

**Report to Faculty, Administration, Council of Trustees, and Students
of**

The City College of New York

**The City University of New York
New York, New York 10031**

**Prepared following analysis of the institution's
Periodic Review Report**

**First Reviewer: Paula Hooper Mayhew
Professor of English and Comparative Literature
Fairleigh Dickinson University**

**Second Reviewer: Carol S. Long
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
SUNY College at Geneseo**

August 1, 2013

The City College of New York (CCNY), established in 1847, is one of twenty-four colleges and institutions in the City University of New York (CUNY) system. The College, originally known as the “Free Academy,” was among the first in the nation founded in the conviction that free, accessible higher education was central to the future of a democratic nation. CCNY offers courses of study at undergraduate and graduate levels and is comprised of the Divisions of Humanities and the Arts, Interdisciplinary Studies, Sciences, and Social Sciences --the latter now named the Colin L. Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership -- and four professional schools: Architecture, Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, and Education. As part of the consortial CUNY Graduate Center, CCNY participates in doctoral programs in science, and, in 2008, CCNY was granted authority to offer doctoral degrees in engineering. This PRR therefore represents reporting in depth on all aspects of this complex institution; it has done so with admirable diligence and clarity both of purpose and of exposition.

After its decennial evaluation visit in 2008, CCNY was asked to submit progress reports on April 1, 2010 (documenting organized, sustained process for assessment) and on October 1, 2011 (documenting assessment procedures for doctoral programs identified in the substantive change request of June, 2010). Although a small committee for the PRR was formed in 2011, new academic leadership signaled the expansion of the original PRR committee to include a wide spectrum of CCNY units and members of the campus community. A digital “PRR Toolkit,” which was developed to aid them and other administrators and staff in the creation and submission of analytical narratives, included the relevant MSCHE reports as well as other CCNY planning and assessment documents. A MSCHE Overview Matrix cross-listing recommendations and suggestions from the 2008 decennial review pertaining to MSA/CHE Standards 1 through 14 was also distributed. Meetings to discuss the report were held at all administrative, departmental and staff levels, with the inclusion of students, as well.

Commendation: We commend the institution for its thorough-going response to the 2008 decennial evaluation team report and to the Commission’s expectation that all members of the CCNY community have the opportunity to be included in the preparation and review of its Periodic Review Report.

II RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS DECENNIAL EVALUATION

The PRR responds thoroughly and well to almost all of the over forty recommendations and suggestions made in the 2008 decennial report and charts advances in most areas, among them: assessment; governance; general education; renovation and repurposing of campus spaces, smart classrooms and lecture halls; art galleries; and cafes. The Commission does not expect that all suggestions in an evaluation team report be implemented, but the responses made by CCNY to suggestions from the 2008 report demonstrate that they were taken seriously and that many were acted upon.

In its 2008 report, the visiting team made a formal recommendation asking that CCNY continue to refine its assessment plan and methods (Standard 14) and, in response to this recommendation, the institution submitted a Progress Report (2010) presenting evidence of compliance. This report was accepted by the Commission. CCNY's response to the recommendation on assessment continues in the PRR and is fully discussed below in Section V, "Assessment Processes and Plans".

Addressed consecutively, CCNY's responses to recommendations and suggestions followed MSA/CHE Standards. A short summary follows:

Standard 1: Mission, Goals and Objectives

CCNY's mission statement, available on the institution's new award-winning website, describes CCNY, in part, as: ". . . a comprehensive teaching, research, and service institution dedicated to accessibility and excellence in undergraduate and graduate education. . . [T]he College is committed to fostering student-centered education and advancing knowledge through scholarly research. As a public university with public purposes, it also seeks to contribute to the cultural, social, and economic life of New York."

CCNY remains committed to access and excellence, welcoming a diverse student body. The Report of the President's Council on Inclusion and Excellence of September, 2012 documents goals and strategies of the institution for balancing access and excellence. CCNY is among the leading schools granting bachelor's degrees to African Americans and to minority engineers. Over all, CCNY is among university leaders in conferring graduate degrees to under-represented minorities.

