MEMORANDUM

To: The Academic Council
From: Selma Botman ♦
Date: December 17, 2007
Subject: Math and Admissions Standards

As you know, over the past year the University has been engaged in a comprehensive review of the basic preparation that students need to succeed in their credit-bearing mathematics coursework at CUNY. The Office of Academic Affairs has consulted widely with the chief academic officers of the colleges, with the University Faculty Senate, and with faculty representing mathematics and other quantitative disciplines, and we have engaged in an extensive review of available data. This review has led to a decision to raise CUNY’s standards in mathematics, as communicated in my memorandum of August 14, 2007. I would like to thank all of you who have contributed to this initiative. With this memo, I would like to address several unresolved questions that have required further consultation since I last wrote to you.

1. Transfer Students. In my conversations with chief academic officers, faculty, and the Mathematics Discipline Council, a consensus has emerged that prospective transfer students who have satisfied math standards at the associate level should not have to retest to meet the higher standards of the senior colleges. The following policy addresses this concern:

Effective 10/1/08, CUNY associate degree students wishing to transfer to a CUNY baccalaureate program can satisfy the University’s admissions standards for mathematics if they have completed a mathematics course worth three or more credits at a CUNY college, with a grade of C or better. As an alternative, these students may meet the standards set by the individual baccalaureate-granting colleges based on the SAT, ACT, the New York State Regents examinations in mathematics, or the COMPASS assessments in pre-algebra and algebra. Colleges may set higher standards as prerequisites for specific courses or programs.

Comparable credit-bearing mathematics courses taken outside CUNY may also be accepted for this purpose.

In addition, effective 10/1/08, the 45-credit blanket exemption for students transferring into CUNY will no longer be available. No matter how many credits they have completed, applicants may meet the mathematics standards on the basis of coursework or the Regents, SAT/ACT, COMPASS, or CUNY/ACT scores. Note that the exemption currently available to students who previously have completed a baccalaureate degree will remain in effect.
2. SEEK Students. Under current University policy, SEEK students are given one year from matriculation to meet the University’s standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This is a requirement that almost all participants in the program have been able to fulfill. Raising the mathematics standard will pose a new challenge for SEEK students. The following measures are designed to assist these students:

- The time limit for achieving the college’s mathematics standard is extended to two years;
- SEEK students who have not yet met the college’s mathematics standard may register in compensatory courses in mathematics, if offered by the college. (In its Manual of General Policy, the University defines compensatory courses as “non-remedial, credit-bearing courses that have compensatory excess hours attached. Compensatory excess hours are all contact hours of a remedial nature in excess of the course credit weight attached to a non-remedial course.”) SEEK students can meet the math standard by passing a credit-bearing math course with a grade of C or higher;
- SEEK students who have not met the new standard will be required to enroll in immersion classes during the summer and/or winter until the standard has been met.

3. Participants in Adult Degree Programs. Students who are enrolled in CUNY’s specialized adult degree programs typically have been out of school for some time, and consequently their academic skills, particularly in math, may need to be refreshed or relearned. To ensure continuing access to currently existing adult degree programs, the University will implement the following policy:

- Students may matriculate on the basis of the current admissions criteria. Transfer students may also qualify on the basis of course work, as described above.
- Effective 10/1/08, students who have been admitted to an adult degree program on the basis of the above standards are expected to meet the college’s higher mathematics standard by the time they have completed the 24th credit.
- Students who have not yet met the college’s higher mathematics standard may enroll in compensatory courses in mathematics, if offered by the college. Adult students can meet the math standard by passing a credit-bearing math course with a grade of C or higher.

The adult degree programs that qualify for this extension are City College’s Center for Worker Education, the Joseph S. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, the Adult Degree program at Lehman, and the Adult Collegiate Education Program at Queens.

4. Readmits. Some students seeking readmission to a baccalaureate program will encounter a higher standard than when they first matriculated. In this case, their admission eligibility should be judged by the earlier admission standard or on the basis of coursework, as described above.

C: College Presidents
MEMORANDUM

To: Chief Academic Officers
From: Selma Botman
Date: May 7, 2008
Subject: Reading and Writing Standards for Transfer Applicants

I write to announce a change in the University's skill standards for students applying to transfer into a baccalaureate program.

