

# Queens College of the City University of New York

## Decennial Self-Study for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education

February 2017

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- A.1 [MSCHE Standards for Accreditation - 2015](#)
- A.2 [Self-Study Design 2015](#)
- A.3 [Documentation Roadmap 2015](#)
- A.4 [Documentation Roadmap 2016](#)
- A.6 [QC Periodic Review Report \(PRR\) 2012](#)
- A.7 [MSCHE 2016 Documentation Roadmap Presentation](#)

## **B College Bulletins**

- B.1 [QC Undergraduate Bulletin 2016-17](#)
- B.2 [QC Graduate Bulletin 2016-17](#)

## **C Strategic Plan and Master Plan Documents**

- C.1 [QC Strategic Plan 2015-2020](#)
- C.2 [QC Strategic Plan 2013-2018](#)
- C.3 [QC Strategic Plan 2008-2012](#)
- C.4 [QC Facilities Master Plan](#)
- C.5 [CUNY Master Plan 2012-2016](#)
- C.6 [QC Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Action Plan 2015-16](#)
- C.7 [CUNY Master Plan 2016-2020](#)
- C.8 [QC 10 Year Sustainability Plan 2007-2017](#)
- C.9 [QC Implementation Planning 2010-11](#)
- C.10 [Division of Education Strategic Initiative 2015-16](#)
- C.11 [Strategic Plan 2016-2017 Goals and Implementation Teams](#)

## **D Performance Management Process (PMP)**

- D.1 [CUNY PMP Goals 2015-16](#)
- D.2 [CUNY PMP Data Book 2015-16](#)
- D.3 [CUNY PMP Data Book 2014-15](#)
- D.4 [CUNY PMP Data Book 2013-14](#)
- D.5 [QC PMP Prospective Report 2015-16](#)
- D.6 [QC PMP Year-End Report 2015-16](#)
- D.7 [QC PMP Year-End Report 2014-15](#)
- D.8 [Academic Senate Minutes March 2014](#)

## **E Assessment Documents**

- E.1 Noel Levitz: Selected Results 2015
- E.2 CUNY Student Experience Survey 2014
- E.3 COACHE 2015 Provost's Report
- E.5 QC Response to CUNY Experiential Opportunities Survey 2015
- E.6 QC Ethics and Integrity Survey Summary of Responses 2015
- E.7 CLA Report CUNY 2012-13
- E.8 W Course Evaluations Report Spring 2010
- E.9 QC Technology Survey Results 2010
- E.10 Report on the Queens College Technology Survey 2011
- E.11 NCATE QC Institutional Report 2012
- E.12 Urban Studies 2013 Assessment Update
- E.13 ACRL Library Survey 2015
- E.14 QC Factbook 2014-15
- E.15 QC Factbook 2011-12
- E.16 QC Goals for Student Writing
- E.17 Guidelines for Program Assessment
- E.18 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2014
- E.19 CUNY Experiential Learning Plan 2016
- E.20 CUNY SPS General Education Assessment 2014
- E.21 GSLIS ALA Accreditation 2014
- E.22 GSLIS ALA Report 2015
- E.23 CMLIT Mission Statement
- E.24 LCD Mission Statement
- E.25 BIOL Mission Statement
- E.26 MATH Mission Statement
- E.27 ECON Mission Statement
- E.28 ACCT Mission Statement
- E.29 QC Qualitative Assessment of Writing Intensive Courses 2011
- E.30 ART Self-study Extract - Assessment
- E.31 FNES Self-study Extract - Assessment
- E.32 CMAL Self-study Extract - Assessment
- E.33 DTD Self-study Extract - Assessment
- E.34 PSCI Self-study Extract - Assessment
- E.41 ELL Department Assessment Plan 2015-2016
- E.50 Major Minor Fair Attendance and Survey
- E.71 CLA Report QC 2012-13
- E.80 Report on W Syllabi Fall 15
- E.81 Writing At Queens (WAQ) College-Wide Assessment Project 2016
- E.82 Working Group on W Courses Report 2016
- E.83 QC SEEK Status Report 2015
- E.93 Course Availability from Student Experience Survey 2014
- E.94 Course Grade Distribution Report from QC Factbook 2014-15

- E.95 Gateway Course Performance from PMP 2013-14
- E.96 QC-adapted VALUE rubric (Written Communication)
- E.97 SLOAC Meeting Notes 20161107
- E.98 QC Writing Assessment 2006-2015
- E.99 Annual Program Review Cycle
- E.282 EDUC Mission Statement
- E.596 CUNY 2013 survey of 2009-10 baccalaureate graduates
- E.597 Urban Studies Outcomes Assessment 2011-2012
- E.598 GSLIS SLO Coverage Survey Results
- E.599 EDUC Unit Assessment Analysis Guide
- E.902 QC Tech Survey Report 2011-2012

## **F Administrative Reports**

- F.3 Foundations of Excellence Final Report 2012
- F.4 QC CUE Annual Report 2015-2016
- F.5 QC CUE Annual Report 2014-2015
- F.6 QC CUE Annual Report 2013-2014
- F.7 QC Transfer Credit Evaluation Guide 2009
- F.8 Freshman Orientation Statistics 2014
- F.9 Transfer Orientation Statistics 2014
- F.10 Continuing Students Annual AAC Trends
- F.11 SEEK Directors Performance Data 2013-14
- F.12 SEEK Persistence 2011 Success 2014
- F.99 QC Reso A projects 2013

## **G CUNY Financial Documents**

- G.1 CUNY Operating Budget Process 2015
- G.2 CUNY Financial Statements 2015
- G.3 CUNY Auditor's Management Report 2015 Response
- G.4 CUNY Senior College Expenditures-Resources 2015
- G.5 CUNY Senior Colleges Enrollment-Tuition 2015

## **H QC Financial Documents**

- H.1 QC Financial Plan 2015
- H.2 QC Student Tech Fee Plan 2015-16
- H.3 QC Planning Budget and Assessment Cycles 2016
- H.4 QC Reso A Projects 2016
- H.5 Reso A Request Form final5-21-15.FNES Food Science Labs
- H.6 QC Reso A Request Form 2017
- H.7 Summit Apartment Marketing Plan
- H.8 Q Student Residences, LLC



- H.9 Continuing Education Enrollment Report
- H.10 2016 Budget Request with SP goals

## **I Governance**

- I.1 QC Organization Chart: Executive 2015
- I.3 CUNY Collective Bargaining Agreement
- I.4 QC Mission Statement
- I.5 QC Organization Chart: Academic Affairs 2016
- I.7 QC Organization Chart: Student Affairs 2015
- I.9 QC SPIG Teams 2016
- I.92 QC P&B Committee
- I.93 QC Organization Chart: Enrollment Management & Retention
- I.94 QC Organization Chart: Finance & Administration 2016
- I.95 Assessment of Student Writing 2009
- I.96 LCD Assessment Report - 2016
- I.97 QC Organization Chart: Governmental Affairs
- I.98 QC Organization Chart: Institutional Advancement
- I.99 CUNY Multiple Position Policy

## **J Additional Documentation**

- J.1 QC College Profile 2015
- J.2 UFS Statement on Academic Freedom
- J.3 QC LASAR Requirements 2007-2009
- J.4 QC Reorganization Of General Education 2004
- J.5 QC Perspectives in the Liberal Arts (PLAS) 2008
- J.6 CUNY Pathways Common Core
- J.7 QC Pathways Implementation Plan
- J.8 QC Transportation Survey
- J.9 QC Guidelines for Tenure/CCE and Promotion 2014
- J.10 New Student Orientation Presentation
- J.11 Experiential Education Definition
- J.12 Experiential Learning 2014-15
- J.16 Space Committee Guidelines - May 2015
- J.17 CUNY Continuing Education Standard Operating Procedures 2011
- J.18 QC Space Request Form - May 2015
- J.19 Expanding Hybrid and Online Programs at Queens College
- J.21 CUNY Information Security Policy and Procedures Attestation Response
- J.22 ACE CIL One Pager 2015
- J.23 QC Academic Affairs International Programs Proposal
- J.26 Affirmative Action Plan
- J.27 Hostos CC Non-APR Presentation
- J.29 CUNY Tech Consortium Charter



- J.31 USSC Report 2015-16
- J.32 QC Hiring flowchart
- J.33 The Queens College Value
- J.34 Graduate Studies Handbook
- J.441 FYI Spring Seminar Flyer 2012
- J.442 Quantitative Reasoning recommendation
- J.595 ACE Internationalization Laboratory QC Peer Report 2016
- J.596 Year of Country Report 2010-2016
- J.597 EDUC English Program Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
- J.598 NYSTCE (Title II) Pass Rates - 2014-15 completers
- J.599 Transfer Honors Program Statistics and Demographics
- J.776 QC TRN Retention and Graduation Rate Trends
- J.777 QC FTF Retention and Graduation Rate Trends
- J.991 Career Development Workshops
- J.992 CUNY Workforce Demographics 2015
- J.993 NSSE 2014 High-Impact Practices
- J.994 Lipman Hearne QC Enrollment Playbook
- J.995 Approved General Education Courses
- J.996 QC Class Scheduling Matrix
- J.997 Creating Gateway Chemistry Courses for At-risk Students
- J.998 Queens College Psychological Center
- J.999 Mapping from QC Mission to Pathways SLOs

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- [74] [CUNY Murphy Institute](#)
- [75] [ELI \(English Language Institute\)](#)
- [76] [Center for Ethnic Racial, and Religious Understanding \(CERRU\)](#)
- [77] [American Council on Education \(ACE\) Internationalization Lab](#)
- [78] [QC Strategic Plan for Internationalization](#)
- [79] [Experiential Learning at Queens College](#)
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- [81] [Tech Talent Pipeline Residency at Queens College](#)
- [82] [CUNY Service Corps](#)
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- [119] [CTL Tech Tips webpage](#)
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- [121] [Shuttle Bus Website](#)
- [122] [CUNY Conflict of Interest Policy for research](#)
- [123] [The Board of Trustees Bylaws](#)
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- [125] [Committee On Faculty Personnel And Budget](#)
- [126] [CUNY Bylaws: Duties Of Department Chairperson](#)
- [127] [Chair Handbook](#)

- [128] [The Academic Senate](#)
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- [134] [Academic Senate Charter, Title X](#)
- [135] [Eduventures 2012](#)
- [136] [Expanding Online at QC: Spring 2016](#)
- [137] [Expanding Online at QC, Spring 2016: Symposia](#)

## Executive Summary

In preparation for its decennial accreditation review, Queens College undertook a comprehensive self-study beginning in early 2015 and culminating with this report completed in January 2017. Through the efforts of eight working groups, each comprised of faculty, students, staff, and academic and administrative leaders from across disciplines and functional areas of the College, the self-study demonstrates a continuous and strong commitment to each of the seven standards in the 13th edition of the *Standards for Accreditation and Requirements for Affiliation* issued by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) in 2015. Queens College of the City University of New York (CUNY) is privileged to be one of initial 15 institutions chosen to base its decennial self-study on these revised standards as part of the Commission's *Collaborative Implementation Project* (CIP).

### About Queens College

Queens College enrolls nearly 20,000 students each year in degree and certificate programs across a wide variety of disciplines, including about 3,300 graduate students. Approximately 60% of our students come to Queens College having started their college careers elsewhere. The College is located in the borough of Queens, widely considered to be the most diverse county in the United States. This diversity is reflected in the student body, where over 150 nationalities and more than 100 languages are represented. It is reflected as well throughout the curriculum, through the perspectives offered by our students and by a diverse and well renowned faculty. Students have the opportunity to participate in research, and to serve the community through a variety of internships and experiential offerings, commensurate with the motto of Queens College - We Learn So That We May Serve. A core mission of the College is to provide affordable access to a high quality liberal arts education. Thirty-four percent of students are the first generation in their family to attend college.

Queens College is one of 24 CUNY institutions in New York City. The University serves over 250,000 degree seeking students, and nearly as many in continuing education or other non-degree programs. Though Queens College is situated in a densely populated urban area, the 80-acre campus features tree-lined grassy areas and athletic fields. It is the only institution in CUNY with NCAA Division II athletic programs. The CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan awards most doctoral degrees in the University, and many Queens College faculty members teach there or mentor doctoral candidates who teach or perform research at the College.

Queens College was recognized in 2011 by the Education Trust as one of only five colleges in the U.S. that do a good job serving low-income students (based on graduation rate and cost). More recently, the Washington Monthly ranked Queens College second among 1,540 U.S. colleges as "best bang for the buck" in 2013 and again in 2014. These accolades reflect a core mission of the College – access to a quality education.

## **The Self-Study Process**

This self-study was prepared in a campus-wide effort over a two-year period. There were eight working groups – one for each of the seven standards and an eighth to verify compliance with regulations and requirements. Each working group was chaired by a faculty member, and included administrators, faculty, staff, and students. A steering committee, similarly constituted, provided oversight.

The steering committee identified five intended outcomes:

1. Demonstrate that Queens College meets the Middle States standards and has processes in place to assure continuous improvement for each of the standards' criteria.
2. Examine the academic and business processes encountered by students, faculty, and staff, to understand where reorganization, streamlining and simplification might improve student experience and outcomes.
3. Focus on enrollment management with the aim of increasing retention, enhancing diversity, improving student services, building graduate programs, and supporting transfer students.
4. Foster educational innovation to improve student attainment via academic support, faculty development, technology, and other means.
5. Through participation in CIP, develop expertise in effectively addressing and benefitting from the new standards, and share best practices with its sister CUNY institutions as well as with regional institutions.

The working groups analyzed each of the seven standards and provided recommendations. The resulting reports received campus feedback through campus forums and online solicitations. The full self-study and supporting documentation may be found on the College's website. The findings and recommendations for each of the seven standards are summarized here.

### **Standard I – Mission and Goals**

The Queens College mission statement, last revised in 1995, continues to reflect the core aspirations of the institution and to guide goal-setting and planning on campus. Its distinctive features include an emphasis on access, affordability, and academic excellence, and on the institution's role in promoting the vitality and economic future of New York. The current Strategic Plan of the College identifies nine themes in the mission statement and ties its goals to these themes. The Standard I working group noted that the mission statement should be more succinct to encourage the campus community to be more familiar and conversant with its themes.

Goal setting at Queens College occurs in three interrelated processes: 1) strategic planning; 2) the University performance management process; and 3) academic program review. The College's strategic planning process which occurs in 5-year cycles, involves input from all constituents of the campus community. The current 2015-2020 plan identifies 12 initiatives to advance the strategic goals and 12 measureable outcomes to gauge our progress. Associated intermediate goals are identified annually by the president's extended cabinet and faculty representatives. The University's Performance Management Process (PMP), administered by the CUNY System Office, is another mechanism for monitoring efforts to achieve the College's



mission. For this annual process, the University establishes goals (e.g., improve degree progress, prioritize spending on instruction and student services, and increase student satisfaction) and annually gauges the progress of each college and of the University, overall, through a set of metrics related to each goal. In recent years, the CUNY Chancellor has asked colleges to establish campus-specific goals as part of the PMP, aligned with the college's own strategic plan. These college focus goals are developed through a consultative process on the campus. Academic Program Review, a third goal-monitoring process, requires all academic units to engage in periodic self-study to assess progress on program goals and make recommendations for ongoing improvement. Following an external review of the programs, an action plan is developed and recommendations are implemented as budgets permit. Our new Institutional Effectiveness Office is developing a similar process for the non-academic units.

Review of the mission as part of this self-study led to the following recommendation:

*Recommendation 1: The campus community, under the leadership of the Academic Senate, should consider revisions to the Mission, and develop a short but meaningful statement that captures its essence.*

## **Standard II – Ethics and Integrity**

The working group reported favorably on the extensive set of policies and processes the College has in place to insure integrity, transparency, and ethical behavior. The self-study summarizes and provides links to these policies, and details how responsibility for compliance is assigned to various College offices. The COACHE and NSSE surveys revealed favorable attitudes and perceptions of faculty and students, respectively, in these areas. In the 2015 COACHE survey, for example, nearly a quarter of the faculty listed academic freedom as one of the two best aspects of working at Queens College. The Standard II working group recognized that neither of these surveys solicited feedback from administration or other staff, and so conducted its own survey of these populations. The administration and staff survey identified the need to better communicate staff promotional policies and the College is exploring other avenues of communication about this topic. Overall, the working group found that the College is open and clear in its policies, but that information can be difficult to locate, which led to the following recommendation:

*Recommendation 2: Better communication of rights, policies, and compliance can be accomplished by consolidating pertinent information on the website more effectively, and by offering more opportunities for training of students, faculty, and staff in the form of public presentations, online modules, department and office visits, and effective messaging.*

The Compliance working group undertook a thorough review of regulations that impact the quality of the student, faculty, and staff experience. The working group verified compliance in these areas, and also endorsed Recommendation 2. The proposed training and support are consistent with Intended Outcome 2. Notably, QC and CUNY have significantly expanded their processes and policies addressing research integrity, sexual misconduct, and environmental responsibility, to better assure a safe and respectful environment for the College community.

### **Standard III – Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience**

Queens College offers 100 bachelor's degree programs, 106 master's degree programs, and 54 certificate programs. The student full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty ratio of 24.2 slightly exceeds the CUNY senior college average. The CUNY *Pathways* Initiative, which became effective in fall 2013, enables CUNY students to fulfill General Education requirements at any of the CUNY institutions, with the assurance that credits will transfer seamlessly. Queens College also participates in doctoral instruction and research through the consortial doctoral programs at the CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan, with much of the associated research performed on the Queens campus. The Clinical Psychology (Neuropsychology) doctoral program is taught entirely at Queens College, and was awarded accreditation by the American Psychological Association in 2015.

Support for student academic success is provided by the Academic Advising Center, the Writing Center, the Math Lab, the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) program, College English as a Second Language (CESL), the Library and its online services, and multiple tutoring sites. The Student Services minor provides peer counseling.

Support for instruction is provided by Writing at Queens (WaQ) and by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). CTL offers pedagogy- and technology-related workshops to help faculty develop, such as a boot camp on online and hybrid course development. Support for scholarship includes research enhancement funds, undergraduate research mentor funds, travel funds from the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) union and the College, PSC-CUNY research grants, as well as services offered by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

To prepare students as leaders, over 10,000 students are engaged in experiential learning annually in programs such as the CUNY Service Corps, which provides paid internship opportunities in the community. Study Abroad offers programs in 14 nations. Efforts that expand access include the Office of Special Services, the CUNY Black Male Initiative, the SEEK program, QC Veterans Support Services, the CUNY Murphy Institute, the CUNY Dream Scholars program, the CUNY Students of Promise program, the CUNY Early College Initiative, QC Professional and Continuing Studies (PCS), QC Adult Collegiate Education (ACE), and the QC Weekend College. Centers that serve our various cultural communities include the Asian American/Asian Research Institute, the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, the Center for Byzantine & Modern Greek Studies, the Center for Jewish Studies, the Research Center for Korean Community, and the Queens College Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding (CERRU). Over 100 student clubs serve the campus as well.

The CUNY general education framework instituted in 2013 includes provision for each baccalaureate college in the CUNY system to have, in addition to the 30 credits of CUNY-wide requirements, its own set of requirements that its students must complete (the "College Option" of up to four courses). At the time *Pathways* was implemented, QC set up a College Option structure that seemed best to address discrepancies between *Pathways* and the QC general education structure in effect at the time. However, experience has shown that the QC College Option structure is both complicated to explain to students and could potentially be

revised to support student success. To address these issues, the following recommendation will be pursued:

*Recommendation 3: The Academic Senate should assess the College Option (up to four courses in Pathways), and explore whether a newly designed course (or courses) can better support student success.*

#### **Standard IV – Support of the Student Experience**

On campus, a “One Stop” service center was created several years ago to better serve students, providing them with services previously provided by the registrar, bursar, financial aid, and other front offices, with referrals back to the front offices as necessary. In 2015, the College created the position of Vice President of Enrollment and Student Retention, to oversee and coordinate these areas in support of student success. The following recommendation supports this effort:

*Recommendation 4: Reorganize and consider relocating the One Stop to increase the quality, convenience, and efficiency of service provided to students, and thereby improve student satisfaction, retention, and outcomes.*

Funds have recently been obtained from the Queens Borough President and the NYC Council to relocate and reconceive the One Stop as the “QC Hub,” in much closer proximity to the front offices.

Affordability is key to the College mission and is demonstrated by the fact that over 70% of students have no debt when they graduate. Though students in need of remedial instruction are not admitted as freshmen to the CUNY senior colleges, Queens College does provide support for students who are admitted or conditionally admitted with deficiencies in reading/writing or mathematics, offering free summer and January immersion programs that conclude with the CUNY skills tests, and offering additional supports upon admission through programs such as CESL and SEEK. All freshmen and virtually all transfers receive academic advising prior to registration.

The CUNY Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) program provides supplemental funding for tutoring, Freshman Year Initiative (FYI), SEEK immersion programs, the Writing Center, mentoring, and other supports for student success, with funding based on assessment results. The College’s graduate programs are currently undergoing a thorough faculty-based review. A new transfer honors program offers scholarships and academic support for high achieving transfer students. The Adult Collegiate Education (ACE) program awards life achievement credits for experience deemed by the appropriate department to be equivalent to a course. Advising is provided by the Academic Advising Center, by major advisors in the department, by specialized advisors in the SEEK program and Murphy Institute, and by the various honors programs. The Counseling Center supports students in need of personal counseling, and the Student Services minor supports the peer counseling program.

The working group noted that there are many opportunities for students to participate in a vibrant array of student clubs and social activities. The College also provides well-equipped

fitness facilities for student use, and has the only Division II athletic program in the CUNY system.

### **Standard V – Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

Educational assessment occurs at several levels and through a variety of processes. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness works with the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee to continuously evaluate assessment documentation (self-studies, assessment plans, curriculum maps, mission statements, and other assessment reports), which are maintained in an online assessment repository. Assessment plans are aligned with program missions and goals. All academic units conduct a self-study on a seven-year cycle as part of the College's academic program review process. Each self-study culminates in an external review and plan of action that guides the work of the departments after the self-study.

Assessment of general education outcomes is multi-faceted. The CLA (Collegiate Learning Assessment) instrument has been employed to broadly assess student achievement. The College has paid particular attention to assessment of its writing program, most recently with studies of writing intensive syllabi and of student writing. Multi-year OASIS and HSI-STEM grants are focused on improving general education outcomes. The College will be systematically assessing the learning outcomes specified in the new *Pathways* general education curriculum.

At the institutional level, the Performance Management Process (PMP) and the assessment of the goals related to the Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) programs are managed by the University system office with input from individual colleges. Colleges identify goals, set targets, measure progress and allocate funding and implement changes to advance the relevant goals. The CUE program focuses on academic support programs and academic outcomes in specific basic skills domains. The PMP goals are more comprehensive, encompassing outcomes beyond educational effectiveness to include operational effectiveness, but with a strong emphasis on student degree progress. The College relies on surveys for some of its institutional assessment data. For example, faculty and student satisfaction and engagement are periodically assessed through COACHE, NSSE, and Noel Levitz.

*Recommendation 5: Enhance and expand assessment-related professional development for faculty and staff, and provide more resources to support assessment at the program level.*

### **Standard VI – Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement**

Strategic goals consistent with the overarching goals of the Strategic Plan are established or revised annually in a collaborative manner, with responsibility assigned to specific key administrators. Progress is monitored by the Strategic Plan Implementation Group (SPIG). The Strategic Plan is aligned with the budget and assessment processes; significant budget requests and hiring justifications are tied to the plan. Budget planning and financial performance are continuously reviewed by a faculty sub-committee of the College Personnel and Budget (P&B) Committee.

The College Sustainability Council monitors the Queens College 10 Year Sustainability Plan which, for example, has produced substantial energy savings, installation of three rain gardens,

and planting of over 500 trees to beautify the campus while reducing carbon emissions. Plans are underway to install solar cells on the Summit Apartments and to purchase 6 electric sedans and 1 electric van for the college's fleet. New technology has also been implemented that allows us to closely monitor energy usage by building.

Institutional performance is assessed annually through the PMP; in addition, assessments of technology, student services, and a number of business offices are routinely performed. The College, however, acknowledges that some administrative units are further along than others in standardizing and documenting assessment efforts. The working group, noting the effectiveness of the academic program review process in the academic units, suggested a similar approach to assure uniform and effective assessment of non-academic units. This recommendation was echoed by the Standard VII working group. The new Office of Institutional Effectiveness will work to coordinate and systematize assessment with the goal that all units of the College -- both academic and nonacademic -- are working toward continuous improvement.

*Recommendation 6: Extend cyclical non-academic program reviews to all Queen College non-academic units; all of these units should develop assessment plans. The President's Council will undertake a review of effective assessment models and implement a timeline and template for non-academic unit assessments.*

## **Standard VII – Governance, Leadership, and Administration**

CUNY is governed by a Board of Trustees. Consistent with CUNY Bylaws, the College P&B Committee addresses personnel (e.g., tenure and promotion) matters and consists of the chairs of the academic departments, the provost, and the president. The Academic Senate, with 40 faculty and 20 student members, is responsible for curricular matters and for policies relating to admission, retention, and granting of degrees.

All personnel, at all levels, receive annual evaluations. The Senate reviews the academic deans at 5 year intervals. The president is likewise reviewed by the CUNY Chancellor annually, with a more thorough review at 3-5 year intervals. As described above, institutional goals are developed in an inclusive process and guide budget, planning, and assessment. The working group's recommendation is intended to insure that our centers and interdisciplinary programs are regularly evaluated.

*Recommendation 7: The period of appointment for the directors of centers and interdisciplinary programs should be of limited duration to allow for regular review of unit leadership and performance. All such units should be added to the College's schedule of departmental self-studies (if not already present), and their self-studies should be due in the year prior to the appointment or reappointment of the director.*

The full self-study as well as prior self-studies are available on the QC website.

# Requirements of Affiliation

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To be eligible for, to achieve, and to maintain accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, an institution must demonstrate that it fully meets the following Requirements of Affiliation. Compliance is expected to be continuous and will be validated periodically, typically at the time of institutional self-study and during any other evaluation of the institution's compliance. Once eligibility is verified, an institution then must demonstrate that it meets the standards for accreditation.

1. The institution is authorized or licensed to operate as a postsecondary educational institution and to award postsecondary degrees; it provides written documentation demonstrating both. Authorization or licensure is from an appropriate governmental organization or agency within the Middle States region (Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands), as well as by other agencies as required by each of the jurisdictions, regions, or countries in which the institution operates.

Institutions that offer only postsecondary certificates, diplomas, or licenses are not eligible for accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

2. The institution is operational, with students actively pursuing its degree programs.
3. For institutions pursuing Candidacy or Initial Accreditation, the institution will graduate at least one class before the evaluation team visit for initial accreditation takes place (Step 7 of the initial accreditation process), unless the institution can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Commission that the lack of graduates does not compromise its ability to demonstrate appropriate learning outcomes.
4. The institution's representatives communicate with the Commission in English, both orally and in writing.
5. The institution complies with all applicable government (usually Federal and state) policies, regulations, and requirements.
6. The institution complies with applicable Commission, interregional, and inter-institutional policies. These policies can be viewed on the Commission website, [www.msche.org](http://www.msche.org).
7. The institution has a statement of mission and goals, approved by its governing body, that defines its purpose within the context of higher education.

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|---|--|
| <p>8. The institution systematically evaluates its educational and other programs and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes.</p>  | <p>of the institution and for ensuring that the institution's mission is being carried out.</p>  |
| <p>9. The institution's student learning programs and opportunities are characterized by rigor, coherence, and appropriate assessment of student achievement throughout the educational offerings, regardless of certificate or degree level or delivery and instructional modality.</p>  | <p>13. A majority of the institution's governing body's members have no employment, family, ownership, or other personal financial interest in the institution. The governing body adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures that those interests are disclosed and that they do not interfere with the impartiality of governing body members or outweigh the greater duty to secure and ensure the academic and fiscal integrity of the institution. The institution's district/system or other chief executive officer shall not serve as the chair of the governing body.</p>  |
| <p>10. Institutional planning integrates goals for academic and institutional effectiveness and improvement, student achievement of educational goals, student learning, and the results of academic and institutional assessments.</p>   | <p>14. The governing body/bodies are prepared to demonstrate in writing, as may be required, that the institution will make freely available to the Commission accurate, fair, and complete information on all aspects of the institution and its operations. The governing body/bodies ensure that the institution describes itself in identical terms to all of its accrediting and regulatory agencies, communicates any changes in accredited status, and agrees to disclose information (including levels of governing body compensation, if any) required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities.</p> |
| <p>11. The institution has documented financial resources, funding base, and plans for financial development, including those from any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership) adequate to support its educational purposes and programs and to ensure financial stability. The institution demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, has a prepared budget for the current year, and undergoes an external financial audit on an annual basis.</p> | <p>15. The institution has a core of faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals with sufficient responsibility to the institution to assure the continuity and coherence of the institution's educational programs.</p>   |
| <p>12. The institution fully discloses its legally constituted governance structure(s) including any related entities (including without limitation systems, religious sponsorship, and corporate ownership). The institution's governing body is responsible for the quality and integrity</p>   |  |



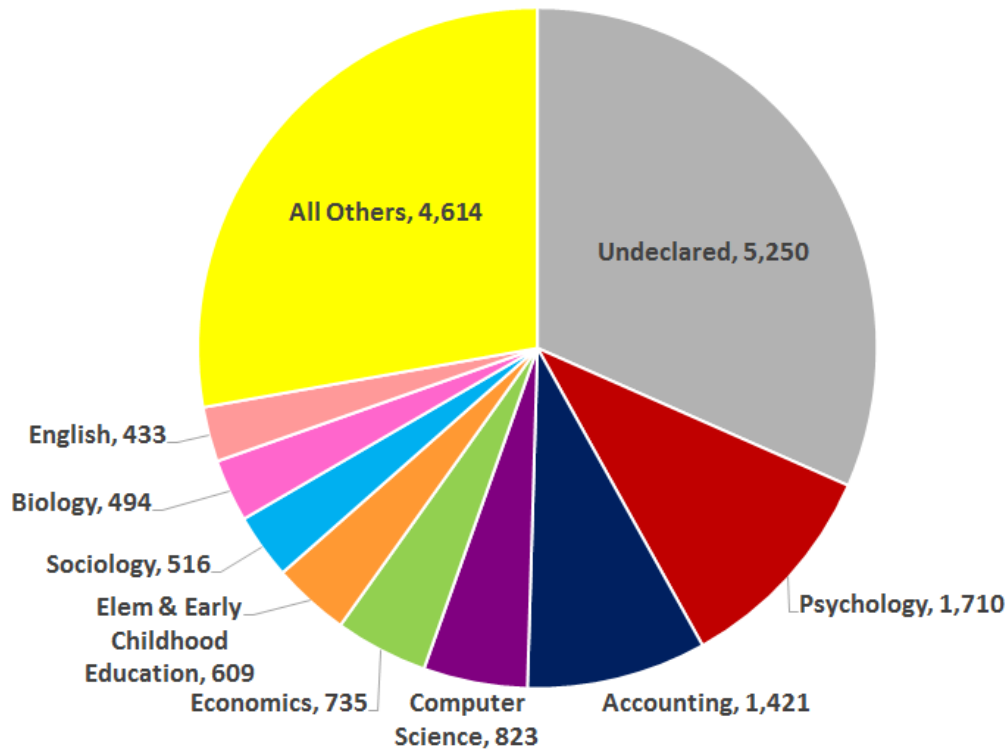
## Introduction

Queens College (QC) of the City University of New York (CUNY) is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). At ten year intervals, the College prepares a detailed self-study to demonstrate compliance with the Commission's standards, and to develop recommendations for improvement. The College is privileged to be among the first 15 institutions, selected by MSCHE as part of the Collaborative Implementation Project (CIP), to base its decennial self-study on the new Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation (Appendix [A.1 \[A101\]](#)) issued by MSCHE in 2015.

In this introductory section, we describe key characteristics, trends, and recent developments at the College. We then outline the inclusive process by which the self-study was conducted and the accompanying recommendations were developed.

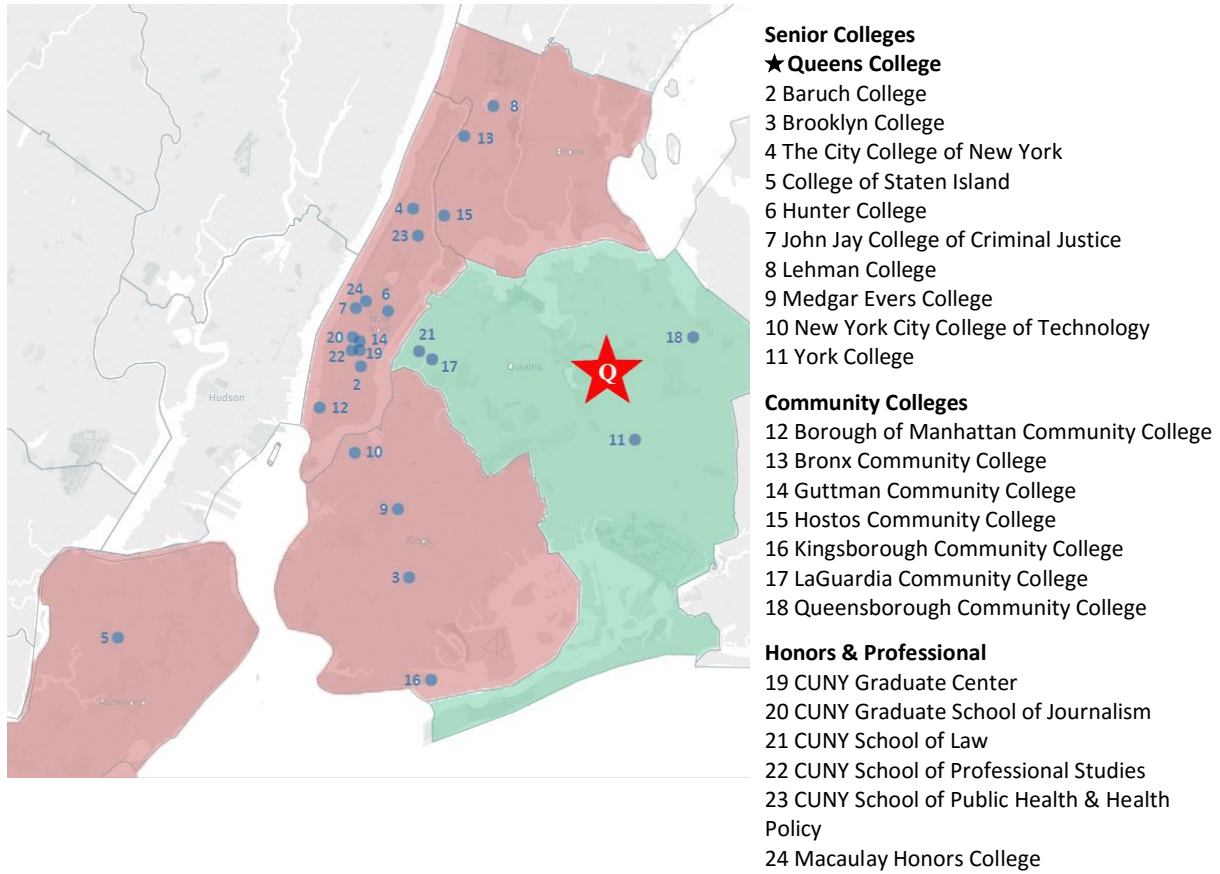
### 0.1 Our Institution

Queens College [\[1\]](#) is a traditional liberal arts college that also includes strong programs in the fine and performing arts and in teacher education. The College enrolls 19,600 students in bachelor's, master's and certificate programs. Located in Flushing, NY seven miles east of midtown Manhattan, Queens College features an attractive, tree-lined 80-acre campus comprised of 36 buildings and playing fields, in the center of the most diverse county in the United States. Established in 1937 to offer a strong liberal arts education to working-class people, Queens College students come from over 150 different countries and speak more than 100 different languages. As of 2015, the top undergraduate majors were psychology, accounting, computer science, economics, and elementary and early childhood education (see Figure 1). QC enrolls more computer science students than any university in the city, ranks third statewide in the number of accounting and business students, and graduates more teachers, counselors, and principals than any other institution in the metropolitan area [\[2\]](#).



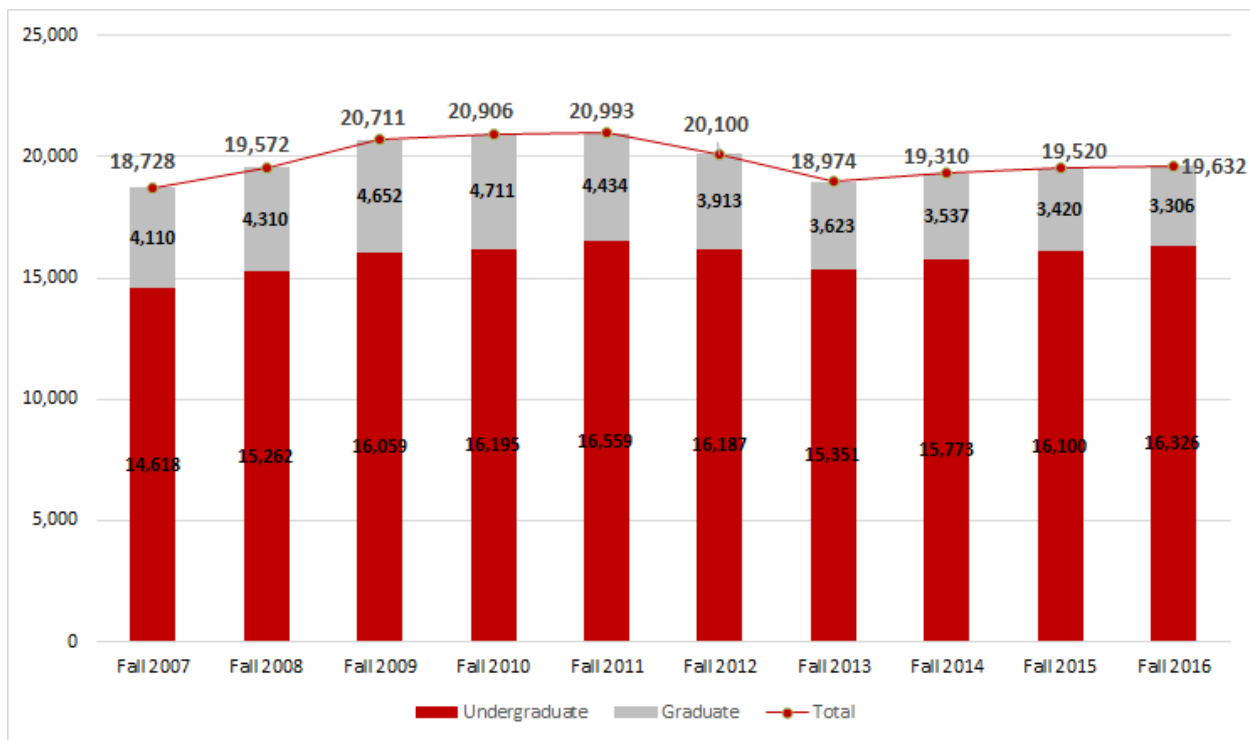
**Figure 1. Top Undergraduate Majors at Queens College**

Queens College is one of 24 institutions in the City University of New York, which is one of two public higher education systems in the state. CUNY colleges are all in close proximity allowing for ease of transfer and shared resources (Figure 2). CUNY serves over 250,000 degree seeking students, and nearly as many in continuing education or other non-degree programs. Among the 24 institutions are 11 senior colleges (offering bachelor's and master's programs) and 7 community colleges. The CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan (cross-corner from the Empire State Building) awards most doctoral degrees in the University. Many QC faculty members teach a course there or mentor doctoral candidates who in turn teach or perform research on the Queens campus.



**Figure 2. Location of CUNY Institutions**

Total enrollment at Queens College rose steadily in the period 2005-2009, from 17,638 to 20,711, and has remained relatively stable since then (19,632 students are enrolled this year). Enrollment trends for the past 10 years are shown in Figure 3. Undergraduates continue to comprise a substantial proportion of the overall student body. Students studying at the graduate level make up a smaller proportion today (about 17%) than they did 10 years ago (about 25%). As undergraduate enrollment grew during this time, graduate enrollment contracted somewhat.



**Figure 3. Trends in Enrollment**

The profile of our undergraduates is distinctive as illustrated by the information displayed in Table 1 and in the profile in Appendix J.1 [A102]. Queens College serves a relatively large number of students traditionally underrepresented in higher education, yet with a one-year retention rate of 85% and a six-year graduation rate of 58% for freshmen and 62% for transfers, institutional performance measures are stronger than might be predicted, and Queens College ranks at or near the top on these measures within CUNY. As discussed in sections III and IV, the College continues to invest in strategies to raise student success rates for all its students.

More than one quarter of undergraduates attend part time, one quarter are over age 25, and there are somewhat more female undergraduates (56%) than males. Approximately half of Queens College’s undergraduates work at least part time while going to school (13% work more than 20 hours per week). Between 40% and 50% come from families with household income below \$30,000<sup>1</sup>, 45% receive Pell Grants, and 33% are in the first generation of their families to attend college. One-third of our students were born outside the US and 43% have a first language other than English.

Echoing the demographics of the borough in which the College is located, the undergraduate student body is ethnically and racially diverse. Twenty-eight percent are Hispanic, another 28% are Asian or Pacific Island and about 9% are Black or African American; ethnically and racially, we are a majority minority institution.

<sup>1</sup> Estimated from responses to CUNY’s biennial survey of undergraduates. Results from the 2014 survey estimated 40% of students come from families with income below \$30,000. Results from the 2016 survey indicate that as many as half of our undergraduates come from families with incomes below \$30,000.

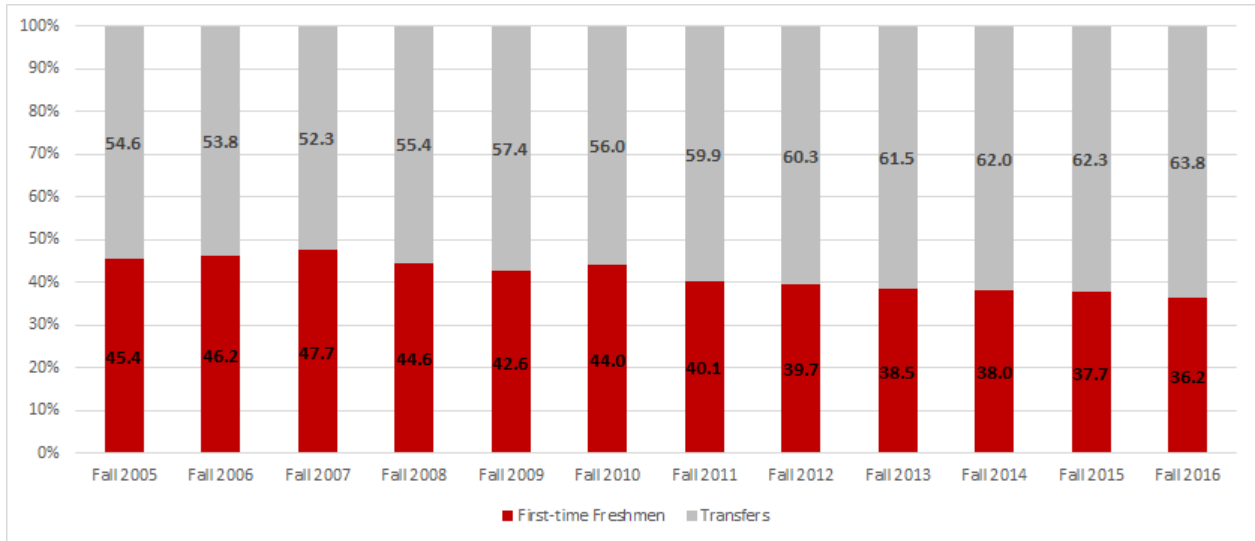
Queens is characterized by ever-changing immigrant populations and is the most international county in the United States. Flushing, for example, is home to New York City’s largest Chinatown. Queens College students speak over 100 native languages and identify with over 150 countries.

**Table 1. Undergraduate Profile**

<b>Undergraduate Profile (Fall 2015)</b>	
<b>16,100</b>	<b>Total Undergraduates</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>% Enrolled Part Time</b>
<b>56</b>	<b>% Female</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>% 25 and Older</b>
<b>40</b>	<b>% from families with income less than \$30,000</b>
<b>34</b>	<b>% first generation to attend college</b>
<b>33</b>	<b>% Born Outside US Mainland</b>
<b>43</b>	<b>% With a Native Language Other than English</b>
<b>120</b>	<b>Languages spoken</b>
<b>0.3</b>	<b>% American Indian or Native Alaskan</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>% Asian or Pacific Islander</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>% Black or African American</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>% Hispanic or Latino/a</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>% White</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>% Non-resident alien</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>% Two or more races</b>

The vast majority of undergraduates commute to the campus by public transportation, bicycle, or car; 2% live in our residential facility, the Summit Apartments.

As Figure 4 below illustrates, a growing proportion of our new students are transfers, having either earned a degree from a two-year college or otherwise starting their college career elsewhere before coming to QC.



**Figure 4. Trends in New Student Enrollment**

The profile of our graduate student population (Table 2) is somewhat different from our undergraduates; the vast majority attend part-time (87%). Women make up over two-thirds (69%) of our graduate students, and a larger proportion (49.8%) are white/non-Hispanic.

**Table 2. Graduate Student Profile**

<b>Graduate Student Profile (Fall 2015)</b>	
<b>3,420</b>	<b>Total Graduate Students</b>
<b>87</b>	<b>% Enrolled Part Time</b>
<b>69</b>	<b>% Female</b>
<b>32</b>	<b>% 30 and Older</b>
<b>0.2</b>	<b>% American Indian or Native Alaskan</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>% Asian or Pacific Islander</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>% Black or African American</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>% Hispanic or Latino/a</b>
<b>50</b>	<b>% White</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>% Non-resident alien</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>% Two or more races</b>

### 0.1.1 Our Faculty and Staff

As of fall 2015, Queens College had 1,305 full-time employees and 1,191 part-time staff as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Queens College Full-time and Part-time Employees by Title Groups (Fall 2015)**

	Full-time Employees		Part-time Employees		Total
	N	%	N	%	N
<b>Instructional Staff</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>70.6</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>2,112</b>
Executive	28	2.1			28
Faculty	612	46.9	906	56.7	1,518
Administrators	241	18.5			241
College Lab Technicians	38	2.9	8	0.5	46
Research Staff	2	0.2			2
Graduate Assistants			52	3.3	52
Non-Teaching Adjuncts (Research and Office Work)			123	7.7	123
Continuing Education Teachers			102	6.4	102
<b>Non-instructional (Classified)</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>792</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,305</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,599</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,904</b>

Of the full-time professorial faculty, 80% are tenured. Of the 14% of faculty who hold lecturer appointments, 75% have a Certificate of Continuous Employment (CCE). Full- and part-time faculty at CUNY, as well as those holding certain other kinds of full-time titles (Higher Education Officer series), are represented by a collective bargaining agency, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) [3], which negotiates the terms and conditions of employment with the University management and advocates for the interests of the instructional staff.

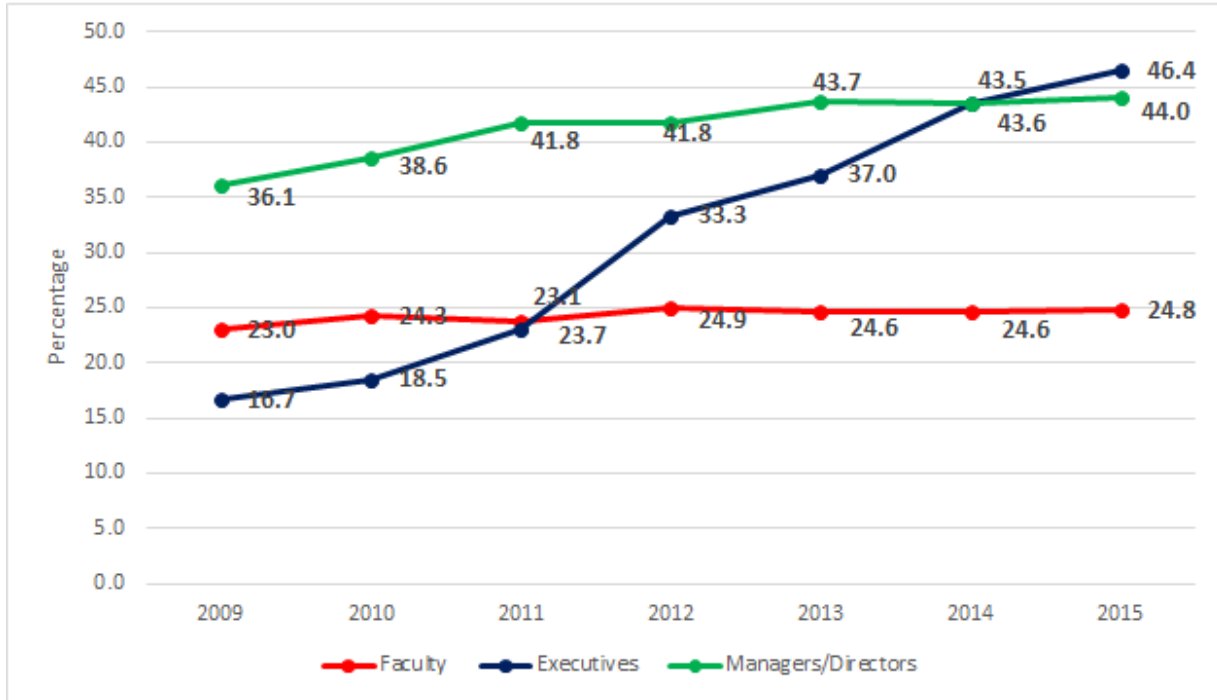
As noted above, Queens College has a diverse student body. As described in other sections of this self-study, QC's enrollment management and student support operations are planned to further increase diversity and ensure that the College is supportive of students from traditionally underrepresented groups. Enhancing the diversity of the faculty and staff that students encounter in classrooms, labs, offices, and elsewhere on campus is an important part of that support. About 21% of full-time faculty identify with one or more minority race or ethnicities as shown in Table 4.



**Table 4. Racial/Ethnic Composition of the Full-time Faculty**

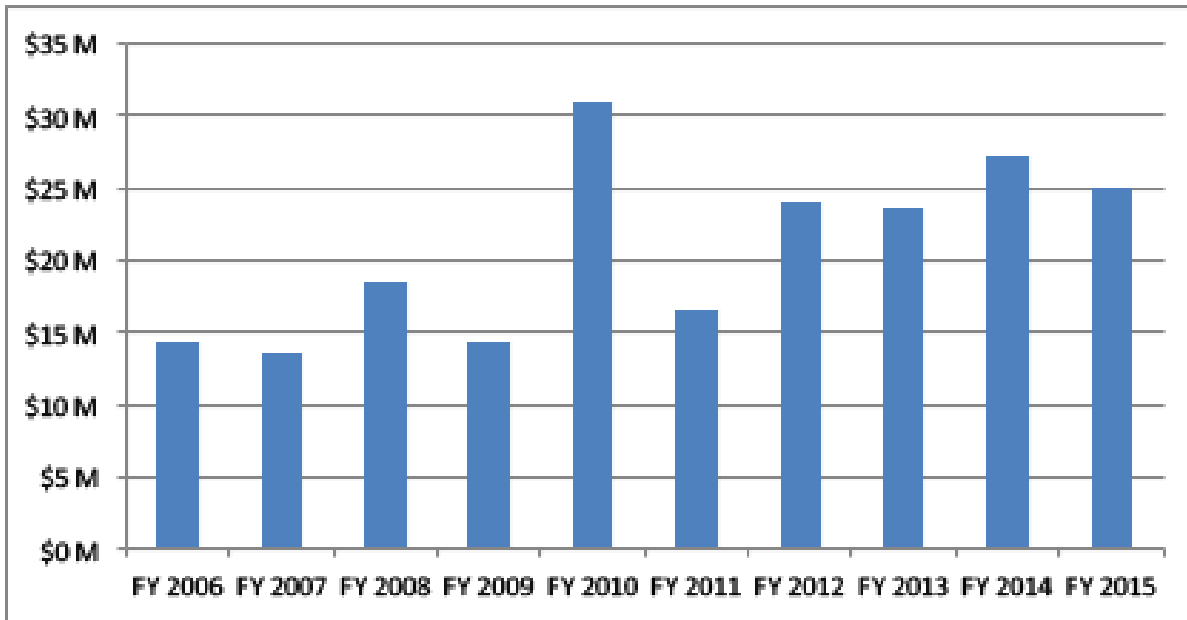
Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2015
American Indian	0.0%
Asian	10.0%
Black/African American	5.4%
Hispanic	5.9%
White	71.2%
Non-Resident Alien	6.9%
Two or more races	0.7%

Figure 5 shows changes in campus diversity over the past several years. Of particular note is the strong increase in the proportion of racial/ethnic minorities among campus executives. The racial/ethnic composition of employees in manager and director position has also become more diverse. In spite of policies and practices in place to ensure the availability of a diverse pool of applicants for all positions, the College has been less successful in increasing the diversity of its faculty. This is due, in part, to the large number of full-time faculty (much larger than the number of executive staff, for example) and the relatively low turnover and slow hiring rate for faculty compared with other groups of employees. Although more than half of QC's faculty have been hired in the past 10 years, severe budget limitations in more recent years have slowed hiring. Nonetheless, QC added 116 new full-time faculty over the past five years, 29% of whom identify with one or more racial/ethnic minority group, so the College is making headway on this goal. The 2015 CUNY workforce analysis (Appendix [J.992 \[A103\]](#)) details the ethnic breakdown of faculty and staff at each of its institutions.



**Figure 5. Trends in the Percentage of Minority Faculty, Executives and Managerial Employees**

QC faculty garner recognition for their teaching and scholarship both within the College and outside. Over the last decade our new faculty members have been awarded 10 NSF New Career Awards, as well as 10 Fulbrights since 2010. Faculty, overall, are productive with regard to research, scholarship, and creative activity, each publishing two pieces of peer-reviewed scholarship, on average, each year (see Section 3.2). External research awards averaged under \$15M per year prior to 2010, but have risen since. Figure 6 shows the trend.



**Figure 6. Trends in External Awards<sup>2</sup>**

Queens College was recognized in 2011 by the Education Trust as one of only five colleges in the U.S. that do a good job serving low-income students (based on graduation rate and cost) [4]. More recently, the Washington Monthly [5] ranked QC second among 1,540 U.S. colleges for giving students the “best bang for the buck” in 2013 and again in 2014. These accolades reflect a core mission of the College – access to a quality education. Eighty percent of our bachelor’s students graduate debt free, and the debt for those who do have loans averages just over \$13,000.

More recently, Queens College ranked No. 10 in the nation on a “Social Mobility Index” being proposed by CollegeNET, Inc. as a measure of “the extent to which a college or university educates more economically disadvantaged students (with family incomes below the national median) at lower tuition, so they can graduate and obtain good paying jobs.” The Social Mobility Index website [6] explains the rationale for developing this alternative to “prestige” rankings, such as US New and World Reports, as a way of encouraging colleges and universities to do a better job of serving the long-term interests of society. Perhaps not surprising, given the City University’s mission (See Section Chapter 1), some other CUNY campuses also did well in this ranking.

Our academic programs are organized into four divisions: Arts and Humanities, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Education. Across the divisions, the College offers 100 bachelor’s degree programs and 106 master’s degree programs (which includes 49 master’s in education programs). Programs can be completed by taking courses that are offered both days and evenings. Our “Weekend College” offers sufficient courses on weekends for students

<sup>2</sup> The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (“stimulus package”) of 2009 led to the large number of awards in 2010.

to complete one of six baccalaureate programs. We also admit a cohort of approximately 60 students annually into CUNY's Macaulay Honors College (MHC), a selective tuition-free academic program open to highly motivated undergraduates.

Queens College's centers and institutes serve students and the larger community by addressing critical social justice, public health, and environmental challenges as well as celebrating the borough's many ethnic communities. The arts scene on campus is vibrant thanks to the Kupferberg Center for the Visual and Performing Arts, which brings together the College's academic departments in the arts (Music, Drama, Theatre & Dance, Art, and Media Studies) and its museums (the Godwin-Ternbach, the Queens College Art Center, and the Louis Armstrong House Museum). The Evening Readings Series, recently celebrating its 40th anniversary, has brought some of the world's most acclaimed writers to campus.

The College is committed to offering an enriched campus experience for its students. With over 100 clubs and organizations – from the Science Organization of Minority Students to clubs for theatre, fencing, environmental science, and martial arts – robust opportunities exist for students to develop leadership skills and talents outside of the classroom. The only CUNY college that participates in NCAA Division II sports, Queens sponsors 19 men's and women's teams that have won numerous conference and regional championships and have competed on the national stage.

## **0.2 Recent Developments and Challenges**

Several notable developments at Queens College in the past 10 years illustrate the vitality of the institution. Dr. Félix V. Matos Rodríguez assumed the presidency of QC in August 2014, having previously served as president of Hostos Community College in CUNY; shortly after, a new Chancellor was appointed to lead CUNY. President James Muyskens retired from Queens College in 2013 after 12 years of extraordinary service, and former provost Evangelos Gizis served for eight months as the interim president. Coincident with his arrival, President Matos Rodríguez received approval and financial support from CUNY to create a new VP position for enrollment management and retention, which was filled in August 2015. As oversight for some administrative and academic support services shifted to this new office, other changes were set in motion enabling the creation of a new Office of Institutional Effectiveness. A dean position was created and recently filled to oversee the institutional research, business intelligence, assessment and accreditation responsibilities of that office. The reorganization represents a significant increase in resources devoted to these areas. In the years leading up to the start of President Matos Rodríguez tenure at QC, there had been considerable administrative turnover at the dean and vice president levels, due to retirements and departures for leadership roles at other institutions, resulting in several vacancies. These positions are now occupied by permanent appointees. Most notably, Provost Elizabeth Hendrey assumed her permanent position in 2015, having previously served as acting provost, acting CFO, and for many years as dean of the Division of Social Sciences.

Roughly six years ago, the College acquired a large building, formerly the CUNY Law School, on the west edge of campus. It contains two dozen classrooms as well as significant office space, and recently became home to our Foreign Language departments and the Department of

Linguistics and Communication Disorders, as well as to a Psychology Department clinic supporting the mental health needs of the local community (Appendix [J.998](#) [[A104](#)]). This, in turn, opened up space in King Hall to centralize our international activities, including a planned Navitas cohort of international students. At about the same time, construction was completed on the Remsen Building Annex, which houses over a dozen state-of-the-art research and teaching laboratories. More recently, the 13-story Kiely Hall tower was extensively renovated, with new windows and HVAC providing significant future energy savings. The first residence hall for Queens College, the Summit Apartments, opened in 2009. This 503-bed facility has added vibrancy to life on campus, and facilitated special programs such as an exchange program with Toyohashi University of Technology in Japan. A new shuttle service, connecting to nearby subway stations, was instituted last year with support from a student approved fee. In its first year, the shuttles have served 300,000 riders.

In 2013, CUNY instituted a new General Education curriculum entitled *Pathways*, designed to ease the ability of students to transfer from community colleges to senior colleges, or between colleges, and thereby speed time to graduation. QC had just instituted its own new general education curriculum, and was able to maintain many of its key distinctive features within the *Pathways* guidelines.

In 2010, CUNY introduced CUNYfirst, a new business (ERP) system based on Oracle's PeopleSoft products. QC served as one of two vanguard institutions for this system, which has automated processes in admissions, registration, financial aid, purchasing, and human resources, and provides ready access to key data. CUNY also introduced, in 2013, the CUNY Service Corps, which gives approximately 100 QC students the opportunity for paid internships in service to the community.

In 2011, CUNY developed a forward looking "Compact" with New York State [[7](#)], which defined the financial contributions and goals of the institution and the State. The State consequently agreed to a "rational" tuition policy, allowing tuition to increase by \$300 per year for five years. The last year of these increases was 2015, with no tuition increase in 2016. CUNY tuition remains relatively low (\$6,330 per year for in-state undergraduates), and, according to 2015-2016 financial aid data available in CUNYfirst, 49.7% of students eligible for financial aid have no out of pocket tuition or fee costs. CUNY placed revenue from the most recent \$300 increase in reserve, in anticipation of salary increases in the new PSC-CUNY contract [[8](#)], which was ratified in 2016. Faculty were without a new contract from 2010 to 2016, with salary steps governed by the prior contract, but without cost-of-living increases. The new contract includes a 10.4% salary increase over the 2010-2017 contract period, including retroactive increases for the period 2012-2016.

The Clinical Psychology (Neuropsychology) Program received accreditation from the American Psychological Association in 2015. The Education unit of the College received continued accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 2013, and simultaneously received accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the successor agency to NCATE. This was the first accreditation awarded by CAEP to any institution. The College is studying the possibility of accreditation for

its business-related programs. QC is currently a member of the 13<sup>th</sup> ACE Internationalization Lab [9] cohort and is one of 11 institutions selected for Education Trust’s OASIS project [10], which aims to improve degree completion rates of underrepresented minority students.



**Queens College Campus Portrait**

### **0.3 The Self-Study Process at Queens College**

The seven MSCHE standards for accreditation have a logical flow that has been encapsulated by Middle States Commissioner Dr. David Rehm as follows:

“A higher education institution

- has a mission (Standard I)
- and lives it with integrity (Standard II)
- to enhance the student learning experience (Standard III)
- and support the overall student experience (Standard IV).

That institution

- assesses its success in achieving that mission (Standard V)
- and engages in planning to strengthen its resources and improve as an institution (Standard VI)
- by means of an effective governing process (Standard VII).”

The standards and their respective criteria appear fully in the face pages preceding each of the subsequent sections of this report.

In September 2014, President Matos Rodríguez, in consultation with Provost Hendrey, appointed three individuals to serve as MSCHE CIP liaisons and co-chairs of the self-study steering committee: Professor Antonio Gonzalez, Chair of the Art Department; Dr. Steven Schwarz, Associate Provost and Professor of Physics; Dr. Christopher Vickery, Director of General Education and Professor of Computer Science. Acting Dean of Institutional Effective Cheryl Littman became a co-chair upon her appointment in August 2016.

The College created one working group for each of the seven standards, and an eighth working group to focus on verification of compliance. Working groups were also assigned responsibility to address requirements of affiliation -- displayed at the beginning of this section -- that were pertinent to their charge. Table 5 indicates where information on requirements 7-13 and 15 may be found in the subsequent sections of the self-study. The chair of each working group was a faculty member, and each working group had an administrative liaison to the Steering Committee as well as a co-chair. All groups had student representation. The working group rosters may be found in the Self-Study Design, Appendix [A.2 \[A105\]](#).

**Table 5. Requirements of affiliation assigned to each working group**

Working Group	Requirements of Affiliation
I. Mission and Goals	7*, 10
II. Ethics and Integrity	-
III. Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience	8, 9*, 10, 15*
IV. Support of the Student Experience	8, 10
V. Educational Effectiveness Assessment	8*, 9, 10
VI. Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement	8, 10*, 11*
VII. Governance, Leadership, and Administration	12*, 13*
VIII. Compliance with Relevant Regulations and Requirements of Affiliation	all

\*The Steering Committee asked the working group to specifically examine how the College meets this requirement of affiliation.

The College developed a Google Docs system for the use of the working groups and to facilitate campus feedback. All individuals with QC e-mail addresses have access to the system, though individual documents can have limited viewership as determined by their authors. Key documents such as the Self-Study Design (Appendix [A.2 \[A105\]](#)), the initial Documentation Roadmap (Appendix [A.3 \[A106\]](#)), working group reports, campus presentations, and MSCHE publications are readily available on the site, and can be edited and commented on by multiple individuals. (The site is also accessible from the provost’s Middle States webpage, along with prior Middle States self-studies and periodic review reports [[11](#)].) Each group maintained its



own folder where dozens of supporting references are stored. When campus feedback was sought, students, faculty, and staff had the option of e-mailing their comments to a strawman e-mail account, or to logging in directly to the Google Docs system to enter their comments and suggestions.

Figure 8 presents a timeline of self-study activities at Queens College. Working groups began meeting in March 2015, and their requests for information and documents allowed the Steering Committee to populate the Documentation Roadmap that was submitted to Middle States as part of the Self-Study Design document the following month. The Roadmap has continued to evolve. For example, we developed a “consolidated” roadmap spreadsheet that lists all documents requested by any group, along with all groups that requested that document. The current roadmap is a cloud-based service that uses a spreadsheet (Appendix [A.4 \[A107\]](#)) as an index to an online documentation repository and various web applications to analyze, manage, and generate various parts of this report. We have structured the roadmap so we will be able to use it as a resource for standards compliance reporting in the future. We presented information about the design and use of the documentation roadmap at the 2016 Middle States Annual Conference (Appendix [A.7 \[A108\]](#)).

### Self-Study Timetable

#### **2014**

October 7	CIP Orientation Workshop (Washington, D.C.)
November 12	CIP Training (Philadelphia)

#### **2015**

January	Selection of Steering Committee members
February	Steering Committee approved outline of Self-Study Design
March/April	Working groups begin to meet. Self-Study Design is prepared.
April 10	Draft of Self-Study Design provided to Steering Committee.
May 6	Campus visit of Middle States VP- Dr. Debra Klinman
June	Draft Design revised; approval from MSCHE Liaison
July/August	Documentation for Working Groups Assembled
September	Working Groups begin inquiry
November 9-10	Self-Study Institute for 2017-18 cohort
December	Outlines submitted by working groups
December	Steering Committee provides feedback

#### **2016**

January	First drafts submitted by working groups
February – March	Campus feedback; Open Forum; Senate presentation
April	Final drafts of working group reports submitted
June	Self-study co-chairs prepare first draft of final self-study
August – September	Campus Feedback on First Draft of Final Self-Study
October	Self-Study Co-chairs prepare Second Draft of Final Self-Study
October 20	Preliminary visit by team chairperson; feedback on draft
November	Open Forum and Senate presentation
November	Self-Study Institute for 2018-19 cohort; final CIP meeting
December – January	Preparation of final self-study report based on feedback

#### **2017**

February	Final self-study report sent to all Evaluation Team members
April 2-5	Evaluation Team Visit

**Figure 7. Timetable of Self-study Activities**

#### **0.4 Intended Outcomes**

The Self-Study Design document [12] describes the priorities and intended outcomes of the self-study, and presents the charges to the working groups. Five intended outcomes were identified:

1. Demonstrate that Queens College meets the Middle States standards and has processes in place to assure continuous improvement for each of the standards' criteria.

2. Examine the academic and business processes encountered by students, faculty, and staff to understand where reorganization, streamlining and simplification might improve student experience and outcomes.
3. Focus on enrollment management with the aim of increasing retention, enhancing diversity, improving student services, building graduate programs, and supporting transfer students.
4. Foster educational innovation to improve student attainment via academic support, faculty development, technology, and other means.
5. Through participation in CIP, the College will develop expertise in effectively addressing and benefitting from the new standards, and will share best practices with its sister CUNY institutions as well as with regional institutions.

We can report, for the fifth intended outcome, that we have consulted extensively with other colleges (NY Tech, CCNY, York College) and have participated in panel presentations at MSCHE spring and fall symposia. We look forward to assisting other institutions in addressing the new standards. The concluding section of this document summarizes the progress to date for each of the intended outcomes.

### Reference Notation In This Document

We use the following notational conventions for various types of references in this document.

- Items in parentheses, such as ([s3c5a](#)) or ([r10](#)), indicate a particular MSCHE Standards criterion or Requirement of Affiliation being discussed. The examples refer to Standard III, Criterion 5a (General Education Scope) and Requirement 10 (Institutional Planning), for example. These items are hyperlinked to the corresponding definitions from the MSCHE Standards document.
- Cross-references within this document use hyperlinked section numbers. For example, Section 1.2 links to a subheading in Chapter 1.
- Appendices are grouped by category, and then sequentially within each category, with the reference hyperlinked to the appropriate appendix. For example, Appendix [A.1](#) [[A101](#)] refers to the copy of the MSCHE Standards document attached as an appendix to this report.
- References to external websites or to documents that are not included as appendices are hyperlinked using numbers enclosed in square brackets. For example, [[13](#)] is a link to the Queens College website. The integrity of such links is subject to changes made by the maintainers of those external sites.

# Standard I

## Mission and Goals

The institution's mission defines its purpose within the context of higher education, the students it serves, and what it intends to accomplish. The institution's stated goals are clearly linked to its mission and specify how the institution fulfills its mission.

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. clearly defined mission and goals that:
    - a. are developed through appropriate collaborative participation by all who facilitate or are otherwise responsible for institutional development and improvement;
    - b. address external as well as internal contexts and constituencies;
    - c. are approved and supported by the governing body;
    - d. guide faculty, administration, staff, and governing structures in making decisions related to planning, resource allocation, program and curricular development, and the definition of institutional and educational outcomes;
    - e. include support of scholarly inquiry and creative activity, at levels and of the type appropriate to the institution;
  - f. are publicized and widely known by the institution's internal stakeholders;
  - g. are periodically evaluated;
2. institutional goals that are realistic, appropriate to higher education, and consistent with mission;
  3. goals that focus on student learning and related outcomes and on institutional improvement; are supported by administrative, educational, and student support programs and services; and are consistent with institutional mission; and
  4. periodic assessment of mission and goals to ensure they are relevant and achievable.

# Chapter 1

## Standard I: Mission and Goals (s1)

In this section, we highlight the key features of the Queens College mission which establishes a distinct identity and role for the College within the City University of New York (CUNY) system. We describe the process by which our last two strategic plans have been developed, and show how our strategic goals and general education program are aligned with our mission as well as with goals articulated by the CUNY Central Office as part of the University's Performance Management Process (PMP). In addition, we describe several processes for monitoring progress on the goals related to our mission. This section sets the stage for the other sections of the self-study which describe how the College works to achieve its mission both on a day-to-day operational basis and with longer range planning. The subsequent sections help illustrate how the efforts of individual units, with their more specialized missions and goals, contribute to achieving the College's overall mission and goals – academic, operational, and financial.

### 1.1 Mission (s1c1)

Queens College is one of the 4-year baccalaureate and master's degree-granting institutions within the City University of New York (CUNY). Although the College itself existed for several decades before the existence of the CUNY system the College's mission fits well with that of the system as a whole. CUNY was established in 1961 by an act of the State of New York legislature. The State Legislature thus determines the context in which the College operates. The Legislature's act to create the CUNY System states, in part [14]:

*The Legislature's intent is that The City University be supported as an independent and integrated system of higher education on the assumption that the University will continue to maintain and expand its commitment to academic excellence and to the provision of equal access and opportunity for students, faculty and staff from all ethnic and racial groups and from both sexes. The City University is of vital importance as a vehicle for the upward mobility of the disadvantaged in the City of New York.*

The College's mission statement [15], positions Queens College as a liberal arts institution, carving out a somewhat unique role within the CUNY system that differentiates us from other CUNY institutions, while still echoing the legislative intent and mission of the University as a whole. Unlike other CUNY colleges such as Baruch College (known for its business school) City College (defined by its engineering programs) the Graduate Center (the University's doctoral institution), or the CUNY community colleges, QC's mission distinguishes us as a college "in which students learn the underlying principles of the humanities, the arts, and the mathematical, natural, and social sciences." Our mission statement expresses what we expect our students to gain from a Queens College education:

- learn to think critically;
- address complex problems;
- explore various cultures; and

- effectively use the full array of available technologies and information resources, states our commitment to faculty excellence:

- the College seeks productive scholars, scientists, and artists deeply committed to teaching;
- endeavors to enhance the teaching effectiveness of faculty; and
- encourages faculty research and creative work,

and affirms the importance of our relationship to and service of our community:

- provides affordable access to higher education;
- serves as a source of information in the public interest;
- offers cultural and educational activities to the public;
- develops students to assume leadership positions in their communities;
- contributes to creating an educated workforce and the economic future and vitality of the borough and city.

The themes of the current Queens College mission statement remain as relevant today as when they were first articulated twenty years ago and continue to define who we are and what we are striving to achieve.

Although the Mission and Goals Working Group concluded that the mission themes continue to represent the QC's values and focus well, because the College Motto, *Discimus ut serviamus - We learn so that we may serve*, is not clearly reflected in the College's mission statement, and because the statement, itself, is quite lengthy at 460-words, they felt that a more complete and succinct mission statement could better serve the College. A short summary of our mission statement would help our campus community and the broader community become more familiar with our core themes of access, diversity, and excellence. The group noted that the "Mission Summary" that was developed as part of an earlier strategic plan is even longer than the mission statement! The current strategic plan (see the first column of Figure 11 below) distills the QC mission into nine cogent themes. A more complete discussion of the strategic planning process and current plan is provided below, but here it is important to note that the seventh strategic plan theme (support for staff members) is not clearly stated in the current version of the mission statement, and thus provides additional support for the recommendation at the end of this chapter.

This process of reviewing and revising the College mission statement should be completed prior to the 2018-2019 academic year, when Queens College will begin work to prepare the 2021-2025 strategic plan. The resulting statement must be well publicized within the campus community and to the public. The working group found that the current mission statement was difficult to locate on the college's website so it was coupled with the strategic plan in the "About QC" section to make it easier to find [\[15\]](#).

*Our Statement of Purpose, updated as part of the 1995 Middle States Self Study.*

The mission of Queens College is to prepare students to become leading citizens of an increasingly global society. The college seeks to do this by offering its exceptionally diverse student body a rigorous education in the liberal arts and sciences under the guidance of a faculty that is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and the expansion of the frontiers of knowledge. Its goal is that students learn to think critically, address complex problems, explore various cultures, and use effectively the full array of available technologies and information resources.

Within a structured curriculum and in an atmosphere of collegiality and mutual respect, the college fosters an environment in which students learn the underlying principles of the humanities, the arts, and the mathematical, natural, and social sciences. The college also prepares students in a variety of professional and pre-professional programs that build upon and complement the liberal arts and sciences foundation.

Recognizing the special needs of a commuting student population, the college strives to create a broad range of intellectual and social communities. The college offers a spectrum of curricular and co-curricular programs that serve individuals and distinctive student constituencies.

In support of the need for advanced study in the liberal arts and professions, the college offers a variety of master's degree and certificate programs. In particular, the college recognizes and accepts its historic responsibility for providing high quality programs for the pre-service and in-service education of teachers.

As a partner with CUNY's graduate school, the college provides faculty and resources in support of the university's mission in doctoral education and research. The college employs university graduate students and prepares them for careers in higher education and research, and it supports faculty who serve as mentors for doctoral students and engage in related scholarly activities.

For its faculty, the college seeks productive scholars, scientists, and artists deeply committed to teaching. It endeavors to enhance the teaching effectiveness of faculty and to encourage their research and creative work. The college recognizes the importance of a diverse faculty responsive to the needs and aspirations of students of all ages and backgrounds.

As a public institution, Queens College provides affordable access to higher education and embraces its special obligation to serve the larger community. It is a source of information in the public interest; it is a venue for cultural and educational activities serving the general public. Through its graduates' contributions to an educated workforce and through the leading roles they assume in their local communities, the college is vested in the economic future and vitality of New York.

**Figure 8. Queens College Mission Statement ([r7](#))**

Just as our institutional mission statement should align with our legislated mandate and the mission of the City University of New York, each academic department, student support office, and administrative unit should have a mission statement consistent with the College's mission.

In an ongoing effort to systematically review academic and non-academic assessment at the College, it became apparent that not all departments and offices had a published mission statement. To encourage all units to develop and share a statement intended to guide their work and contribute to advancing the College's overall mission and goals, the College established a college-wide goal as part of the University's Performance Management Process (the PMP is discussed further below and later in this report) that all academic departments and programs will post their mission statement (or relevant link) to the College's assessment repository [12] by end of the 2016. The College's PMP focus goals (a set of annual goals established by the College as a supplement to the University-wide goals set forth in the PMP) is included in section C of QC's prospective PMP report for 2015-16 (Appendix D.5 [A109]). As is noted below and in our discussion of Standard V, nearly all departments have met this goal and we have several dozen mission statements collected and publicly available. To encourage further progress with this goal, in terms of revising outdated statements, and to ensure that departmental and program mission statements are well publicized, the College has revised its guidelines for academic program assessment to include a section about expectations for departmental mission statements (Appendix E.17 [A110]). We expect that these guidelines will help units that have not already done so, to articulate their distinct role in serving the College mission. The work of the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council, and other assessment bodies the College plans to form this year to strengthen its assessment infrastructure, should also help advance this goal. Meta data features built into the QC Assessment Document Repository (discussed in more detail in Section 5.1) facilitate regular monitoring of progress on our goal related to departmental and program mission statements. The College will extend this goal to non-academic departments next year as it continues to develop its program of assessment of administrative and student services units.

## **1.2 Academic Program Missions and Goals**

The academic program review process is described in more detail in Section 5.2.1, but we present here some examples of department and program mission statements and goals from the QC assessment repository. Departments are required to use the repository to maintain current mission statements for the academic programs they offer, program learning outcomes, an assessment plan that ties the mission statements to shorter term goals and assessment activities, and evidence of assessment. The mission statements and plans are developed and approved by department faculty, with feedback provided by the College's Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (described more fully in Section 5).

Among other guidance, QC's guidelines for academic program review (departmental self-study) posted on the QC Academic Program Review website ([16]) indicate that the department's self-study report should include the departmental mission statement. The template outline for the report includes the following:



“Mission Statement: This is a statement of the department’s sense of itself and its goals and mission. These should be related to the mission of Queens College and the University...”

Table 6 below provides links to a sample of mission statements from across the four divisions.

**Table 6: Sample of academic department mission statements**

Division	Department	Appendix
ARTHU	Comparative Literature	Appendix <a href="#">E.23</a> [ <a href="#">A111</a> ]
ARTHU	Linguistics and Communication Disorders	Appendix <a href="#">E.24</a> [ <a href="#">A112</a> ]
EDUC	Overall Professional Education Unit	Appendix <a href="#">E.282</a> [ <a href="#">A113</a> ]
EDUC	Each Department in Education Unit	Appendix <a href="#">E.282</a> [ <a href="#">A113</a> ]
MNS	Biology	Appendix <a href="#">E.25</a> [ <a href="#">A114</a> ]
MNS	Math	Appendix <a href="#">E.26</a> [ <a href="#">A115</a> ]
SOCSC	Economics	Appendix <a href="#">E.27</a> [ <a href="#">A116</a> ]
SOCSC	Accounting and Information Systems	Appendix <a href="#">E.28</a> [ <a href="#">A117</a> ]

ARTHU=Arts and Humanities; EDUC=Education; MNS=Mathematics and Natural Sciences; SOCSC=Social Sciences

Beyond the budgets for the typical instructional activities of the academic departments, both QC and the University invest additional resources to support learning goals and student success ([s1c3](#)) with the objective of advancing the college mission. For example, CUNY provides funding to the Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) program at each campus in support of three priority areas focused on immersion and summer bridge programs, first-year and student success initiatives including programs for new and transfer students, and academic support services. CUNY also supports Writing Fellows and Quantitative Reasoning Fellows – doctoral students who work directly with faculty to enhance student performance and study novel pedagogical approaches. Among the supports for student learning provided by the College are a Writing Center, extended tutoring programs, computer facilities in the Library and elsewhere, and faculty professional development, including a professional office hour for adjuncts so they can interact more with students. Support for faculty to learn about all aspects of teaching and learning is provided by the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL), which also receives funding from CUE.

### 1.2.1 General Education Goals and the College Mission

Several themes of the College’s mission are reflected in the goals and learning outcomes of the College’s general education curriculum. A new CUNY-wide general education curriculum known as *Pathways* was introduced in 2013 (discussed in more detail in Section [3.6](#)). The general education learning goals were developed in consultation with faculty committees drawing from all CUNY campuses, and the curriculum was approved by the separate academic governing bodies at each CUNY college. *Pathways* provided some flexibility to the CUNY 4-year colleges, including Queens College, in shaping their general education curriculum by allowing those

colleges to include additional learning outcomes and courses in the general education curriculum as part of what is called “the College Option” of *Pathways*. The College Option, in addition to the fact that the learning goals of *Pathways* and those of the QC general education curriculum that had just been revised prior to the introduction of (called *Perspectives*) were sufficiently similar, allowed QC to apply many of the courses already part of our general education curriculum to the new *Pathways* framework. And this, in turn allowed us to retain some particularly distinctive features of *Perspectives* such as addressing how data and evidence are construed and knowledge is acquired, as well as how a given discipline is positioned in the liberal arts.

A significant number of the learning outcomes for the general education curriculum help advance our mission theme of providing “Rigorous education in the liberal arts and sciences and STEM (our academics).” A few are shown below:

- Read and listen critically and analytically, including identifying an argument’s major assumptions and assertions and evaluating its supporting evidence.
- Formulate original ideas and relate them to the ideas of others by employing the conventions of ethical attribution and citation.
- Demonstrate research skills using appropriate technology, including gathering, evaluating, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources.
- Use algebraic, numerical, graphical, or statistical methods to draw accurate conclusions and solve mathematical problems.
- Gather, analyze, and interpret data and present it in an effective written laboratory or fieldwork report.
- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Articulate how meaning is created in the arts or communications and how experience is interpreted and conveyed.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the skills involved in the creative process.

And for our mission theme of developing “Leading citizens of our global society (our students)”, the following general education learning outcomes are relevant:

- Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.
- Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one’s own.
- Articulate and evaluate the impact of technologies and scientific discoveries on the contemporary world, such as issues of personal privacy, security, or ethical responsibilities.
- Appreciate what is lost or gained in translations among languages.

Our goal to foster a “diverse, inclusive, collegial, and respectful” campus community is supported by the following general education learning outcomes:

- Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies.

- Evaluate how indigenous populations, slavery, or immigration have shaped the development of the United States.
- Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.

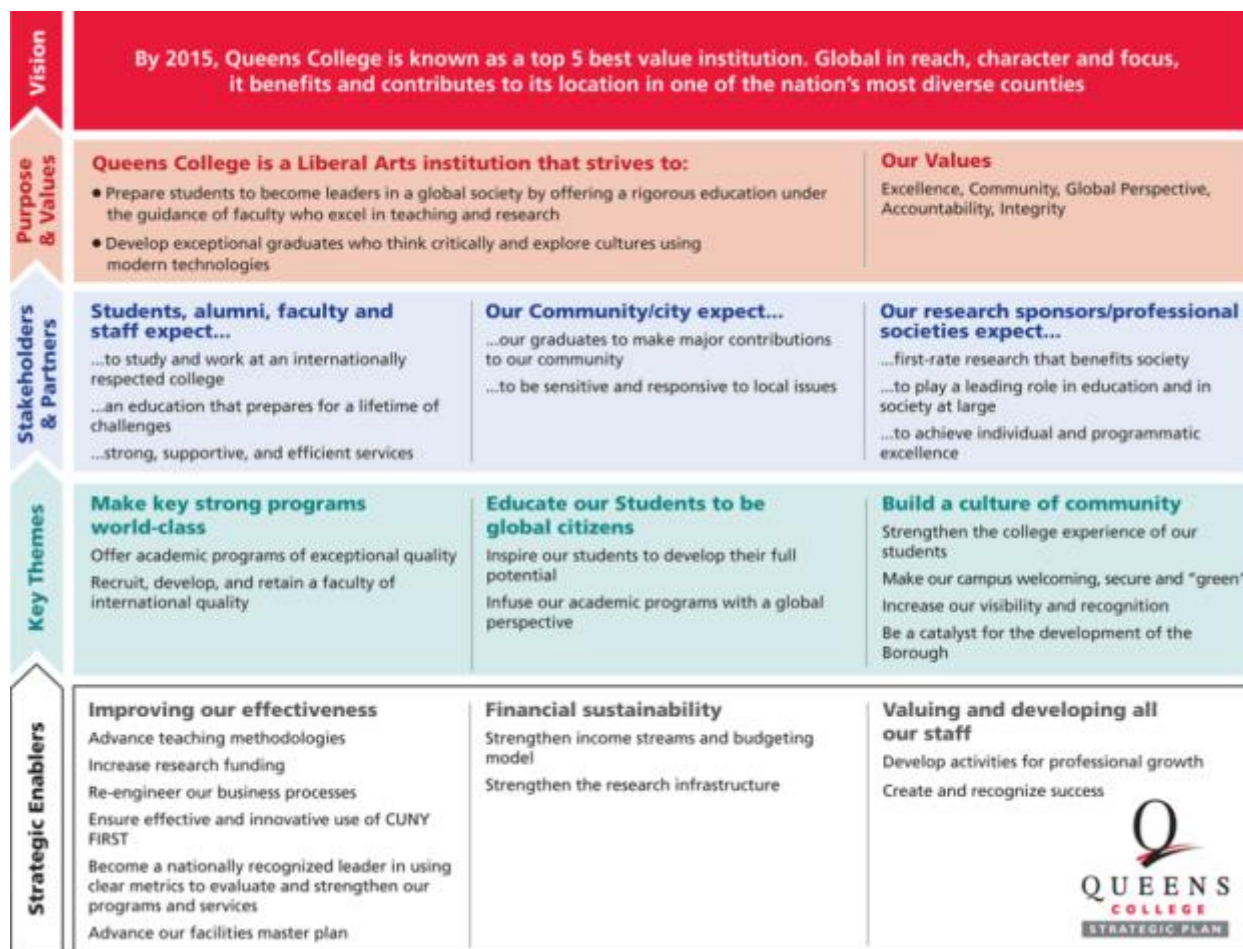
In 2007, the QC Senate adopted ambitious goals for student writing governing the College's writing intensive (W) courses as well as first year and general education courses that focus on writing. These goals are described in Appendix [E.16 \[A118\]](#). The goals were developed by the Writing at Queens (WaQ) program Appendix [E.81 \[A119\]](#), which has a faculty director and resources supporting assessment of writing, together with the Writing Sub-committee (WSC) of the Academic Senate. Assessment of these goals is discussed in Section [Chapter 5](#).

The College and the University provide many resources to support learning goals and student success ([s1c3](#)). CUNY provides funding to the Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) program at each campus in support of tutoring, advising, and assessment activities. CUNY also supports Writing Fellows and Quantitative Reasoning Fellows – doctoral students who work directly with faculty to enhance student performance and study novel pedagogical approaches. Among the supports for student learning provided by the College are a Writing Center, the Center for Teaching and Learning, extended tutoring programs, computer facilities in the Library and elsewhere, faculty development, and a professional office hour for adjuncts so they can interact more with students.

### **1.3 The 2015-2020 Strategic Plan ([s1c2](#), [s1c3](#), [s1c4](#))**

While the College's mission statement has been stable over a long period of time, we are continuously reviewing and revising our shorter term goals, embodied in a series of 5-year strategic plans (SP). We are in the second year of implementation of our current 5-year plan. Like the prior plans, our current plan was developed through an open and inclusive process described below. To provide context for our current set of strategic goals, it helps to see where we came from through a brief review of the prior plan. The 2008-2013 plan is outlined in Figure 10 below. The topmost goal (the red bar in the figure) was realized in 2013, when the College was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation by Washington Monthly as a "Best Bang for the Buck" College; QC remained near the top of this ranking for several years after and fell in the rankings somewhat after the methodology was substantially changed. Overall, 63 faculty/staff committees identified numerous desired outcomes that were referenced in our 2012 Periodic Review Report, Appendix [A.6 \[A120\]](#).

As the 2008-2013 plan (Appendix [C.3 \[A121\]](#)) neared completion, work began under the leadership of then President James Muyskens on developing the 2013-2018 plan. The College held town hall meetings and an off-campus retreat in which over 100 faculty and staff participated, and solicited contributions from numerous subcommittees, all resulting in input on which the current plan is based. Implementation began immediately with several initiatives intended to advance strategic goals related to our mission, including the formation of an Enrollment Management Task Force and entry into the ACE Internationalization Lab cohort [\[9\]](#), as described elsewhere in the study.



**Figure 9. Queens College Strategic Plan 2008-2013 overview**

Implementation continued even after President Muyskens retired at the end of 2013 and during the period of Interim leadership. President Felix Matos Rodriguez arrived at the College in August 2014 and undertook a review of the 2013-2018 strategic plan. President Matos Rodríguez and his cabinet saw ways to refine and restructure that plan while remaining consistent with the existing plan's essential character and themes, and with the College's mission. A revised plan was developed and a draft was disseminated campus-wide. Further revisions reflected discussions at a series of well-attended public fora in 2015. In December 2015, the Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 (Appendix [C.1 \[A122\]](#)) was published. The current strategic plan extracts nine major themes from the College's mission statement, sets four high-level goals for QC over the five-year period, identifies a dozen initiatives that we believe will help us achieve those goals, and lists a set of outcomes we are using to assess how successfully our plan is executed. The themes, goals, initiatives and outcome measures are presented in Figures 11 below. Pages 14-15 of the current strategic plan present the current status on the outcome measures and sets five-year targets on each - Appendix [C.1 \[A122\]](#).

Mission Themes	Goals	Initiatives	Outcomes
1. Leading citizens of our global society (our students) 2. Affordable access to higher education (our belief) 3. Spectrum of curricular and co-curricular programs (our approach) 4. Rigorous education in liberal arts and sciences and STEM (our academics) 5. Advanced graduate education (our academics) 6. Teachers, scholars, scientists, and artists (our faculty) 7. Staff flourishing in student support and administrative roles (our staff) 8. Diverse, inclusive, collegial, and respectful (our campus environment) 9. Vested in the cultural, economic, and educational vitality of New York (our community)	1. To facilitate student success	1. Support transfer student transition to QC 2. Improve the graduate student experience, with an emphasis on master's students 3. Leverage use of technology to strengthen student engagement and teaching and learning	1. Improved student retention, graduation, and success/progress rates, particularly for undergraduate transfers and graduate students 2. Increased student satisfaction with campus support services 3. Enhanced support for faculty teaching, research, and scholarship 4. Strengthened professional development that supports staff professional and career growth
	2. To support faculty and staff excellence	4. Foster faculty scholarship in research, teaching, and Service 5. Support professional development of staff 6. Strengthen planning and assessment practice	5. Strengthened use of student learning and institutional effectiveness assessment data in academic and budgeting decision-making 6. Increased international exposure and experiences for students, staff, and faculty
	3. To weave campus, community, and global connections	7. Nurture campus diversity 8. Broaden local community connections and service 9. Expand QC's international presence and interactions	7. Increased faculty scholarship in the form of research, creative activities, publications, contracts, and grants 8. Increased faculty and student diversity to better resemble borough demographics (especially for African American and veteran populations) and to better resemble our student body
	4. To strengthen operational capacity and infrastructure	10. Re-engineer business processes to better meet student needs 11. Promote the impact and visibility of QC 12. Enhance stewardship and grow our resources	9. Increased experiential offerings, service learning, and internships 10. Increased hybrid and fully online course offerings 11. Increased non-tax-levy funds 12. Better utilization of physical plant and energy resources

**Figure 10. Queens College Strategic Plan 2015-2020 snapshot**

The president meets with his extended cabinet and faculty representatives at least annually to outline and prioritize strategic goals, and periodically to develop and implement strategies to

achieve them. At the start of the academic year, individuals are identified to assume responsibility for each goal, and the Strategic Plan Implementation Group monitors progress, as typified by the 2015-2016 Action Plan (Appendix [C.6 \[A123\]](#)). This process is discussed further in [Chapter 6](#). The strategic plan goals for 2016-2017 and the implementation team structure are presented in Appendix [C.11 \[A124\]](#).

#### **1.4 The CUNY Performance Management Process**

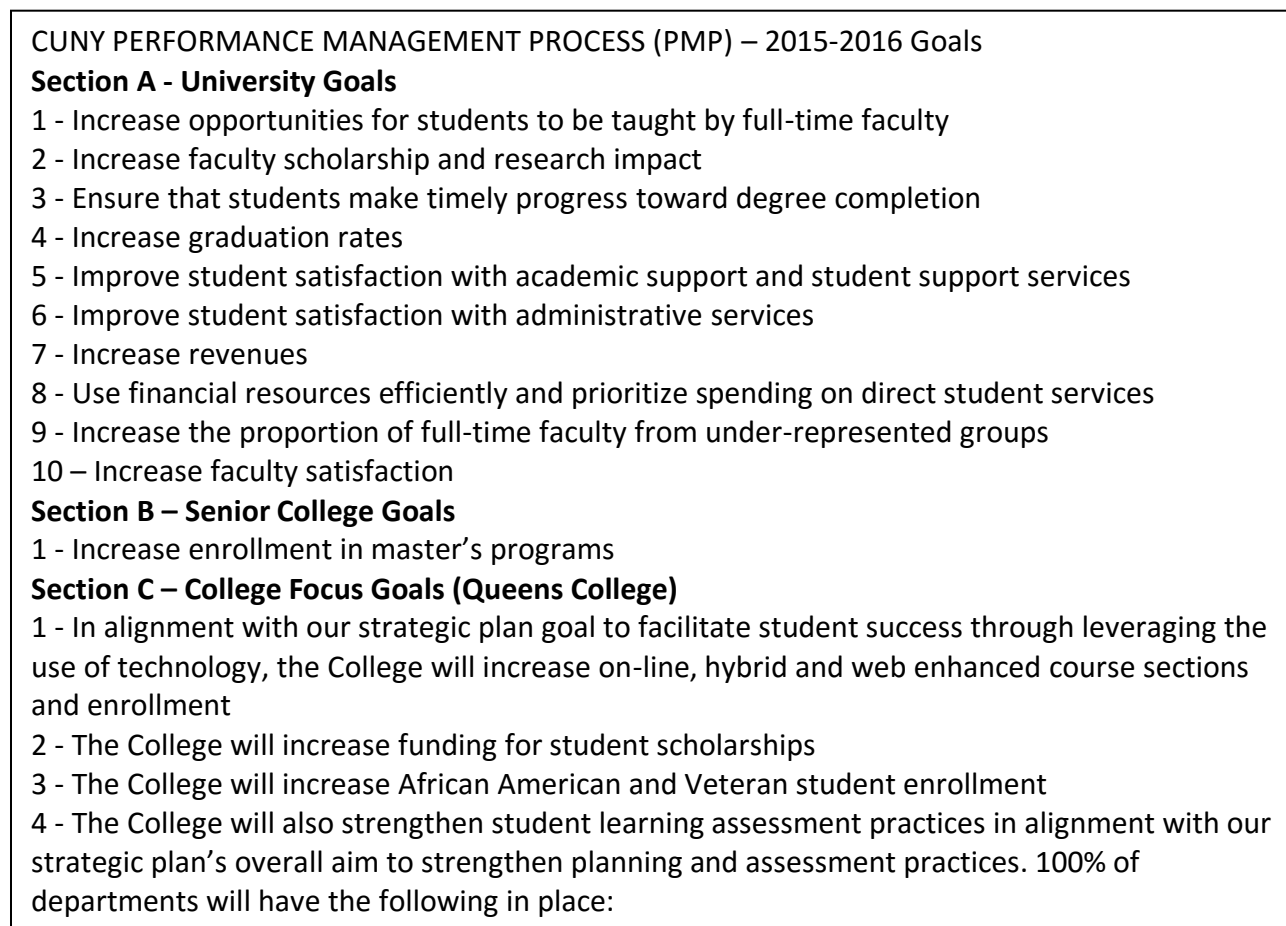
In addition to the strategic plan goals we have derived from our own mission, the College strives each year to make progress on a set of goals set University-wide by CUNY's chancellor. The chancellor uses a process known as the Performance Management Process, or PMP, of annual goal-setting, outcomes-monitoring, and feedback to manage the institutions and advance university-wide goals. The process and purpose is described on the CUNY website [\[17\]](#). The structure of the performance management process and the set of University PMP goals reflect consultation with college presidents through the CUNY Council of Presidents and college Provosts through CUNY Academic Council, and have been relatively consistent from year to year, with some changes introduced in more recent years when a new chancellor came in to replace a long-serving one. The PMP goals for 2015-16 are shown in Figure 11, and a more detailed document including the specific outcome measures used CUNY-wide to measure progress on these goals is in Appendix [D.1 \[A125\]](#).

As part of this process, at the beginning of each year, CUNY colleges establish targets on University goals and identify a small number of additional goals specific to the college and aligned with their own strategic plan (Appendix [D.5 \[A109\]](#)). The initial set of QC's college-specific goals for 2014 was submitted by the interim president in June of that year, after consultation with the Academic Senate and the College Personnel and Budget Committee. Appendix [D.8 \[A126\]](#), pages 1-2, gives the minutes of the meeting at which the interim president introduced the PMP process to the Academic Senate.

At the end of each academic year, CUNY publishes a data book displaying five-year trends in the PMP metrics (Appendix [D.2 \[A127\]](#)) for the 2015-16 data book). Year-end performance on PMP measures and focus goals is the subject of an annual conversation between the CUNY Chancellor and each college president. At Queens College, the president then shares the assessment with relevant administrators, initiating or continuing a series of conversations that informs the work for the coming year – planning, budgeting, and the implementation of new initiatives, in some cases, as funds allow. These conversations also lead to the establishment of new targets and initiatives for addressing new challenges or further advancing the goals. Examples of how the PMP process is used to improve educational effectiveness is provided in our discussion of Standard V, and our discussion of Standard VI provides examples of how the PMP is used to assess other institutional goals.

The PMP process has resulted in, among other things, the collection of data documenting faculty scholarly activity [\[18\]](#) and external grants [\[19\]](#). These data have proven useful to departments in conducting their self-studies. Departments have also used these data for recruitment of students and prospective faculty.

Performance on PMP measures is the subject of an annual conversation between the CUNY Chancellor and the President. The goals and structure of the PMP are relatively consistent from year to year, and reflect consultation with the CUNY Council of Presidents and the CUNY Academic Council (provosts). The goals and metrics used to gauge progress on PMP goals are listed in Figure 11. At the end of each academic year, CUNY produces a data book displaying five-year trends in the metrics. The PMP data books for 2014-15 and 2015-16 are included in Appendix D.3 [A128] and Appendix D.2 [A127]. In recent years, PMP goals have been divided into three sections; the goals in section A pertain to all institutions in the University; those in section B pertain to individual sectors (2- or 4-year colleges); section C consists of the annual focus goals selected by the individual campus. Examples of QC’s year-end PMP reports are in Appendix D.7 [A129] and Appendix D.6 [A130].



**Figure 11. CUNY Performance Management Process goals and measures**

### **1.5 Recommendation**

The analysis undertaken by the Working Group on Mission and Goals, as described above, led to the following recommendation:

**Recommendation 1: The campus community, under the leadership of the Academic Senate, should consider revisions to the Mission, and develop a short but meaningful statement that captures its essence.**



# Standard II

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## Ethics and Integrity

**Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.**

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. a commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights;
2. a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives;
3. a grievance policy that is documented and disseminated to address complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty, or staff. The institution's policies and procedures are fair and impartial, and assure that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably;
4. the avoidance of conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all activities and among all constituents;
5. fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees;
6. honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials and practices, as well as in internal communications;
7. as appropriate to its mission, services or programs in place:
  - a. to promote affordability and accessibility;
  - b. to enable students to understand funding sources and options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt;
8. compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements to include reporting regarding:
  - a. the full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification and licensure or licensing board pass rates;
  - b. the institution's compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation;

## Standard II

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- c. substantive changes affecting institutional mission, goals, programs, operations, sites, and other material issues which must be disclosed in a timely and accurate fashion;
  - d. the institution's compliance with the Commission's policies; and
- 9. periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidenced in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented.

## Chapter 2

### Standard II: Ethics and Integrity ([s2](#))

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully. The central mission of Queens College is to prepare students to be model citizens of a global society. The Ethics and Integrity Working Group organized its response according to the following themes: freedom, respect, integrity, fairness, and openness. These themes are addressed in Section 2.1. and pertain to the following criteria: [s2c1](#), [s2c2](#), [s2c3](#), and [s2c6](#).

A separate working group (# 8) was formed to address compliance with federal requirements in order to prepare the Verification of Compliance report. The group collected information that intersected with several criteria related to Standard 2, specifically criteria [s2c4](#), [s2c5](#), [s2c7](#), and [s2c8](#)., and their findings were integrated with the work of the Ethics and Integrity group and are presented in this chapter. Working Group 8 examined Title IX compliance as well as compliance with other federal and institutional regulations ([r5](#)) that assure a safe and respectful environment for students, faculty, and staff, as described below. Although Title IX compliance is not mentioned specifically in the Standards, the College felt it was important to highlight its strong record of Title IX compliance in this chapter.

#### 2.1 Ethical Conduct

##### 2.1.1 Freedom ([s2c1](#))

*“Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.”* AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles [[20](#)]

The College offers a rigorous education in the liberal arts and sciences guided by a faculty dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and the expansion of the frontiers of knowledge. Teaching and learning, the pursuit of excellence and the expansion of knowledge - these all require unconstrained academic and intellectual freedom, and unfettered freedom of expression. These freedoms are among the underlying principles of education, the humanities, the arts, and the mathematical, natural, and social sciences that our students learn. Without these freedoms, students could not learn to think critically or address complex problems, nor could the College function in its role as a source of information in the public interest. The core goals of the College’s 2015 - 20 Strategic Plan to promote student success and faculty excellence rest on the same foundation. It is therefore appropriate that freedom is the first criterion associated with Standard II - Ethics and Integrity ([s2c1](#)).

The AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles, Appendix [J.2](#) [[A131](#)], forms the basis for CUNY policy on academic freedom. CUNY has officially affirmed its support for academic freedom many times; for example on October 26, 1981, when the Board of Trustees expressed “profound

regret” for the firings of faculty and staff in the 1941 Rapp-Coudert purge, and pledged “diligently to safeguard the Constitutional rights of freedom of expression, freedom of association, and open intellectual inquiry of the faculty” (University Faculty Senate Statement on Academic Freedom [A131], September 2009, p. 12). The history of that purge is a reminder that strong policy is by itself no guarantee against political interference.

Academic freedom is mentioned in the collective bargaining agreement (2007-2010) in its Preamble (Appendix I.3 [A132]):

*CUNY and the PSC seek to maintain and encourage, in accordance with law, full freedom of inquiry, teaching, research and publication of results, the parties subscribe to Academic Freedom for faculty members.*

The University Faculty Senate’s 2009 Statement on Academic Freedom [A131] provides a very complete account of the state of academic freedom across the University at that time. It notes that CUNY has been censured twice by the AAUP, in 1973 and 1977, and has been the subject of inquiries several other times. It also expresses some concerns about pressure exerted by outside groups on colleges, for example, to dismiss adjunct faculty whose views those groups oppose. Nevertheless, academic freedom is jealously guarded. At Queens College and throughout CUNY, the academic freedom of the faculty is monitored by faculty governance bodies, before which complaints about violations of academic freedom may be raised; by the Academic Freedom Committee of PSC-CUNY; by the Academic Freedom Committee of the UFS; and by the AAUP.

The COACHE faculty survey results suggest that this monitoring is very effective, at least in the case of Queens College: almost a quarter of the faculty listed academic freedom as one of the two best aspects of working here. (See page 40 of the COACHE 2015 Provost’s Report, Appendix E.3 [A133]).

### **2.1.2 Respect (s2c2)**

Queens College seeks to cultivate an atmosphere of collegiality and respect, and considerations of diversity are central to its mission. Standard II connects these, calling for a climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration whatever their background or standpoint (s2c2). The Ethics and Integrity Working Group realized that, while COACHE provides detailed information about the perception and attitudes of the faculty, and NSSE provides similar information for students, the College lacks any equivalent data for staff and administration. In order to remedy this lack, the Working Group devised a brief survey (Appendix E.6 [A134]), which ran in November 2015 and addressed the question of a climate of respect, as well as several other issues relevant to Standard II. QC has adopted the recommendation of the working group that some such satisfaction survey of the non-instructional staff be conducted regularly in future.

Staff and administration were asked, “How respectful are your interactions with other people at the College—students, faculty, staff, administrators?” The results were very positive, with over four-fifths of respondents ranking their interactions 4 or 5 on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being

very positive. Respondents were also asked how well the College supported its staff and administration in terms of respect for diversity. 64% chose either 4 or 5, while only 15% chose either 1 or 2.

The COACHE results on departmental collegiality and respect for diversity are also reassuring, with scores above 4 on a 5-point scale (Appendix [E.3 \[A133\]](#), pp. 35 and 37). One-fifth of the faculty surveyed listed “support of colleagues” among the best two aspects of working at Queens, and only a tiny number listed “lack of diversity” as one of the two worst aspects. The results for appreciation and recognition were not as strong (scores below 4), and recognition scores are lower the higher one goes in the College hierarchy.

The results from NSSE 2014 (Appendix [E.18 \[A135\]](#)) on the quality of student interactions are also positive with respect to interactions with other students and with faculty for both first-year students and seniors, but less than one-third (32%) of first-year students surveyed rated their interactions with student services staff a 6 or 7 (1 = Poor; 7 = Excellent) and seniors were even less satisfied in this area. Additional results are shown in Table 7 below for NSSE items receiving low satisfaction ratings:

**Table 7. Selected NSSE Survey Results**

NSSE Survey Item	% Satisfied (6 or 7 rating)	
	First-year students	Seniors
Interactions with student services staff	32%	29%
Interactions with other administrative staff and offices	34%	25%
Interactions with academic advisors	44%	34%
	% Reporting Often or Very Often	
Course discussions or assignments include diverse perspectives	51%	48%
Try to understand another’s views by looking at things from their perspective	65%	63%
Have discussions with people from a race or ethnicity other than their own	71%	78%

Increasing student satisfaction with campus support services is one of the college-wide outcomes set in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. NSSE results bearing on respect for diversity are better. In addition to the strong ratings shown in the bottom portion of Table 7, nearly half of the first-year students and just over half of the seniors surveyed responded either “very much” or “quite a bit” to the question of how much the College encourages contact among students from different backgrounds.

### 2.1.3 Integrity ([s2c4](#), [s2c5](#), [s2c6](#))

On June 27, 2011, the CUNY Board of Trustees adopted a new Academic Integrity Policy [[21](#)], revising the policy adopted in 2004. This strengthened due process protections for students

facing only academic sanctions and clarified circumstances where disciplinary rather than academic sanctions are appropriate. One goal of the changes was to improve consistency across campuses and improve information-flow, especially where students have enrolled at more than one campus.

The new policy, in operation only for the last three and a half years, has taken some time to “bed down” and so it is difficult to judge what effects the changes have wrought. The number of cases reported to the Office of Student Affairs under the policy is very small. At Queens College, the Vice President for Student Affairs serves as the College’s Academic Integrity Officer. CUNY Policy 5.20: Student Complaints about Faculty Conduct in Academic Settings [22], governs complaints in the other direction.

The CUNY Manual of General Policy [23] regulates almost every aspect of College life, from admissions to the maintenance of public order, from veteran reinstatement to advertising. Ethics at the University level is overseen by the Office of Legal Affairs. At Queens College, the Ethics Officer, Glenda Grace, is General Counsel and Chief of Staff. The Office of the General Counsel provides legal advice and guidance to the President and to academic and administrative departments; is responsible for labor relations for faculty and administrative staff and, with the Office of Human Resources, for other staff; represents the College in grievance and agency proceedings; serves as records and Freedom of Information Law officer, and financial disclosure and compliance officer; and liaises with the State attorney general on all litigation. Given this very extensive and important set of responsibilities, the staffing of this office has been considerably strengthened under the new President.

#### **2.1.4 Fairness (s2c5)**

“How fair and impartial are the College’s practices - in hiring, evaluation, promotion, and disciplinary action?” (s2c5) Staff and administrators who responded to the 2015 Ethics and Integrity Survey [A134] were more positive than negative in their answers except in the case of promotion, where only about 30% chose a score of 4 or 5 and 38% chose 1 or 2. Comments backed up the conclusion that, at least among respondents to the survey, the promotion process should be made more transparent. The College is committed to making sure that all policies included those relating to evaluation, promotion and disciplinary action are widely available and accessible to the entire community. This in part is the basis for Recommendation 2 of this report through which there will be a variety of ways to increase access to these policies, and thereby address these concerns. COACHE surveys provide data on how faculty perceive tenure and promotion practices at the College - on the whole, positively - but with no workplace satisfaction survey for staff and administrators, no such information is available for the non-instructional workforce. The College will in the future regularly survey the non-instructional workforce, just as it does students and faculty.

Almost a third of the respondents to the Ethics and Integrity Survey thought evaluation, promotion, and disciplinary policies were hard to access; the results were a little better as regards grievance policies (s2c3). It is perhaps not surprising that most of those who filed a grievance thought it had not been addressed either promptly or equitably: promptly addressed

- 8 Yes, 26 No; equitably addressed - 9 Yes, 23 No. In each case the number checking “Not applicable” was 294. In the grievance process, staff members are represented by their union, PSC-CUNY.

Among the faculty, the perception of tenure and promotion policy and practice as shown in the COACHE results is positive (above 4 out of 5) in the categories, for example, of “Tenure decisions are performance-based,” and “Clarity of expectations: Scholar” (Appendix [E.3 \[A133\]](#) p. 30). The Strategic Plan includes aspirational 5-year targets for these COACHE benchmarks.

The Academic Senate adopted a new grade appeal policy in 2015. So far, it has made little difference to the number of appeals that reach the USSC - the Undergraduate Scholastic Standards Committee. Appeals of grade begin with the instructor and proceed upwards through the Chair to the Dean and then to USSC. As can be seen in Appendix [J.31 \[A136\]](#), Nearly all are resolved before this last step. Most of the appeals reaching USSC are not for perceived unfairness but involve reopening incomplete grades after the deadline for resolving them has passed, retroactive withdrawals from courses, posting a letter grade in place of Pass/No Credit, etc. The new policy maintains the principle that the instructor’s judgment may not be appealed, but only deviations from stated grading guidelines or partiality.

### **2.1.5 Openness ([s2c5](#))**

The College’s Strategic Plan 2015 - 20 lists under core goal 4 - Strengthening Operational Capacity and Infrastructure, the need to strengthen internal communications across campus and to update existing communications tools, including the website (II.6). The Working Group found no indication that the College fails to represent itself truthfully when it represents itself at all, but information is not easy to find for those who do not already know how to find it.

In the case of tuition costs and sources of funding for students ([s2c7b](#)) most of the information is uniform across CUNY and so CUNY’s websites (e.g., Tuition and College Costs) supplement those of the College (e.g., QC Tuition Costs; Financial Aid). The College offers an excellent education at a low price, as called for in its mission ([s2c7a](#)). This information is easy to find: see, for example, the “QC Value” brochure in Appendix [J.33 \[A137\]](#).

In the Ethics and Integrity Survey, administrators and staff were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement “Official communications are truthful and accurate (memos, websites, guidelines, etc.” 72% agreed (score of 4 or 5) and less than 9% disagreed (1 or 2).

The College’s mission calls for it to act as a source of information in the public interest. Three examples: the Webby-winning demographic data website Social Explorer [\[24\]](#); Riverkeeper’s Hudson River Water Quality Program, a collaboration with Queens College and Columbia’s Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory; and the Barry Commoner Center, an environmental and occupational health research institute based at the College.

## **2.2 Compliance with relevant regulations ([s2c8](#), [r5](#))**

Many federal, state, or institutional regulations pertain directly to the mission of the College, and the performance of the College in these areas directly impacts the quality of the student, faculty, and staff experience. In the past five years, the College and the University have



significantly expanded their processes and policies that address research integrity, sexual misconduct, and environmental responsibility. These processes assure a safe and respectful environment for students, staff, and faculty. The Steering Committee directed the eighth working group to verify that the College is in full compliance with these regulations, with other pertinent regulations, and in addition to insure that we are compliant with the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

### **2.2.1 Compliance with regulations governing the conduct of research**

Federal regulations governing research stem from acts of Congress (e.g., the 1966 Animal Welfare Act, the 1974 National Research Act, the 1985 Health Research Extension), and from regulations issued by awarding agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the Food and Drug Administration. These regulations address the responsible conduct of research, treatment of human and animal subjects, conflicts of interest, export control, data management, mentor and trainee responsibilities, as well as financial disclosure and accountability. As such, they provide protections for faculty, students, and the community, and assure a healthy and ethical work environment conducive to research based education. It is appropriate therefore to examine how the College assures that its faculty and students comply with these regulations, receive appropriate training, and enjoy the protections required. We briefly present here evidence demonstrating a complete and strong research compliance program.

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) at Queens College, reporting to the Office of the Provost, assists faculty and staff with securing external funding from public and private sources for research and non-research initiatives (e.g., training, program and curriculum development, community service, conferences, etc.). ORSP assists faculty and staff in identifying funding opportunities, proposal and budget development, and application and reporting submissions. ORSP assures that submitted proposals meet applicable federal and CUNY guidelines. This is facilitated in part by a training requirement, an approval checklist addressing whether IRB or conflict of interest documentation is required, and an export control evaluation form [25] if applicable. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research in CUNY oversees compliance with federal, state and local regulations and ethical standards pertaining to research activities. Posted on the CUNY research website [26] are the research misconduct policy, Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies and procedures, conflict of interest and export control policies and procedures, and training resources and requirements. All faculty, staff, and students who participate in research at CUNY, whether the research is sponsored or unsponsored, must abide by CUNY guidelines. ORSP collaborates with the Vice Chancellor's office to ensure that faculty and staff, who are applying for grants that involve research at the College, are aware of and adhere to the following procedures:

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR): RCR training is required and offered through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), which is accessible via the CUNY website. In addition to training, CUNY has clear protocols for dealing with perceived cases of misconduct, as described in CUNY's Policy Regarding the Disposition of Allegations of Misconduct in Research and Similar Educational Activities. A Research Integrity Officer (RIO) is assigned at each CUNY College. The Associate Provost of Queens College, Dr. Steven Schwarz, is the RIO for



the College, and is responsible for implementing CUNY's Research Misconduct Policy at Queens College, and providing further RCR trainings at the campus through annual workshops.

Conflict of Interest (COI): COI training is also required and provided via the CITI. CUNY's COI policy states that all activities shall be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity and ethics. Furthermore, there cannot be any interest, financial or otherwise, which conflicts substantially with the proper discharge of the individual's duties and responsibilities at CUNY. Regarding funded research, faculty must complete a Significant Financial Interest Disclosure (SFID) form and, if applicable, a Supplemental Disclosure form for each proposal submitted. A COI officer is assigned at each CUNY college and Queens College is in the process of identifying a new officer. ORSP forwards completed SFID forms to the COI officer for initial review. When a conflict is perceived, the COI officer contacts the CUNY central office for further review and action as needed.

Human Subjects and Non-human Animals Subjects Research: The climate of respect that surrounds students and staff, faculty and administrators, also extends to cover human and nonhuman animal subjects in experimental research. Here ethical questions arise often. All research involving non-human animals is strictly regulated and continuously monitored through IACUC, the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Research on human subjects is regulated and monitored by IRB, the Institutional Review Board. Both are overseen by the Office of Regulatory Compliance, which reports directly to the Associate Provost. IACUC has its own federal assurance, while IRB is integrated in one of five University Integrated IRBs under CUNY's HRPP (Human Research Protection Program). HRPP has filed Federal-wide Assurances (FWA) with the US Department of Health and Human Services Office for Human Research Protections to document CUNY's commitment to comply with federal regulations for the protection of human subjects in research (Queens College: FWA #00018638). Human Subjects Research includes all research activities that involve human subjects, such as data analysis and publication of results, including activities that are eligible for exemption under federal guidelines and are conducted on the Queens College campus or use Queens College-affiliated subjects or information related to Queens College-affiliated subjects. Research proposals must be reviewed and approved by CUNY's University Integrated Institutional Review Boards (UI-IRBs), and the Queens College Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects before such activity begins. If the investigator is conducting research cooperatively with another institution, Queens College also requires the investigator to obtain proper approval from the UI-IRB. Each campus at CUNY has a Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) Coordinator who oversees the IRB policy and procedures [27].

Export Controls: Compliance with Export Controls regulations, involving the protection of sensitive information, is a high priority for Queens College and CUNY. CUNY provides an overview of Export Controls and a detailed policy. ORSP uses an Internal Approval checklist to direct faculty and staff, who are applying for grants, to the CUNY Export Controls policy, and to ask principal investigators if their research will involve export controls.

In addition to working closely with CUNY's central office for compliance, ORSP liaisons with the Research Foundation (RF) [28] of CUNY, which serves as fiscal conduit for grants and contracts to the CUNY colleges. The RF is a not-for-profit entity, governed by its own Board of Directors.

Funds administered through the RF are subject to RF's policies and procedures, which include but are not limited to: Affirmative Action; Code of Ethics; Combatting Trafficking in Persons; Conflict of Interest; Domestic Violence in the Workplace; Drug-free Workplace; Effort Certification; Fair Labor Standards Act Compliance Policy; Intellectual Property; Misconduct in Science; Occupational Health & Safety Act of 1970; Payments to CUNY employees; Project Employee Complaints; Record Retention Policy; Sexual Harassment; Time and Leave; Violence Prevention and Weapons in the Workplace; and Whistleblower.

### **2.2.2 Compliance with Title IX and nondiscrimination statutes**

The College's mission statement places emphasis on diversity as well as on maintaining "an atmosphere of collegiality and mutual respect." President Matos Rodríguez has designated Cynthia W. Rountree, Esq., the Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator and Director of the Queens College Office of Compliance and Diversity Programs (OCDP). She is the college official responsible for providing campus leadership and oversight to insure compliance with CUNY policies regarding nondiscrimination, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and all other applicable federal, state and local statutes regarding nondiscrimination[29]. The President prepares an annual letter describing our commitment to diversity and addressing specific areas where improvements can be made.

Each year, OCDP prepares a federally mandated Affirmative Action Plan (AAP), which contains data regarding the Queens College workforce during the period July 1 through June 30. The AAP also contains information regarding initiatives undertaken at the College to maintain a diverse, inclusive and discrimination-free environment; and to recruit and maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce. The most recent AAP is contained in Appendix J.26 [A138].

CUNY, in concert with New York State's new "Enough is Enough" [30] law addressing sexual harassment on college campuses, has updated its Sexual Misconduct [31] as well as its Nondiscrimination policies [32]. The College has implemented various initiatives to insure compliance with Title IX and the guidelines issued by the federal Department of Education/Office of Civil Rights. These include the appointment of a Title IX coordinator and deputy coordinator, the expansion of the college's Title IX committee to include faculty representation, the creation of a Title IX website [33], distribution of Title IX posters and palm cards, and a mandatory online Title IX training program for students entitled, "Haven: Understanding Sexual Assault." The Chief Diversity Officer has also conducted training sessions with multiple campus offices and student organizations.

The College has implemented a Faculty Diversity Strategic Plan [34] for the period 2013-2018, coincident with the 2013 preliminary Strategic Plan. The OCDP provides all search committees with data regarding under-representation in specific job groups to assist them in developing search plans and outreach activities. The OCDP maintains an online Directory of Female and Minority Applicant Resources.

OCDP also oversees complaint processing and resolution in matters relating to sexual misconduct and discrimination. Printed copies of CUNY's discrimination prevention policies are widely distributed on campus in paper and electronic form. As previously noted, CUNY has implemented the Policy on Sexual Misconduct which contains detailed procedures for filing

Title IX complaints. Likewise, CUNY has implemented the Policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-discrimination which contains detailed procedures for filing discrimination complaints. Finally, the Title IX Coordinator has established a hotline for Title IX complaints. This monitored messaging system is widely publicized and is available to students and employees at all times. The system provides a recorded message in English, Spanish, Cantonese, and Mandarin.

### **2.2.3 Environmental Health and Safety**

Queens College is committed to providing healthful and safe facilities for its students, faculty, employees and visitors, minimizing its impacts on the environment, and maintaining compliance with applicable federal, state and local regulatory requirements. It is our goal to integrate environmental considerations into teaching and research activities, facilities operations and interactions with the community. The Princeton Review named Queens College a Green Campus in 2014 [35]. Initiatives involving green practices and sustainability feature in the Strategic Plan under core goal 4 - Strengthening Operational Capacity and infrastructure.

The Office of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S), Building & Grounds, and the Office of Public Safety (along with their CUNY counterparts) are responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental health and safety related requirements. Through the recognition, evaluation, and control of personal and environmental hazards, the College strives to eliminate individual risk and reduce the environmental impact of its activities. EH&S offers a wide range of services and develops relationships with faculty and departmental personnel to promote a safe work environment and maintain compliance with both College policy and applicable regulations. EH&S has developed programs including personnel training, chemical hygiene, biological safety, environmental safety, radiation safety, fire safety, occupational safety, and asbestos management in compliance with applicable local, state and federal regulations to achieve its goal.

To assist with this effort, The City University of New York's Office of Environmental, Health, Safety and Risk Management (EHSRM) conducts compliance audits at each campus. The audit reviews technical and environmental, health and safety requirements. The purpose of the Compliance Audit is to identify areas of noncompliance or areas that although compliant are not consistent with best management practices (BMPs), so that appropriate corrective actions or improvements can be implemented. Queens College was recently subject to a compliance audit and all identified deficiencies were quickly addressed, which for example included the decommission or replacement of some laboratory equipment.

### **2.2.4 Athletics**

The Athletics Department and the Office of Student Affairs (along with their CUNY counterparts) are responsible for ensuring compliance with athletics related requirements. Queens College is the only NCAA Division II institution in the City University of New York. Our student athletes are successful both on the field (e.g., two straight East Coast conference championships in women's basketball) and off the field (dept. GPA 3.1; retention rate 91%, graduation rate 81%). In 2012, and again in 2015, the College requested a Compliance Blueprint Review from the NCAA. The reviews addressed governance, recruiting, eligibility, financial aid,

playing & practice, and athlete well-being. Quoting from the conclusion of the most recent proprietary report:

“Senior administrators inside and outside the Department of Athletics are committed to Queens College’s intercollegiate athletics program. This commitment extends to rules compliance. The reviewer had the opportunity to review the Compliance Blueprint Review that was conducted in 2012 and noted that significant progress has been made with regard to establishing a culture of rules compliance and the importance of documentation and monitoring of compliance with NCAA rules and regulations. Some areas of concern were noted, but the reviewer was impressed with the way staff approached their work in compliance and with their willingness to accept recommendations.”

In response to the recommendations of the audit, the Athletics Department instituted monthly compliance meetings for coaches, compliance training with representatives of the financial aid, registrar, and admissions offices, and routine spot checks for each sport. The compliance working group concluded that the college athletics program has a strong compliance program with a clear commitment to excellence, as evidenced by the hiring of a Director of Compliance as of July 2016.

### 2.2.5 Ensuring compliance

Table 8 summarizes the units that are assigned responsibility for assuring compliance to pertinent regulations and requirements.

**Table 8. Administrative Responsibility for Compliance at Queens College**

Requirement	Responsible Unit
Employment Benefits	QC Office of Human Resources (along with its CUNY counterpart) department
Other Employment Obligations	QC Offices of Human Resources, General Counsel, and Public Safety along with their CUNY counterparts)
Academic Programs	QC Offices of the Provost, General Counsel, International Students & Scholars (Office of Student Affairs) (along with their CUNY counterparts)
Privacy and Information Security	QC Offices of Information Technology and General Counsel (along with their CUNY counterparts)
Campus Safety	QC Offices of Public Safety, Environmental Health & Safety, Buildings & Grounds, and Compliance & Diversity (along with their CUNY counterparts)
Financial Aid	QC Office of Financial Aid, Registrar, Bursar (One Stop) (along with their CUNY counterparts)
Accounting	QC Budget Office (along with its CUNY counterpart)
Contracts/Procurement	QC Purchasing Department and Budget Office (along with their CUNY counterparts), and the CUNY General Counsel’s Office
Ethics	QC Offices of the General Counsel and Regulatory Compliance (and their CUNY counterparts)
Fundraising & Development	QC Offices of Development and Governmental and External Affairs (along with their CUNY counterparts), and the QC Foundation Controller
Grants/Research Management	QC Offices of Research and Sponsored Programs, and Regulatory Compliance

Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer	Offices and departments throughout QC, including the academic departments and the QC Office of the General Counsel (along with their CUNY counterparts)
International Activities and Programs	QC Offices of the Provost and General Counsel (along with their CUNY counterparts)
Lobbying and Political Activity	QC Offices of Governmental and External Affairs and General Counsel (along with their CUNY counterparts).
Independent Contractors	QC Offices of Finance and Administration and General Counsel (along with their CUNY counterparts)

**2.3 Recommendation**

The College already requires mandatory training in the areas of workplace violence and sexual harassment, and provides forums on the ethical conduct of research. However, given the wide range of policies that can impact our community, and the need for awareness and training, working groups two and eight forwarded similar recommendations that can be summarized in the second major recommendation of the self-study:

**Recommendation 2: Disseminate information about rights, policies, and compliance more effectively. Consolidate pertinent information on the college’s website. Offer more training opportunities on these matters (public presentations, online modules, and department and office visits) for students, faculty, and staff.**

# Standard III

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## Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

**An institution provides students with learning experiences that are characterized by rigor and coherence at all program, certificate, and degree levels, regardless of instructional modality. All learning experiences, regardless of modality, program pace/schedule, level, and setting are consistent with higher education expectations.**

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. certificate, undergraduate, graduate, and/or professional programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential, of a length appropriate to the objectives of the degree or other credential, designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning;
2. student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and/or other appropriate professionals who are:
  - a. rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service, as appropriate to the institution's mission, goals, and policies;
  - b. qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do;
  - c. sufficient in number;
  - d. provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation;
  - e. reviewed regularly and equitably based on written, disseminated, clear, and fair criteria, expectations, policies, and procedures;
3. academic programs of study that are clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution in a way that students are able to understand and follow degree and program requirements and expected time to completion;
4. sufficient learning opportunities and resources to support both the institution's programs of study and students' academic progress;
5. at institutions that offer undergraduate education, a general education program, free standing or integrated into academic disciplines, that:
  - a. offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field;

## Standard III

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- b. offers a curriculum designed so that students acquire and demonstrate essential skills including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. Consistent with mission, the general education program also includes the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives; and
  - c. in non-US institutions that do not include general education, provides evidence that students can demonstrate general education skills;
- 6. in institutions that offer graduate and professional education, opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, and independent thinking, provided by faculty and/or other professionals with credentials appropriate to graduate-level curricula;
  - 7. adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval on any student learning opportunities designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers; and
  - 8. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs providing student learning opportunities.



## Chapter 3

### Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience (s3)

In this chapter we examine the first seven of the Standard III criteria. The eighth criterion, which addresses periodic assessment of academic programs, is discussed in [Chapter 5](#) of this self-study.

#### 3.1 Undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs ([s3c1](#))

Queens College offers 100 bachelor's degree programs, 106 master's degree programs (which includes 49 Master's in Education programs), and 54 certificate programs, all registered with the New York State Education Department. Undergraduate programs are designed to be completed in 120 credits, which must include coursework that satisfies a set of general education requirements as well as the requirements for at least one major course of study. Master's programs require no less than 30 credits. The curriculum resides in 30 academic departments within the four academic divisions of the College: Arts & Humanities, Education, Mathematics & Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences.

The traditional liberal arts model of developing educational breadth and perspective through general education requirements, and in-depth engagement with an academic discipline through a major, applies completely to our undergraduate offerings. Our general education requirements are described in [Section 3.6](#) of this chapter, while the requirements of the various undergraduate majors and graduate degree programs are documented in the College Bulletin ([Appendix B.1 \[A139\]](#)).

All courses offered by the College are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty through a multi-tiered review process within programs and departments, as well as across the divisions of the College. Proposals for new programs and courses, as well as revisions of existing ones, are first approved at the departmental level. Upon receipt of departmental approval, proposals are forwarded for review to either the Undergraduate or Graduate Curriculum Committee of the Academic Senate, and then are reviewed by the full Senate. Additional reviews are conducted by the University and, if program registration is required, by the New York State Department of Education. Because of the University-wide structure of the General Education program, QC General Education courses, once approved by the Academic Senate, must additionally be peer reviewed by a University-wide committee before being approved for any of the CUNY "Common Core" General Education requirement designations.

Queens College also participates in doctoral instruction and research through the consortial doctoral programs at the CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan. The Clinical Psychology (Neuropsychology) doctoral program is taught entirely at Queens College, and was awarded accreditation by the American Psychological Association in 2015. Other current accreditors of



QC programs include the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the American Library Association, the American Chemical Society, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). To highlight just a few of our programs: our education programs were chosen as a pilot to be the first in the United States to receive accreditation, in 2013, from CAEP – the successor agency to NCATE. The education programs maintain extensive documentation [36] of the reports and processes of approval (r8). The Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (GSLIS) is unique in CUNY and one of the few such schools in the metropolitan area. GSLIS [37] is currently accredited by the American Library Association (ALA), which assesses the program’s planning, curriculum, qualifications and achievements of faculty and other factors. The Aaron Copland School of Music has renowned programs, faculty, and alumni in the classical and jazz fields and is currently in the process of being accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music. Our computer science department prepares more students than any other CS department in New York City, and an alumnus, Dr. Alexander Wolf, is the past president of the computing professional organization, the ACM. Our MFA in Creative Writing and Literary Translation, founded in 2007, has a strong national reputation, and its co-director, Distinguished Professor Kimiko Hahn, is the current president of the Poetry Society of America.

### 3.2 Faculty (s3c2)

The College relies on faculty (612 full-time and 922 part-time faculty, plus 51 graduate assistants in 2015) who, as Standard III states, are “rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment, scholarly inquiry, and service for the design, delivery, and assessment of student learning experiences.” Some faculty statistics were presented in Section 0.1.1. Tables 9 and 10 below show a breakdown of faculty by rank and division, and indicate for example that lecturers and instructors make up a small fraction of the full-time faculty:

**Table 9. Faculty Qualifications: Full-Time Faculty by Title and Division (2015)**

Title	Arts & Humanities	Education	Math & Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Total	
Distinguished Professor	0.5	0.0	0.7	1.0	2.1	13
Professor	9.8	2.8	9.2	9.5	31.2	191
Assoc Professor	8.5	4.1	7.2	10.6	30.4	183
Asst Professor	7.2	3.3	4.9	5.4	20.8	127
Clinical Professor	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	2
Distinguished Lecturer	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	6
Lecturer Doc Sch	3.6	0.7	2.5	2.5	9.2	26
Lecturer	1.1	0.3	1.3	1.6	4.4	57
Instructor	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.7	4
<b>Column Totals (%)</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>30.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>197</b>		<b>612</b>

Note: Percentages are based on total N.

**Table 10. Faculty Qualifications: Part-Time Faculty by Title and Division (2015)**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Arts &amp; Humanities</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Math &amp; Natural Sciences</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>	<b>Total</b>	
Adj Professor	1.4	0.0	0.1	0.6	2.1	21
Adj Assoc Professor	0.8	0.2	0.4	1.8	3.1	32
Adj Asst Professor	9.3	3.1	4.9	5.7	23.0	235
Adj Lecturer	19.8	8.4	20.4	14.7	63.3	646
Adj Lecturer Doctoral Student	0.0	0.1	3.3	0.0	3.4	35
Graduate Assistant A	0.5	0.0	0.6	0.1	1.2	12
Graduate Assistant B	0.0	0.0	3.5	0.0	3.5	36
Graduate Assistant D	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.4	4
<b>Column Totals (%)</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>22.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>233</b>		<b>1,021</b>

Note: Percentages are based on total N. Graduate assistant designations A, B, and D distinguish positions based on maximum allowed teaching hours.

Faculty rigor and effectiveness are monitored through contract-mandated teaching observations and annual reviews. Within each department, annual reviews are conducted by the department chair for untenured faculty as well as for faculty eligible for promotion. The annual review covers the individual's teaching effectiveness; scholarly productivity; and professional service, as described in the Queens College Guidelines for Tenure/CCE and Promotion, published on the College's website and available as Appendix J.9 [A140]. The guidelines additionally describe the written annual review report, the teaching observation, and the evaluation conference. Untenured faculty receive an enhanced third year review, conducted by the department Personnel and Budget (P&B) committee. Also within each department, senior faculty members conduct teaching observations for untenured and adjunct faculty members. The teaching observation report includes recommendations for ways to enhance teaching effectiveness. For untenured full-time faculty, teaching observations are conducted each semester. For adjunct faculty, teaching observations are conducted for the first ten semesters of employment. The rigor and effectiveness of Queens College faculty are also monitored, where applicable, by the accreditation agencies listed in the prior section.

**Table 11. Faculty Qualifications: Highest Degrees held by Full-Time Faculty**

Highest Education Level	Arts & Humanities	Education	Math & Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Total	
Unknown	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.3	2
Less than Bachelor's	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	3
Bachelor's Level Degree	2.0	0.2	1.0	0.5	3.6	22
Master's Level Degree	8.3	1.8	1.5	4.9	16.5	101
Doctorate	19.9	9.5	23.2	26.5	79.1	484
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>197</b>		<b>612</b>

**Table 12. Faculty Qualifications: Highest Degrees held by Part-Time Faculty**

Highest Education Level	Arts & Humanities	Education	Math & Natural Sciences	Social Sciences	Total	
Unknown	0.2	0.5	1.5	0.0	1.4	13
Less than Bachelor's	0.2	0.2	1.0	0.3	1.1	10
Bachelor's Level Degree	14.2	1.3	18.1	7.0	27.0	249
Master's Level Degree	24.8	12.1	16.5	18.8	47.9	442
Doctorate	10.9	5.2	7.2	10.6	22.6	208
<b>Total (%)</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>19.3</b>	<b>44.3</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	
<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>225</b>		<b>922</b>

Note: Excludes Graduate Assistants.

The current student (FTE)-faculty ratio is 24.2 for undergraduate programs, as compared to 23.9 for all senior colleges in CUNY (CUNY PMP data, Appendix [D.3 \[A128\]](#)). Class sizes vary greatly between and within departments and in many of the larger departments (e.g., Psychology, Sociology, Computer Science), large-section introductory level courses are paired with small-group lab or discussion sections. Overall, 71% of undergraduate classes have fewer than 30 students, giving students opportunity to know and interact with their instructors. As students progress to more advanced courses within the major, class size generally decreases, and the College will permit small upper-level classes (<10) to run when necessary to insure that students can complete their major requirements in a timely fashion. Responses to the 2014 CUNY Student Experience Survey, Appendix [E.2 \[A141\]](#), indicate that the majority of students are satisfied or very satisfied with class size (69%), consider classroom space adequate (63%), and do not consider it desirable for the College to offer smaller sections (58%).

There are several ways in which faculty are provided with “sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation” ([s3c2d](#)). The faculty union (the PSC) provides faculty with funds for presenting at academic conferences and other academic events. In addition to the PSC travel allocation, the Provost allocates travel funds to each dean based on the number of full time faculty in each division. The College also provides research enhancement grants to foster grant acquisition and to provide bridge funding where needed.

Adjunct faculty are eligible to apply for grants from the PSC Adjunct Professional Development Fund [38]. In addition, the contract with the PSC provides funds for small research awards [39] to between 75 and 95 QC faculty annually basis, and the University offers a number of research grants to foster campus collaborations.

The College actively encourages faculty to seek external funding for their research in addition to the internal sources cited above. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at QC helps faculty prepare grant proposals, administer awards, and interface with the CUNY-wide Research Foundation that manages award funds. In addition, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides demographic and other data to faculty seeking appropriate evidence to support their external proposals. QC also provides start-up support for new faculty (negotiated individually based on research needs), as well as bridge support if grants end.

During 2014, Queens College faculty presented at 650 academic conferences and published 504 articles in peer reviewed scholarly journals. Based on scholarship and creative activity data collected at the College and reported to CUNY, pages 4-6 of the University PMP Data Book (Appendix D.3 [A128]) shows that our faculty have relatively strong research productivity, with an average of 2.2 pieces of scholarship produced annually per faculty member, higher than the average across the CUNY 4-year colleges (1.5 pieces per year per faculty member). Data on scholarly activity and research awards, disaggregated by individual, department and product type, is published on the QC's Graduate Studies and Research website [40].

### **3.3 Center for Teaching and Learning**

An important resource for both full-time and adjunct faculty development at the College is the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) [41]. The central mission of the CTL is to recognize, promote, and sustain the quality of teaching and learning at the College. CTL provides faculty with opportunities to discuss and learn about all aspects of teaching and learning, assessment, and the curriculum through long-term development series, intensive week-long and full-day workshops, and one-one consulting for faculty who seek support in improving their pedagogical practice. The center provided more than 43 workshops during the 2014-2015 academic year, with 638 attendees from all academic divisions, and it actively solicits participation in its workshops from all full- and part-time faculty. CTL also offers workshops targeted to first year and adjunct faculty, to assist their acclimation to the college community.

### **3.4 Effectiveness of official publications (s3c3)**

The College's website provides access to a wealth of information about the College, its programs, and available resources. College Bulletins dating back to 1993 are available online and contain all program requirements. All departments, academic programs, and offices that serve students maintain websites where requirements and other pertinent information is posted. The Financial Aid Office also maintains a detailed website where information on full-time status, as is often required for aid, is clearly presented. DegreeWorks [42] is a CUNY-wide system that is the basis of the QC online advisement system. It provides students with a definitive statement of their general education and major requirements, grades, and other information they need in order to successfully complete their degree in a timely manner.

CUNYfirst, the CUNY-wide business and registration system, also provides students with detailed online information on their academic history, both within CUNY and at prior institutions.

Appendix [J.995](#) [\[A142\]](#) is a list of all courses approved for either the *Perspectives* or *Pathways* general education requirements. This appendix was generated from a website [\[43\]](#) maintained by the QC Office of General Education that has been constructed in such a way that other websites on campus are able to embed customized views of it, thereby maintaining automatic synchronization across various communication channels. For example, the General Education website publishes web pages that break the master list down into sections for both *Pathways* requirements [\[44\]](#) and for *Perspectives* requirements [\[45\]](#). Some of the divisional websites at the College also embed views of subsets of the master list as well.

The Office of General Education also provides a website that shows all general education courses that have been scheduled to be offered at the College for recent-past, present, and near-future semesters [\[43\]](#). This website provides certain information about QC general education offerings that are not available on CUNYfirst, the university-wide database system. The CUNY *Pathways* website, [\[46\]](#), provides a uniform description of the *Pathways* structures and policies for all CUNY students, and includes links back to each campus' General Education website, including QC's.

A valuable service that the CUNYfirst system provides is a searchable listing of all courses being offered in the upcoming semester at all CUNY campuses, and identifying those that satisfy *Pathways* requirements. This makes the universe of CUNY courses available to students, who can take courses at another CUNY college or online and have those courses transfer back to their home college, enabling students to complete their degree requirements more efficiently.

A recent development of note at QC is an initiative under the guidance of the Office for Enrollment Management to have departments use a standard format for degree maps that show students how each academic program at the College can be completed in four years. These degree maps, in both hardcopy and online form, are scheduled to be available to students in the Fall 2017 term.

Because over half our students transfer from other colleges, the College has paid particular attention to publicizing degree requirements, articulation agreements, course equivalencies, and other relevant information for students who do not spend a traditional four years here. This material is available on the QC transfer website [\[47\]](#).

### **3.5 Academic support ([s3c4](#))**

Academic support is provided by both the faculty and the College at large. This section describes ways in which the College provides a variety of academic support services and opportunities to complement the support provided by faculty. These include support for diverse communities, experiential learning, and international learning as well as direct academic support such as tutoring and supplemental instruction.

### 3.5.1 Academic support and resources

**The Academic Advising Center** [48] provides a staff of committed professionals who provide both academic orientation and advisement. As made available online on the college's website, students are able to find a New Student Guidebook [49] (which documents a wealth of resources, programs, and activities), and specialized support for freshmen (including the Freshman Advising Program [50] and the opportunity to join learning communities through the Freshman Year Initiative [51]), a guide for Transfer Students [52], and options to see advisors through walk-ins, by appointment, and via Skype, with evening and weekend availability. Data on student interactions is provided in Section 4.1.4.

**The Academic Support Center** [53] houses several academic support services for the general student body. This includes: content tutoring [54] in Accounting, Business, Economics, Linguistics, Psychology, Chemistry, Physics and foreign languages; workshops on improving presentation and study skills [55]; The Writing Center [56]; a Math Lab; a Testing Center; and support for students who need to improve their academic literacy.

**The Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library** [57] serves as a hub for research, campus activities, speaking events, student learning, and access to a robust collection of scholarly books, journals, articles, and media titles. (The Library's Chaney-Goodman-Schwerner clock tower, pictured on the cover of this report, is named for three civil rights workers who lost their lives in the Freedom Summer of 1964.) In addition to the Library's own collection, students and faculty are provided access to other titles through several Inter-Library Loan [58] and CUNY-wide Inter-Campus Loan Services [59]. The inventory of Library holdings is summarized in Appendix E.13 [A143], and includes nearly 900,000 physical books and over 100,000 serial titles available electronically. The Music Library [60] and Art Library [61] provide supplementary resources.

**The Godwin-Ternbach Museum** [62] and the **Kupferberg Center for the Arts** [63] provide resources, learning venues, and entertainment in the arts, music, theater and dance, and humanities to Queens College and the community at-large.

### 3.5.2 Support for diverse communities

To meet the different needs of distinct populations and communities, QC offers a variety of student support services and programs, each with staff who offer support and advising to our students. Support services range from programs committed to enhancing access to the College and assisting students in meeting the academic rigor of their programs of study, described below, to the Office of Honors and Scholarships [64], a vibrant Honors community housing the Macaulay Honors College at Queens College and various honors and fellowship programs.

Services that expand access to the College include: the Office of Special Services for Students with Disabilities (which includes test administration support, reader/writer/attendant care referrals, assistive technology services, among other supports) [65], the Office of Minority Affairs and Pre-Professional Advisement [66], Project ExCEL [67] (a program that offers academic and student support and services to African American/black men and other underrepresented populations; part of the CUNY Black Male Initiative), the SEEK program [68]

(which provides supplemental instruction and learning communities to over 900 qualified low-income students), Veterans Support Services [69], and advising for Re-Entry and Long Distance Learners [70]. Queens College supports non-traditional students through Adult Collegiate Education (ACE) [71] and Weekend College [72], which provides opportunities to advance on coursework in several majors, and access to advisors through Weekend Advising [73]. QC students who are union members also receive services from the CUNY Murphy Institute [74]. The English Language Institute [75] assists non-matriculated students who are learning English as a second language, while the College English as a Second Language (CESL) program performs this service for matriculated students. Support for inadequately prepared students is described in Section 4.1.3.

The College houses several centers that focus on specific communities, including the Asian American/Asian Research Institute, John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, Center for Byzantine & Modern Greek Studies, Center for Jewish Studies, and The Research Center for Korean Community. These centers host numerous cultural events and actively involve students in their activities, and seek to provide guidance to students who need assistance. Student clubs that focus on specific cultures serve as an additional resource for students.

The Queens College Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding (CERRU) [76] hosts speakers, runs workshops, and organizes other events that provides students from diverse backgrounds with exposure to the principles of conflict resolution as well as training in conflict negotiation. CERRU also serves as a safe venue for students to engage in dialogue on subjects that are not easily resolved.

The College is also working on developing further global engagement and cross-cultural sensitivity training for students and for faculty through its American Council on Education (ACE) [77] Internationalization Lab. The goal of this project is to develop more global content in the classroom, encourage international collaboration among faculty and create more study abroad opportunities. The Strategic Plan for Internationalization is presented at [78] and includes a Global Learning and Engagement Survey as well as a survey of international research. In this context, a new Global Studies minor was introduced in 2016, and recommendations from the ACE Peer Review Report are being pursued (Appendix J.595 [A144]).

### **3.5.3 Support for experiential learning**

The campus motto "*Discimus ut Serviamus: We learn so that we may serve*" is central to the College's approach to supporting students' academic learning through experiential learning. Experiential Learning Opportunities (ELOs) provide students with the opportunity to augment their academic learning by applying and testing concepts learned in the classroom in real or simulated environments. Many of these ELOs remind students that their learning and their programs of study have applications in the community, and the campus motto reminds students that their learning is in service to the community.

ELOs are widely available at the College. The QC Experiential Learning website [79] documents the College's participation in an Experiential Education Task Force that CUNY convened in 2014 in response to NY State legislation mandating experiential education plans from both SUNY (the



State University of New York) and CUNY. Appendix [J.12 \[A145\]](#) shows that more than 60 academic departments, administrative offices, and related campus organizations provided experiential learning opportunities to over 10,000 students during the 2014-15 academic year. Table 13 summarizes the data from that appendix to show the number of students who participated in each category. (The categories listed in Table 13 are defined in Appendix [J.11 \[A146\]](#)).

**Table 13. Participation in Experiential Opportunities: 2014-15**

Category	Number of Participants
Research/Field Study	5,102
Clinical Preparation/Practicum	1,972
Campus--based Work or Leadership	1,337
Civic Engagement	1,030
Service Learning	381
Formal Internships, Unpaid	378
Independent Internships, Paid	238
International	202
Formal Internships, Paid	26
Independent Internships, Unpaid	9
Co-operative Education	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,675</b>

The College encourages students from any major to add an internship to their program of study. The Office of Career Development and Internships [\[80\]](#) assists students by connecting them with and preparing them for internship opportunities, including: formalizing their experience via a learning agreement; providing guidance on making their internship be either credit-bearing, paid, stipend, or unpaid; and ensuring the employer provides a meaningful evaluation of the student’s experience. The Tech Talent Pipeline Residency at Queens College [\[81\]](#), part of Mayor De Blasio’s signature TTP program, connects students focusing on technology to paid work experience with local tech companies and employers. The new CUNY Tech Consortium (Appendix [J.29 \[A147\]](#)) provides additional experiential opportunities in the technology sector.

Queens is one of eight colleges that participates in the CUNY Service Corps [\[82\]](#), which currently engages 840 CUNY students from any academic major to commit one academic year to part-time public service (12 hours per week) and in the process gain paid experience working with either community-based or governmental organizations or with faculty-led service projects. The CUNY Service Corps program, inspired by student efforts in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, offers students service learning opportunities through non-profit and civic organizations around New York City known as “community partners,” and its programs are evaluated by the Office of



Research Evaluation and Program Support, out of the Office of the Senior University Dean for Academic Affairs at the central CUNY office. Community partners, which are groups devoted to public health, education, environmental and other issues, apply to participate in the program. The Central Office reviews partner applications based on a number of criteria, including their ability to provide students with meaningful experience, supervision, and evaluation. Once projects are reviewed, those approved are made available to students, students interview for them, and then they are placed there for one academic year. Each individual project at each community partner site is also reviewed jointly by Central Office and Campus Managers to ensure that the project constitutes a meaningful learning opportunity. In the fall, students develop a Learning Action Plan, which is reviewed and approved by Campus Managers and Community Partner Site Supervisors. Students' performance is evaluated by Site Supervisors towards the end of the Fall semester, and Campus Managers review the evaluation with students (r9). Then Central Office and Campus Managers visit a selection of sites to conduct surveys of the students placed there and observe project activities.

Several of the ELOs available at Queens College provide students an opportunity to work in closer relation with a faculty member. The Undergraduate Research and Mentoring Education (URME) [83] program at Queens College supports research, scholarly and creative work where undergraduate students collaborate with college faculty. Students in certain departments work under faculty supervision by engaging in service learning projects, like those housed under the Urban Studies Department [84]. ELOs exist on campus that lead to enrollment in certain recognized minors, like the minor in Student Personnel offered to students active in the Peer Support Services [85]. Courses under the Business and Liberal Arts minor [86] closely connect students learning the practical aspects of the business world. Queens College also offers Pre-Professional Programs [87], programs designed with an emphasis on professional programs in majors not offered at the College; students in these programs may either transfer to the Columbia School of Engineering under an articulated agreement, or prepare for professional studies in health or law. Students wanting to explore courses not offered at Queens College (and to gain experience as a visiting student) are able to fulfill this experience through their participation in the National Student Exchange [88].

#### **3.5.4 Support for international learning opportunities**

As part of its mission, Queens College aims to prepare students to be citizens and leaders in a global environment by increasing their international education. The student body itself, which represents over 150 different countries and which speaks over 100 different languages, provides a base for international experience. In addition, the college's Study Abroad Office [89] offers numerous opportunities to study in another country through summer, winter, and during the fall and spring semesters, and even participate in internships abroad. The Office of Global Education Initiatives [90] internationalizes the curriculum and furthers learning opportunities through collaborations with international partners. Other international programs are more professional in nature, such as the college's Teaching English in Vietnam program done in partnership with SEAMEO [91] and the Cultural Ambassadors to Spain program, arranged by the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sport. Students who do not leave the campus are still able to benefit from the international education programs Queens College offers,

through the annual “Year of ... ” program [92], which observes a country or global area each year, and works with academic and non-academic departments on campus to bring lectures, exhibits, events, and other international learning opportunities to the campus community. A summary of 2010-2016 “Year of” activities is found in Appendix J.596 [A148].

### **3.6 General Education (s3c5)**

General education requirements are core to the mission of any liberal arts college, and Queens College is no exception. There are three components to the general education requirements at QC: a discipline-focused framework of requirement areas, and two “overlay” requirements (writing and quantitative reasoning) that cross disciplinary boundaries. Although the quantitative reasoning overlay was approved by the Academic Senate, it has not yet been implemented because of recent changes to the discipline-focused frameworks.

Because general education is such an integral part of our mission, our general education program, by design, “offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field” (s3c5a).

Since our last decennial review, we have implemented three discipline-focused general education frameworks. In chronological order, the three frameworks are called “Liberal Arts and Science Area Requirements” (LASAR), “Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences” (*Perspectives*), and “Pathways to Degree Completion” (*Pathways*). These three structures are outlined in Table 14.

**Table 14. Three general education frameworks at QC, 1981-present.**

<b>Liberal Arts and Sciences Area Requirements (LASAR)</b> (1981-2009, Appendix <a href="#">J.3 [A149]</a> )	<b>Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences (<i>Perspectives</i>)</b> (2009-2013, Appendix <a href="#">J.5 [A150]</a> )	<b>CUNY <i>Pathways</i></b> (Fall 2013-Present, Appendix <a href="#">J.7 [A151]</a> )
<i>Basic Skills Requirements</i> - English - Reading - Mathematics - Health and Physical Education - Foreign Language	<i>Critical Academic Abilities</i> - Writing (English 110; 3 Writing Intensive (“W”) courses) - Mathematics - Abstract/Quantitative Reasoning - Foreign Language	<i>Common Core</i> - College Writing - Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning - Life and Physical Sciences
<i>Area Requirements</i> - Humanities I - Humanities II - Physical and Biological Sciences - Scientific Methodology and Quantitative Reasoning - Social Sciences - Pre-Industrial/Non-Western Civilization	<i>Perspectives on the Liberal Arts and Sciences</i> Core Areas of Knowledge and Inquiry - Reading Literature - Appreciating and Participating in the Arts - Cultures and Values - Analyzing Social Structures - Natural Science  Global Contexts: United States; European Traditions; World Cultures; Pre-Industrial Society  Upper-Level Degree Requirement - Capstone or Synthesis Course	<i>Flexible Core</i> - World Cultures and Global Issues - United States Experience in its Diversity - Creative Expression - Individual and Society - Scientific World - One additional Flexible Core course  <i>College Option</i> - Literature - Language - Science - One additional general education or synthesis course

The close alignment between the College’s mission and the current general education framework, *Pathways*, is shown in Appendix [J.999 \[A152\]](#). The appendix is divided into five sections, one for each of the five mission themes of the College that deal with student success, as listed in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan (Appendix [C.1 \[A122\]](#), page 3). The first section of Appendix [J.999 \[A152\]](#) is reproduced in Table 15 as a guide: the first column identifies the mission theme from the Strategic Plan; the second lists some of the key Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) from the *Pathways* general education structure that apply to that mission theme, and the third column lists the *Pathways* requirement area or areas that require that SLO as an objective for courses in the area(s).

**Table 15. Extract from Appendix J.999 [A152].**

Mission Theme	Pathways Learning Objective	Pathways Category
1. Critical thinking skills	Read and listen critically and analytically, including identifying an argument’s major assumptions and assertions and evaluating its supporting evidence.	Required Core: English Composition
	Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.	Flexible Core: (all)
	Evaluate evidence and arguments critically and analytically.	Flexible Core: (all)
	Gather, interpret, and assess information from various sources, and evaluate arguments critically.	College Option: Language

Our general education frameworks are not static structures. By 2004 (prior to our 2007 decennial review) the College had observed that the LASAR requirements adopted in 1981 were comprehensive, but lacked coherence. They had devolved into checklists that were perceived by many students as arbitrary hurdles to be satisfied in as convenient a manner as possible. The College’s president at the time convened a Task Force on General Education, calling for a redesign of the LASAR requirements to address the perceived flaws in that program. That Task Force’s vision (Appendix J.4 [A153]) called for a general education structure that would enable students to make connections across disciplinary boundaries, and which would help them deepen critical abilities in courses that contextualize knowledge. The redesigned *Perspectives* curriculum (Appendix J.5 [A150]) was approved by the Academic Senate in 2006, and took effect in the Fall 2009 semester.

In June 2011, only two years after QC began implementing *Perspectives*, the CUNY Board of Trustees adopted a resolution that called for a new general education curriculum to be implemented across all CUNY campuses. Explicitly intended to facilitate smooth transfers from community colleges to senior colleges, the detailed structure of the new *Pathways* system was developed during the summer and fall of 2011. In addition to a 30-credit *Common Core* structure (the *Required Core* and the *Flexible Core*) that applies to all associate’s and baccalaureate degree programs at CUNY (Appendix J.6 [A154]), the *Pathways* structure specified a segment of up to 12 additional credits that colleges offering baccalaureate degrees had the option of implementing in ways they felt reflected the individual nature of each campus, the so-called *College Option* part of *Pathways*.

Campuses were charged with deciding how they would implement the *Pathways* system during the spring of 2012, and it became the official general education structure for all newly matriculated CUNY students starting in the Fall 2013 semester.

The CUNY Colleges had some leeway in how they could implement *Pathways* at their campuses, so long as their implementations adhered to stipulations on the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for each requirement designation in the *Common Core*, the number of credit hours required, and the rule that once a student satisfies a *Pathways* requirement at any college, it must be honored at all other campuses in the CUNY system.

Despite the short timeframe available for creating our *Pathways* Implementation Plan (Appendix [J.7 \[A151\]](#)), Queens was able to draw on its recent experience in developing the *Perspectives* curriculum to develop a set of structures that are based on the College's mission and goals and that reflect its recent institutional thinking about how general education requirements should be structured at the college.

There are three key ways in which the College has implemented *Pathways* in order to make it align well with our own mission and goals, and our Strategic Plan objectives 1-5 for student achievement:

1. In addition to the CUNY Common Core SLOs, each QC Common Core course must satisfy two criteria carried forward from the *Perspectives* framework: “to address how, in the discipline (or disciplines) of the course, data and evidence are construed and knowledge acquired; that is, how questions are asked and answered,” and “to position the discipline(s) in the liberal arts curriculum and the larger society.”
2. The College's existing “Writing Across the Curriculum” structure, which had required students to complete three courses identified as “writing intensive” were carried into *Pathways* by creating a set of customized *College Writing 2* courses as part of the required English Composition sequence—courses that tailor the writing to various disciplines. There are 11 of these “Writing in ...” that have been developed to date. In addition, QC students must complete an additional two writing intensive courses within their QC coursework.
3. The QC College Option structure addresses important elements of general education that are missing from the *Pathways* Common Core: Literature and Language. The SLOs for College Option courses are given in our *Pathways* Implementation Plan (Appendix [J.7 \[A151\]](#)).

Table 16 shows the number of different courses that have been approved for the various *Pathways* and Writing-intensive requirements at the College. All courses have been reviewed by the College's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and approved by the Academic Senate. Courses in the Required Core and Flexible Core have also been reviewed and approved by a CUNY-wide review committee. The QC Academic Senate's *Curriculum* website [\[93\]](#) provides the syllabi, proposal narratives, and approval status for all courses proposed for the *Pathways* curriculum at QC.

**Table 16. Number of Approved General Education Courses (as of Spring 2017)**

<i>Pathways Group</i>	<i>Pathways Area</i>	Number of Approved Courses
Required Core	English Composition	12
	Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning	37
	Life and Physical Sciences	43
Flexible Core	Creative Expression	22
	Individual and Society	23
	Scientific World	21
	United States Experience in its Diversity	24
	World Cultures and Global Issues	48
College Option	Literature	61
	Language	178
Writing Intensive		246

At the time of this report, the College is in its fourth year with the *Pathways* curriculum. Although 2% of our undergraduate students are still completing their degrees under the LASAR requirements and another 10% are still following the *Perspectives* requirements that were in effect when they matriculated, we are now at the point where the vast majority of our students are operating under the *Pathways* requirements, and the first cohort of students to enroll at the College as freshmen under *Pathways* are nearing the 4-year mark for completing their degrees.

### 3.6.1 Written and oral communication ([s3c5b](#))

Queens College’s goals for student writing are based on Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition set forth by the Council of Writing Program Administrators [94], but have been expanded and adapted to the local needs of our students. They include: identifying genuine intellectual questions, discussing and analyzing relevant evidence, engaging sources critically, adapting their language to specific disciplines, and mastering the processes and methods as well as the style and mechanics of academic writing. These goals are described in a “Goals for Student Writing” document (Appendix [E.16 \[A118\]](#)) that was formally adopted by the Academic Senate in 2007.

The curriculum of Queens College addresses writing with a Writing Across the Curriculum approach [95]. Students must take two college writing classes in their first year as required by *Pathways*. The second semester is taught across the disciplines, so that students who are interested in a field can study writing within that specific context. These include classes about

writing in unexpected disciplines such as the performing arts and biology. Students are additionally required to take two more W-designated “writing-intensive” classes during their time here. This requirement, too, takes a Writing Across the Curriculum approach, since these classes are offered in many different departments across campus. As opposed to the second semester writing course, which focuses on the writing process, the writing intensive courses focus on content in the discipline, but have substantial writing components that include preparation of drafts and attention to discipline specific best practices.

The writing program was strongly impacted by the advent of *Pathways*, and continues to engender the interest of faculty from a variety of disciplines. Appendix [E.82 \[A155\]](#) is a recent report, prepared by a working group convened by the Director of the Writing at Queens Program, that provides a vision for making the program even stronger than it is now.

In addition to the curricular requirements, other offices across campus are working toward helping students become better writers. The College Writing Center [\[56\]](#) provides one-on-one assistance, including online feedback on papers, and focuses on “helping students grow and mature as writers.” We also provide opportunities for students to write outside of class, including the QC Voices blog, our Revisions journal (a once-per-semester publication on writing, which includes work by both faculty and students [\[96\]](#)), and many departmental conferences and symposia at which students can present. Furthermore, the College recognizes outstanding student writing with awards and essay contests.

### **3.6.2 Scientific and quantitative reasoning ([s3c5b](#))**

The CUNY-wide *Pathways* requirements include, at a minimum, courses in Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific World, and a lab course in Life and Physical Sciences.

Students can fulfill the requirement for Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning with classes in computer science, mathematics, or statistics. To earn the MQR designation, a class must require students to draw conclusions from quantitative representations, to use quantitative methods to communicate ideas and problems in an appropriate way, and to apply quantitative reasoning in other fields of study. Faculty are encouraged to provide innovative approaches to integrating quantitative reasoning across the curriculum beyond designated QR courses. This effort is supported by the Center for Teaching and Learning through Quantitative Reasoning Across the Curriculum [\[97\]](#), a faculty development initiative that supports faculty in the development of assignments that infuse quantitative reasoning skills throughout the curriculum. Instructors work with QR fellows over a semester (PhD students from the CUNY Graduate Center), encouraging innovative approaches to integrating QR learning objectives and instruction into courses.

The College supports an Undergraduate Research Mentoring Education program [\[83\]](#), through which students of any major may apply to lead a research project with a faculty mentor over the summer. Successful applicants are awarded funds with which to conduct their research. Although these projects have been carried out in a variety of disciplines, many of them are scientific in nature. Students have additional opportunities to participate in research, including the CUNY Summer Undergraduate Research Program [\[98\]](#). Each fall, the Division of



Mathematics and Natural Sciences holds an undergraduate research symposium, featuring dozens of posters that are viewed by visiting schools as well as by the QC community. Again in the spring, the Sigma Xi poster session features undergraduate and graduate research, and attracts strong attendance.

### **3.6.3 Critical analysis and reasoning ([s3c5b](#))**

At Queens, every general education course, regardless of which CUNY *Pathways* requirement it fulfills, must show that it addresses “how, in the discipline (or disciplines) of the course, data and evidence are construed and knowledge is acquired; that is, how questions are asked and answered,” and to “position the discipline(s) in the liberal arts curriculum and the larger society.” These are course criteria (as distinct from Student Learning Outcomes) which were carried forward from the previous Queens College general education curriculum, *Perspectives*. These criteria are clearly aligned with the learning outcomes related to critical analysis and reasoning shown in Table 15 above.

### **3.6.4 Technological competency ([s3c5b](#))**

There are few courses specifically dedicated to developing students’ technological competency, because these competencies are addressed through technology integration in both the general education curriculum and in the majors. Queens College surveyed students in 2010 and 2011 regarding their perceptions and use of technology (Appendix [E.9 \[A156\]](#) and Appendix [E.10 \[A157\]](#)). The findings indicated pervasive access to technological tools, as well as enthusiasm and ubiquitous use of technology in students’ personal lives, but there was a pronounced disconnect when it came to their use of technology for academic purposes. In light of these findings, the Center for Teaching and Learning increased its professional development offerings in teaching with technology by promoting digital literacies through curricular design and engaging use of technologies. The College will conduct another survey of Queens College students’ perceptions and use of technology in the next academic year to gauge progress in this area. Additionally, the high level focus on increasing hybrid and online courses at the College suggested the need for a more robust system of professional development and training.

With support from the Student Technology Fee, the College now provides no-cost access to Lynda.com, which provides online on-demand online training in technology, software use, and business skills. Students can access more than 4,000 courses and 140,000 video tutorials through this service.

### **3.6.5 Information literacy ([s3c5b](#))**

Information literacy allows students to distinguish among high-quality and low-quality sources of information, navigate complex information landscapes, understand how and why information was produced, and draw upon the work of others as they produce information themselves. The curriculum provides many opportunities for students to acquire information literacy. Librarians regularly provide instruction to graduate and undergraduate courses in many disciplines. All College Writing I (English 110) classes must include a research component. Librarians work with each class to ensure that students are well-prepared to conduct college-



level research. Many majors include a course on research methods; the Library works closely with some of these classes, including key sociology and psychology classes. Additionally, the Library offers a two credit course focused on information literacy. The SEEK program offers a one-credit course entitled “Information Literacy,” required of all SEEK students, in which students learn the basics of searching for, evaluating and using information. The Library’s three-credit class, Writing and Library Research Methods, emphasizes writing with research and fulfills a College Writing requirement.

### **3.6.6 Values, ethics and diverse perspectives ([s3c5b](#))**

Queens College prides itself on its diversity, and the experiences of our students are reflected constantly in classroom interactions. The Queens College motto is “We learn so that we may serve.” That is, service is one of our primary values. In the discussion of experiential education above, we note the opportunities for students to serve the community in internships and through the CUNY Service Corps. A substantial portion of our general education courses have a strong culture or diversity component. As mentioned previously, the *Perspectives* curriculum supplanted by *Pathways* had requirements that were suffused through a broad array of new general education classes, and these have been retained. Thus, the requirement that general education classes display, where appropriate to the course content a diverse perspective, continues to have a prominent influence on the curriculum. The College also selects four campus specific courses (12 of the 42 *Pathways* general education credits) that students must take, and one of these is a language requirement, again reflecting an emphasis on global awareness.

The aforementioned ACE Internationalization Lab [[77](#)] is an ongoing effort by the College, with assistance from internationalization experts at the American Council on Education, to form and develop a campus team to articulate internationalization goals, develop a plan [[78](#)] and spearhead initiatives to achieve those goals. For example, the associated new Global Studies minor, represent additional efforts to suffuse the curriculum with global and diversity issues. The “Year of...” Initiative is a distinctive set of programs the College has run for the past 7 years, in which we celebrate the culture and language of a particular country, through exhibits, talks, performances, and other events throughout the year. Each year, members of the QC community have an opportunity, through an open forum, to recommend a country. This year, the College is celebrating Korea.

We have already described above the support we provide for diverse communities, which includes several centers that provide talks and events. In particular, the Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding conducts much outreach to faculty to support classroom discussions. In collaboration with the Africana program, the College’s Black History Month Committee organizes a number of activities, particularly in February, when we celebrate Black History Month.

In Section [2.2.2](#), we describe the mandatory Title IX training students receive, as well as the mandatory research ethics training required for students working in research.

### **3.7 Graduate education support (s3c6)**

Chapter 0 of this report (Introduction) provides data on the number of graduate programs along with a profile of our graduate student population. It also describes some of our master's programs. All graduate programs and their associated requirements are described in the annual Graduate Bulletin (Appendix [B.2 \[A158\]](#)). Our graduate programs are described on the Graduate Admissions website [[99](#)]. QC also has a handbook to familiarize graduate students with relevant policies and procedures (Appendix [J.34 \[A159\]](#)).

In Section [3.2](#) above we described funding provided to faculty to support their research in the form of research awards and travel grants. The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Environmental Health and Safety Office, the Office of Regulatory Compliance, and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies all have staff devoted to providing training and support to faculty and graduate students conducting research. CUNY's Office of Research also oversees a number of training and support programs, and science faculty have access to the new Advanced Science Research Center located on the CCNY campus.

Our Strategic Plan called for the College to create better social and study space for graduate students, in response to feedback from this population. In 2016, QC opened a graduate student lounge and a second graduate student space is planned for next year.

### **3.8 Third party providers (s3c7)**

Queens College and CUNY generally administer study opportunities directly rather than through third party providers. An exception is the College's Education Abroad Office, which offers study abroad opportunities through two recognized consortium programs and numerous independent agreements.

The College offers study abroad opportunities for students including CUNY-run Paris and Italy exchange programs and through two partnership programs, University Study Abroad Consortium (USAC), which offers programs in 23 countries, and the National Student Exchange (NSE), which enables our students to access education abroad programs throughout a network of other colleges and universities. CUNY-wide study abroad programs are reviewed and approved by the CUNY central office and the Queens College president. Opportunities through USAC are approved by the provost's office at Queens College, and the NSE.

### **3.9 Recommendation**

The Standard III Working Group recommended improvements to departmental websites that are underway as part of a general upgrade to the QC website. A college website committee was formed in 2016 to address these issues, and jointly chaired by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Vice President for Enrollment and Retention. The working group also recommended funding to allow students, faculty, and staff to access Lynda.com, to provide technology training. This funding was approved as part of the College technology fee process in 2016, and usage is being monitored and assessed. In the first three months in which the service was available to the campus community, more than 800 distinct users (nearly 600 students and

about 250 faculty) have active accounts. The number of active users and viewing activity is increasing weekly.

In the area of general education, with the first cohort to follow the *Pathways* curriculum approaching graduation, it is an appropriate time to revisit the structure of the College Option, the part of *Pathway* that is unique to the College. Some background has been prepared through a pilot freshmen seminar course (Appendix [J.441 \[A160\]](#)), through findings of a Quantitative Reasoning Committee (Appendix [J.442 \[A161\]](#)) issued just prior to the introduction of *Pathways*, and in the 2004 task force report on general education (pp.24-25 Appendix [J.4 \[A153\]](#)).

**Recommendation 3: The Academic Senate should assess the College Option (up to four courses in *Pathways*), and explore whether a newly designed course (or courses) can better support student success.**

# Standard IV

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## Support of the Student Experience

**Across all educational experiences, settings, levels, and instructional modalities, the institution recruits and admits students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals are congruent with its mission and educational offerings. The institution commits to student retention, persistence, completion, and success through a coherent and effective support system sustained by qualified professionals, which enhances the quality of the learning environment, contributes to the educational experience, and fosters student success.**

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. clearly stated, ethical policies and processes to admit, retain, and facilitate the success of students whose interests, abilities, experiences, and goals provide a reasonable expectation for success and are compatible with institutional mission, including:
    - a. accurate and comprehensive information regarding expenses, financial aid, scholarships, grants, loans, repayment, and refunds;
    - b. a process by which students who are not adequately prepared for study at the level for which they have been admitted are identified, placed, and supported in attaining appropriate educational goals;
    - c. orientation, advisement, and counseling programs to enhance retention and guide students throughout their educational experience;
    - d. processes designed to enhance the successful achievement of students' educational goals including certificate and degree completion, transfer to other institutions, and post-completion placement;
  2. policies and procedures regarding evaluation and acceptance of transfer credits, and credits awarded through experiential learning, prior non-academic learning, competency-based assessment, and other alternative learning approaches;
  3. policies and procedures for the safe and secure maintenance and appropriate release of student information and records;
  4. if offered, athletic, student life, and other extracurricular activities that are regulated by the same academic, fiscal, and administrative principles and procedures that govern all other programs;
  5. if applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of student support services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers; and
  6. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of programs supporting the student experience.
-

## **Chapter 4**

### **Standard IV: Support of the Student Experience ([s4](#))**

This chapter demonstrates that Queens College has clearly defined recruitment and admissions processes consistent with its mission and provides appropriate support to the student body generally as well as enhanced support for students who are deemed at higher risk. The section examines the criteria of Standard IV sequentially. The discussion simultaneously addresses Requirements of Affiliation 8 ([r8](#)) and 10 ([r10](#)). We also address two of the five intended outcomes of this self-study listed in Section 0.4: to streamline and simplify academic and business processes to improve the student experience, and to strengthen enrollment management and student support to improve retention. Several short-term recommendations from this working group have already been implemented or are underway. These are described in Section [Chapter 8](#) (Conclusions). This chapter concludes with a strategic recommendation.

#### **4.1 Policies and processes ([s4c1](#))**

##### **4.1.1 Student Recruitment and Admissions Processes([s4c1](#))**

The College holds annual undergraduate and graduate open houses, as well as information sessions for students who have been admitted but not yet confirmed their attendance. The College advertises in print and social media, and also employs radio ads, billboards, and other signage. The College also reaches out by letter, email, and in some cases by telephone, to students who have stopped attending or have not registered for the upcoming semester. To meet its diversity goals, the College travels to selected schools and college fairs to recruit.

Prospective freshmen apply to Queens College and to the other senior CUNY colleges through a universal CUNY application, on which they indicate the CUNY colleges to which they want to apply for admission. The freshman admission rate is 40%, and admission is based on clearly stated criteria. Among these are a minimum SAT math score of 510, a minimum total SAT score of 1020, satisfactory New York State Regents examination scores, and a HS average of at least 80. Skills tests in mathematics and reading may also be taken in lieu of examination scores to demonstrate college readiness. Transfer students with a minimum GPA of 2.0 from within CUNY may automatically transfer to the College. Students applying for the Macaulay Honors College must in addition submit essays and letters of recommendation. Students applying for the Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge (SEEK) program must demonstrate significant financial need, and meet slightly relaxed admission standards. SEEK is the higher education opportunity program at the senior (baccalaureate and master's degree-granting) CUNY colleges. It was established to provide comprehensive academic support to assist capable students who otherwise might not be able to attend college due to their educational and financial circumstances. These students receive supplemental instruction, and they have demonstrated superior retention and performance compared to the student body as a whole, as shown in Appendix [F.11](#) [[A162](#)] and Appendix [F.12](#) [[A163](#)].

#### **4.1.2 Information regarding expenses and financial assistance (s4c1a)**

Consistent with our mission of affordable access, QC strives to be as transparent as possible about the costs associated with a Queens College education and to provide students with timely and relevant information about covering all costs associated with attending college. Cost of attendance information is posted in several places on our website including our Admissions page [100], and our Consumer Information page [101]. As required, QC provides a link to CUNY's net price calculator to help prospective students see how much financial aid they may be eligible for and what their out-of-pocket costs are likely to be [102]. Information on loans, grants, work study, and financial aid is provided in several ways. Prospective QC students can attend financial aid sessions organized by CUNY's Central Office. The QC financial aid office participates in financial aid fairs at local colleges, and presents financial aid information at new student orientation sessions. Further, all relevant financial aid information is, presented on our financial aid web page [103], with links from there to additional external resources to help students understand different forms of aid and eligibility requirements. The financial aid office sends out award letters to students who qualify for aid with additional information, and meets with individual students to assist them with financial aid applications and processing of awards, and provides students with information about both need-based and non-need-based aid. The Standard IV Working Group noted that navigation to this information could be simplified, and webpage improvement, related to Self-Study Recommendation 2, is already underway.

#### **4.1.3 Support for inadequately prepared students (s4c1b)**

A CUNY-wide resolution passed in 1999 required students wishing to attend one of CUNY's 4-year institutions to demonstrate basic skills proficiency in reading, writing, and math to be admitted for a baccalaureate degree, and relegated remedial instruction to the CUNY community colleges or colleges offering the associate degree. The proficiency requirements are built into QC's admissions criteria noted above. With the exception of admissions to a few special programs, the College does not admit students who do not demonstrate skills proficiency in the required areas. The College does identify, however, students who are deemed to be at risk in English or mathematics. All English as a Second Language (ESL) students who have do not demonstrate reading and writing proficiency (based on SAT, NYS Regents, or CUNY Basic Skills Tests scores) are invited to enroll in the free basic skills immersion program, which offers reading and writing courses in July, August, and January. Students are re-administered the basic skills tests at the end of the program. Students in the highest-level College English as a Second Language (CESL) writing course, CESL 31, who do not pass the basic skills test in writing at the end of the course must register for ENGL 95 (fewer than 20 of the approximately 70 CESL 31 students per semester), a course designed and reserved for such students.

All entering SEEK freshmen (approximately 220 each year) attend summer immersion programs. We offer summer experiences to help SEEK students adjust to college life and prepare them for the academic challenges of college. In addition to academic skills enrichment, the SEEK College Advising workshop introduces students to time management, study habits and learning styles. Students are instructed on how to set up a computer account and establish a



QC email address, use Blackboard, our online/hybrid course platform, as well as how to register for courses. The QC SEEK Program operates on a Learning Community/Block Program model and students are introduced to this model during the SEEK Pre-Freshman Summer Program. SEEK and College English as a Second Language (CESL) work together to coordinate services for ESL students in the SEEK program, who are automatically referred to the CESL Program for registration if basic skills test scores deem such a placement. During the fall and spring semesters, students are encouraged to take advantage of activities of the SEEK Learning Center, the SEEK Writing Center, SEEK Counseling Unit and the numerous services provided by the SEEK Program such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, counseling, counseling workshops, study skills workshops, academic enrichment workshops, reading groups, service learning initiatives, co-curricular community events, activities provided by the SEEK and QC Clubs, and advanced computer instruction. The Fall 2015 SEEK status report, Appendix [E.83 \[A164\]](#), demonstrates strong student performance.

Following admission all students may avail themselves of tutoring, advising, supplemental instruction, and academic support services provided with the support of the CUNY Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) program. CUE supports the summer immersion programs, the Writing Center, the Math Lab, tutoring programs, the Freshman Year Initiative (which gathers students into communities that take linked courses together), and special recruitment/retention initiatives such as Project Excel (which is aimed at black male students). We present information about CUE's assessment processes and outcomes in Section [5.4.2](#). QC is in the early stages of implementing an early alert system using new functionality available in its existing Hobsons system. In the middle of the fall 2016 semester, faculty teaching Freshman Year Initiative courses were asked to identify any students not making satisfactory progress in their classes. The Hobsons Connect system then sent out communications to the targeted students with information about a scheduled advising appointment and available academic support services. Over 300 students were contacted as a result of the fall implementation, and the system will be refined in response to the feedback obtained.

#### **4.1.4 Orientation, advisement, and counseling programs ([s4c1c](#))**

The College offers a variety of support mechanisms to ensure that students have the necessary information and guidance they need to select courses and programs to make efficient degree progress. The Academic Advising Center (AAC) is responsible for new student orientation (freshmen and transfer students) and continuing advisement of all undergraduate students, and works with other student services, such as the Registrar, Bursar, and Financial Aid. The Office of Counseling, Health and Wellness assists students with personal, academic, and mental health issues, and meets with students at academic risk. This office also oversees the Peer Support Services program, where approximately 50 students advise hundreds of their peers on issues such as scheduling, English practice, stress management, selecting majors and minors, and personal issues.

**New student orientation:** The AAC runs new student orientation programs for both freshmen and transfer students. The goal of these programs is to advise and register students and provide an orientation to the College. The students are given handouts (the New Student Guide

publication, Appendix [J.10 \[A165\]](#)), and provided with information on general education requirements, QC rules and regulations, the major selection process, QC policies and procedures, and campus resources and services. Attendance at an orientation session is mandatory for freshmen. Approximately 95% of entering transfer students also attend an orientation session even though it is not required.

Our current freshman orientation involves short sessions with groups of 30 to 70 students during a morning or afternoon, followed by individual advising sessions. Fall 2014 statistics, Appendix [F.8 \[A166\]](#), indicate that 1,300 freshmen (96%) attended formal orientation sessions, with the remaining 4% entering through an academic department or individual advising session with a professional advisor. Our freshman orientations are evaluated on a regular basis by soliciting feedback from students and advisors. The College's previous orientation procedure involved a large group (225 or more students), day-long campus orientation for students and parents and collective advising for groups of 15 to 20 students with peer mentors and AAC staff. Student evaluations of the large group orientations indicated that the advising session had an impersonal feel, but the peer-to-peer interactions were positive. For the small group orientation sessions now in place, feedback indicates that although students encountered long waits to meet with advisors, they rated the individual meetings favorably.

Transfer student orientation has a structure similar to freshman orientation. Groups of 30 to 70 students are seen during a scheduled session, followed by optional individual advising meetings. Fall 2014 data, Appendix [F.9 \[A167\]](#), indicate that 2,008 transfer students (95%) attended orientation sessions. Transfer students are given information on transfer credit policies and major requirements, in addition to the information given to freshmen. In individual advising meetings, transfer students work with an advisor to discuss major plans, to review their transfer credit evaluation, and to establish a degree plan. Transfer student orientation is evaluated on a regular basis; student feedback has been positive regarding clarification of the QC requirements, but students report frustration with long wait times to see an advisor. Advisors also provided feedback on the sessions, identifying the problem of stressful student-advisor relationships owing to the demanding advisement schedule. As a result of feedback from students and advisors, the College is examining ways to address the demand, including group sessions, additional mechanisms for communicating information to students, advisor professional development, and hiring additional advisors.

**Advising services:** The Academic Advising Center (AAC) provides advising services to continuing students to assist them in completing their degree requirements in a timely manner. The AAC advises students on general education and major requirements and monitors their progress toward the degree. Students get advising on course selection, major options, and identifying major/minor advisors. The advisors regularly consult with faculty on these issues. They advise students on co-curricular activities, such as Career Services, Study Abroad, and internships, and work with other student offices, such as Honors, SEEK, and the Murphy Institute. Annual statistics, Appendix [F.10 \[A168\]](#), show a marked increase in on-site student visits over the past 10 years, increasing to 5,800 in fall 2014 from 2,400 in fall 2005, reflecting a concerted outreach effort, expanding advising hours, and the re-location of the AAC to a more central location on the campus in 2001. (An apparent drop-off after 2010 is in fact due to the introduction of e-



advising, Skype advising, and increased telephone advising, as these contacts are not accounted for in the on-site statistics.) The AAC acts as liaison to Student Affairs and student support services, such as the Registrar, Bursar, One Stop, Financial Aid, and Academic Support. They work with the Offices of the Registrar and Financial Aid regarding student eligibility for aid, with the Office of Counseling, Health and Wellness regarding students who are at-risk and with Title IV issues and also work on appeals with the Undergraduate Scholastic Standards Committee (USSC) and the Office of General Education.

Students and advisors both have access to online resources for tracking their academic histories and progress towards degree completion. Advisement at QC is greatly facilitated by our advising platform, DegreeWorks, in use across the CUNY system to help students select courses that are appropriate to their major, that meet general education requirements, and that qualify for federal and state aid eligibility. Advisors, both in the AAC and the academic departments, use DegreeWorks in advising sessions with students to explain degree requirements and help students make choices that facilitate efficient degree progress. DegreeWorks is also the College's official degree audit system to certify students for graduation. In addition to DegreeWorks, students and advisors may utilize views of the student's academic history in CUNYfirst to complement the information in DegreeWorks and to resolve course equivalency appeals.

The AAC relies heavily on part-time advisors to meet the demand for individual advisement. As of fall 2016, there were seven part-time advisors and ten full-time advisors, with searches for additional full-time advisors underway. Results from surveys such as NSSE, FSSE and Noel Levitz administered at the College, as well as QC's own surveys of new and continuing students, showed dissatisfaction with the lack of uniformity of the guidance they got from different advisors. In response and consistent with the CUE goal to "improve efficiency of information and advisory services through the increased use of technological resources," the AAC obtained CUE funds to create individual e-advising portfolios that contain notes on all advising sessions and email correspondence between the student and the Center to ensure uniform information and continuity of message regardless of who a student interacts with in the Center. As the most recent CUE report (see p. 8 of Appendix [F.4 \[A169\]](#)) indicates, QC has taken additional steps to advance this goal and support the work of the advising staff. For example, the AAC used CUE funds to provide computer kiosks and iPads in the AAC waiting area to assist students.

Survey results also indicated that students were dissatisfied with availability of and access to academic advisors, particularly in evenings and on weekends. As a result, the AAC increased its hours to include two evenings and year-round Saturday availability.

In their survey responses, students expressed the desire for better coordination between the AAC and the departments. One way the College is improving in this area is through the annual Major/Minor Information Fair [[104](#)], part of its undeclared majors' intervention campaign. The AAC organizes and staffs the fair. Departments send faculty and current majors to provide information to students who attend. The College monitors attendance data and major declaration rates to assess the impact of the campaign activities. As the report in Appendix [E.50 \[A170\]](#) shows, over 500 students attend the fair each year. The report also shows that between

40 and 50% of students who had been undeclared, declare a major shortly after the fair, and this proportion has been growing in recent years. The proportion of students with at least 60 credits who have not yet declared a major is higher than we would like, and the College is continuing to encourage earlier major declaration.

Departments provide academic advising to their majors and prospective majors. Each department designates dedicated faculty advisors who review requirements for the major, advise students on course sequences, help in course planning and post-graduate planning. In addition to individual advisement, some departments with a large number of students also schedule special times for group advising. In some cases the College provides release time for faculty members with high advising loads. Students must obtain a signature from a departmental advisor when they declare a major, and this is generally another occasion for faculty advising.

**Counseling Services:** The College provides counseling to help students address both personal and academic issues. The Counseling, Health, and Wellness Center [[105](#)] provides individual counseling for students to enhance their academic, intellectual, personal, and social growth, and to address mental health issues. The Center has five full-time professional staff members who are licensed or certified mental health professionals and four part-time interns. In addition to its daytime hours, the Center is open two evenings a week, as well as on Saturday mornings.

Individual counseling is available to assist students with personal issues, including immigration (legal and familial), family interactions and history, and developmental issues. Counselors help students address their financial circumstances, including their living situations and the need to balance their studies and work hours. They assist students in applying for grants and loans from the VP for Student Affairs. Counselors guide students in assessing their personal and academic goals.

Mental health services include individual counseling for issues such as anxiety and depression. Mental health professionals develop safety plans for students with mental health issues and provide referrals to resources off campus. A consulting psychiatrist is available for three hours per month during the academic year to assist with diagnosis and medication management. There are no testing services; students are referred to the QC Psychological Center.

The Counseling, Health, and Wellness Center also provides individual counseling for students with academic issues, and works closely with AAC to identify and support these students. All students at academic risk after their first semester (GPA lower than 2.0) and all students re-entering after probation are required to meet with a counselor. They are interviewed to identify any difficulties they may have, such as personal or financial issues, which may impede their academic success. Counselors give these students information about college rules and deadlines, such as P/NC options, withdrawals, financial aid, and grade replacement policies. They discuss personal issues, academic strengths and weaknesses, and prospective majors, and assist students in submitting appeals for retroactive withdrawals and reopening FIN grades. They also identify available tutoring and support services and provide referrals to AAC and

Career Services. Counseling Services handles appeals for reinstatement of financial aid and leaves of absence.

The Counseling, Health, and Wellness Center carries out student evaluations periodically, most recently in March 2015, when all students seen that month were asked to evaluate their counseling experience. The number of students served has been increasing in recent years, consistent with national trends. The Center served 1,750 students last year, about 8% of QC students. This is higher than the average for commuter colleges, perhaps because the Center also serves students who are at academic risk or who require financial aid appeals. The Center attempts to see students in crisis immediately, and others generally within a week.

#### **4.1.5 Processes supporting student success ([s4c1d](#))**

As previously described in Section [3.6](#), the *Pathways* initiative was designed to insure that students can easily transfer general education credits across CUNY institutions. *Pathways* also facilitates the transfer of credits in courses that are identified as “gateways to the major” — courses that are common introductory courses in a set of popular majors (for example, macro and microeconomics, ECON 101 and 102 at QC). This initiative, built on a common curricular foundation, encourages efficient degree progress. Articulation agreements [\[47\]](#) with other CUNY and non-CUNY colleges also speed progress toward the degree.

The College provides academic support in a variety of formats from wrap-around programs such as SEEK, to Freshman Year Initiative and mentoring programs, to drop-in services such as tutoring, the Writing Center, and the Math Lab. These services are intended to improve student academic success, retention, and degree progress. Where these services align with CUE goals, the College is able to target funds available through that program. See Appendix [F.4 \[A169\]](#) for recent examples.

The College is also able to use student technology fee funds to provide additional services to support student success. Examples of these services include “smart classroom” upgrades, software licenses, and free access to training modules for technical skills through Lynda.com. Students are directly involved in selecting projects to be funded, and the Office of Information Technology manages and monitors services provided.

As noted previously, the Strategic Plan has identified improved retention as a key goal (Appendix [C.1 \[A122\]](#)). Among the initiatives underway, led by the newly created Office of Enrollment Management and Retention, are improved documentation describing degree requirements (degree maps), expansion of support services for transfer students, creation of graduate student lounges, and increased student services via the One-Stop. QC is expanding and reconceptualizing the One-Stop to create the QC Hub, which will co-locate essential services. We have secured \$3M in capital funding for construction of the QC Hub.

Many of the supports described thus far focus on services for students who might be struggling personally or academically. QC also has programs and supports for students who excel academically. A number of different honors programs at QC provide students with tuition support, funding for study abroad, support for enriching experiential opportunities and other

For example, students in the Macaulay Honors College, a prestigious program at 8 CUNY colleges provides full tuition scholarship, a generous grant for study programs [106], and a laptop computer to those who meet CUNY NYS residency requirements. The program, in existence at QC since 2001, admits 60 students each year. Another example of support for Honors Students is the Transfer Honors Program [107] which was established in 2014 to provide tuition support and academic services to highly qualified new transfer students. The program has accepted 80 students to date (roughly 17 each semester), 20 of whom have already graduated with eight of these admitted to graduate schools (Appendix J.599 [A171]). Several have received internal college awards, and one was valedictorian of her class.

The Office of Career Development and Internships sponsors numerous workshops and programs devoted to resume preparation, interview skills, and job searches. The Office recently instituted a series of workshops that address communication, leadership and ethics, accountability and reliability, team participation, interpersonal skills, time management, and problem solving. The career fairs bring over 50 employers to campus, and the office also places numerous students into company internships. This is in addition to the internship programs organized by Urban Studies, Economics, and other academic departments. The office logs over 7,000 student contacts annually, with over 3,500 attending workshops (Appendix J.991 [A172]). In a 2013 CUNY survey of graduates from the 2009-10 academic year, 80% of QC graduates reported being employed, 38% reported pursuing additional education, and 18% reported having earned an additional degree (Appendix E.596 [A173]).

The impact of improved processes that support student success is evidenced by steadily increasing graduation rates as documented in CUNY's retention and graduation reports for QC (Appendix J.777 [A174] and Appendix J.776 [A175]). In our 2007 Middle States decennial review, we reported that our first-year retention rate increased from 78% in 1995 to 84% in 2004 and that our 6-year graduation rate increased from 40% in 1995 to 51% in 1999. The first-year retention for freshmen has been bouncing up and down between 75% and 78% for nearly 10 years despite efforts to serve our growing population of transfer entrants. The 4-year graduation rates for transfers has showed improvement over time but appears to be declining in recent years. The College has been engaged in analyses and discussions - at the cabinet level and among those who work in particular service offices - to better understand the needs of our transfer population. We continue to assess the impact of recent initiatives described above to support transfer students on student retention and academic success.

#### **4.2 Transfer credits, experiential learning, life achievement credits (s4c2)**

The CUNY-wide *Pathways* system described in more detail in Section 3.6 is designed to make transfer of general education requirements within CUNY as seamless for transfer students as possible while providing individual campuses with mechanisms for tailoring the requirements to suit the individual characters of those campuses.

In addition, the CUNY "Gateway Courses Into Majors" initiative [108] provides clear articulation structures for the first courses in some of the largest majors offered at the CUNY campuses. At QC, these majors include Biology, Business, Economics, English, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Teacher Education. Under this structure, students who complete designated

courses at a community college are guaranteed to have satisfied corresponding major requirements at whichever senior college, such as QC, they transfer to.

The College has straightforward policies regarding transfer students, which are posted on the College's website at [\[47\]](#). For admission, only the student's previous college transcript is assessed, unless some college credits were earned in high school. All students must demonstrate readiness for college-level work, as determined by a review of completed coursework and GPA. Transfer credits typically require the following minimum grades: C- at any accredited, degree-granting non-CUNY U.S. institution, or any passing grade from a CUNY college. If a direct course equivalency cannot be found, (but meets standards of rigor after review by an appropriate academic department) then the course may still count towards the 120 credits needed for the degree even though it does not satisfy a major or general education requirement. Students who wish to appeal the evaluation of a transferred course do so with the aid of an advisor from the Academic Advising Center. Students must complete at least 45 credits at Queens College to obtain an undergraduate degree.

The Transfer Honors Program [\[107\]](#) offers scholarships and academic support for high achieving students. The CUNY Transfer Information & Program Planning System (TIPPS) website [\[109\]](#) is useful for identifying equivalent courses between campuses.

For international transfer students, in addition to the above steps, all foreign documents from non-English-speaking countries must be officially translated into English and processed through the CUNY University Application Processing Center, which reviews and forwards the applicant's information to individual colleges once the student is officially accepted.

Queens College was designated a 2016 "Military Friendly School" by Victory Media [\[110\]](#), and the College has recently hired a dedicated veterans coordinator. Veterans can transfer credit through a special procedure for Joint Service Transcripts (JST). JSTs are pre-evaluated by the Admission Office's Transfer Department to determine course equivalencies. Students can receive up to 45 credits in equivalencies, and individualized credit adjustments are made for degree and major requirements. Department faculty review the applicant's "Evaluation of Work Taken at an Accredited Degree-Granting U.S. Institution" form for specific subject matter area credit equivalencies. A veteran may be awarded up to 12 non-liberal arts credits when no prior credits are found. Decisions are recorded so that they will apply to future applicants.

Queens College has two other programs that offer credits for prior experience. The Adult Collegiate Education (ACE) program has its own evaluation department and offers up to 36 Life Achievement Credits. (The average number is approximately 10). Students prepare portfolios that highlight their relevant life experiences. Depending on the substance of the applicant's portfolio, academic departments can award course-equivalent credits and/or elective credits. When prior learning is substantial and sufficiently aligned with that gained in a college course, academic departments may award course-equivalent credits, which are actual credits for courses offered by name and number. Elective credits without specific course numbers may be awarded for more generalized learning in an academic area.

Credits at the College can also be awarded through Competency Based Assessment or use of College Level Examination Program (CLEP) to test out of required courses. The College Bulletin provides a brief description for credit by external exam. The Psychology Department is currently the only program identifying specific courses that can be substituted with the CLEP exam. A student can be awarded up to 24 college credits for college-level work completed in high school. Such credits might include coursework taken through College Now, Townsend Harris High School, the QC High Jump Program, pre-college work taken at other accredited institutions and listed on a college transcript, AP work certified through the College Board, and International Baccalaureate credit. (See page 11 of the Transfer Credit Evaluation Guide, Appendix [F.7 \[A176\]](#).)

### **4.3 Student information and records ([s4c3](#))**

Queens College follows CUNY guidelines and mandates in relation to granting access to Non-Public Information (NPI) that is housed on the CUNYfirst system. NPI information includes social security numbers, driver's license numbers, credit/debit card information, financial records and information protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). College employees are granted access on an as needed basis, after approval from both the department and the registrar. Short term employees need special waivers and students are not permitted access except in special circumstances. Individual access is reviewed at least once each semester and employee access is terminated immediately upon separation. User IDs are never reassigned and passwords must be changed every 180 days or sooner depending upon access type. Access from non-University locations is only allowed through secure remote connections. NPI is not permitted to be stored on portable devices without administration and security approval.

The Office of Information Technology runs workshops on security and privacy awareness. FERPA information and forms for students are provided on the AAC website and in new student guides. The Provost website [\[111\]](#) contains FERPA information. There is a strict maintenance (retention) schedule for student records and retention requirements are applied broadly to a host of documents. In addition, collection and maintenance of student financial records collected by the Office of Financial Aid are governed by federal mandate.

### **4.4 Extracurricular activities ([s4c4](#))**

**Athletics:** The Office of Campus & Community Recreation administers five on-campus intramural sports each semester. Responsibilities include the oversight of all operational and programming aspects, which entails registration, social media, and marketing. The Community Recreation Program & Fitness Center oversees seven additional on campus programs. Programs are available to students, and local community members for a fee. Comprehensive and up-to-date programming can be accessed online [\[112\]](#) or in person. This open accessibility invites local community members onto campus, which increases the College's visibility at the local level. The overall programs align with the College's long-term strategic plan of supporting the enhancement of diversity within the College (e.g. veterans). Competitive athletic programs were addressed in Section **xxx**, where the regular NCAA review was described. Roughly 275 students participate in varsity sports, while about 1000 participate in extramural sports and



recreation activities. Roughly 600 students each semester enroll in physical activity courses. A faculty liaison oversees student participation in varsity athletics, and guidelines for notifying faculty of absence due to competition are clearly spelled out.

**Student Life:** The College’s Student Life website [[113](#)] boasts more than 100 clubs and organizations. Club rosters and information are accessible within the Office of Student Development and Leadership. Club registration days are facilitated each semester, and during the summer, for a range of 400-1000 new/transfer students. Student Development and club events tend to be advertised via paper flyers posted around campus. Student Development has adopted a streamlined business and budgetary process flow that exceeds industry standards, which can be attributed to its robust partnership with the College Association. The elimination of bureaucratic hurdles between Student Development and adjacent departments helps with the retention of transfer students. At the start of each academic year Student Life’s largest event is “Welcome Day,” which features traditional music and dances in recognition of a new cultural theme each year. Tracking of event participation and student interest metrics are typically captured via paper sign-in sheets.

#### **4.5 Assessment of programs supporting the student experience ([s4c6](#))**

Several surveys are employed to assess various aspects of the student experience. The NSSE (Appendix [E.18 \[A135\]](#)) and Noel Levitz surveys (Appendix [E.1 \[A177\]](#)) have been administered several times throughout CUNY.

The CUE Program performs annual assessments of all its programs, including tutoring, immersion programs, and workshops. These include student feedback. The SEEK and FYI programs also perform regular assessments which are reported to CUNY through the CUE Program (Appendix [F.4 \[A169\]](#)).

In 2015-2016, Queens College initiated a comprehensive review of all its master’s degree and post-baccalaureate certificate programs. The goals of this review are to enhance program distinctiveness, strengthen academic rigor, and improve the professional success of our graduates. In spring 2016, graduate advisors and chairs prepared reports on all their programs using a questionnaire developed around these key goals. These reports, joined with data compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, will form the basis for analysis by faculty review teams. Based on the team recommendations, a Graduate Review Committee will compose a report for the Provost with recommended action items that aim to improve the graduate student experience and make Queens College a destination of choice for master’s-level education in the New York City metropolitan area.

The quality of the living experience in the Summit residence hall are continuously evaluated by survey instruments and peer groups, and feedback is shared with the managers and peer advisors. Food service satisfaction is also constantly monitored, and resulted in the recent introduction of food trucks on the campus grounds to foster convenience and variety. In addition—in response to feedback from students, faculty, and staff—a vendor was hired in 2016 to operate a new food kiosk in the Administration Building. The new kiosk will have longer hours and will serve a different variety of food than previously available.

Recently, coincident with the end of the campus bookstore contract, a committee was formed as per the Auxiliary Enterprise Corporation policy to select a new provider. The committee included faculty, students, and administrators, and conducted a survey of the campus to determine needs and preferences. As a result, an online provider (Akademos) was selected, and the College will also open a campus store to provide sundries as well as to serve as pickup point for students who wish to have their books delivered to the campus. The selected vendor will allow the College to realize lower average prices for books and materials.

#### **4.6 Recommendation**

The culminating recommendation of the working group on the student experience is as follows:

**Recommendation 4: Reorganize and consider relocating the One Stop to increase the quality, convenience, and efficiency of service provided to students, and thereby improve student satisfaction, retention, and outcomes.**

The working group recommended several other actions which are being acted upon within the Strategic Plan. These include improved web resources, and increased support for orientation, advising and career services, as described in Section [8.1](#). As noted above, we have recently obtained funding for the “QC Hub” to support relocation of the One Stop.



# Standard V

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## Educational Effectiveness Assessment

Assessment of student learning and achievement demonstrates that the institution's students have accomplished educational goals consistent with their program of study, degree level, the institution's mission, and appropriate expectations for institutions of higher education.

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. clearly stated educational goals at the institution and degree/program levels, which are interrelated with one another, with relevant educational experiences, and with the institution's mission;
2. organized and systematic assessments, conducted by faculty and/or appropriate professionals, evaluating the extent of student achievement of institutional and degree/program goals. Institutions should:
  - a. define meaningful curricular goals with defensible standards for evaluating whether students are achieving those goals;
  - b. articulate how they prepare students in a manner consistent with their mission for successful careers, meaningful lives, and, where appropriate, further education. They should collect and provide data on the extent to which they are meeting these goals;
  - c. support and sustain assessment of student achievement and communicate the results of this assessment to stakeholders;
3. consideration and use of assessment results for the improvement of educational effectiveness. Consistent with the institution's mission, such uses include some combination of the following:
  - a. assisting students in improving their learning;
  - b. improving pedagogy and curriculum;
  - c. reviewing and revising academic programs and support services;
  - d. planning, conducting, and supporting a range of professional development activities;
  - e. planning and budgeting for the provision of academic programs and services;
  - f. informing appropriate constituents about the institution and its programs;
  - g. improving key indicators of student success, such as retention, graduation, transfer, and placement rates;
  - h. implementing other processes and procedures designed to improve educational programs and services;
4. if applicable, adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval of assessment services designed, delivered, or assessed by third-party providers; and
5. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of assessment processes utilized by the institution for the improvement of educational effectiveness.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Standard V: Educational Effectiveness Assessment ([s5](#))**

The information presented in this chapter is intended to demonstrate how QC's current assessment efforts meet the criteria of Standard V and to show how QC complies with MSCHE requirements of affiliation 8 and 9 ([r8](#) and [r9](#)), which call for the College to evaluate its educational programs, make public the results, and assure the quality of its programs. In this chapter, we also present efforts to better coordinate and manage student learning outcomes assessment across the College. This chapter begins with a description of the institutional supports for assessment, and is followed by examples of assessment of student learning outcomes at the program and institutional levels, including for our general education curriculum. The last section presents our efforts to assess college-wide educational outcomes.

Queens College uses a variety of processes and strategies to assess student learning both at the specific program level and for overall institutional outcomes. The College also has mechanisms in place to assess other important educational outcomes such as retention, graduation and post-graduate success. Efforts to assess learning outcomes include direct assessment of skills through writing, problem sets, exams, and portfolio evaluation, and indirect measures such as survey results, grades, and measures of academic progress. Many of our departments and programs have long traditions of assessment of student learning outcomes and documentation of data-driven changes and decisions. When President Matos Rodríguez joined Queens College in 2014, he made it a priority, reflected in the Strategic Plan, that the College put in place a structure to ensure that assessment of student learning was conducted systematically across the College, while building on a strong foundation and long history of quality control for its academic programs. Even before undertaking this self-study, Queens College was aware that assessment of student learning was uneven across the College, and that even for the many programs where assessment is ongoing and data is driving changes intended to improve teaching and learning, documentation of data-based decisions needed strengthening. Through this self-study and analysis of our assessment processes and products, we are in a better position to build upon our identified strengths, and improve areas of weakness. Not surprisingly, our largest programs (those that serve the most students) have developed the most rigorous assessment programs, as demonstrated by examples of departmental assessment below. This chapter concludes with a recommendation for strengthening student learning outcomes assessment practice through faculty professional development and efforts to further strengthen our assessment infrastructure.

The QC strategic plan calls specifically for using assessment outcomes to devise improvements that will improve student learning. One way the College is working on this goal is through the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) of the Academic Senate, which beginning in 2017 require consideration of student learning outcomes assessment in curricular submissions.

