

December 13, 2011

Dear Presidents of CUNY Colleges with Undergraduate Programs,

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with some additional information regarding the implementation of Pathways, including information regarding some funds that are available for implementation activities, and to request your nominations for several people from your college who will play important roles in the next steps of the implementation.

We are continuing to follow the provisions of the Pathways resolution passed by the Board of Trustees last June. One piece of the Pathways implementation is now in place: Yesterday the Chancellor accepted the recommendations of the Pathways Task Force, and so we now have a curricular structure for the Common Core part of Pathways (<http://www1.cuny.edu/mu/academic-news/files/2011/12/CommonCoreStructureFinalRec.pdf>).

According to the resolution, Common Core courses, as well as College Option courses, must be available to students as of the fall 2013 semester, and the courses cannot be offered until they have been approved by a CUNY-wide review committee. The resolution states that the "University Office of Academic Affairs will facilitate the expeditious review and approval of all courses proposed for the Common Core with the assistance of a CUNY-wide committee, appointed by the Chancellor, and consisting predominantly of faculty, to ensure that all learning outcomes are satisfied." We in the central office want to do everything possible to facilitate your work towards the fall 2013 goal. We very much appreciate the suggestions that you have already given us, and we look forward to your additional suggestions.

Curriculum Redesign

Several presidents and chief academic officers have asked for assistance in designing 3-credit science courses, including with a laboratory component. Towards this end, Gillian Small, Vice Chancellor for Research, will soon be convening one or more meetings at which faculty experts will lead discussions with other faculty on how to create such courses. If there are additional ways that the central office can help with curricular redesign, please let us know.

Common Core Course Review Process

First, I am pleased to tell you that colleges will have a later deadline for course submissions to the Chancellor's University Report (CUR) than we previously thought. This is because we have established that most new or modified courses for the Common Core and College Option will not have to be approved by either CAPPR or the New York State Education Department; following campus governance approvals, new and modified courses will need only to be entered in the CUR and then approved by the Board of Trustees. As a result, the deadline for entering such courses in the CUR will be December 2012 (not October 2012, as we had previously thought). However, prior to entry in the CUR, Common Core courses will have to have been approved by the university-wide review committee specified in the resolution.

However, we urge colleges to submit new or modified courses as early as possible, rather than waiting until the December 2012. If too many courses are submitted to the review committee just prior to the December 2012 CUR deadline, the review committee will not be able to review all of them in time. Further, board approval of the courses listed in the December 2012 CUR will not occur until the end of January 2013, which will leave colleges very little time to construct their fall 2013 schedules before fall registration begins in April 2013. For these reasons, we strongly encourage all colleges to submit their courses to the review committee, and then to CUR, as early as possible.

As each course comes to the review committee, it will be assigned a number, and courses will be reviewed by the committee according to their numbers, on a rolling basis. We intend to establish a website that will show the review progress and status of each submitted course.

The review committee will function primarily as a set of eight subcommittees--one for each area of the Common Core. Each subcommittee will be composed of faculty members from each campus. The chair for each subcommittee will be drawn from among the committee members. One faculty member will serve as chair of the entire review committee.

We have had many conversations with campus members and among ourselves as to how to coordinate the review committee's work with your own campus governance procedures--in what order should various actions occur and what happens if either the review committee or a governance body wants a change in a course after the other has already approved the course? One suggestion has been that each college could send a Common Core course to the review committee for an advisory opinion at any time during the campus's own review process. Each college might wish to do this at a somewhat different stage in its campus approval process because the colleges have different procedures for approving courses. We would greatly appreciate any additional suggestions you have about how we could facilitate the coordination of the review committee's and campus governance bodies' work.

We have also had some suggestions of ways to speed the review process. One is to have the review committee members review all courses online and, if all members of a committee are satisfied that a proposed course fulfills the learning outcomes for its area, the course will be approved without committee discussion. If, however, one or more committee members want to discuss a course, then it will be put on the agenda of a committee meeting for full discussion before a decision is made. We will also facilitate the review process by creating a clear and specific template for course submissions. We would greatly appreciate any additional suggestions you have about how to facilitate this work.