In my memorandum of December 17, 2007, I articulated a new admission policy for students wishing to transfer from an associate degree program to a baccalaureate program. Under this policy, which takes effect 10/1/08, all prospective transfer students can satisfy the University's admissions requirements for mathematics by earning a grade of C or better in a credit-bearing mathematics course worth three or more credits. In that memorandum, I also announced that the 45-credit blanket exemption for students transferring into CUNY will no longer be available after 10/1/08.

To bring the reading and writing requirements for transfer students into alignment with the new policy for mathematics, effective 10/1/08, all transfer applicants may meet the University's skill requirements in reading and writing by earning a grade of C or better in freshman composition, its equivalent, or a higher-level English course. This provision applies both to students seeking to transfer from a CUNY associate degree program and to students applying from an institution outside CUNY. Transfer applicants may continue to meet the skill requirements in reading and writing based on the current SAT or ACT and New York State Regents cut points.

If you have any questions about this policy please do not hesitate to contact Dean David Crook.

cc: College Presidents
    Admission officers
    Registrars
    Testing Directors
    University Dean David Crook
    University Dean Judith Summerfield
    CUE Coordinators
MEMORANDUM

Date: September 10, 2008

To: Chief Academic Officers

From: David Crook, University Dean for Institutional Research and Assessment

Subject: Guidance on Reading and Writing Proficiency Standards for Transfer Applicants

Executive Vice Chancellor Botman’s May 7, 2008 memorandum on reading and writing standards for transfer applicants (attached) offers a new means for transfer applicants to document basic skill proficiency in reading and writing. Effective October 1, 2008, the new option, based on course work in freshman composition or the equivalent, is available to all prospective transfer students, including those seeking to transfer into associate or baccalaureate programs from associate or baccalaureate programs. Alternatively, all applicants may continue to demonstrate proficiency based on the New York State English Regents, SAT or ACT test scores, or the CUNY Assessment Tests in Reading and Writing.

The new policy affects transfer applicants as follows:

Admission

Students applying to transfer into CUNY baccalaureate programs from non-CUNY colleges. Formerly, students who had earned at least 45 credits from a non-CUNY college and who then transferred to CUNY were automatically deemed skills proficient. This exemption is no longer in effect. These applicants can meet the skill admission requirements in reading and writing on the basis of the SAT/ACT, Regents, the CUNY Assessment Tests in reading and writing, or appropriate course work in freshman composition or the equivalent.

Students applying to transfer within CUNY to a baccalaureate program. The policy affects a small group of students who completed remediation in writing or reading at a senior or community college, before the CUNY Board of Trustees mandated nationally normed objective tests, in September 1999. Many of these students were not required to take the CUNY assessment tests in order to exit from remediation and enroll in freshman composition. Heretofore, when these students have applied for transfer or readmission to
a CUNY baccalaureate program, and lacked qualifying test scores, they had to sit for the CUNY Assessment Tests. Under the new policy, students who have earned a C or better in freshman composition or the equivalent are deemed to have met the skill requirements in reading and writing. (Students applying for readmission to an associate program or for transfer from one associate program to another can also meet the skill requirement in reading and writing in this manner, although it is not necessary that they do so in order to be admitted.)

**Placement**
Placement into freshman composition is not affected by the new policy. Under current CUNY policy, students may register for freshman composition if they have met the University’s skill standards in reading and writing on the basis of the English Regents, SAT or ACT, or the CUNY Assessment Tests in reading and writing. The new policy leaves this practice in place.

**Course Equivalencies**
The new policy does not affect the prerogative of the faculty and the colleges to determine whether to grant credit to a student for freshman composition or other English courses taken at another college. The University’s evaluation of transcripts to determine whether an English course meets the University’s proficiency requirements in reading and writing is a process independent of a transferability assessment. Colleges, in conjunction with the appropriate faculty, may determine that the English courses used to establish proficiency are transferable or they may not so determine. Generally, students who have completed freshman composition at a non-CUNY college have received transfer credit for that course provided they have earned a grade of C- or better.

cc: Alexandra Logue, Interim Executive Vice Chancellor  
    Brian Cohen  
    Dean Robert Ptachik  
    Dean Judith Summerfield  
    Melissa Uber  
    Registrars  
    Directors of Admission  
    Directors of Testing  
    Enrollment Management Council  
    Chief Student Affairs Officers