Our goal for assessment is to connect QC's program-specific student learning outcomes, including those related to our general education program, to institutional (college) goals, and to

connect institutional goals with University-wide (CUNY) goals. Assessment information at one level can then help inform decisions not just at that level, but at other levels as well.

## **5.1 Institutional Support for Educational Effectiveness Assessment**

Under the leadership of the President and Provost, QC has taken several steps to build up the college-wide assessment infrastructure and capacity in departments and programs as called for in initiative #6 of QC's Strategic Plan (Appendix [C.1 \[A122\]](#)), with a related outcome of a stronger use of student learning assessment data for decision-making (SP initiative #5). Three important initiatives undertaken recently in support of this goal are:

- The development of the QC Assessment Document Repository
- The creation of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness
- The reconstitution of the Outcomes Assessment Committee and Standard V Working Group into the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council

### **5.1.1 The QC Assessment Document Repository**

The QC Assessment Document Repository is a recent significant development that supports the QC strategic goals related to assessment. The "Assessment Repository" is an application developed in-house for storing, organizing, cataloging, and reporting on documents related to student learning outcomes assessment in the college's academic departments. More specifically, it allows the College to:

- Better track and organize evidence of student learning outcomes assessment where it exists;
- Identify departments and programs that need support to conduct periodic and impactful assessment of student learning;
- Share examples of good assessment documents (including the development or revision of curricular maps) across departments;
- Facilitate the ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes assessment.

Built upon the Google for Education platform, the repository is designed to allow departmental faculty and staff, as well as administrators in the Provost's Office, to upload documents related to academic assessment into department-specific folders, and importantly, provide metadata about each document submitted to the repository – the type of document (mission, goals, assessment data, syllabus, self-study report), the timeframe the information pertains to, and how it relates to the departments overall assessment practices. QC's Assessment Document Repository has an easy-to-use interface that controls access to the documents within. Access to documents is based on users' departmental affiliation(s). The home page of the QC Assessment Website [[12](#)] serves as a portal for the Assessment Repository. Links allow users to review guidelines for assessment and instructions for the using the repository (see Appendix [E.17 \[A110\]](#)), to access documents currently in the assessment repository for the user's department(s), to view the metadata, if recorded, for each document, and to upload and record the metadata for new assessment documents.

The Provost's Office developed a useful analytic tool to analyze the Assessment Repository metadata ([114](#)). The interactive display allows the user to choose one or more departments or programs to get an overview of the types of documents included in the repository for each department and program. Using the Date "slider," one can see how the contents of the repository have changed over time. The visual display also shows how the Assessment Document Repository is expanding the culture of academic assessment at Queens College as more departments and programs appear in the summary over time.

The Guidelines for Program Assessment (Appendix [E.17 \[A110\]](#)) stress the importance of mission statements for establishing the context in which programs operate. They also suggest how to bridge the more abstract principles of mission statements to create actionable assessment activities through the articulation of learning outcomes. In July of 2015, QC established a goal (one of the PMP College Focus goals) that all departments will have an updated mission statement for their programs in the repository by the end of the 2015-16 academic year. While we are still working to reach 100%, much progress has been made since that goal was first announced. Section **xxx** describes the steps we are taking to improve both the quality of the documents and the metadata about the documents in the repository, as well as to encourage greater compliance of our academic departments.

The assessment guidelines also promote the use of curriculum maps to identify and document which courses or co-curricular activities are intended to produce particular learning outcomes, and identify any gaps so that department faculty can take action to fill those gaps with new or redesigned courses or adjustments to assignments in existing courses. The guidelines further provide suggestions for how faculty can measure the extent to which desired learning goals are being met, such as through departmental exams and the use of rubrics to projects and portfolios. QC continues to stress the importance of assessment activities that lead to actionable outcomes and share examples of how decisions are made and documented based on assessment data. Through this self-study, it was noted that more direct professional development and the availability of template documents would make it easier for faculty to conduct assessment more routinely. At the time of this report, efforts were underway to provide additional support in the form of reporting templates to assist departments in documenting their assessment activities and resulting decisions.

Prior to the development of the repository, the Provost's Office required departments to regularly submit assessment plans and assessment activity reports, which were catalogued, but somewhat difficult to maintain, reference, and update. The QC Assessment Document Repository addresses many of the shortcomings of the previous, low-tech approach, and importantly, provides structure to departments for how to document their assessment activities. With the new repository application, assessment activities have been reorganized to address academic programs rather than academic departments, helping to ensure that all programs within a department undergo regular assessment, and easily identifying those for which documentation is lacking.

When the repository was first launched, it was populated with documents from the College's assessment archives, with new documents continually added as they have become available.

Because assessment is ongoing, departments will be contributing more documents as time goes on.

### **5.1.2 The Office of Institutional Effectiveness**

Another important change recently implemented was the reorganization and reallocation of resources to create the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. This new office oversees the standard functions of an office of institutional research as well as the coordination of and support for assessment, both institutional and program-specific, in academic and non-academic academic domains (the latter domain is discussed in [Chapter 6](#)).

A new position, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, was created to oversee expanded efforts in both assessment and institutional research and the position was filled with an acting dean in September of 2016. Among other responsibilities, the dean coordinates communication and professional development related to assessment, working with an assessment liaison identified by each department's chairperson. In addition to managing a small staff dedicated to collecting, analyzing, and presenting data for assessment and many other purposes, the dean currently leads the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council, described further in the section below.

### **5.1.3 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (SLO-AC)**

Drawing in part from the existing Outcomes Assessment Committee, the Standard V working group, comprised of faculty, students, and staff, reviewed relevant documentation and conducted an assessment audit as the groundwork for a draft chapter for the self-study. At the conclusion of the group's work on the self-study, the working group was reconstituted by the Provost as the Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Council (SLO-AC), comprised of about a dozen faculty and administrators to assess and improve student learning outcomes assessment across the college (see goals and tasks in meeting notes, Appendix [E.97 \[A178\]](#)) by evaluating the contents of the Assessment Document Repository, providing feedback to departments about their assessment activities and documents, and identifying areas of focus for raising the assessment proficiency of the college faculty.

The SLO-AC developed a rubric [[115](#)], aligned with the guidelines for assessment, to evaluate the documents in the assessment repository (assess SLO assessment in academic departments). The council members are using the rubric to communicate more effectively with faculty about QC's expectations for assessment and to provide actionable feedback to departments. The assessment will be completed for each department (and in some cases, for individual programs within the department) to help departments improve (or maintain) their assessment practices and products.

The SLO-AC has also been charged with identifying needs and opportunities for faculty professional development to help departments build and institutionalize their assessment practices. Partnering with the QC Center for Teaching and Learning, and through a limited engagement with an assessment consultant, QC is in the process of developing learning

modules intended to help departments develop or improve their individual assessment plans and related documents.

Although QC has developed some new structures and functions to help strengthen its culture of assessment, we are pleased to note the College is building on a strong foundation and long history of quality control for its academic programs. A description of its longstanding academic program review process and examples of SLO assessment at the program level follow.

## **5.2 Program/Departmental Level Objectives and Assessment**

### **5.2.1 Academic Program Review (APR) Process**

The Academic Program Review process has been the primary means for Queens College to maintain quality academic programs and assess student learning. Academic Program Reviews are performed by all departments on a regular basis – currently a nominal 7-year cycle and efforts are underway to streamline the process to ensure that all departments will undergo at least one full review cycle between institutional accreditation cycles (see program review calendar in Appendix [E.99 \[A179\]](#)). The APR website contains links to the calendar as well as to guidelines for departmental program review and related resources ([\[16\]](#)). Some revisions to the self-study guidelines are already underway to streamline the process, improve access to relevant data, and simplify reporting, as suggested by the Standard V working group.

A review begins with the department faculty engaging in self-study that involves examining trend data on enrollment, post-graduate outcomes (when available), and human and fiscal resources, resulting in a report written by departmental faculty describing and analyzing the current status of the department and articulating the department's aspirations for the next seven to ten years, including recommendations on how to achieve its aspirations. Information related to the department's assessment of educational effectiveness is a required component of the self-study report (see section 4.6 in the self-study outline [\[116\]](#)). The external review panel produces a report to the department following a site visit, that summarizes their assessment of the department and may include recommendations for quality improvements going forward. In addition to an opportunity to respond to the external report, the department discusses its own and the external review panel's report with the Queens College administration to determine whether and on what timeline recommendations might be implemented.

The final self-study report is presented to the divisional Dean, the Provost, and the President, as well as to an external review panel. Because departmental self-study reports are confidential, complete reports are not directly cited in this document which will be made public. However, below, we point to extracts from sections of a sample of self-studies pertinent to Standard V to show how departments incorporate their plans of educational effectiveness assessment in the self-study report. Some departments include assessment results in the self-study and others refer to other reports that document the results.

The Art Department completed a self-study in 2012 which included a plan for the assessment of several of their undergraduate learning outcomes (Appendix [E.30 \[A180\]](#)). The department

describes their use of pre- and post-tests and portfolios of student work to determine whether students are achieving the expected outcomes. For example, in their assessment of the Art History program, the department report says:

The percentages of correct answers improved in the Exit tests, but not as much as we had hoped, because ARTH 001 instructors are free to determine their own course content and therefore they may not cover all of the content presented in the Assessment tests. In Fall, 2011, the Entrance and Exit tests will be revised in consultation with teachers of ARTH 001 in order to be sure all terms in the tests are covered in all sections of this course. We shall also formulate Entrance and Exit tests for ARTH 101 and 102 in 2011-2012, and for the rest of our 100-level and 200-level Art History courses in subsequent years.

The 2013 self-study by the department of Family, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences (FNES) describes the department's assessment methodology and plans for incorporating results in Nutrition and Exercise Sciences and Food Service Management, including some suggested changes to improving post-graduate outcomes for students, motivated by results from a survey of program alumni (Appendix [E.31 \[A181\]](#)).

In 2014, the Classical, Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures (CMAL) department completed a self-study which, as required, included a section on assessing educational outcomes (see Appendix [E.32 \[A182\]](#)). In addition to noting the increased engagement of language learners through the use of language/media lab, presents a planned change to the Latin 101 curriculum from a traditional course in Latin instruction to a course with an emphasis on learning English grammar through the study of Latin. This change is intended to make the learning of Latin more applicable to other courses, especially for the growing number of students who take only one semester of Latin to meet the language requirement and do not continue for further Latin study .

The Department of Drama, Theatre and Dance completed their most recent self-study in 2013. In the assessment section of their report (see Appendix [E.33 \[A183\]](#)), the department describes how students demonstrate appropriate learning outcomes through their participation in theater and dance productions, and highlights post-graduate outcomes for their alumni.

These examples represent some of the ways that departments across the college have been incorporating descriptions of their learning outcomes assessment plans and results into the self-study report that results from their comprehensive academic program review process. More recent departmental self-study reports are more likely to address the assessment of student learning than are older self-studies as the College continues to build up its culture of continuous improvement.

### **5.2.2 Examples of Departmental Assessment**

As described in our 2012 PRR, all academic departments are required to have an assessment plan and to engage regularly in assessment activities. Through campus forums, Personnel and Budget (P&B) meetings, and the SLO-AC's efforts to continue the work of the former Outcomes Assessment Committee (see, for example, archived presentations at [\[117\]](#)), the College



continues to find ways to emphasize the importance of documenting data-based decisions in forum presentations.

Many of our programs and departments—especially those with large enrollments—have developed clearly articulated learning outcomes and mission statements that are well incorporated into a curriculum that is assessed regularly. A number of our programs have developed exemplary practices and as we continue to evaluate the assessment documents we have collected, we will be using these as models for departments whose assessment practices are still emerging.

### **Division of Education**

All departments and programs within the Division of Education engage in regular assessment activities coordinated at the division level and framed by the requirements of its professional accrediting organization, formerly the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), currently the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The Education Division offers 53 registered academic programs leading to New York State Certification of teachers and other school professionals. Together, these programs represent approximately 11% of declared undergraduate majors, 49% of students enrolled in master's programs, and 89% of students enrolled for an advanced certificate. The three departments that comprise the Division of Education -- Educational and Community Programs (ECP), Elementary and Early Childhood Education (EECE), and Secondary Education and Youth Services (SEYS) -- work collaboratively with faculty from four departments in other divisions that offer education programs (Family, Nutrition, & Exercise Sciences; the Graduate School of Library & Information Studies; Music; and Linguistics & Communication Disorders) and in 19 additional departments that offer programs jointly with SEYS (e.g., biology, mathematics, history, etc.) to fulfill the mission of the Professional Education Unit:

- Foster the core values of equity, excellence, and ethics in urban schools and communities; and
- Promote the development of competent, caring, and qualified teachers, counselors, school psychologists, and educational leaders.

The Education Division uses Chalk & Wire -- a web-based assessment management system -- to collect and organize data from multiple sources. The division's assessment process includes documenting the academic and professional development of teacher candidates and linking this work to programmatic goals, objectives, and national standards, including discipline-specific competencies. All courses in the division, including those outside the division but associated with its certification programs, are aligned with learning outcomes, as identified by course.

Queens College was the first institution in the nation to have its programs earn CAEP accreditation (2012) when the new CAEP standard were undergoing pilot testing. The College was pursuing re-accreditation by NCATE at the time it agreed to pilot the new CAEP standards and its accreditation was reaffirmed by NCATE. The complete report and associated assessment documents can be found in Appendix [E.11 \[A184\]](#) and the Units Assessment Guide, which



contains details of how each competency is assessed is in Appendix [E.599 \[A185\]](#). For example, to assess teacher candidates' competencies associated with his/her ability to analyze, synthesize, and reflect upon the fieldwork experiences associated with the course, the Unit uses an assessment rubric that is administered in the content area "methods" courses for each program. Each faculty member completes the assessment for each teacher candidate, to determine how the pre-service teacher (student) is performing. The means and percentages at the unit level and program level are analyzed and aggregated, and a report is submitted to the unit head, department chairs, assessment committee and program leaders to discuss any needed modifications to the clinical practice, in this case, with program faculty.

The Professional Education Unit has a long history of assessing learning outcomes of its program completers by monitoring the results of teacher candidates on the New York State Teacher Certification Exams. As demonstrated by the pass rates reported for the latest group of completers (see Appendix [J.598 \[A186\]](#)) on a new set of certification exams, by and large, students pursuing State certification are achieving the learning outcomes to qualify them as certified practitioners. Pass rates on tests of professional knowledge/pedagogy range from 80-100%. Pass rates on tests in content specialties range from 85-100% on nearly all tests, averaging 87%. Pass rates on a few new content exams were low (45-70%) so the relevant departments have been realigning their course curriculum to better match the demands of those new tests, as well as providing greater support for students preparing to take the exams.

Teacher Education candidates are also required to pass the new Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) and the most recent results show an overall pass rate of 95% (rates are not reported when the number of test-takers is less than 10, so this rate represents the average across areas with 10 or more test-takers). The edTPA requires students to submit authentic artifacts (lesson plans, video clips of instruction, and student work samples) demonstrating evidence of teaching ability. The evidence is submitted through Division of Education's Chalk and Wire platform and then gets scored by an external reviewer under contract with New York State (Pearson).

In addition to determining whether individuals qualify for certification, the results are used by divisional faculty and administrators to strengthen the curriculum to ensure that students are meeting the expectations for certification and the overall learning goals of the individual programs. used by the Education Unit in its assessment activities. When pass rates fall below the expected rate (below 80%), programs prepare a Corrective Action Plan that is submitted to the agency and drives implementation of specified changes. An example of such a plan is provided in Appendix [J.597 \[A187\]](#).

## **Division of Social Sciences**

### *Graduate School of Library and Information Studies*

The Graduate School of Library and Information Studies' (GSLIS) assessment activities emerged out of a yearlong process begun in 2014 in which GSLIS redeveloped a planning process better aligned with the accreditation Standards of the American Library Association (ALA). In 2014 GSLIS submitted its self-study (Appendix [E.21 \[A188\]](#)) to ALA, in which GSLIS presented an

overall planning and assessment process that began with a reframing of its mission, goals and objectives and included the development of measurable student learning outcomes. In October 2015, GSLIS submitted an update to the ALA on progress in implementing regular assessment of student learning outcomes (Appendix [E.22 \[A189\]](#)), including its use of ePortfolios and assessment rubrics. That plan began with a mapping of course curricula to the standards. The results of the survey, shown in Appendix [E.598 \[A190\]](#), revealed that one of the learning outcomes (to serve diversified population) was not well covered, so the department faculty modified LBSCI 700, a course about technologies of information, to add more topics about adaptive technologies for disabled persons.

### *Political Science*

Since 2005, the Political Science department has engaged in direct assessment of student papers in their capstone experience, the Political Science seminar. Part of this assessment project entails matching a sample of the seminar papers with these students' first efforts at writing in the department's introductory level courses to gauge progress. Based on its assessment findings over the years, the department concluded that, in general, students were meeting departmental expectations with regard to developing research questions, addressing those questions theoretically and empirically, and drawing conclusions based on evidence. But that not all students were demonstrating the intended outcomes. As described in the department's latest self-study (Appendix [E.34 \[A191\]](#)), the department found through further investigation that in courses leading up to the capstone course, students were not asked to write research papers, and that faculty favored short "reaction" writing assignments in these courses instead of research-based assignments.

The department's outcomes assessment committee subsequently engaged their colleagues in a discussion which revealed concerns faculty had about balancing the teaching of writing with the teaching of political science content. One way they "closed the loop" on this assessment was to offer professional development around writing instruction to help faculty integrate the teaching of writing into courses, but without letting writing instruction take over course content.

Another change the department implemented was to develop new curriculum designed to increase students' understanding of how political scientists develop and answer research questions. Throughout 2012-2013, the department solicited faculty volunteers to develop syllabi for a proposed research methods course for departmental consideration. In 2013-2014, the department voted to not just offer the new course, PSCI 200 - Research Skills in Political Science, but to require it for all majors. The course was first offered in Spring 2016. The department is just beginning to assess how well this new curriculum addresses the gap in learning outcomes prior assessment efforts had revealed. Faculty will compare outcomes of seminar papers written by those who took the capstone course before and after this new course requirement was implemented.

## *Urban Studies*

As part of their five-year assessment plan, the Urban Studies Department has conducted several outcomes assessments. From 2011-2012, the Urban Studies Department conducted a review of their Service Learning program and student advisement system (Appendix [E.597 \[A192\]](#)). Focus group sessions disclosed that while service learning courses were overall effective, assessing student skill-level and needs regarding scheduling and transportation prior to engagement in internship courses would improve the experience for most students. The department also found that its students received little in the way formal advisement. At the urging of the department's curriculum committee, the department implemented a questionnaire to address student needs prior to engagement in internships, as well as a semester project that combines service to community partners with academic research. Additionally, the department made changes to how and when students receive advisement, implemented in 2012. Students are now required to meet with an advisor upon declaring the major and must meet with an advisor at least once per semester. The Urban Studies department website was updated to include advisement center information.

More recently, the department has conducted an assessment of student writing assignments and student writing (Appendix [E.12 \[A193\]](#)) very similar to the assessment undertaken by the Political Science department. A review of faculty syllabi for all courses offered by the department revealed that while 100-level courses demonstrated clear writing standards, the writing standards of 200 and 300-level courses were less clear. The assessment of student writing entailed a review of all Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 final papers from four Urban Studies writing-intensive courses. The department found that faculty were not teaching students how to write a critical essay. While student writing was largely adequate in terms of simple ability to write clearly and to summarize material, the samples were lacking in two respects: 1) students were seldom using academic journals as sources of information, and 2) the writing was nearly always descriptive rather than research-based and analytical. The department's curriculum committee concluded that the department must establish guidelines for instructors to use in developing writing assignments and for students to follow in preparing written assignments. A Task Force will be convened to focus on developing these guidelines as well as in-depth instructor training regarding assignment of papers and grading.

## **Division of Mathematics and Natural Sciences**

### *Chemistry and Biochemistry*

The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry undertook an analysis of student performance in its gateway course over five years, identifying several risk factors associated with poor grades, including indicators of college preparation such as SAT scores and NYS Regents exam scores. Beginning three years ago, students at high risk, including many who are repeating the course, have been guided to a hybrid course section that incorporates adaptive learning software. A brief description of the study, results and conclusion are shown in the presentation in Appendix [J.997 \[A194\]](#). One important conclusion is that the hybrid version of the course was better for students repeating the gateway course than for those taking it for the first time. For those repeating the course, pass rates have improved by more than 15%. The department is

currently assessing the performance of students in subsequent chemistry courses, and has introduced optional online preparation for the organic sequence, modelled on these studies (Appendix [J.997](#) [[A194](#)]).

Queens College, in partnership with Queensborough Community College, will be redeveloping our STEM “landing” courses to improve success and retention of minority and low income students in STEM disciplines. Data show that currently, a disproportionate number of Hispanic and low-income students leave the STEM majors. The goal of this project is to improve retention and 4-year graduation rates for underrepresented minority and low-income students by improving access and support in the first series of courses that STEM majors must take as an entry point to the major. Beginning in the Fall of 2017, the landing courses in Biology (QC BIOL 105 and 106, QCC BI 201 and 202) and Chemistry (QC CHEM 113 and 114, QCC CH 151 and 152) will start a multi-site block randomized control trial redesign. Planning for this redesign is currently underway with the assessment of the current learning objectives, areas of student difficulty, course design weaknesses with a focus on the laboratory classes, and strategies for professional development for the laboratory section instructors, who are mostly adjuncts. We anticipate that over 1,000 students will be a part of this trial in 2017 and we will be expanding to other departments to ultimately directly impact up to 20,000 students over the course of the 5-year project.

## **Division of Arts and Humanities**

### *European Languages and Literature*

The Department of European Languages and Literature (ELL) periodically reviews course syllabi for consistency with *Pathways* and “W” (writing) course learning outcomes. The departments’ Curriculum and Assessment Committee, upon review of the syllabi for the 100- and 200-level courses, provided each program with feedback and recommendations to better align course outcomes to ACTFL standards. The ELL department’s assessment plan is included in the Appendix [E.41](#) [[A195](#)] and describes the collection of student work to assess how courses, instructors and students are meeting the outcomes. ELL also administers discursive course and faculty evaluation forms each semester in addition to the online evaluations conducted by the College. The ELL department is revising its evaluation forms to provide better assessment information.

### *Linguistics and Communication Disorders*

Last academic year, the Department of Linguistics and Communication Disorders, assessed their students’ ability to demonstrate knowledge of the principles and methods of prevention, assessment, and intervention for people with communication and swallowing disorders, one of the four overarching learning goals the department has identified for its graduate program in speech-language pathology (SPL). Each goal is broken out into subgoals identifying more specific skills and abilities such as outlining an appropriate assessment protocol for clients that exhibit various speech, language, and communication or swallowing challenges, differences and profiles. The expected outcomes for each subgoal can be observed both in class and in clinical

experiences across the two-year program. The department has identified the expected level of achievement on the subgoals for each of the four semesters. In their assessment report (Appendix [1.96 \[A196\]](#)), the department specifies how they will measure the expected outcomes through a mapping of assessment tools used to measure specific kinds of learning, including cases studies, portfolios, and tests.

In that same report, the LCD department describes the decisions and changes they implemented in response to the prior year's assessment. In response to feedback from students requesting more opportunities and experiences in learning how to educate and counsel parents about their children's communication disorders, the SPL program developed a pilot program with our on-campus Child Development Center (CDC) that ran in Spring 2015. The LCD/SPL students, under the guidance of a clinical faculty member, worked with the educational staff of the CDC to develop parent-oriented educational meetings that would benefit the current group of students/families at CDC. The SPL students presented several sessions to CDC parents on topics such as speech and language development, language and play, ways for parents to create language-learning opportunities for their children. The feedback was very positive from both the parents and the CDC educators. As a result, this program was continued in the 2015-16 academic year. SPL students will participate over the first year on a rotating basis and will continue to be supervised by a clinical faculty member.

The examples above are intended to demonstrate the variety of tools and approaches that departments use to assess student learning. QC will work to better institutionalize and cement these good practices through enhanced communication, workshops, and the ongoing development and revision of assessment guidelines. The Standard V working group noted that some departments need assistance to collect and manage data that will inform them about well their students are learning. What the working group also found, and what some of these examples may reveal, is that the College's "closing the loop" activities could be more consistent and better documented. The recommendation from this working group included at the end of this chapter will drive the focus of the work in which the QC Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will engage this spring and beyond.

### **5.3 General Education Outcomes and Assessment ([s5c1](#))**

The structure of three general education curricular frameworks (LASAR, *Perspectives*, and *Pathways*) that have been or are currently in place since the last decennial review in 2007 were outlined in Section [3.6](#), in which the learning outcomes associated with these curricula were also presented. In this section, we describe QC's plans and progress in assessing general education learning outcomes since the 2007 self-study.

The learning outcomes for the two general education curricula that our current students adhere to -- *Perspectives* and *Pathways* (depending upon when they entered the college) -- are presented on our General Education website ([\[118\]](#)) with information about the requirements that courses must meet in order to be part of the general education curriculum. For example, in order for a course to be considered as meeting the requirements for the *Pathways* Common

Core Area of Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning, a course must meet all six learning outcomes associated with that area:

- Interpret and draw appropriate inferences from quantitative representations, such as formulas, graphs, or tables.
- Use algebraic, numerical, graphical, or statistical methods to draw accurate conclusions and solve mathematical problems.
- Represent quantitative problems expressed in natural language in a suitable mathematical format.
- Effectively communicate quantitative analysis or solutions to mathematical problems in written or oral form.
- Evaluate solutions to problems for reasonableness using a variety of means, including informed estimation.
- Apply mathematical methods to problems in other fields of study.

Twenty-seven courses offered at QC have the content and syllabi aligned with these outcomes including one or more courses offered the departments of computer science, mathematics, sociology and psychology. A list of courses that meets each *Pathways* curricular area (with its distinct set of learning outcomes) is included in Appendix [J.995 \[A142\]](#).

Much of the assessment of general education over the past few years has focused on assessing the implementation of the new *Pathways* curricular framework, which, as noted earlier in this self-study, is a centralized framework that has been implemented at each CUNY college. Early efforts focused on ensuring that students were getting exposure to the learning outcomes of this newly implemented framework. As the *Pathways* curriculum applied to more and more of our students over time, both those who entered as freshmen and those who entered as transfers, we noted that enrollment in *Pathways*-approved courses increased as would be expected. We also noted that students entering as transfers (in more recent cohorts) are entering having already satisfied their general education requirements, and are thus less likely to need general education courses at Queens College (most of our transfers come from a CUNY community college which employs the *Pathways* curricular structure). The general education (*Pathways*) courses taken prior to coming to QC automatically transfer to QC. As would be expected then, most of the enrollment in *Pathways*-approved courses is comprised of freshmen and sophomores as shown in the top panel of Table 17. The bottom panel of the table shows that 77% of the courses that freshmen and fifty-eight percent of the courses taken by sophomores deliver curriculum aligned with general education learning outcomes. The proportions are much lower for juniors and seniors who are focused on pursuing their major though a substantial proportion of upperclassmen and women continue to take courses that meet the *Pathways* general education learning outcomes requirements.

**Table 17. Enrollment in Pathways General Education Courses, by Curricular Area and Class Level of Student (Fall 2016)**

Row Percentages	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	Total UG Seats
<b>Pathways Courses</b>	%	%	%	%	N
English Composition	66.5	18.6	9.6	5.3	2,779
Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning	23.8	26.8	32.9	16.5	8,681
Life and Physical Sciences	19.9	27.1	28.5	24.5	6,000
World Cultures and Global Issues	41.4	23.2	21.8	13.6	2,854
U.S. Experience in its Diversity	40.9	22.3	21.7	15.2	2,995
Creative Expression	43.4	23.7	19.0	13.9	1,588
Individual and Society	44.6	23.6	20.9	10.9	4,145
Scientific World	34.4	26.6	22.7	16.3	3,109
<b>Total Pathways Courses</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>32,151</b>
<b>All Other Courses</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>37,748</b>
<b>Total Seats</b>	<b>14,362</b>	<b>13,616</b>	<b>20,599</b>	<b>21,322</b>	<b>69,899</b>
Column Percentages	Freshmen	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	Total UG Seats
<b>Pathways Courses</b>	%	%	%	%	%
English Composition	12.9	3.8	1.3	0.7	4.0
Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning	14.4	17.1	13.9	6.7	12.4
Life and Physical Sciences	8.3	12.0	8.3	6.9	8.6
World Cultures and Global Issues	8.2	4.9	3.0	1.8	4.1
U.S. Experience in its Diversity	8.5	4.9	3.2	2.1	4.3
Creative Expression	4.8	2.8	1.5	1.0	2.3
Individual and Society	12.9	7.2	4.2	2.1	5.9
Scientific World	7.5	6.1	3.4	2.4	4.4
<b>Total Pathways Courses</b>	<b>77.4</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>38.7</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>46.0</b>
<b>All Other Courses</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>54.0</b>

In these early stages of assessing the new general education curriculum, we are focused primarily on measuring how successful students are on the assignments in their general education courses. Assessment of general education outcomes under the *Pathways* structure is happening initially on a broad scale, driven by enrollment patterns and grade distributions across curricular areas to assess exposure and mastery of outcomes in curricular areas. Table 18 shows that the large majority of students who take courses aligned with our general education learning outcomes are performing well on related assignments, but that student outcomes for courses related to Life and Physical Sciences, and to some extent Scientific World, are lower than for other *Pathways* curricular areas. These results are consistent with those from several other data analyses the College has prepared for STEM and student success initiatives.



**Table 18. Outcomes in Pathways General Education Courses (Fall 2015)**

<b>Pathways Areas (Common and Flexible Core)</b>	<b>Passed with C or better</b>	<b>Failed or did not complete</b>
<b>Common Core</b>		
English Composition	83.8	16.2
Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning	68.3	31.7
Life and Physical Sciences	74.6	25.4
<b>Flexible Core</b>		
World Cultures and Global Issues	82.6	17.4
U.S. Experience in its Diversity	82.9	17.1
Creative Expression	86.8	13.2
Individual and Society	80.3	19.7
Scientific World	78.7	21.3
<b>Total Pathways Courses</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>22.2</b>

Queens College is deeply engaged in efforts to understand performance in gateway mathematics and science courses, which not only promote learning outcomes in three general education curricular areas but also lead to majors in the STEM fields. The work related to our HSI-STEM grant was described briefly above. In addition, as part of its work with the OASIS project (noted in the self-study introduction) QC is engaged in close examination of performance in its most challenging courses in which many new students enroll, such as MATH 131 and 141, BIOL 105, and CHEM 1134, and, through the the OASIS network, is learning about practices that other institutions have found successful, especially in improving outcomes in these challenge courses for underrepresented minority students, women, and students from low-income families students. Supporting the success of such students, in particular, is a key part of the QC and CUNY missions.

The 2011-12 College Factbook (Appendix [E.15 \[A197\]](#), page 81) reported that approximately 45% of students in English 110, "College Writing," our required freshman writing course, received 'A' grades. Concerned that this number was too high, the directors of First Year Writing began offering substantial faculty development for all instructors (including such topics as: Writing to Read, English Language Learners, Productive Classroom Discussion Techniques, The Multimodal Essay, and Conferencing with Students). In addition, we are offering a new Teaching Practicum for first-time instructors of ENGL 110. Specific grading advice is now provided to all English 110 instructors. The 2014-15 Factbook (see p. 128 in Appendix [E.14 \[A198\]](#)) shows that the number of 'A' grades in English 110 had dropped to approximately 39%. We continue to monitor course grade data periodically and encourage ENGL 110 instructors to periodically assess student learning.

### **5.3.1 Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA)**

The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) was used several years ago to assess critical thinking, analytical reasoning, writing, and problem-solving skills in students CUNY-wide. The assessment was administered for two years (2012-2013 and 2013-2014) at each of CUNY's 4-year colleges. CLA results for 2013 are in Appendix [E.71 \[A199\]](#), and show QC students performing as expected given the academic background of our students. QC's performance is comparable to



peer institutions (Appendix [E.7 \[A200\]](#)), though, particularly in critical analysis there is room for improvement. The results provided us with some insights regarding the strengths and weaknesses of our general education curriculum, but the assessment method was not in place for long enough for us to establish a protocol for administration that produced sufficiently reliable results that we felt we could act on. The College is considering an administration of the CLA+ in the near future to help us assess *Pathways*. The College is just beginning to explore whether the CLA+ aligns sufficiently *Pathways* learning outcomes to help us determine whether an investment in this tool will be valuable for assessing and improving our general education program. If the College decides to administer the CLA+, we will work to communicate the results to relevant constituents within the campus community and engage them in efforts to explore these and other data further (as the CAE advises) and to make curricular and pedagogical enhancements, if warranted.

### **5.3.2 Assessment of Student Writing**

In 2007, the Senate adopted ambitious “Goals for Student Writing” governing its writing intensive (W) courses as well as the first year and general education courses that focus on writing. These goals are described in Appendix [E.16 \[A118\]](#). These were developed by the Writing at Queens (WaQ) program which has a faculty director and resources supporting assessment, together with the Writing Sub-committee (WSC) of the Academic Senate. Assessment of these goals is discussed at length in Section [Chapter 5](#).

As noted in our 2012 PRR, the College had been taking steps to improve outcomes related to writing and QC has continued to focus on assess writing instruction and student performance (Appendix [E.98 \[A201\]](#)). In the PRR, we noted that the College had made a significant investment to reduce class size in writing courses to allow instructors to provide more frequent and targeted feedback to students several years ago. The enrollment cap in freshman English composition courses (ENGL 110) was reduced to 20 and for other writing intensive (W) courses, class size was limited to 25. The cap was maintained in the second college writing course for the *Pathways* curriculum (see also Appendix [E.29 \[A202\]](#)).

In 2009, the Writing Across the Curriculum program conducted a direct assessment of student writing (Appendix [I.95 \[A203\]](#)). Using an original rubric, the study examined the effect of number of writing intensive courses (“W courses”) on student writing outcomes, measured through a collection of student papers. The Writing Intensive Sub-Committee of the Academic Senate considered these outcomes in reflecting on potential changes to the curriculum.

The Academic Senate’s Committee on Student Writing adapted student evaluation forms for W courses in order to assess the extent to which faculty teaching practices varied in their pedagogical approach to teaching writing (Appendix [E.8 \[A204\]](#)).

QC undertook a follow-up study on writing in 2013-14 led by the director of the Writing at Queens program. The study involved the direct assessment of student writing through a review of more than 700 course papers submitted by faculty. o address some of the findings of the 2009 report, a faculty team developed a qualitative study that used student focus groups to

delve deeper into the student perspective (Appendix [E.81 \[A119\]](#)). That subsequent study found that the student experience with W courses varied widely.

The study involved the construction of a curricular map linking an assessment rubric (Appendix [E.96 \[A205\]](#))—an adapted version of the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Written Communication VALUE Rubric—with the Queens College Academic Senate’s Goals for Student Writing (Appendix [E.16 \[A118\]](#)), as well as with relevant student learning objectives for the three general education curricula used in the past decade. This approach offered not just an overall assessment of writing outcomes, but also a finer-grained assessment of four sets of college-wide learning objectives. Key results of this study (see the preliminary report in Appendix [E.81 \[A119\]](#)) demonstrate that student writing improves with the number of hours of coursework completed, demonstrating progress through the college years for the average student. The study showed an expected correlation of writing skills with GPA, and just a slight deficiency among transfer students. In contrast to the findings from 2009 writing study, this more recent assessment found no clear increase in performance based on the number of writing intensive courses students had taken, suggesting that W courses may need to be examined and strengthened.

A separate study undertaken in 2015 involved the review of syllabi from 287 writing intensive courses (Appendix [E.80 \[A206\]](#)) which found that only 25% verify compliance with the four requirements for a W course, though the majority verify compliance with at least three. To improve writing instruction within the general education curriculum and within W and college writing courses, a faculty writing group was established in 2014. Chaired by the Dean of Arts and Humanities, the group includes representatives from the various relevant committees and programs such as Writing at Queens (WaQ), the Writing Subcommittee (WSC) of the Academic Senate, and First Year Writing in the English Department. This group meets periodically to consider all aspects of writing and at the College and to provide continuous oversight of writing courses. It is currently focused on a review of QC’s W requirement and may make specific recommendations to the Academic Senate in spring 2017.

### **5.3.3 Timeline for assessing other Gen Ed Learning Outcomes**

As a next step in our general education assessment plan, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will work with SLO-AC to develop a timeline and methodology to assess the new *Pathways* learning outcomes in other general education curricular areas beyond writing. One component of a proposed plan is to ask faculty members who teach *Pathways* courses to identify specific assignments that demonstrate learning on one or more *Pathways* learning outcomes. We plan to pilot this assignment-to-learning outcomes mapping exercise in the Spring 2017 semester. At the end of the semester, we will ask faculty in the pilot courses to provide a random sample of the mapped assignment or assignment grades for analysis, in order to gauge the level of mastery of the associated learning outcome(s). Based on the results of the pilot, we will revise the timeline and method for general education assessment. Expansion beyond the pilot will likely involve the assessment of the learning outcomes in one curricular area (i.e., one of eight *Pathways* requirement designations) each term.

We are participating in ongoing discussions at the University level on the design of mechanisms for general education assessment under the *Pathways* curricular structure, and we are also tracking models for general education assessment at other campuses that we find exemplary. For instance, the CUNY School of Professional Studies has released a report (Appendix [E.20 \[A207\]](#)) which describes some practices we might consider adopting.

## **5.4 Institutional Assessment of Educational Effectiveness**

Since the last self-study in 2007, Queens College has engaged in a number of other assessment activities aimed at understanding educational effectiveness from a broader perspective than program and general education learning outcomes. Some of these, like the College's participation in Foundations of Excellence, described below, were one-time, large-scale efforts that have led to lasting changes. Other efforts are cyclical and sustainable because they are cost-effective and have infrastructure to support them on an ongoing basis, such as the assessment of the goals in our CUE-funded programs (Coordinated Undergraduate Education and the Performance Management Process (PMP), both mentioned in earlier sections and described below.

### **5.4.1 Foundations of Excellence Self-Study**

In 2011-2012, the College participated in a self-study of the first-year experiences of freshman and transfer students, in partnership with the John N. Gardner Institute, through its Foundations of Excellence program. Queens College participated in both Foundations of Excellence in the First-Year and Foundations of Excellence Transfer Focus. The process involved more than a hundred faculty, staff, student, and alumni members from the QC community, formed into nine committees that analyzed a set of dimensions of the experience of new students. Each of nine committees proposed recommendations inspired by the data which were generalized into a set of 15 broad recommendations (pp. 28-31 of Appendix [F.3 \[A208\]](#)), most of which focused on improving services and information for new students. Two recommendations in that report focus on assessment of student learning: (1) establish an Assessment Office to organize assessment activities (which now exists within the Office of Institutional Effectiveness); (2) implement more forward-thinking teaching practices and greater learning outcome assessment (which is underway through the work of the Center for Teaching and Learning, and a nascent partnership between that center and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness). The College has also responded to the FoE recommendations by creating a new VP position for Enrollment Management and Retention and the development of systematized ways to collect evidence of assessment work, the Assessment Document Repository, described above in Section [5.1.1](#)).

The QC Center for Teaching and Learning has developed and offered a number of assessment-focused professional development programs, including the following:

- Syllabus Bootcamp: A one-week intensive workshop focused on course redesign that introduces faculty to outcomes assessment, helping them to develop learning goal for their courses, mapping their courses to those goals, and developing rubrics and other tools for assessing students' performance on course assignments. The Syllabus

Bootcamp has thus far been offered twice (in 2014 and 2015) to 26 faculty members across 16 departments.

- Quantitative Reasoning Across the Curriculum: A semester-long workshop to engage faculty in incorporating quantitative reasoning components into a course. Faculty are guided in the development of quantitative literacy learning objectives coupled with assessments of relevant learning outcomes. The workshop connects participating faculty to faculty leaders with expertise in teaching and assessing quantitative reasoning. The leaders were trained through a program administered at CUNY Lehman College, with funding from the National Science Foundation. Faculty are also connected to quantitative reasoning fellows (doctoral students from the CUNY Graduate Center who supported in this work by a fellowship from the CUNY Central Office). This program has been run twice so far (in 2014-2015 and in 2015-2016), with more than 25 faculty members participating.