Other Aspects of Pathways Implementation

Implementation of Pathways is complex, touching on many of the academic and administrative areas of the university. To make sure that all aspects of this complexity are understood and that all tasks are successfully completed, we are asking you to send your chief academic officer, chief administrative officer, Pathways main contact person (see below), and anyone else whom you deem appropriate, to an implementation meeting at the central office in January. We will hold this same meeting on several different days/times so that attendees can pick the one that best fits their schedules. The purpose of the January meetings will be to discuss the many different implementation aspects of Pathways. Subsequent meetings will be held concerning particular topics, e.g., admissions, registration codes, advisement, etc. Your Pathways main contact person, plus any other campus representatives you deem appropriate, should attend each of the subsequent meetings. Senior University Dean Bob Ptachik will chair all of these meetings.

Campus Participants

We are asking you for the following:

Campus Contact: Please, before the holiday break, send to pathways@mail.cuny.edu your choice for the person on your campus who will be the central office's main point of contact with regard to Pathways for approximately the next year. This person can be a tenured faculty member, staff member, or administrator. If the person is a tenured faculty member, we can provide a modest stipend for this person's work, including over the summer when faculty are on annual leave.

Review Committee Nominations: Please submit to pathways@mail.cuny.edu, again before the holiday break, your nominations for faculty to serve on the Common Core course review committee for approximately the next year. These faculty must be tenured. For each nomination, please indicate for which one or more of the eight areas of the Common Core you are nominating the person, and include the person's curriculum vitae. We will be providing modest stipends for faculty serving on the first year of these committees because the work of these committees will be concentrated during the first year. If a faculty member serves on two areas of the review committee, that faculty member will receive 150% of the usual stipend. Please also let us know if you would like to recommend a faculty member to serve as chair of an area or as chair of the entire review committee. In accordance with the Board of Trustees June resolution, the Chancellor will make all of the appointments to this committee.

Implementation Plans

The June Board resolution also requires that each college submit for the approval of the Chancellor by April 1, 2012, its plan for implementation of the General Education Framework (the Common Core plus the baccalaureate-granting colleges' 12 College-Option general education credits).

Your implementation plan should explain the procedures that the college is using for revising courses and developing new courses as needed, in time for the December 2012 deadline. The plan should also include a timetable and who will be responsible for which task or tasks. Implementation plans should be brief (no more than five pages) but specific.

Your implementation plan should include consideration of the following tasks, plus others that you deem appropriate:

- Review of existing courses for possible inclusion in the Common Core.
- Reformulation of courses to meet the credit requirements and/or learning outcomes specified in the Common Core framework, and/or development of new courses, as needed.
- Assurance that the college is submitting, for each area within the Common Core, a minimum of one course that requires no prerequisites, and, as appropriate, courses within each area that will address students' instructional needs, whether a student is placed at introductory, intermediate, or advanced levels on entry to the college.
- Identification of placement strategies to be used, as appropriate.
- For baccalaureate-granting colleges, plans for determining how the structure and content of the 12 College-Option credits will be developed.
- Plans for changing, if needed, general education requirements linked to particular majors.
- Plans for changing web sites, course catalogs, or other curricular information to reflect changes in courses and requirements and for insuring broad dissemination of materials on the Common Core to the campus community.

- Plans for informing advisers, other employees, and students about the new requirements.

Changes in each college's curricula and informational materials will entail work on the part of faculty and staff members. Colleges may request funds to help them carry out tasks related to Pathways implementation. Colleges that wish to apply for these funds, up to a maximum of \$150,000 for a very large and complex college, can do so by requesting funding for specific elements of their implementation plans using the attached application form. Funds could be used, for example, for the provision of summer salary to faculty members doing curricular development, for securing technical help in designing and changing web pages, or for providing professional development for advisors.

Funds will be committed to the colleges by June 1, 2012 and must be spent on the specified activities between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 (colleges whose financial needs do not fit this timetable should contact Bob Maruca, University Executive Director of Academic Financial Affairs and Planning, robert.maruca@mail.cuny.edu; 212-794-5778). Colleges to which implementation funding is committed will be required to submit brief reports regarding the activities for which the funds were spent.

Thank you so much for your help and continued suggestions. Please do feel free to contact me concerning any Pathways matters.

Sincerely,



Alexandra W. Logue
Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost