 pages. The Self-Study must represent the collective thinking of the College. While the Steering Committee and working group members were representative of the campus, it is imperative that the entire college community be familiar with the document and be able to comment on the contents. Please make every effort to attend at least one of the four public hearings to be held on Monday, September 8; Wednesday, September 10; Monday, September 15, and Wednesday, September 17. All the meetings will be held in room M-136.

Dr. Edna Baehre, President of Harrisburg Area Community College and Chair of the Evaluation Team, will conduct a preliminary visit on November 24th and 25th. In preparation for her visit, please note that a final draft of the Self-Study report will have been completed by the end of October and sent to her. The visit by a team of nine colleagues from other states is scheduled for March 15, 16, 17 and 18. All faculty, administrators and staff must be available to the Chair and the Team during the above dates.

MSA accreditation is a requirement for us to provide Financial Aid to our students and is the standard used to determine transferability of our credit courses. This is a most important evaluation.

I look forward to a great semester.