#### **5.4.2 Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE)**

Queens College continuously monitors student performance on goals related to the CUE program (described in Sections [1.2](#), [4.1.4](#), and [4.5](#)). One particular area of focus for CUE is support for students to develop strong skills in writing and mathematics to strengthen the foundation students need to succeed in other general education courses and courses in their chosen major. As a result of data on the performance of students in gateway English and mathematics courses (Appendix [E.95 \[A209\]](#)) and grade distribution reports produced each semester as shown in the 2014-15 Factbook (Appendix [E.94 \[A210\]](#)), the College has been investing CUE funds in programs that offer tutoring to students and professional development in mathematics pedagogy to both full-time and part-time instructors.

CUE funding also supports innovative projects in mathematics, such as the use of software to advance student learning (ALEKS). Beginning in 2010, the Freshman Year Initiative was modified to link ENGL 110 (gateway English) and general education courses where possible, and throughout FYI small communities of freshman take pairs of courses together. This program is continuously assessed through the analysis of institutional data such as grade distribution reports and survey responses from students and faculty. The FYI program has expanded so that all entering freshmen have the opportunity to join a community, and the number availing themselves has increased from 64% in 2011 to 88% in 2016.

#### **5.4.3 Performance Management Process (PMP)**

The CUNY Performance Management Process (PMP) has already been mentioned in several sections of this self-study, but we present it again here as an example of ongoing assessment of educational effectiveness at the institution level. Although, as noted above, the PMP addresses both educational and operational goals, over the years, the PMP has served as a valuable process for collecting, analyzing, and acting on data on important educational outcomes, including performance in math and English gateway courses, student persistence, efficient degree progress, and post-graduate success. For example, retention and graduation rates reported each year as part of the PMP indicate that performance has been improving at QC

over time, but that QC students are still making slower degree progress than we would like, so the College continues to implement new strategies to improve student persistence.

Among the measures tracked through this institutional assessment process, are 4- and 6-year graduation rates. Table 19 displays trends in the College’s graduation rates for students entering as first-time freshmen and as transfers from other colleges. Rates for freshmen show some steady progress. Rates for students who transferred into Queens College have not improved over the past five years. The College has implemented several strategies to improve retention and graduation rates (a few are described below), and will continue to seek out ways, through our Strategic Planning Implementation Group work and other efforts such as our involvement with OASIS, to help students make more efficient degree progress, including by streamlining enrollment and registration processes, helping students access financial aid, improving course availability, and enhancing academic support and advising. For example, the Advisement office instituted a procedure to improve the quality of the data in DegreeWorks, to quickly implement course requirement scribing corrections and updates, which ensures that students make more efficient degree progress.

**Table 19. Trends in graduation rates of full-time first-time freshmen and transfers**

Term of Entry	4-Year Graduation Rate (%)		Term of Entry	6-Year Graduation Rate (%)	
	Freshmen	Transfers		Freshmen	Transfers
Fall 2007	25.1	52.9	Fall 2005	53.1	60.0
Fall 2008	27.2	55.8	Fall 2006	54.9	62.3
Fall 2009	28.2	54.5	Fall 2007	56.4	60.0
Fall 2010	30.7	56.2	Fall 2008	56.6	63.5
Fall 2011	29.5	53.5	Fall 2009	57.7	62.3
Fall 2012	29.9	54.1	Fall 2010	60.0	62.0

Retention rates are also tracked as part of the PMP and through OASIS and other work in which QC’s administrative offices are engaged, there are many opportunities to examine data on student retention. Lower than desired retention rates -- for freshmen retention rates have fluctuated between 84% and 87% in recent years, and for transfer students, between 75% and 79% -- led QC to propose the “We Want You Back” initiative in 2015, which was implemented in the spring of 2016 with financial support from the CUNY Central Office using NYS performance incentive funds. The project centered around a campaign to communicate with and resolve financial issues for students to encourage them to re-enroll. The initiative targeted two groups of students who had either dropped out or stopped out, or were at risk for not re-enrolling in the subsequent semester. For the group that had dropped or stopped out, a survey was administered to solicit each student’s reason for not returning to Queens College. Of the 131 (13%) who returned the survey, about one-third indicated they left for financial reasons. QC staff were able to get in touch with 41 students, and access additional financial aid or provide stipends for 17 students who re-enrolled and continued on in their programs.

The College reached out to a second group of students (about 1,500) at risk of not re-enrolling because they had not paid their tuition bill. College staff helped many of these students complete financial aid applications that resulted in support that enabled many of these students to access financial aid or receive stipends to cover their mostly modest balances. More than two hundred students were able to register the following semester (spring 2016). The Division of Enrollment Management and Retention, the office that oversaw this initiative, learned that many of the students they communicated with were unaware of what steps they needed to take to access financial aid for which they were eligible and did not know who to contact for help. They also noted that transfer entrants needed a higher level of support related to financial aid issues that might prevent them from persisting to the degree. The College is beginning to implement some policy and procedural changes, such as more proactive outreach to students with bursar holds and closer course eligibility evaluation to ensure that students, in particular, maximize access to financial aid.

#### **5.4.4 Surveys for Assessment**

QC periodically participates in national survey efforts to learn about the undergraduate experience and benchmark our performance against our peer institutions. The College last administered the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2014 as part of a University-wide administration. The College's IR office worked with other administrative offices to disseminating the standard report (Appendix [E.18 \[A135\]](#)) including on the website, and to review selected NSSE results at meetings to inform policy discussions. The NSSE survey included questions of great interest to the College and University regarding high impact practices. The results were used for the assessment section of a report commissioned by CUNY's Central Office to inventory experiential education opportunities at each of the CUNY colleges (Appendix [J.993 \[A211\]](#)). Queens College's input to the CUNY experiential survey, describing the opportunities available and how they are assessed, is included as Appendix [E.5 \[A212\]](#). A CUNY task force employed this and other inputs to produce a 2016 report entitled - A Plan for Experiential Learning, Appendix [E.19 \[A213\]](#).

5.5.5 The Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) is also administered periodically at QC and results are presented (see, for example, Appendix [E.1 \[A177\]](#)) and, like the NSSE results, used to inform policy discussions. Several of the items from the SSI are used to measure progress on PMP goals related to student satisfaction with academic, student support, and administrative services. The Noel Levitz SSI, with its focus on student satisfaction with services is thus similar to the CUNY Student Experience Survey (SES), administered biennially by the CUNY Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA). Data from both of these surveys are used by some offices at the College to identify areas for improvement and to benchmark their performance based on student self-report of their experience at the College. Occasionally, an administrative office will field their own survey as a follow up to the Noel Levitz or the CUNY SES in an effort to obtain more detailed information to better guide decision-making. For example, the Advising Office, as noted in Section [4.1.4](#), has used survey results to improve access to advisors.

The CUNY SES instrument changes somewhat from year to year in an attempt to gather data about new policies or practices. But parts of the instrument are stable so it is possible to look at trends. One such area has to do with course availability, which has been included in the SES for at least four administrations. The results, although based on a small and not completely representative sample, indicate that students face challenges in registering for courses they need for their major and to fulfill general education requirements (Appendix [E.93 \[A214\]](#)). In 2014, 37% of respondents reported such difficulty. And although down from prior years (43% in 2012) and continuing to trend down (35% in 2016), we know that academic progress is impeded when students cannot get the courses they need. The College regularly monitors registration for courses, with a particular focus on “bottleneck” courses. While advisors continue to work with students to find alternative course that will fulfill requirements, the College has undertaken an effort to create standardized 4-year degree maps (degree maps existed in many departments, but this standardized format will help QC manage course availability from a college-wide perspective) for every program to show students the courses they need to take each semester to graduate from their program within four years. Departments are working to develop those maps for a fall 2017 rollout and to ensure that the courses are available when the students need to take them.

The CUNY Survey of Graduates is another survey periodically administered by OIRA. This survey project reaches out to alumni to ask about their post-graduate outcomes about three years after graduation. It was last administered in Spring of 2013 to students who graduated in 2009-2010. A full report of the results for all of CUNY is included in (Appendix [E.596 \[A173\]](#)). While the report has been shared at the College, the results of this survey has not led to any particular decision or change, but has reinforced the awareness that the College knows too little about post-graduate success overall. Several departments have strong alumni networks and field periodic surveys of their graduates to understand how well the curriculum prepared students for related careers, but we know that we could benefit from more systematic, college-wide information on post-graduate outcomes. As the new Office of Institutional Effectiveness continues to build capacity, the office will bring together resources such as survey data, National Student Clearinghouse, and labor force data to learn more about the success of our alumni and use that information for program improvement, when possible.

In addition to National and CUNY-led surveys, administrative offices and departments have administered their own surveys as part of their assessment efforts. Some of these have items that can be used to assess educational effectiveness, while others are intended to assess performance on operational and administrative goals. The results from the QC Technology Survey (Appendix [E.902 \[A215\]](#) and Appendix [E.9 \[A156\]](#)) that explored students’ use of academic technology among other related areas, was fielded in 2012 and led to, among other things, improved resources for instructors around using technology in the classroom. The QC’s Center for Teaching and Learning offers a growing list of resources for instructors to improve use of and access to academic technology to enhance the student learning experience [[119](#)], such as tips on how to make use of Google applications.

## 5.5 Recommendation

Working Group V identified many strengths and some weaknesses in the College's assessment infrastructure and practice. A number of areas needing improvement have already been addressed, as noted above, but there is one critical area that will require ongoing development and investment if we are to develop a truly strong and comprehensive culture of assessment at Queens College. Thus, we offer the following recommendation:

**Recommendation 5: Enhance and expand assessment-related professional development for faculty and staff, and provide more resources to support assessment at the program level.**

Some of this training should be provided by internal and external experts, but departments that engage in exemplary assessment activities will be encouraged to share their methods and expertise as well. The Center for Teaching and Learning and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will direct relevant professional development activities.



# Standard VI

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## Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement

The institution's planning processes, resources, and structures are aligned with each other and are sufficient to fulfill its mission and goals, to continuously assess and improve its programs and services, and to respond effectively to opportunities and challenges.

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. institutional objectives, both institution-wide and for individual units, that are clearly stated, assessed appropriately, linked to mission and goal achievement, reflect conclusions drawn from assessment results, and are used for planning and resource allocation;
2. clearly documented and communicated planning and improvement processes that provide for constituent participation, and incorporate the use of assessment results;
3. a financial planning and budgeting process that is aligned with the institution's mission and goals, evidence-based, and clearly linked to the institution's and units' strategic plans/objectives;
4. fiscal and human resources as well as the physical and technical infrastructure adequate to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered;
5. well-defined decision-making processes and clear assignment of responsibility and accountability;
6. comprehensive planning for facilities, infrastructure, and technology that includes consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance and is linked to the institution's strategic and financial planning processes;
7. an annual independent audit confirming financial viability with evidence of follow-up on any concerns cited in the audit's accompanying management letter;
8. strategies to measure and assess the adequacy and efficient utilization of institutional resources required to support the institution's mission and goals; and
9. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of planning, resource allocation, institutional renewal processes, and availability of resources.

## Chapter 6

### Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement ([s6](#))

In this section, we show how the College's strategic plan guides our planning and budget decisions, describe the CUNY and QC budgeting and planning processes, and provide some examples of how the College uses data to make resource allocation decisions and improve operations and services to students and others in the campus community. The section concludes with a recommendation that focuses on strengthening assessment practices, especially in non-academic units.

#### 6.1 Institutional objectives tied to assessment, planning, and resource allocation ([s6c1](#))

Shortly after his arrival in fall 2014, President Matos Rodríguez assembled a steering committee with representation from across the College to refine and finalize a strategic plan for Queens College that built upon a plan that had been drafted under the leadership of the previous president (Appendix [C.2 \[A216\]](#)). In early 2015, faculty, students, administrators and other staff had several opportunities to contribute to the development of a new plan, described in Section [1.3](#) of this self-study. As part of the process, we collected a wide array of institutional data, such as trends in PMP metrics, survey results, enrollment trends, and financial data, to help us identify priority areas of focus as well as to create the outcomes on which we would measure our progress over the next five years. Extensive outreach to and feedback from the campus community followed. The product of this process is the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan (Appendix [C.1 \[A122\]](#)). The plan is a compass for QC grounded in evidence that points to the areas on which we most need to focus to become an even more effective higher education institution. The current strategic plan includes our goals for the campus for the year 2020, clearly defined metrics to measure our progress in achieving those goals, and an implementation plan (shown on pages 14-17 of the strategic plan document).

With every budget and planning cycle, the institution aligns the strategic plan, budget, and resource allocation through implementation plans as illustrated by this planning document from FY 2011 (Appendix [C.9 \[A217\]](#)) and documents related to the implementation of the current strategic goals (described further below). One of the first steps is to align the timing of strategic and operational planning and budgeting processes, as shown in the *Planning, Budget, and Assessment Cycles* document produced by the Budget & Finance Department (Appendix [H.3 \[A218\]](#)). It provides a comprehensive view of the timeline and activities related to goal setting, planning and assessment activities that take place over the fiscal year. This document is important for coordinating the activities of multiple offices and facilitating communication among them. Examples of these linkages are provided in sections below.

QC is implementing the Strategic Plan through an action-planning process for which annual plans link specific activities with strategic goals. The president has also provided small grants to the deans in support of special Strategic Plan initiatives, for example, supporting a professional development program with our partner early-college school (Appendix [C.10 \[A219\]](#)). A Strategic Plan Implementation Group (SPIG) consisting of four teams, each led by a member of the

cabinet, oversees implementation across campus and works closely with the President and Cabinet to set priorities, interpret data on progress, and consider financial implications. The SPIG teams and priorities for the current academic year are shown in Appendix [I.9 \[A220\]](#). The Budget Office ensures that the tax-levy budget is aligned with the Strategic Plan as shown in a recent QC Financial Plan (see p. 6 in Appendix [H.1 \[A221\]](#)).

Early in the new academic and fiscal year (September to October), the QC Budget Office prepares a report to the President detailing the previous year's budget and budget projections for the current year, and showing how the budget is aligned with the strategic plan. In February, a mid-year report is presented at a Cabinet meeting where a discussion about program and financial implications is initiated. In April-May, divisional and department leaders submit budget proposals to the President and Vice President for Finance and Administration showing linkages to the strategic goals. Between June and August, CUNY Central, through the University Budget Office, (UBO) gives the CUNY colleges an initial allocation of their respective budgets. Additional allocations and adjustments are made throughout the year. The end-of-year report and the upcoming year action plan are discussed by the Cabinet to determine program and financial implications. Colleges submit financial plans detailing the projected uses of their funds to CUNY Central for the current fiscal year, with linkages to the Strategic Plan included. As an example, a recent budget request for the academic divisions demonstrates the linkages explicitly (Appendix [H.10 \[A222\]](#)). In August or September, CUNY approves the financial plan.

The UBO also distributes quarterly budget reports that include financial data on all CUNY colleges, allowing QC to gauge its overall revenue and expenditures compared with other CUNY colleges. Appendix [G.4 \[A223\]](#) is an extract from the 2015 Q1 report, showing QC's expenditures and resources along with other CUNY senior colleges. Using these quarterly reports and internal reports that disaggregate expenditures by department, the QC Budget Office reviews the departmental budgets at mid-year with all Cabinet members and their direct reports and makes adjustments where needed, such as the redistribution of OTPS across departments.

## **6.2 Budget Process**

As part of a public university system, Queens College's budgeting and planning processes are strongly influenced by the way the State and the University allocate tax-levy funds to support the operating and capital budgets to the colleges (see Appendix [G.1 \[A224\]](#) for an overview). CUNY's 4-year (senior) and 2-year (community) colleges are separate sectors with different operational budget allocation models and budgeting processes. The State establishes the total annual operating budget for CUNY's senior colleges together. Just over half of the operating budget of CUNY's senior colleges is from the State (tax-levy), 46% is covered by tuition revenues, with the City of New York providing modest funding that accounts for about 1% of the operating budget. For the CUNY community colleges, New York City establishes the total annual operating budget which is funded by the State, City, and tuition revenues as well, but with NYC City covering about one-third of the operating budget, State tax-levy providing for just over a quarter, and 40% covered by tuition revenues.

The City and State funding is appropriated to the University, which then makes allocations to the individual CUNY colleges. UBO implements an allocation formula set by the City or State to distribute the operating budget. CUNY has a single Board of Trustees (described further in [Chapter 7](#)) and consequently one overall tax-levy budget so the major source of revenues for each college is controlled by the University, not the individual colleges. Through their individual foundations and auxiliary enterprises (entities that are legally separate from the colleges), CUNY colleges have control over the generation of their non-tax levy revenues. Appendix [G.1 \[A224\]](#) provides more detail on the structure and timeline that CUNY follows for the annual budget process.

## **6.2.1 Capital Budget and Planning**

In accordance with Education Law a726 section 6233-A - Master Capital Plan [\[120\]](#), the City University of New York annually submits a capital plan that sets forth the projects proposed to be constructed, reconstructed, rehabilitated or otherwise substantially altered pursuant to appropriations enacted or to be enacted during the succeeding five years. The process of preparing the University's plan begins each year in the spring when CUNY's Office of Facilities Planning, Construction and Management (FPCM) meets with each college to discuss on-going capital projects, the previous year's request, and new needs. Following the guiding principle that "facilities follow academic mission," the College identifies capital priorities. New needs are generally first identified in the College's facilities master plan, which is informed by the 2006 Master Plan Amendment for Queens College, Appendix [C.4 \[A225\]](#). However, changes to the plan may occur due to enrollment fluctuations, building conditions, or availability of new resources. As it does with other CUNY colleges, FPCM works with Queens College to prepare individual project scopes, estimates, and schedules based on comparable projects, current construction costs, and the complexity of individual projects. The University's overall capital request is presented to the CUNY Board of Trustees in the fall for their consideration and approval, after which the plan is sent to the State.

New York State is required to have its budget completed by April each year, which is when CUNY learns the result of its budget request to the state and the colleges learn which capital projects have been funded.

## **6.3 Budget Planning, Development, and Analysis**

### **6.3.1 The CUNY Compact**

CUNY's approach to financing its operations is a multi-year partnership with New York State and City (the "Compact") to ensure that sufficient funds are invested in the University. This comprehensive, multi-year financing strategy is tied to the goals and objectives outlined in the current and most recent prior University Master Plans, Appendix [C.5 \[A226\]](#) and Appendix [C.7 \[A227\]](#). The Compact offers an economically efficient way to finance CUNY by delineating shared responsibility among partners and creating opportunities to leverage funds. The Compact calls on the State and City to commit to providing tax-levy funding to cover the University's mandatory costs and a portion the programmatic investment plan. In turn, CUNY commits to funding the balance of the investment plan through a combination of sources

including philanthropy, productivity and efficiencies, targeted enrollment growth, and increased revenue from modest, annual tuition increases.

### **6.3.2 The Budget Request**

The first step in the operating budget process is the development of the College's budget request to the University. The development of the request involves numerous tasks and significant interactions among College and University officials.

The UBO assesses college baseline budget needs for subsequent years, based on projected costs, and develops detailed budget schedules that are transmitted to the City and State Budget Offices in accordance with their instructions. These documents, referred to as the technical budget request, are supplemented by detailed summaries of programmatic initiatives that represent the University's priorities for the subsequent year. The funding sources to cover the total requested amount are identified. Upon adoption of the budget request by the Board of Trustees, UBO transmits the official budget request book to the Governor and State Legislature and to the Mayor and City Council.

When the State and City issue their respective budget and financial plans (in April and June, respectively) UBO analyzes the recommendations and assesses the impact of these budgets on the University. The Chancellor testifies before State and City legislative committees several times during the year, between November and May, on the University's budget request and the Governor's and Mayor's Executive budget recommendations.

### **6.3.3 Allocations and Budget Implementation**

#### **Senior College Allocations**

The senior college resource allocation process involves, in the first instance, the assessment of whether the University's adopted budget contains sufficient resources to implement stated University objectives. Depending on the outcome of this assessment, UBO establishes appropriate funding levels. For example, the adopted budget does not always contain sufficient funds in the appropriation to cover ongoing costs. There are often shortfalls in the funding of specific programs or obligations that are considered University priorities. Once an assessment is made of the size of the shortfall in an area, adjustments are made among appropriations to provide a sufficient level of funding for various programs.

Once the financing of ongoing obligations is accounted for, UBO allocates the colleges' base budgets. As a result of the indirect allocation process, CUNY colleges do not know their budget allocations until mid-summer, and sometimes later, well after planning for the year has begun. The College makes adjustments to plans and activities based upon the available funds as the budget details evolve. In addition to base budget allocations, the University provides lump sums that support specific initiatives or categorical funding, such as child care, SEEK, Coordinated Undergraduate Education Programs, College Now, Language Immersion, Services for the Disabled and Writing Across the Curriculum. The University Budget Office establishes the framework for the distribution of these and other funds and, in so doing, works closely with

other University offices involved with the formulation of University program priorities, mainly the Offices of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Instructional Technology.

### **Senior College Budget Implementation**

In order for colleges to spend their allocations, monthly budget certificates must be submitted to the State Controller's Office. A budget certificate represents the distribution of the funding in the State budget, by college and program (lump sums and specific allocations), and then by expenditure object (PS Regular, Adjunct, Temporary Service, and OTPS). This preparation of the certificate involves interaction among staff within the University Budget Office, at the colleges, with the University Controller's Office, and with the State Budget and Audit and Control offices.

The budget certificate process is ongoing throughout the year. Colleges and University programs are required to distribute their adopted budgets as described above. UBO generates monthly certificates in accordance with college inputs. The process is simple: if a college allocation is increased, the additional amount is added to the college's budget in a specific account (since a college cannot increase its budget unilaterally). The college can then internally shift these funds from the specific account in its budget to the accounts in which the expenditures will be made.

Senior colleges have the flexibility of moving funds on certificate from one account to another within their budget allocation. These transfers must be consistent with their financial plans and must fully fund all full-time personal service obligations. In certain cases, where a college may be experiencing a revenue shortfall or where the State imposes a general spending reduction, the University may require the colleges to establish unallocated reserves that reduce their spending authority. Otherwise, the University makes every effort to provide the colleges with the funding to which they are entitled as quickly as possible so that their allocation and certificate distributions are consistent.

### **Revenue**

#### *Senior and Community Colleges*

The University also allocates revenue budgets to the senior and community colleges. Colleges have the flexibility to achieve their targets in many different ways (e.g., additional summer sessions, improved collection rates, more graduate or non-resident students, and enhanced collection of prior year receivables).

During the course of the year, UBO will make and update projections of college revenue collections by examining the actual billed revenue amounts and applying a historical collection rate to them. This method has proven to be a good indication of the colleges' projected year-end collections and projections are updated weekly.

This aspect of the process is very important to the University and the colleges because it determines whether a college will be eligible for additional funding if it is over-collecting revenues, or must under-spend its budget if there is an anticipated under collection.

## Expenditure Monitoring

The colleges are required to submit financial plans to the University Budget Office in which they distribute their budget allocations into expenditure categories and detail their anticipated monthly filled positions, additions, and separations. UBO reviews college submissions to ensure that, among other things, salary expenses are consistent with filled position projections and that OTPS expenses are consistent with prior year levels. These projections, which are reviewed with the colleges, provide the University Budget Office with a valuable tool to evaluate college financial plans and subsequent expenditures against these plans.

In order to ensure that the campus community is kept abreast of the budget, the VP for Finance & Administration meets on a monthly basis with the Budget Committee of the College's Personnel & Budget Committee. Briefings are also given several times a year to the Academic Senate and to the President's Council and Cabinet.

In our Professional and Continuing Studies unit, certificate programs such as the English Language Institute and the Paralegal Program use clearly defined goals, metrics, and assessment in planning and resource allocations. PCS is a self-supporting unit for continuing education in the College that reports directly to the CFO, and is strictly governed by the CUNY Standard Operating Procedures for Continuing Education to assure that funds are directed to the purposes for which they were received. The CUNY Standard Operating Procedures for Continuing Education are given in Appendix [J.17 \[A228\]](#).

### 6.4 Improvement processes based on assessment ([s6c2](#))

Processes carried out by departments in the Division of Finance and Administration exemplify how the strategic plan goals guide decision-making at the College. Queens College has, for the past decade, required that all significant budget requests (typically those above \$5,000) include a justification tied to the current strategic plan. The strategic plan goals also guide the hiring of personnel paid from the tax-levy budget. Appendix [J.32 \[A229\]](#) shows the hiring process workflow which culminates in a review of the request by the president to ensure that the College's personnel budget is utilized to support strategic priorities. A recent administrative hire exemplifies the way strategic goals data drive hiring decisions (OIE)

**Space management decision making process:** Following the reopening of the Kiely Hall tower (closed 2 years for updates) and the transfer of Queens Hall from CUNY's Law School to Queens College, the College reconstituted its Space Management Committee. Chaired by the Provost, the committee includes the Vice President for Student Affairs, Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Retention, Assistant Vice President for Facilities Planning and Operations and Vice President for Finance and Administration.

Working with the Facilities Planning and Operations Department, the Space Committee has established guidelines (Appendix [J.16 \[A230\]](#)) to ensure that decisions about space utilization are aligned with strategic goals and informed by evidence. The guidelines help the college plan effective and efficient utilization of institutional space (instructional and non-instructional space). All requests for space Appendix [J.18 \[A231\]](#) are submitted through the appropriate



Dean/AVP and Cabinet Member. The Committee meets regularly and sends its recommendations to the President for his final approval. Once the President approves, the space request is implemented.

Classrooms are assigned by the Office of the Registrar. Each department is provided with a list of appropriately located and equipped rooms that they have used on a regular basis. Time slots that are unused are then distributed as needed. The college's scheduling matrix ("bell schedule"), Appendix [J.996 \[A232\]](#), was developed by a committee of faculty, students, and staff, to insure both efficiency and convenience to the extent possible.

**Capital project proposal process:** The Capital Budget (Resolution A or "Reso A") planning process (Appendix [H.6 \[A233\]](#)) also shows how the College makes decisions about facilities aligned with the strategic plan, in this case, with regard to capital improvement or enhancement projects funded through grants to QC from the Queens Borough President or the New York City Council (Reso A projects). Reso A capital grants range from \$200,000 to \$3,000,000. These grants provide funding for essential enhancements and upgrades to our facilities that are not supported by the capital budget provided by the State. (Recent Reso A projects at QC are listed in the Appendix [H.4 \[A234\]](#) and Appendix [F.99 \[A235\]](#)).

There was general agreement among the campus constituents that the College needed a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of facility needs in order to make decisions about spending Reso A funds. Thus, the Reso A request process was revised to require written justification for proposed projects. Requests for Reso A projects are reviewed by the Provost for academic-related projects and by the AVP for Facilities Planning and Operations and the members of the Cabinet before being sent to the President. The President reviews the projects with the AVP for Governmental and External Affairs to ensure that they align with the interests of the Borough President and the members of the NYC Council from Queens. An example of a recent request by the FNES Department is provided in Appendix [H.5 \[A236\]](#) for which the department was requesting facilities improvements to support curricular changes connected to the requirements of professional accreditors.

**Student Tech Fee Approval Process:** CUNY students pay a technology fee of \$200 per year to fund the purchase of technology equipment, software licenses, and personnel and technology support services to ensure students have access to technology and the ability to use it to enhance their experience at the College. All of QC's campus constituencies are represented in the Student Tech Fee planning process. Faculty, student, and staff requestors submit proposals on-line each year up until the deadline in early January. The proposals are reviewed by a committee comprised of students, faculty, and staff to determine if they are appropriate for Tech Fee funding. In April, budgets are allocated to fund projects and operational activities for the next fiscal year. After the President reviews and approves the proposed technology budget, it is submitted to the CUNY Central Office for their review and a decision about whether the project can be implemented is made. Implementation decisions are based on availability of financial, technological, and human resources. The academic schedule is also considered to determine on what schedule a technology project can move forward. All tech fee proposals, and their implementation status, are posted on the Queens College intranet where their



progress can be tracked. Proposal guidelines and examples of funded proposals are included in the Tech Fee Plan (Appendix [H.2 \[A237\]](#)).

**Enrollment Management:** The planning processes leading up to the 2013 and 2015 strategic plans resulted in the decision to undertake a major initiative to increase enrollment at the College, but in a way that would maintain selectivity while enhancing diversity. Maintaining and growing enrollment is essential, especially as Queens College's operating budget, like that for other public colleges in New York and across the country, depends increasingly on tuition revenues (55% of the QC operating budget is from tuition revenues). A number of initiatives grew out of the decision to strategically grow enrollment including the creation of a Strategic Enrollment Management Council (SEMC) with membership from across the College, and the development of a marketing strategy with the assistance of an outside consultant, Lipman Hearne (Appendix [J.994 \[A238\]](#)). More recently, the President created a new unit for Enrollment Management and Student Retention as shown in the organizational chart in Appendix [I.1 \[A239\]](#) by reorganizing some existing units and reorganizing some College functions. The new office is led by a Vice President hired in the summer of 2015 into a newly created position. With the new office up and running, the SEMC has been succeeded by an advisory group comprised of division leaders and members from Academic Affairs and Enrollment and Student Retention.

The charge for the new division is to examine current practices, identify changes in policies and practices that may improve the student experience in admissions, financial aid, academic advising and academic support services, among other related areas. QC's Marketing Department was brought under the umbrella of Enrollment and Student Retention with the goal of improving the linkage between our marketing plan and our enrollment goals. For example, the new unit seeks to improve and enhance the college's website to make it a better recruitment tool, as addressed in the recommendations below.

Efforts to bolster enrollment through recruitment and retention requires collaboration with both internal and external constituents. The applicable budget process at the College starts with a careful review of enrollment data for the most recent three years to estimate future enrollment. Once the target is established, a financial simulation is used to determine the revenue projection/outcomes. Some factors that are considered are high school student demographics, community college enrollment trends as well as regional graduate program enrollment patterns. The proposed budget is then shared with the CUNY Central Administration for approval. Also, the proposed budget is shared with the Personnel & Budget Committee on campus to ensure that everyone understands the fiscal plan.

The CUNY Standard Operating Procedure Manual (Appendix [J.17 \[A228\]](#)) requires clearly documented planning and communication in our Professional and Continuing Studies (PCS) unit, which oversees continuing education programs at the College. The manual dictates operational and financial practices. Enrollment data are provided to CUNY on a semester basis for the continuing education programs (Appendix [H.9 \[A240\]](#)). PCS has roughly 5,000 enrollments annually.

## 6.5 Fiscal and human resources - support for operations (s6c4)

The revenues per FTE for QC are comparable to other CUNY senior colleges and exceed the CUNY senior college average, as seen in Appendix [G.5 \[A241\]](#). As has been the case in prior years, the resources-to-expenditures ratio for Queens College shows sufficient reserves for the 2015 fiscal year, projected vs actual (Appendix [G.4 \[A223\]](#)). Staffing at the institution compares favorably with the CUNY senior colleges as indicated by Staffing to FTE ratios, however, there seems to be a tendency toward lower ratios when compared to institutions of similar enrollment and size. By all indication the fiscal and staffing at the institution is adequate in meeting its mission. Despite budgetary pressures, faculty hiring has remained a high priority, and the number of faculty has remained relatively stable (628 full-time faculty in fall 2007 and 612 in fall 2015 as noted in Section [0.1.1](#)).

Recent implementation of information technology systems has led to productivity savings that have increased administrative efficiencies for academic and non-academic units. For example, in 2015 the College automated its personnel timekeeping systems for both full-time and part-time staff. An Electronic Personnel Action Form automated the submission process for approved hires in 2014. These systems provided improved controls to strengthen the management of the Office of Human Resources administrative functions and to process new hires more quickly. Other technology improvements are underway in 2016 such as the implementation of the electronic Hiring Justification Form and an Online Budget Submission system ([s6c3](#)). All these systems were developed in-house.

There has been an expansion of the College's information system technology in support of the strategic plan goal to leverage technology to better serve students, faculty and staff. CUNY expanded its fiber ring network, capable of speeds up to 20 GB, to QC to improve networking capacity in 2015. In October 2016, we replaced the college's firewall with one having seven times the previous throughput (now 7 GB).

Responding to suggestions from students, faculty and staff, we introduced a new WiFi service in the summer 2015 that improved the persistence of Wi-Fi connections once logged in and expanded the capacity for simultaneous logins.

Faculty and Staff email services are supported by the Office of Information Technology. In 2012 Queens College retired Lotus Notes and moved faculty and staff to Microsoft Exchange. An upgrade to Exchange Server 2013 from Exchange 2010 was completed in 2015. This upgrade, while updating the out dated back end, improved the overall design of the application; a new web based interface was provided that improved access on mobile devices. In 2014 student email was moved from Lotus Notes to Microsoft Office 365 which gave students a modern flexible system and access to Microsoft Office to use anywhere, on any device.

Student Technology Fees have been used in support of the Strategic Plan Goal to Strengthen Operational Capability and Infrastructure. Some examples are funding Cisco network switch upgrades to improve security, increased speed and reliability, adding WiFi access point devices to areas where students gather such as the Rosenthal Library and Dining Hall. Tech fee funding is provided to the Center for Teaching and Learning to foster faculty excellence in pedagogy and

the recent acquisition of Lynda.com with Tech Fee funds is fostering faculty and staff excellence as well as facilitating student success.

Some examples of many dozens of projects funded by the Technology Fee related to Facilitating Student Success are implementation of lecture capture enabled technology enhanced classrooms, creation of a photonics lab in the Physics department, provisioning 3D printing facilities in the Art Department, and the acquisition of mobile device (laptops, tablets, digital cameras and video cameras) for students to borrow.

The College recently implemented some changes in the Bursar's Office to improve bursar-related services for students. In the fall semester of 2015, the Bursar incorporated the Summit housing charges into the student's bill along with tuition and fees, and other related charges. As a result of this new comprehensive bill for residence hall students, residence hall charges are now more easily considered in financial aid processing. Residence hall students have the same flexible payment options available to other students (including credit card payments and payment plans), and can now make payments of housing charges to the Bursar's Office, rather than paying them separately to the entity that runs the residence hall. The QC Bursar's office made another change intended to better serve students. By contracting with a new company (Nelnet) to administer student payment plans, students, in addition to having the option to enroll in a payment plan online which was available with the previous company (Tuition Pay), now also can elect to have monthly payments automatically deducted from their bank account or charged to their credit cards. The new system, unlike the previous one, is integrated with our Student Information System, CUNYfirst, and will auto-rebalance the student's contracted plan amount to sync with students' tuition and fee balance in CUNYfirst.

In order to ensure that the College had the fiscal resources necessary to support the Summit Apartments, our student residence hall, the Q Student Residences LLC (QSR) hired a financial advisory firm, Lamont Financial, to assist the Corporation in analyzing a number of alternatives to the original bond issue. The 2009A Bonds were floating rate, included an interest rate swap, and required a Letter of Credit. In addition, a separate \$2 million note was issued to the developer to provide needed financial resources. This financial structure was developed at the time of the worldwide financial crisis to allow the project financing to proceed so that the Summit Apartments could be built. By 2013, the financial environment had improved significantly yet the variable rate nature of the original financial structure made it very difficult to plan for the long-term viability of the QSR thereby putting the Summit Apartments at risk, resulting in a major challenge for the institution.

Lamont Financial recommended that the QSR pursue a refinancing of the 2009 bond issue. On September 5, 2014, QSR issued \$65,230,000 in Revenue Refunding Bonds through Build NYC Resources Corporation (2014 Bonds) to currently refund the \$67,110,000 in outstanding 2009A bonds. The current refunding allowed Q Student Residences to use certain amounts in its debt service reserve account as part of the transaction. The proceeds and amounts in the debt service were used to currently refund the 2009A Bonds, terminate the interest rate swap obligation and fully satisfy the principal and accrued interest of the developer note payable. The savings produced by the refunding were in excess of \$7.4 million.

The City University of New York was the guarantor for the Bond Refinancing. The University carries an AA2 credit rating from Moody's which was reaffirmed at the time of the refinancing. The successful refinancing of the Bond stabilized the Summit Residence Hall (QSR) finances by securing a lower fixed interest rate. With funds remaining from the refinancing (\$230,000) the College was able to finance the revitalization of the marketing of the Summit to ensure increased occupancy (currently in excess of 97%). In addition, a new WiFi system was implemented and new television programming was offered. These improvements were implemented to increase student satisfaction and were done in response to feedback received in annual occupant surveys

The Board of the Queens College Student Residences meets on a quarterly basis to review the financial condition and operations of the Summit Apartments with Capstone On-Campus Management (COCM), the entity hired to operate the Apartments. Issues are discussed and plans are developed and implemented to solve problems. For example, in Fiscal Year 2016, housing billing and collections were implemented in CUNYfirst. This allowed for Financial Aid awards to be applied directly to student accounts to ensure that the awards were used to pay for apartment rentals. In addition, weekly occupancy reports and monthly financial reports are distributed and reviewed by senior staff. In 2015 Capstone hired a new director for the Summit Apartments who has stabilized occupancy by increasing recruiting and programming. There has also been closer collaboration of recruiting efforts between the QC Enrollment staff and Capstone. This has led to the successful recruitment of incoming students. The Campus Venues Rental Department and the staff of the Summit work together to plan and implement conferences, events, etc. to help increase the utilization of the facility over the summer months.

The Summit Apartment Marketing Plan (Appendix [H.7 \[A242\]](#)) examined the current status of the residence hall and provided a plan based on evidence. The plan improves communication to all constituents at Queens College that housing can be an integral part of the recruitment and retention plan. It also provides Summit personnel with better access to incoming student information for marketing purposes. Customer service initiatives have been implemented including repairing/replacing fitness center equipment, upgrading landscaping, replacing apartment furniture and upgrading WiFi access throughout the facility. All of these changes have positively impacted the student experience, and it is anticipated the customer service changes will in turn increase renewals to the property. Staff is not solely relying on the impact of the recent changes, but rather being proactive to add additional amenities to The Summit Apartments' offerings, including utilizing a new cable vendor introducing a ResLife Cinema package, adding an optional "My Laundry Station" service for residents, and providing parents with the ability to send students care packages and contract for other services (linens, etc.) through an outside vendor. With all of the changes happening at The Summit Apartments, it is anticipated that the annual resident survey will show improvement in several of the measured factors, but will also provide additional items for the staff to explore for improvement.

In Professional and Continuing Studies area an upgraded module of the Continuing Education Registration System (CERS) introduced online student registration which greatly increased enrollments in selected programs. An online faculty module was added which offered

instructors the flexibility to remotely print student rosters, enter grades and attendance, upload and email course materials to students. Upgrades of technology were made and visual teaching aids were added to classrooms.

## **6.6 Planning with consideration of sustainability and deferred maintenance (s6c6)**

New processes were put in place recently to ensure broad participation in planning for facilities, infrastructure and technology investments and resources. Capital and technology budget request processes are linked to the institution's strategic and financial planning processes. For example, results of an external review by Aramark helped to institute standard operations and management practices within our Campus Facilities and Building & Grounds departments. Based on the external assessment, strategic administrative and organizational changes in management have resulted in governance of both departments by a single executive manager. Decisions are made to maximize investment to deal with deferred maintenance issues. The College has taken the lead within CUNY to identify external sources of funding to improve the operations and maintenance of the college's infrastructure, resulting in significant budget savings through the reduction of our energy budget. For example, several projects have been planned in cooperation with CUNY's Central Office that have received funding from the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), the NY Power Authority (NYPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy. We also have received revolving loans from the CUNY Sustainability Fund which are used to finance energy saving projects and are repaid over 3 years from the savings. Additional energy conservation projects are being planned by the College's Sustainability Council which includes students, faculty, staff and community members.

Over the past five years, Queens College made major investments in initiatives that would decrease the overall use of energy and champion sustainability initiatives on campus. Reductions in our energy utilization leads to budgetary savings which allows us to invest further in sustainability projects. A summary of some of the major projects includes: (1) the Student Union's HVAC system and boiler were upgraded leading to energy savings; (2) the Kiely Hall envelope project was completed with new façade and windows providing major energy savings; (3) Science Building project upgrades were made to the HVAC and mechanical systems in 2015; (4) The Office of Information Technologies reduced energy usage through server virtualization and other projects; (5) over 500 trees were planted to beautify the campus while also contributing to the reduction of carbon in the atmosphere; (6) three rain gardens have been built and a 4<sup>th</sup> rain garden will be built soon reducing pressure from storm runoff on the City's sewage system saving energy and reducing water pollution; and (7) solar picnic tables were installed with 110 volt receptacles and USB ports for student outdoor use with charging stations.