Standards 2 and 3: (2) Planning, Resource Allocation, and Institutional Renewal; (3) Institutional Resources

(Please see Section VI and the finance evaluator's report.)

Standard 4: Leadership and Governance

In 2012, the CUNY Board of Trustees, amended the CCNY Governance plan to provide that all tenured faculty members of a department – instead of its executive committee— review and vote on tenure candidates; changes in the constitution of departmental promotion committees have been approved, as well. Since 2008, the Faculty Senate has approved voting privileges to the new non-voting members of the College Review Committee; supported the installation of an Army ROTC program at the College; endorsed and approved the renaming and reorganization of the social sciences as the Colin L. Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership; and accepted changes in the Graduate Student Council's charter.

Although the reported strides in faculty participation in departmental personnel decisions are signal, we hope that they are merely the most recent evidence of the institution's on-going dedication to, shared faculty governance.

Standard 5: Administration

In its 2008 decennial report, CCNY charted and documented “sweeping changes” at the College, most of which were at the macro-institutional level, including newly-designated schools of architecture, engineering and science and a revised general education curriculum. At the City University (CUNY) level, the CUNY Master Plan (2008-2012), newly-articulated Goals and Targets in CUNY’s Performance Management Process (PMP) and a strategic plan (“Promoting Research Scholarship and Creativity, 2009-2013”) were developed and promulgated.

More “sweeping changes” – the replacement of virtually all the major administrators at the College -- occurred after August 2010 when the new president took office. These changes make it especially important that the 2017-2018 self-study include evidence of continued and sustainable progress in administrative leadership and shared governance.

Standard 6: Integrity

CCNY shows every evidence that it “honors its contracts and commitments, and represents itself truthfully” in this PRR and in its publications and on electronic media. Moreover, it expects the same adherence to “ethical standards and conduct” from all members of the institution. The CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity is available on the CUNY and CCNY websites and is discussed in new student orientations. The “Verification of Student Identity” policy is implemented for online courses. CCNY adheres to the CUNY Policy on Responsible Conduct of Research and Similar Educational Activities and its institutional review board (HRPP) manages the process for CCNY researchers. Compliance with CCNY, CUNY, local, state, and federal laws on affirmative action and equal employment opportunity is ensured by the Office of Affirmative Action, Compliance, and Diversity and the director of the Accessibility Center serves as the AACD’s compliance officer for issues governed by ADA.

As of this writing, it has become clear that the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision on affirmative action will require that CCNY review and re-align its present practices. We have no doubt that the institution’s long-held commitment to diversity will continue unabated.

Standard 7: Institutional Assessment; Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning

The evaluation team in 2008 requested a follow-up report on “...implementation of an organized, sustained process for the assessment of institutional, program-level, and general education student learning goals, including evidence that student learning assessment results are used to improve teaching and learning” in undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs. The CCNY Progress Report (March, 2010) to the CHE was accepted by the Commission and, when viewed in conjunction with the current PRR, paints an impressive picture of the progress that has been made in assessment in all areas of the institution since 2008. Thoroughly documented and replete with rubrics and checklists, the 2010 report clearly demonstrates the means by which progress in assessment areas is being monitored and encouraged over time.

As the PRR notes, the assessment initiative and its concomitant multi-level processes have only intensified over the intervening two years. (See” Section V “Assessment Processes and Plans”).

Standard 8: Student Admissions and Retention; Standard 9: Student Support Services

Student success was an issue of the first magnitude for the new president in 2010. The goal of new programs to in this area was to raise the six-year graduation rate at CCNY from 35% in 2009 to 50% for the fall 2010 first-year cohort. Since then, admissions criteria have been strengthened in the improvement of the mean SAT score for non-SEEK, non-ESL first-year students. The CUNY Board of Trustees eliminated conditional admission to the senior colleges in the fall, 2011 so all non-Seek, non-ESL first-year students and transfers must met specific scores in reading, writing and mathematics. The CCNY Faculty Senate voted to raise the minimum GPA for transfer students to 2.5 (2.7 for engineering). The institutionalization of multiple retention initiatives cluster around Student Support Services and are discussed below.

Standard 10: Faculty

In its 2008 report, the team suggested that CCNY needed “...to integrate new faculty and adjuncts more effectively into all aspects of College life. . .[and] to assure that all new part-time faculty demonstrate the same excellence in teaching as their full-time peers.” The College has also pledged to try to build a faculty who more closely reflects the diversity of the student body and is especially committed to recruiting women and under-represented minorities for positions at the new CCNY Science Research Center. As of fall 2012, 817 faculty from under-represented minorities (of 2,163 total faculty members) worked at CCNY; 150 of these were in full-time, tenured teaching lines.

In relation to the full-time faculty, the PRR observes that the administration has determined to address the “disparities in the professional experiences” of individual faculty members, to assure consistency in the application of tenure and promotion guidelines, and to promote mentoring between senior and junior faculty. Evidence of this intention focuses on the multiple initiatives to enhance faculty climate and to create opportunities to address the integration of new part-time teaching colleagues into the CCNY community are noteworthy and may well help in achieving the stated goal: that new part-time faculty “demonstrate the same excellence in teaching as their full-time peers.”

It must be noted, however, that a large number of part-time faculty members at CCNY are not “new” and seem not to have been targeted for professional development. If that is the case, efforts on their behalf should be created and implemented.

Commendation: We commend the City College of New York for the initiatives it has taken to enhance and invigorate the quality of academic life for both faculty and students through pursuit of its 2009-2013 strategic plan. We look forward to evidence of sustained academic vitality in the 2017-2018 Self-Study.

Standard 11: Educational Offerings

In response to the MSCHE 2008 evaluation team’s suggestion, CCNY has revised its schedule for academic program reviews and begun “to explore new and additional programs and educational offerings.” Since then, the institution has received approvals for many new and re-registered academic programs. The number of evening and weekend courses has increased, as have hybrid/online course offerings.

Standard 12: General Education

As noted above, the 2008 evaluation team asked for a report to the Commission, to be submitted by CCNY in 2010, that would give a full and complete account of changes to and progress in General Education and the assessment of student learning in general education offerings to that date. That report was accepted by the Commission. It is important to note that there soon will be changes to general education at the institution, since the PRR notes that “the primary focus of the General Education Office in the next five years will be the transition to the Pathways curriculum.” Updated information about general education and the transition to “Pathways” is discussed in Section V “Assessment Processes and Plans”.

Standard 13: Related Educational Activities

The decennial evaluation team suggested that the institution, “... refocus student retention strategies and activities.” A federally-support program to support low-income, first generation undergraduates serves over 500 students. Other supports include a program aimed to help students majoring in science, architecture and the pre-medical and health professions. The latter program has helped to raised medical school acceptance rates appreciably. Student Affairs supports a cluster of services in counseling, health services and accessibility and, along with advising and tutoring programs, is attempting to assess and coordinate efforts campus-wide. The President’s 5-year goal of graduating 50% of the class that entered in 2010 graduating class will be evaluated in 2016. Evidence of progress on this goal should be included in the 2017-2018 Self-Study

Responses to Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning are discussed in Section V below.

III CCNY PRR: MAJOR CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNIES

The CCNY PRR lays out ten major challenges and opportunities that the institution will address in the next five years, underscoring: general education; the implementation of new curricula; the development of a new strategic plan; the opening of new research facilities; and, ongoing budgetary pressures as signal among them. Challenges in the remaining areas are also on-going and are explored below.

Strategic Plan

The development of the current CCNY strategic plan began shortly after the MSCHE evaluation visit in 2008. It identified three critical areas (academic quality, student success, financial effectiveness) and outlined five priorities in those areas: “increase faculty scholarship and research, improve retention and graduation rates, plan academic programs in high growth areas, create an atmosphere of academic excitement, and strengthen ties with the community.” Arriving in 2010, the new president reaffirmed the College’s commitment and further defined her three principal priorities:

Provide a world-class education to all CCNY students, raising graduation and retention rates.

Support . . .the faculty in their research, scholarship, and teaching to attract and retain excellence.

| Raise the visibility of the College in the community and expand the substantive collaboration with important community organizations.

Some accomplishments under the expiring plan include: the appointment of an Assistant VP for Research who works with faculty and administrators to assist and advise them in reaching the College's research goals; an important increase in faculty scholarship and research grants, especially in the School of Education; a move from the master's degree to become a doctoral level institution (a change that was fully explored in the 2011 progress report to MSCHE); and, significant support for the recently renamed Colin L. Powell School for Civic and Global Leadership; the Charles B. Rangel Center for Public Service; and the Skadden, Arps Honors Program in Legal Studies.

Concurrent with work on the PRR, the President, the Senior Leaders Advisory Committee, and the Strategic Planning Committee began to meet to develop the next strategic plan. That plan will be an important shaping influence for the 2017-2018 self-study.

Faculty Hiring

In fall, 2012, the number of full-time faculty at CCNY, including the full-time medical series title, was 497 of whom 188 were female and 309 were male. The total number of teaching faculty, with a range of titles including adjuncts and teaching assistants, was 2,163 in the same year. CCNY is attempting to hire female faculty members to staff its new science initiatives.

Building (Support for) Research Programs

Since FY 2008, CCNY has received almost \$300 million in external awards. CCNY boasts significant research resources, among them:

The Office of Research Administration responsible for the guidance and support for all pre- and post-award research activities, including, but not limited to: identifying funding sources; preparing budgets; interpreting sponsor guidelines and CUNY and CCNY policies; providing guidance on account management and documentation; and, preparing annual reports.

The Office of Research Compliance, consisting of programs that verify human research protections, monitor animal research, verify responsible conduct in research, query conflicts of interest and oversee export control.

The Research Foundation of CUNY identifies and obtains external support (pre-award) from government and private sponsors and is responsible for the administration of all such-funded programs (post –award).

Three CCNY “building research” initiatives are”

“City Seeds,” providing funding for the initial stages of new interdisciplinary and collaborative work.

The “Bridge Funding Program,” supporting CCNY researchers who will encounter a break in establish external research funding.

The CCNY “Faculty Travel Program” distinguishing itself from limited OTPS travel budgets and the tax-levy reimbursement process by use of program funding.

In spring 2012, CCNY hosted a CUNY-wide workshop on “Institutionalizing Undergraduate Research for State Systems and Consortia” funded by CUNY’s Vice Chancellor for Research and the Council on Undergraduate Research. A follow-up workshop will be held at CCNY in fall 2013.

These activities and resources have resulted from careful planning and have enhanced the academic excellence of the campus. Evidence should be included in the 2017-2018 self-study to demonstrate the sustainability of these efforts. Multiple funding sources will be important at a time when federal research dollars have been shrinking.

IV ENROLLMENT AND FINANCE PROJECTIONS

Five-year student enrollments at CCNY increased modestly from fall 2008 to fall 2012 (15,402 to 16,161) while FTE's increased from 11,047 to 11,878 in the same period. This increase in enrollment coincides with years in which the average SAT (Critical Reading and Math) score has grown from 1000 in fall 2007 to 1125 in fall 2012. In roughly the same period, the entering cohort of the highly competitive and generously funded Macaulay Honors College has been allowed to double. Administration of traditional enrollment management functions and planning is a collaborative effort between the Office of the Provost and the Office of Finance and Administration; in recent years some productive changes have been made by the President in assigning and re-assigning reporting lines in these two areas.

Finances have been strengthened on the campus both through the state funding compact and through fundraising and philanthropy. Notably, fund-raising efforts have been increasingly successful. We concur with the financial findings described in the attached report by this PRR evaluation team.

V ASSESSMENT PROCESSES AND PLANS

In responding to the PRR's coverage of Standard 14, we have taken into account the CCNY 2010 and 2011 Progress Reports, which were extensive and candid responses to the Commission's request. The PRR under consideration, submitted three years later, provides data with which to assess the changes and relative sustainability of assessment processes and programs now in place at the institution.

The assessment processes described below are being shared as best practices among the CUNY campuses.

Institutional Assessment:

The CUNY-wide Performance Management Process (PMP) establishes goals for institutional and student success. Further, the results of the PMP are tied to a funding supplement; increases in executive compensation are based on the institution's achievement of its PMP goals and define specific goals for the following academic year. CCNY vice presidents manage assessment in their divisions and offices based on the annual PMP and on the reviews mandated by the CCNY strategic plan that is now being revisited.

Assessment in the Professional Schools

CCNY hosts four professional schools: The Bernard and Anna Spitzer School of Architecture, The Sophie Davis School of BioMedical Education, The School of Education, and the Grove School of Engineering. All four schools have earned external accreditation by their appropriate discipline-based bodies.

In responding to the 2011 Progress Report that followed the earlier request by CCNY for the approval of substantive change, the Commission asked that this PRR “document evidence of appropriate use of direct methods of assessment of student learning at the program level” and, “use student learning assessment information to improve teaching and learning” in all doctoral programs in engineering.”

The Grove School of Engineering

In response to the Commission’s directive, the School has implemented a “continuous and rigorous process” of academic assessment of its eight undergraduate programs. These undergraduate programs obtained full accreditation by ABET in fall 2010 until the next visit, so the institution has chosen to report fully on its graduate programs in engineering at both the masters- and doctoral-levels.

All masters and doctoral-level program have arrived at agreed-upon program learning outcomes that rely on curriculum grids in which course offerings are aligned with the departmental, School and CCNY missions. PhD students are assessed conventionally, by exams constituting the approval of the thesis proposal and, later, the thesis defense, the latter by a panel of experts, including external evaluators in the field. To supplement these activities, Electrical Engineering has begun to administer a progress review for their doctoral students; Biomedical Engineering also plans to implement a progress review using the learning assessment tools.

Masters-level program learning outcomes have begun to be assessed by course-embedded assignments; each of these programs has assessed two to six courses so far. This process will continue for the next two to three years until a complete program assessment can be performed by aggregating data. In the meanwhile, the faculty who have assessed their courses have made changes where appropriate; it should be noted that their programs provide the coursework for the first phase of the PhD program, although as noted above PhD program outcomes are assessed through doctoral exams.

In sum, CCNY’s Grove School of Engineering is well begun in the creation and implementation of direct assessment of student learning at both the course and program level and that these assessments are in the process of being used in teaching and learning. CCNY is therefore complying with Commission’s requests in response to the 2011 Progress Report.

General Education Assessment:

The processes initiated by the time of the 2008 Self Study and those reported on in 2010 have been regularized and expanded. Interventions and changes have been made as a result of the assessment of student learning. Precise learning outcomes with scoring rubrics have been developed in writing, critical thinking and quantitative skills and approved by the CCNY General Education Committee. Most recently, the initial (and later improved) general education assessment plan has been revised and refined again. Seemingly generated by assessment work in the first year courses, specifically, both direct and indirect assessment data has been used to:

- improve teacher training in first-year instruction;
- change course content;
- modify classroom delivery methods;

- strengthen tutoring efforts;
- develop student support services for students;
- inform assessment in the majors.

After years of focusing on writing skills, the assessment of reasoning skills has been initiated. Assessment began in the general education quantitative offerings in fall 2012. All in all, the work done since the decennial evaluation in 2008 in General Education (and also the related liberal arts and sciences to a lesser extent) is prodigious and deserves our commendation. (For a quick look at the methodology used in these assessments, please see page XX below).

In the midst of this skillfully-devised, long-term assessment effort, the fact is that beginning in fall 2013 a new General Education curriculum will begin to be implemented across all CUNY institutions. “Pathways,” a University-wide program requiring 42 credits of general education for all students, will ensure ease of transfer between CUNY colleges with the goal of producing graduates with strong reading, writing and quantitative skills, exposure to a variety of disciplines, critical reasoning, and ethical self-awareness. The CCNY General Education website has recently been updated with information for students, faculty and staff on the “Pathways” curriculum, and a new faculty handbook for the first-year writing program has been distributed. Supplemental materials for students will be developed for “Pathways” as it is fully absorbed into the curriculum and its effects have been experienced by students and teachers alike.

According to the PRR, the transition to “Pathways” should be eased by its similarity to the present General Education program at CCNY that was instituted in 2003 and has been progressively better and better assessed since 2008. Because these basic assessment activities in CCNY’s General Education are already in place, it is important to note that the key proficiencies and learning outcomes in both 2003 and 2013 programs are parallel and will allow for the continued use of existing assessment tools where they remain applicable. In the next five years, a graduated curriculum at CCNY will allow the College to establish clearer benchmarks for student learning and better-focused instruction in the areas of key proficiencies. Evidence of such progress should be included in the 2017-2018 Self-Study.

It is hoped that more transparent and shared expectations for learning and, as it follows, for mandated and concomitant assessment will only be enhanced by “Pathways” at CCNY and across the entire CUNY system, as well. The decennial CHE Self-Study due in 2018, is therefore expected to reflect increasingly useful results for in general education and its assessment.

Academic Program Review

| The institution is revising the process for academic programs review better to assure the integration of outcomes assessment. A skeletal process is suggested, but it has not been implemented. It calls for: 1) initial meetings with the program or unit leading to the integration of a formal assessment plan; 2) institutional review of the preliminary integrative plan and the creation of a revised version; 3) external review of the revised version; 4) response from the program or unit to the external review; and, 5) development of a five-year action plan with the input of senior administrators and the appropriate dean.

The object of the process is to take the outcomes of the PMP and the reviews that may well be directed by the yet-to-be finalized new strategic plan and to close the assessment loop for the use of programs and units as they make curricular decisions, initiate faculty hires and direct productive methods to help assure student success.

The decennial self-study will be expected to report fully on this revisited and revised initiative

Student Learning Assessment

Assessment of student learning in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences continues to be organized and sustained by an administrative infrastructure that stretches from involvement by the Provost and his staff to the divisional coordinators supported by a cadre of departmental assessment coordinators. To make tangible this investment of institutional time and energy to comprehensive implementation of assessment processes and procedures, the PRR reports that the total of those involved is 35.

First fully described in the 2010 Progress Report and proved effective in the PRR, an Assessment Progress Rubric developed by the Office of Assessment is being used in all academic departments and programs based on the nine traits recommended by the MSCHE for organizing Standard XIV. The scores provide a quick look of the strengths and weakness of assessment activities at departmental, divisional and institutional levels. The scale developed from the scores move from “needs work” to “highly developed/good practice” and most departments and programs now score well.

Since it started using assessment results in 2010, the majority of departments and programs have completed multiple assessment cycles providing results with which to close the assessment “loop”.

At the undergraduate level, recommendations derived from the assessment results were used to: change course content; provoke discussion at collegial meetings at all levels; change course delivery/pedagogy; devise guidelines for contingent teaching faculty; justify past curriculum changes and show program improvement from those changes; and, refine assessment methods or implement new methods.

At the graduate level, recommendations derived from assessment results were used to: make changes in course delivery/pedagogy; add or delete courses; make changes in course content; make changes in advising processes; develop program-based websites; refine or initiate assessment methods; and, develop guidelines for contingent teaching faculty.

Additionally, assessment findings are used at the institutional level in areas such as admission requirement adjustment; coordination and assessment of student support services; and review of faculty policies and guidelines.

VI LINKED INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGETING PROCESSES

Writing in response to three suggestions in the 2008 evaluation team report, the PRR notes that processes for allocating available resources in support of annual and long-term plans have been

revised, with decisions based upon on-going assessments and discussions with all campus constituencies. Examples include progress towards the full implementation of CUNY's plan to integrate financial accounting and human capital management that demands the development of comprehensive and transparent procedures for space allocation and more deliberate enrollment planning.

VII CONCLUSION

The reviewers commend CCNY for the progress it has made, particularly in the areas of institutional and programmatic assessment and the assessment of student teaching and learning. We ask that the 2017-2018 Self-Study provide further evidence of continued and sustained efforts towards: 1) refining benchmarks for student learning and the construction of key proficiencies; 2) assuring the effectiveness of the wide-ranging changes made in administrative leadership; and, 3) revisiting and aligning admissions criteria in the light of the 2013 Supreme Court ruling on affirmative action. We expect that the implementation of the strategic plan now under construction will provide CCNY with appropriate opportunities to report on these and other issues central to its functioning in its 2017-2018 Self-Study.