In addition, repairs and replacements have been made to inefficient air conditioners, LED lighting projects have been made across campus to include Kiely Hall Lobby LEDs, Goldstein Theatre LED stage lights, the installation and upgrade from fluorescents to LEDs in Kiely hall tower using a new technology setting a model for more projects to come.

Queens College has partnered with CUNY Office of Facilities Planning, Design and Construction and CUNY Conserves, in its Operations & Maintenance Program Evaluation. This was done in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order 88 requiring all state agencies to be 22% more energy efficient by 2022. Based on consultant's recommendations, the following actions were undertaken and completed by QC's Engineering Staff: (1) adjusted the Reheat System Temperature Set point and lowered the heating hot water supply temperature to reduce system radiation losses and reduce space overheating associated with reheat valve leak-by; (2) Enhanced Air Handling Unit (AHU) Preheat System Operation and modified preheat valve modulation to remain closed during lower outside air temperatures. The outdoor air setpoint adjustment eliminated approximately 900 hours of hot water pumping in each building; (3) resolved various issues associated with pumps/fans running in manual operation via the Building Automation System (BAS) allowing the College to implement equipment operating schedules to shut-down equipment for at least 6 hours each day; (4) our BMS contractor, Siemens, incorporated in all buildings using a BMS system a Start/Stop Optimization Strategy for the Building's Air Handling Units (AHUs). It has also been implemented in buildings not controlled by BAS including 20 large AHUs.

Additionally, a comprehensive energy assessment was conducted by another outside consultant to determine targets for upgrades to facilities systems to help make buildings more efficient.

Additional projects in the planning, initiation or completion stages that should further increase energy efficiency and yield savings include:

- New chiller plant to provide increased energy efficiency and improvements to internal air quality, etc. (Phase I design)
- Six dual inverter electric cars in "Vehicle to Grid," to provide energy during peak load times to lower the college's electric bills and provide resiliency in case of blackouts;
- Installation of solar energy systems on the roof of the Summit Residence Hall (investigation phase);
- Exterior lighting upgrades to parking decks and pathways across campus;
- Interior lighting LED upgrades including daylight harvesting controls allowing natural light and the installation of motion sensors in the library stacks and across the campus (Planning phase)
- Expanding environmental awareness on campus in collaboration with students in the Earth and Environmental Science and Urban Studies departments and environmental clubs;
- Environmental Risk Management program (for which the college is seeking capital funding through NY-CUNY 2020)
- New Environmental Science labs (for which the college is seeking NY-CUNY 2020 funding in combination with capital funding from the Queens City Council)

Queens College recently received two awards for environmental work: Students in an Earth & Environmental Science class received 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in the EPA Campus RainWorks Challenge; and four Queens College staff members were recognized as NYS BuildSmart Energy Star winners for

their work to improve energy efficiency on campus. We are regularly included in the Princeton Review's Guide to Green Colleges

The above mentioned initiatives and projects all are in keeping commitments made in the 10-year Sustainability Plan for Queens College, (Appendix [C.8 \[A243\]](#)). The Plan was developed and is monitored by a Sustainability Council that has been working to bring together students, faculty and staff to create a culture of cooperation and collaboration on campus in all our sustainability efforts. Regular meetings and presentations inform the campus while encouraging idea sharing and joint ventures. The Council meetings have become a forum for expanding initiatives, with student leadership actively engaged.

In an effort to reduce the costs of mailing paper bills and communicating with students, the Bursar has reduced the volume of literature mailed to students by instituting email and robo-calling as its primary means of communication. This has greatly impacted the College's postage expenditure and paper usage. With the introduction of the ePAF and HR-Assist online systems, the volume of paper forms for appointments, time sheets, and budget requests has been dramatically reduced throughout the College.

### **6.7 Annual audits and follow-up ([s6c7](#))**

QC works with CUNY to conduct the University's financial audit. In particular, we respond to any concerns cited in the CUNY auditor's Management Letter. The Audit Liaison convenes a kickoff meeting with internal College staff in preparation for the annual College audit. This is followed by an entrance meeting with the auditor and staff of key departments. The Audit Liaison organizes the College Responses to Management Letter comments. A new comment regarding Return of Title IV Funds was added in 2015, as shown in the Audit Management Letter 2015 Response (Appendix [G.3 \[A244\]](#)).

Independent audits are completed for all affiliated corporations on the campus: Auxiliary Enterprise Corporation, Queens College Association, Queens College Student Services Corporation, Q Student Residences, LLC (Appendix [H.8 \[A245\]](#)), Queens Special Projects Fund, The Child Development Center at Queens College, Queens College Athletic and Recreation Fund and the Colden Center/Kupferberg Center (performing arts). In each case the Board of Directors reviews all financial statements and management letters and responds when necessary to the management letter. The 2015 CUNY Financial Statements are given in Appendix [G.2 \[A246\]](#).

In order to comply with the recently passed New York Nonprofit Revitalization Act, Independent Audit Committees were established in Fiscal Year 2015 for the Auxiliary Enterprise Corporation, The Child Development Center and Student Services Corporation. These entities made some modifications to their by-laws to expand their Board of Directors membership to include alumni. The alumni along with one student act as Independent Directors and form the Audit Committee of each 501c3 organization.

### **6.8 Resource assessment ([s6c8](#))**

All members of the President's Cabinet and their management teams work to ensure that sufficient resources are efficiently utilized to support the institution's mission and goals. The VP



for Finance and Administration meets on a monthly basis with the Budget Committee of the College P&B, to share information on the status and outlook of the budget and to seek feedback.

In an effort to increase revenues from alternative sources, the VP for Finance and Administration and his team have worked to provide additional services to the College and Queens community. The Auxiliary Enterprise Corporation, a conduit for dining, catering, vending, bookstore, housing, and other auxiliary enterprises, was reorganized and incorporated in 2013 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation. A board comprised of students, faculty, administrators, and an independent auditor (some of whom are alumni) worked with other campus entities to create new entrepreneurial efforts and to focus on improving revenue. The outcome of this resulted in such steps as the successful replacement of the College's bookstore contract with a new company that provides the opportunity for students to purchase their books online with significant savings. In addition, we reorganized our campus venue rental operation and have significantly increased revenue through the rentals of campus facilities to government entities, film and TV broadcasting companies, etc. We have also increased food service offerings with the addition of food trucks and will be adding an additional food kiosk on campus. The College re-opened an on-campus store to expand services to students and the anticipation of additional revenues beyond what we generated through the online campus store.

Campus surveys indicated that lack of adequate transportation to our campus is a major problem for QC (Appendix [J.8 \[A247\]](#)). After extensive research about transportation options, an additional student activity fee was approved by the student government organizations to finance a shuttle bus service. Now entering its third year of operation, the QC shuttle buses provide transportation for students to and from campus and key locations in the borough, such as train stations, at no additional charge. Faculty, staff, and guests can also ride the bus, but must purchase daily, weekly, or semester tickets, which they do through an online purchasing system. In a typical month, the shuttle buses provide over 40,000 rides. Shuttle bus service [\[121\]](#) has made the campus more accessible to commuter students, making public transportation a more convenient option. It has also made it easier for resident students to get around the borough and to access public transit, and should make the college more attractive to potential students. An added benefit is the greater recognition the College receives as the red and white shuttle buses, sporting the Queens College logo, drive through the borough.

The Office of Information Technology performs a biannual assessment of the state of information security in the college using a self-assessment tool developed by CUNY's CIS office to evaluate compliance and best practices. Areas examined include adherence to university policies regarding use of computer resources, access controls, protection of nonpublic data, data center physical security, hardware, software and network vulnerability protections, risk assessment, disaster recovery and business continuity practices (see the June 2016 attestation of compliance, Appendix [J.21 \[A248\]](#)). The latest assessment shows QC to be in compliance and following recommended practices. There were no changes needed and current security systems will be maintained.



## 6.9 Periodic assessment of planning and resources (s6c9)

At the end of each academic year, CUNY assesses the College's progress on university and college goals, resulting in an annual Performance Management Report (e.g., Appendix [D.4 \[A249\]](#) and Appendix [D.3 \[A128\]](#)), which identifies strengths and ongoing challenges. The Chancellor meets with the College President annually to review institutional performance, recognize successful performance, and identify future priorities. The College President and his cabinet then establish budget priorities, and lead the campus communities to advance University and College goals.

Queens College demonstrates its commitment to assessment based institutional advancement beyond the PMP. The Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) program, a CUNY-wide initiative to affect student learning, development, and success through innovative activities bridging academic disciplines, is discussed in more detail in Section [5.4.2](#), and is an example of the way data is used to drive decisions about resource allocation both at the University (CUNY) level and at the college level (QC). The most recent CUE annual reports given in Appendix [F.4 \[A169\]](#), Appendix [F.5 \[A250\]](#), and Appendix [F.6 \[A251\]](#), show the assessments used to demonstrate how the projects meet the PMP goals. There are a number of examples of projects/proposals from academic affairs that include assessment plans and metrics (e.g., the proposed American Council on Education, Change and Innovation Lab (ACE CIL) - Appendix [J.22 \[A252\]](#), the proposed Office of International Programs - Appendix [J.23 \[A253\]](#), and Expanding Hybrid and Online Courses at Queens College - Appendix [J.19 \[A254\]](#)) and denote a commitment to institutional improvement through assessment practices.

Below are some examples of QC's administrative unit assessment and planning activities:

- Each year, the College submits an enrollment plan to CUNY, projecting enrollments for the coming year.
- Each year, the College submits a financial plan to CUNY, which is the culmination of a year-long planning and budgeting activity in which faculty, staff and students are engaged. The Budget Office conducts budget planning meetings with every unit of the college, and also consults with the College P&B Budget Committee and student leadership. The Financial Plan contains revenue and cost projections. Throughout the year, the Financial Plan is assessed and updated and adjustments made to operations as necessary. Additionally, each year the College submits multiyear financial projections, which are updated annually.
- In December 2012, New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo issued an Executive Order to aggressively pursue energy efficiency in New York State government buildings while advancing economic growth, environmental protection, and energy security. The Executive Order directs the College to increase campus energy efficiency by at least 22% by 2020 compared to an energy baseline of State fiscal year 2010/2011. As part of the Executive Order, the College is required to develop a comprehensive operations and maintenance (O&M) action plan to help achieve cost efficiency improvements and ensure that savings is sustained.

- The College adopted a 10 year Sustainability Plan (Appendix [C.8 \[A243\]](#)) in 2008/09. Since then, the plan has been reviewed annually by the Sustainability Committee and a set of measurable targets chosen to meet planned short & long term goals. Since the establishment of our ten-year sustainability plan, the college has acted on some key sustainability initiatives: building of a new student residence facility which was certified as Gold LEED for its construction; planting over 500 new trees to beautify the campus and contribute to reduction of our carbon footprint; building of three rain gardens with a fourth one in the planning stages. These gardens will capture storm runoff from the city's storm water systems and help alleviate threats to widespread flooding in the aftermath of heavy storms and rainfalls.

## 6.10 Recommendations

The working groups for Standard VI and Standard VII noted that the College does not have a schedule for assessment of administrative units, nor a common template for conducting such assessment. In order to ensure a systematic approach guaranteeing routine assessment of all units, as called for by both standards, the working groups recommended establishing a timeline and template, similar to the process adopted by CUNY's Hostos Community College as a model (Appendix [J.27 \[A255\]](#)).

This recommendation addresses Intended Outcome 1, supporting continuous improvement at the College. The President's Council will undertake a review of effective assessment models and implement a timeline and template for non-academic unit assessments in fall 2016.

**Recommendation 6: Extend cyclical non-academic program reviews to all Queens College non-academic units. All of these units should develop assessment plans. The President's Council should undertake a review of effective assessment models and implement a timeline and template for non-academic unit assessments.**

**Recommendation 7: The period of appointment for the directors of centers and interdisciplinary programs should be of limited duration to allow for regular review of unit leadership and performance. All such units should be added to the College's schedule of departmental self-studies (if not already present), and their self-studies should be due in the year prior to the appointment or reappointment of the director.**

It was further suggested that all interdisciplinary programs and centers should have faculty advisory boards, as most currently do, and that the current Committee on Centers and Institutes (a sub-committee of the College P&B) review these self-studies. A likely term of office would be three to five years. A process for nominating directors to the President will be established. This recommendation addresses the concern that some centers and programs have longstanding directors, and would benefit from more regular review and assessment.

# Standard VII

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## Governance, Leadership, and Administration

**The institution is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, religious, educational system, or other unaccredited organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose, and it operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.**

### Criteria

An accredited institution possesses and demonstrates the following attributes or activities:

1. a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that outlines roles, responsibilities, and accountability for decision making by each constituency, including governing body, administration, faculty, staff and students;
2. a legally constituted governing body that:
  - a. serves the public interest, ensures that the institution clearly states and fulfills its mission and goals, has fiduciary responsibility for the institution, and is ultimately accountable for the academic quality, planning, and fiscal well-being of the institution;
  - b. has sufficient independence and expertise to ensure the integrity of the institution. Members must have primary responsibility to the accredited institution and not allow political, financial, or other influences to interfere with their governing responsibilities;
  - c. ensures that neither the governing body nor its individual members interferes in the day-to-day operations of the institution;
  - d. oversees at the policy level the quality of teaching and learning, the approval of degree programs and the awarding of degrees, the establishment of personnel policies and procedures, the approval of policies and by-laws, and the assurance of strong fiscal management;
  - e. plays a basic policy-making role in financial affairs to ensure integrity and strong financial management. This may include a timely review of audited financial statements and/or other documents related to the fiscal viability of the institution;
  - f. appoints and regularly evaluates the performance of the Chief Executive Officer;
  - g. is informed in all its operations by principles of good practice in board governance;
  - h. establishes and complies with a written conflict of interest policy designed to ensure the impartiality of the governing body by addressing matters such as payment for services, contractual relationships, employment, and family, financial or other interests that could pose or be perceived as conflicts of interest;

## Standard VII

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- i. supports the Chief Executive Officer in maintaining the autonomy of the institution;
3. a Chief Executive Officer who:
- a. is appointed by, evaluated by, and reports to the governing body and shall not chair the governing body;
  - b. has appropriate credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization;
  - c. has the authority and autonomy required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, including developing and implementing institutional plans, staffing the organization, identifying and allocating resources, and directing the institution toward attaining the goals and objectives set forth in its mission;
  - d. has the assistance of qualified administrators, sufficient in number, to enable the Chief Executive Officer to discharge his/her duties effectively; and is responsible for establishing procedures for assessing the organization's efficiency and effectiveness;
4. an administration possessing or demonstrating:
- a. an organizational structure that is clearly documented and that clearly defines reporting relationships;
  - b. an appropriate size and with relevant experience to assist the Chief Executive Officer in fulfilling his/her roles and responsibilities;
  - c. members with credentials and professional experience consistent with the mission of the organization and their functional roles;
  - d. skills, time, assistance, technology, and information systems expertise required to perform their duties;
  - e. regular engagement with faculty and students in advancing the institution's goals and objectives;
  - f. systematic procedures for evaluating administrative units and for using assessment data to enhance operations; and
5. periodic assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership, and administration.

## Chapter 7

### Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration ([s7](#))

In this section, an examination of governance documents, and an analysis of organizational structure, staffing, and assessment processes, demonstrate that Queens College is governed and administered in a manner that allows it to realize its stated mission and goals in a way that effectively benefits the institution, its students, and the other constituencies it serves. This section also addresses requirements of affiliation 12 ([r12](#)) and 13 ([r13](#)). With regard to the former requirement, the public documents described in this section verify that Queens College has fully disclosed its governance structures. With regard to the latter requirement, the CUNY Conflict of Interest Policy [[122](#)] and Multiple Positions Policy (Appendix [1.99](#) [[A256](#)]) help to assure the impartiality of the governing body.

The Standard VII criteria are divided into three groups below: Criteria 1-3 concern the governance structure, and governing bodies. Criterion 3 also addresses administrative structure and staffing, as does Criterion 4. Criterion 4(f) and Criterion 5 address the assessment of the effectiveness of governance, leadership and administration. We define “leadership” to be the setting of goals, direction and vision, based on the mission of the institution, in contrast to “administration” or “management,” which has to do with the operationalization of goals and vision described in the previous section. The working group recommendations at the end of this section are intended to ensure continued strong compliance.

#### 7.1 Governance ([s7c1](#), [s7c2](#), [s7c3](#))

Queens College has a clearly articulated and transparent governance structure that articulates with the governance structures and policies of the City University of New York, as described below. Documents related to University and College governance are listed section I of the Appendices.

CUNY has one Board of Trustees (BoT) for the entire university. The Board is composed of 17 Trustees; ten appointed by the Governor and five by the NYC Mayor, both with NY State Senate advice and consent. One ex-officio Trustee is the chair of the University Student Senate. One ex-officio non-voting Trustee is the chair of the University Faculty Senate. The Chair and the Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Board of Trustees Bylaws [[123](#)] describe the duties of the members of the Board of Trustees. Additional responsibilities, including conflict of interest policy, are described in the BoT's Manual of General Policy [[23](#)], which consolidates the non-bylaw policy action items adopted/amended by the BoT. The BoT delegates to each campus the responsibility for how the campus organizes itself, contingent on the campus governance plans being first adopted by the BoT. Further, under CUNY Bylaws, Article IX, Organization and Duties of Faculty Departments, Section 9.6, “The provisions in a duly adopted college governance plan shall supersede any inconsistent provisions contained in this article.” Thus, colleges may in their governance plans,



define the duties of faculty departments, including methods for appointments and promotions, and those provisions may be inconsistent with CUNY Bylaws, as long as the Board has adopted the college's governance plan.

The Bylaws establish at each CUNY college a faculty or academic council (at QC, this body is called the Academic Senate) [124]. The Bylaws also establish at each college a Personnel and Budget (P&B) Committee [125] and define relevant duties of departmental chairs [126]. (The College's Handbook for Department Chairs [127] is a useful guide that further describes the duties of the QC department chairs.) The college-wide governance structure at Queens College is thus divided into two domains. Both bodies meet once a month during the fall and spring semesters and provide important avenues for communication among faculty, students, and administration.

The Queens College Academic Senate [128] has 60 members (40 faculty elected for a two-year term and 20 students elected for a one-year term), representing the academic departments, the divisions, and the student government. Section I of the Academic Senate Charter [129] states that the Senate is responsible "for the formulation of policy relating to the admission and retention of students, curriculum, granting of degrees, Campus Life, and the nomination of Academic (full) Deans." Student membership and responsibilities are defined in Sections IIb, VIII, X, and XII of the Senate Charter. The Academic Senate has 11 standing committees, three special committees, and three college committees shown on the Senate website [130]. Two noteworthy Senate committees are the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC), which are charged with reviewing all curriculum changes. The UCC and GCC recommendations must be approved by the full Academic Senate before being submitted to the CUNY Board of Trustees for final approval.

The College Personnel and Budget (P&B) Committee consists of the chairs of all academic departments, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President, who serves as the chairperson. As the name indicates, the College P&B is involved in personnel and budgetary matters at the College, including matters of tenure and promotion. There are six standing subcommittees of the College P&B Committee. Further detail about these subcommittees can be found in Appendix I.92 [A257].

Additional characteristics of the College governance structure are defined by the contract between CUNY and the union representing faculty and staff, Appendix I.3 [A132] and revised in fall 2016 [8]. The Contract establishes lines of communication and consultation between the College President and the PSC chapter chairperson at the College and details how labor-management issues for both instructional and non-instructional staff are to be addressed.

## **7.2 Administration (s7c3, s7c4)**

The BoT has ultimate authority as the governing body of the entire City University of New York; it delegates certain responsibilities to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor delegates to the presidents of the colleges [131]. The chief executive officer of each college is the president.

At Queens College, the president is assisted in support of his/her responsibilities by a college executive team [132] as shown in the Executive Organization Chart (Appendix [1.1 \[A239\]](#)), consisting of the President's Chief of Staff and General Counsel, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Appendix [1.5 \[A258\]](#)) the Vice President for Finance and Administration (Appendix [1.94 \[A259\]](#)), the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Retention (Appendix [1.93 \[A260\]](#)), the Vice President for Student Affairs (Appendix [1.7 \[A261\]](#)), the Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Alumni Relations (Appendix [1.98 \[A262\]](#)), the AVP for Government and External Affairs (Appendix [1.97 \[A263\]](#)), the Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Strategic Initiatives. These individuals make up the president's cabinet, which generally meets on a weekly basis. A new Vice President position was recently created to oversee Marketing and Communications for the College. The incumbent is a new member of the President's Cabinet.

To enhance communication across administrative offices and keep administrative staff informed of changes, events, policies and issues, President Matos Rodríguez instituted two administrative bodies, in addition to his Cabinet, the Extended Cabinet and President's Council. The Extended Cabinet, consisting of the VP's as well as AVPs and directors from the college's administrative offices, meets monthly. The President's Council consists of the Extended Cabinet members and about a dozen additional administrative office staff members. This latter body also meets on a monthly basis.

Similar to the organization of the upper administration, each administrative unit has a hierarchical structure that supports the efficient execution of that unit's responsibilities and functions. The Provost's Office uses a similar hierarchical structure to ensure that academic matters (policies and practices that affect both students and faculty). As noted previously, Queens College has four divisions, each led by a Academic Dean who reports to and meets regularly with the Provost and others in the Provost's Office. Each Dean has administrative responsibility for departments and programs within their division. Department chairs (faculty elected by departmental faculty to lead the department), in turn, have administrative responsibilities for their specific departments and programs, and the students and faculty within. Chairs report to their respective Dean, and meet regularly in Divisional Caucuses. Chairs hold full faculty and program-specific meetings within their respective departments to discuss curriculum matters and to address local departmental issues of concern to faculty and students. Departmental faculty also meet to discuss and make decisions about personnel and budget issues at department P&B meetings.

Monthly college-wide P&B meetings (of department chairs, deans, and senior administrators) are another important venue for direct information sharing, and importantly, stand out as a structure that crosses hierarchical boundaries.

At the University level (CUNY), communication across campuses is enhanced by several University-wide administrative councils (presidents, provosts, admissions officers, enrollment management officers, registrars, assessment directors, etc.). In addition to facilitating interaction across the CUNY colleges, these councils provide important fora for addressing



University-wide policies and procedures and providing an avenue for CUNY central administration to consult with college administrators.

President Matos Rodríguez has been a member of the CUNY Council of Presidents (COPs) since 2009 when he was president of Hostos Community College before. During his tenure, he has served on a number of COPs subcommittees: Academic Affairs Committee (2009-2011); Executive Committee (2010-present); Fiscal Affairs Committee (2010-present), Chair (2014-present); International Education Committee (2012-present); Ad Hoc Committee on Strengthening Services to Veterans (2012-present); Graduation and Retention Task Force (2012-2013); Long-Range Planning Committee (2013-present); External Affairs Committee (2009-present), Chair (2010-2013). President Matos Rodríguez also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the Research Foundation of the City University of New York (2010-present).

College administration led the effort to seek designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution which made us eligible for certain kinds of federal grants. As a result, the College became eligible for, applied for, and received a \$5 million HSI-STEM grant (“STEM Bridges across Eastern Queens”) from the U.S. Department of Education.

### **7.3 Assessment ([s7c4f](#), [s7c5](#))**

Co-chairs from the Standard VII working group joined the members of the Standard VI working group for a series of interviews with college executive team leaders to discuss reporting relationships and organizational structure of college administration. The executive team supplied information about the size of administrative teams, leadership qualifications/expertise, and their assessment about whether administrators have sufficient time and technical support to fulfill their duties. Communication flow between the administration and faculty, staff, and students was also reviewed.

From the information provided in these interviews and the documentation gathered (for example, administrative unit websites), the working group found that for each administrative unit, objectives are clearly stated, linked to mission, and used to drive planning and resource allocation decisions.

The working group also found that in a number of administrative offices, planning and improvement processes provide for constituent participation and incorporate assessment results (e.g., Advising, Student Services), but that other offices and units do not have structures in place for organized and sustained assessment of their administrative effectiveness. Further, that although assessment does occur, the results of such activities and the decisions derived from them are not as well documented and publicized as they could be. Coupled with similar feedback from Working Group VI, the Recommendation described in Section [6.10](#) has been adopted, to assure that systematic assessment in all non-academic units will take place. This effort will be supported by the new Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

The remainder of this section uses examples to demonstrate how leadership, administration and governance are assessed at QC.

## Leadership Assessment

The CUNY Manual of General Policy 5.05 [133] describes the review and assessment of the Chancellor and the college's presidents, calling for evaluations to be conducted at least every five years. Policy 5.05 sets out the criteria for evaluation: academic and administrative leadership, and relationship with the college community as well as the broader public, in particular communicating the mission and priorities of the institution. What the Manual of General Policy terms academic and administrative leadership corresponds to what we have identified as "leadership" and "administration" for the purposes of Standard VII.

The criteria ensure that the leadership of the institution has "educational quality as its primary purpose" as specified in the Standard, and that both "leadership" and "administration" are assessed. Policy 5.05 states that "the President must understand and be committed to the educational needs of his/her college, and have the ability to articulate and to meet these needs at all levels," as well as "defining and communicating his or her sense of the college's mission and its priorities." The policy also requires that "measures of a President's effectiveness include how well he or she is able to maintain an effective administrative team, to develop sound and responsive management practices, to develop and carry out an effective affirmative action program, to designate the appropriate use of fiscal resources, to coordinate the advancement of campus construction programs, where relevant, and to maintain ongoing programs of planning, evaluation and review," as required in Criteria 3, 4 and 5. Policy 5.05 further provides that presidents will be subject to an annual evaluation and that every three to five years, additional input will be sought from the campus community by the Office of the Chancellor.

The Performance Management Process (PMP) described in Section xxx is used both as a mechanism for institutional assessment and as a way for the University Chancellor to evaluate presidential leadership. Each spring, CUNY's Chancellor states the University's performance goals for the upcoming academic year. Campus Presidents, working with their executive teams and college communities, establish performance targets for their institution for the coming year and state their own college-specific goals reflecting differences in campus missions, strategic plans, priorities, resources, and circumstances. At the end of each academic year, each college's progress on university and college goals is assessed, and strengths and ongoing challenges are identified. The Chancellor meets with each college president annually to review institutional performance, recognize successful performance, and identify future priorities. This process culminates with a confidential letter from the Chancellor to the President that documents areas for leadership improvement and establishing institutional priorities.

There are also processes in place at the College to assess and evaluate college leadership. For example, the President conducts annual evaluations of the Vice Presidents, who are responsible for meeting annual goals. The VP's also evaluate, on annual basis, their unit leaders who, in turn, evaluate their staff members. These evaluations are both mandated by and supported by the College's Office of Human Resources. In addition, the QC Academic Senate Charter [134] establishes committees to evaluate the work of the Provost, Deans and Chief Librarian in their fifth year of service, and to make a confidential report to the President, with a recommendation

for or against continued appointment. QC has also employed intensive “360° evaluations” of key administrators, involving feedback from the campus, as resources allowed.

Administrative units have routinely conducted assessments, often using outside evaluators, and have made changes to operations and organizational structure. For example, in 2013, consistent with the new Strategic Plan, QC engaged the services of Lipman Hearne, a well-known enrollment management consulting firm, to assess QC’s recruitment strategies. Lipman Hearne developed a “playbook” of strategies to enhance the college’s recruiting activities ([2] to playbook). Initially, Lipman Hearne was retained to operationalize these strategies, but ultimately the assessment led to a reorganization of the college’s enrollment management activities, and the creation of a new executive position, VP for Enrollment Management and Student Retention.

As a second example, in 2012, QC engaged Eduventures [135] to assess the operations of the Office of Communications and Marketing. Key findings were that the Office of Communications needed to focus more on enrollment management and marketing. In response to these recommendations, two important changes were put in place. First, the Office of Communications was reorganized as an Office of Marketing and Communication and a new Executive Director with higher education marketing experience was recruited. Second, when the new VP for Enrollment and Student Retention position was created, our enrollment marketing function was moved under that vice president, and the communications function remained separately reporting to the AVP for Government and External Affairs.

Queens College took on a leadership role in the surrounding community and amongst its fellow CUNY campuses by addressing climate change through campus initiatives resulting in a decrease of energy use as well as in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. For example, the College participated in the City University of New York (CUNY) Sustainability Initiative, part of Mayor Bloomberg’s PlanNYC for a sustainable city. To meet the objectives of PlanNYC, CUNY has pledged to reduce carbon emissions intensity 30% by 2017 from the established 2005 reference. CUNY commissioned an energy consulting firm which in 2012 completed a comprehensive College Campus Energy Assessment of the campus buildings and infrastructure. This study identified opportunities for reducing energy consumption and offered methodology for investments in energy efficiency via capital upgrades. Some examples chosen to be implemented in a 1 to 5 year phase include: interior lighting upgrades and controls; application of window films in Rosenthal library; chiller upgrade and replacement; and sub-metering campus wide to better monitor energy consumption.

Another important assessment was conducted in response to NYS Governor Cuomo’s 2012 Executive Order, requiring all state and city agencies to reduce energy consumption by 20 to 22% by year 2020. As a result of this mandate, QC became one of the two vanguard CUNY schools in the development of CUNY’s first Operations and Maintenance Plan to achieve energy efficiency in all its buildings. In 2014, CUNY Conserves contracted with an operations and maintenance (O&M) consultant for a complete analyses of QC’s O&M activities. In coordination with QC’s Buildings and Grounds (B&G) staff, the consultant completed a GAP analysis which served to develop a strategy focused on improvement in seven key O&M program elements:

organizational framework; energy best practices; preventive maintenance; Standard Operating Policies and Procedures (SOPP); regulatory compliance; the Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS); and training and development. The consultant's analyses listed 85 potential opportunities for increased operational efficiency. QC operational staff received the 2015 NY Facility Star Award from Buildsmart NY (New York Power Authority) for putting into practice several initiatives identified in consultant's recommendations: lowering the heating hot water supply temperature to reduce system radiation losses and reduce space overheating; modifying preheat valve modulation to remain closed during lower outside air temperatures, eliminating approximately 900 hours of hot water pumping in each building; resolving issues associated with pumps/fans running in manual operation, allowing us to implement equipment operating schedules to shut-down equipment for at least 6 hours each day; improved on/off schedules for air handling units.

#### **7.4 Recommendation**

The College makes no recommendation specific to this standard. A recommendation that is related to aspects of this standard, but one that stems more naturally from the requirements related to Standard VI, is included as a second recommendation in that chapter (see Section 6.10).

## Chapter 8

### Conclusions

The first intended outcome in the 2015 Self-Study Design calls on Queens College to demonstrate that it “meets the Middle States standards and has processes in place to assure continuous improvement for each of the standards’ criteria.” The preceding sections of the self-study, as summarized in the Executive Summary, have presented evidence and analysis to demonstrate compliance with the standards, and a commitment to continuous improvement. This commitment is further demonstrated by several recent and ongoing activities at the College:

- The 2015-20 Strategic Plan is rooted in the College mission, has measurable goals tied to our budget and planning processes, and is continuously assessed. Significant outcomes have already been realized, as described below.
- Consistent with the key initiatives of the Strategic Plan, two new leadership positions were recently established – the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Retention, and the Dean for Institutional Effectiveness.
- Prominent recent initiatives that address Strategic Plan goals include the Transfer Honors Program (Section xxx), the OASIS project to improve graduation rates for minority students [10], the ACE Internationalization Project [9], the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant to nurture faculty diversity (Section 8.2), the US DOE “STEM Bridges across Eastern Queens” grant, Foundations of Excellence, the Quantitative Reasoning Fellows program, the Tech Talent Pipeline, and a selective AAC&U TIDES grant to increase diversity in STEM. These initiatives address Intended Outcome 3 of the self-study, to “focus on enrollment management with the aim of increasing retention, enhancing diversity, improving student services, building graduate programs, and supporting transfer students.”
- Recent initiatives to strengthen assessment at the College include two writing projects addressing writing-intensive syllabi, and writing in capstone courses (Section xxx). A 7-year academic program review cycle is nearly complete, and has been expanded to include additional interdisciplinary programs. Departments and programs have produced mission statements and curriculum maps, and these documents are available in a new repository of assessment materials.
- Improvements in service have been realized through creation of the One-Stop Center for students, creation of a shuttle bus service, and the widespread introduction of electronic forms, replacing paper for most uses.
- As part of a ten-year sustainability plan, the College has installed rain gardens and reflective roofs, and has committed to a reduction in carbon emissions of 30% by 2017 from a 2005 base level.

The self-study, as intended, has identified opportunities to better serve our students. Each of the working groups forwarded suggestions and recommendations, many of which are already embedded in the annual Strategic Plan or have already been addressed. Those that require an extended effort to accomplish, with broad impact on the institution, make up the 6 strategic recommendations of the self-study.

## 8.1 Suggestions from the Working Groups

Most of the working groups suggested improvements to the college's website to clarify our processes and better inform the campus community. The Standard I working group suggested that the College's mission statement, a brief description of the current Strategic Plan, and information about the PMP process should be coalesced on the College's website, and that this web page should contain links to an archive of current and previous strategic plan documents and PMP-related data reports. The Document Roadmap, which will continue to serve as an archive of relevant documentation aligned to the standards, will address this suggestion as well. The Standard III working group suggested that departments update faculty information on their websites, especially regarding participatory research, and describe special class requirements on their sites as well. The Standard IV working group suggested that current military credit transfer policy needs to be made more accessible, that additional CLEP information be posted, and that the Student Life website be updated to reflect accurate club contact information and mission statements. The Standard V working group suggested that more institutional assessment results, especially for general education, be posted publicly. All of these suggestions inform Recommendation 2 of this self-study (see below). In 2016, the College established a website committee, headed by two members of the President's Cabinet, to review and modify our website so it is easier to navigate and better serves our campus community. Website suggestions from the working groups have been forwarded to the committee, with the expectation that they will be adopted.

Better dissemination of information was also a common theme among the suggestions offered by the working groups. The College is working to make better use of its website for communication, as well leveraging other channels to improve communications, such as the Campus Notification email system, listservs, physical posting of notices in buildings, and sharing information at various campus meetings including College Senate, P&B, Divisional Caucuses, and administrative meetings. These suggestions will be taken up in conjunction with Recommendation 2 of the self-study. The Standard I working group noted the importance of updating the College bulletins to better describe the college mission and the Strategic Plan. The Standard II working group saw a need to better communicate staff promotion practices. The Standard III working group suggested additional training in ethics and integrity for staff, administrators, faculty and students, which has been addressed in part by new mandatory Title IX information sessions for our students. The Standard IV working group recommended FERPA awareness training for new faculty, and also recommended a redesign of the athletics program catalog. The Standard V working group suggested that the self-study guidelines for academic programs be updated and streamlined, and also recommended training in assessment as described in Recommendation 5 of the self-study.

A number of specific additional working group suggestions will also be addressed in the near future. Among these are suggestions to: 1) periodically administer a workplace satisfaction survey for staff and administration; 2) more systematically collect data on placements in graduate school, employment, and internships; 3) standardize club email accounts in order to streamline the yearly transition of club leaders; 4) streamline the Student Affairs survey process for its 18 departments; 5) streamline the Student Affairs student check-in process; and 6)

examine the evaluation process for QC's executive team to more closely parallel the evaluation criteria established for college presidents.

## **8.2 Strategic Plan and PMP Activities**

In the first year of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, the efforts of the working groups informed the selection of the initial annual activities. Two initiatives were addressed under Goal 1 - Facilitating Student Success. Initiative 2 ("improve the graduate student experience") was addressed by creating a new technology-equipped lounge for graduate students in Queens Hall, which opened in June 2016, with a second student lounge slated to open in Kiely Hall in summer 2016. An Initiative 3 project ("use technology to strengthen student engagement and teaching and learning"), begun in January 2016, addresses Intended Outcome 4 of the self-study ("foster educational innovation") as well as the current PMP college goal (C1 – "the College will increase online, hybrid and web enhanced course sections and enrollment"). The project [136], overseen by the Center for Teaching and Learning with funding from CUNY, involves departmental teams that seek to convert at least one program to a half hybrid or fully online mode. It includes a series of workshops, talks by distinguished speakers [137], an analysis of student success in online courses, and a governance component. Applications to NY State and to MSCHE to allow for fully online programs are in preparation. The online policy committee will shortly be focusing on examining campus supports for students taking online courses, and drafting enhanced guidelines for departments wanting to expand online and hybrid offerings. Based on these substantive efforts, the Standard III working group did not deem it necessary to submit further recommendations in this area.

Under Goal 2 ("supporting faculty and staff excellence), two initiatives were addressed in the 2015-2016 strategic plan activities. For Initiative 4 ("foster faculty scholarship"), as well as Initiative 1, a new Tech Talent Pipeline project [81] connects faculty and industry, allows for data analysis to support assessment in the computer sciences, and offers significant student internship opportunities. The first cohort of 24 Queens College students completed their 4 month residencies in fall 2015, with a second cohort of 25 starting in summer 2016. The new, no-cost, access to Lynda.com technology courses for students, faculty, and staff further supports these initiatives. Three activities address Initiative 6 ("strengthen planning and assessment practice"). The first is a restructuring of institutional research to strengthen and coordinate data collection and dissemination practice on campus, accomplished in fall 2016 with the creation of the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness position and the expansion of the IR office. The second is an update of the Academic Program Review template to include analysis of and recommendations for experiential learning, which is straightforward and will be completed in spring 2017. The last activity, based on feedback from two working groups (VI and VII) is establishment of a formal assessment process for non-academic departments. This is an ongoing activity upgraded to a strategic recommendation in this self-study (Recommendation 6).

Two strategic plan initiatives are addressed in the 2015-16 activities for Goal 3 ("weaving campus, community, and global connections"). A \$450,000 3-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, received in October 2015, is addressing Initiative 7 ("nurture campus



diversity”) by implementing a faculty development and diversity initiative. Initiative 9 (“expand Queens College’s international presence and interactions”) is being addressed through the ACE Internationalization Project, as described in Section [3.5.2](#).

Queens College set a PMP focus goal last year to ensure that each department has documented their mission statement, specified learning outcomes, and developed a curriculum map for each program. In addition, departments are required to develop and document assessment activities related to program learning outcomes. Over the course of the last year, relevant materials have been gathered in Assessment Document Repository and are under ongoing review. Academic departments will continue to develop and revise these documents and submit updates and new documents to the repository as they become available.

### **8.3 Recommendations of the Self-Study**

Queens College commits to implementing the seven self-study recommendations listed below. These will be incorporated into the goals of the Strategic Plan, and progress will be monitored by the Strategic Plan Implementation Group (SPIG).

**Recommendation 1:** *The campus community, under the leadership of the Academic Senate, should consider revisions to the Mission, and develop a short but meaningful statement that captures its essence.*

**Recommendation 2:** *Disseminate information about rights, policies, and compliance more effectively. Consolidate pertinent information on the college’s website. Offer more training opportunities on these matters (public presentations, online modules, and department and office visits) for students, faculty, and staff.*

**Recommendation 3:** *The Academic Senate should assess the College Option (up to four courses in Pathways), and explore whether a newly designed course (or courses) can better support student success.*

**Recommendation 4:** *Reorganize and consider relocating the One Stop to increase the quality, convenience, and efficiency of service provided to students, and thereby improve student satisfaction, retention, and outcomes.*

**Recommendation 5:** *Enhance and expand assessment-related professional development for faculty and staff, and provide more resources to support assessment at the program level.*

**Recommendation 6:** *Extend cyclical non-academic program reviews to all Queens College non-academic units. All of these units should develop assessment plans. The President’s Council should undertake a review of effective assessment models and implement a timeline and template for non-academic unit assessments.*

**Recommendation 7:** *The period of appointment for the directors of centers and interdisciplinary programs should be of limited duration, to allow for regular review of unit leadership and performance. All such units should be added to the College’s schedule of departmental self-*

*studies (if not already present), and their self-studies should be due in the year prior to the appointment or reappointment of the director.*

Common themes and conclusions emerge from the working group reports that provided the content for this self-study. Among these are a constant emphasis on effective communication of policy and processes, on the value of transparency (as evidenced by the public nature of this self-study and its component appendices), and on the need to maintain and nurture a culture of assessment and improvement. The working group reports demonstrate a strong and growing linkage between assessment-based planning and commitment of resources. As hoped, the self-study process has brought the Queens College community together for a period of extensive reflection, and the resulting suggestions and recommendations will have lasting benefit for our students.