CUNY Pathways to Degree Completion
Steering Committee Meeting
Friday, September 9, 2011
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Summary of the Meeting

Committee members present:
• Michelle Anderson, Dean and Professor of Law, CUNY School of Law
  (Committee Chair)
• Paul Attewell, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, The Graduate Center
• Michael Barnhart, Professor of Philosophy, Kingsborough Community College
• Laird Bergad, Distinguished Professor of Latin American and Caribbean History,
  Lehman College
• Theodore Brown, Professor of Computer Science, Queens College
• Katherine Conway, Associate Professor of Business Management, Borough of
  Manhattan Community College
• Edward Grossman, Professor of Mathematics, The City College of New York
• Mona Hadler, Professor of Art, Brooklyn College
• Orlando Hernandez, Professor of Modern Languages, Hostos Community College
• Patricia Mathews-Salazar, Professor of Anthropology, Borough of Manhattan
  Community College
• Elizabeth Nunez, Distinguished Professor of English, Hunter College
• Neal Phillip, Professor of Chemistry, Bronx Community College
• Elizabeth Beck, Student, LaGuardia Community College
• Steven Rodriguez, Student, Vice Chairperson for Legislative Affairs, University
  Student Senate
• William Fritz, Provost, College of Staten Island
• Anne Lopes, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, John Jay College of Criminal
  Justice

Central Office staff support present:
• Erin Croke, Director of Undergraduate Education Policy
• David Crook, University Dean for Institutional Research and Assessment

Dean Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

I. Announcements
• Dean Anderson announced that the summary of the Task Force’s August 26,
  2011, retreat has been posted to the Pathways website
  (http://www.cuny.edu/pathways). The Steering Committee has received several
  emails with feedback about the summary and its contents that were distributed to
  Steering Committee members.
• Dean Anderson circulated a document detailing an updated timeline for this phase
  of the Pathways Project. She also circulated a document organizing and detailing
of all cross-curricular learning outcomes proposed at the August 26, 2011, retreat. For discussion purposes, she also distributed a lexical analysis of the terms most frequently used in the cross-curricular learning outcomes proposed at the retreat.

II. Steering Committee Discussion of Pathways Project Timeline

- Dean Anderson reviewed the timeline for completing the Board’s charge. Future meetings of the Steering Committee and full Task Force will focus on developing the multi-disciplinary areas and credit allocations of the 30-credit Common Core and the learning outcomes to define the boundaries of those multi-disciplinary areas. Components of this work developed by the Steering Committee will be circulated to the Working Committee for feedback at each appropriate juncture. The Steering Committee will then consider the Working Committee’s feedback and make revisions as appropriate.

- The full draft recommendations will be posted on the Pathways website and distributed to the University community on November 1, 2011, and feedback will be due back on November 15, 2011. The Steering Committee will then have two meetings to consider feedback and make changes to the draft recommendations before submitting its final recommendations to the Chancellor on December 1, 2011.

- Dean Anderson invited Steering Committee members to provide comments and suggestions about the timeline. Several Steering Committee members suggested clarifying the mechanisms for providing feedback. Some committee members indicated that they have reached out to various groups on their campuses to provide information about the project.

- Committee members suggested that a variety of responses be solicited from groups, such as the curriculum committee, general education committee, and University Faculty Senate at each college. It was also suggested that feedback be solicited as early as possible and in an ongoing fashion. Dean Anderson reported that an email was sent to all faculty members at CUNY indicating that any individual or group may respond to the draft recommendations via the Pathways website. Another email was sent to the college presidents requesting a coordinated college response by November 15, 2011. Another email was sent to the college provosts requesting a coordinated college response by Nov. 15, 2011. Dean Anderson indicated that she will continue to maximize efforts to keep members of the University community informed about the project.

- Dean Anderson reported that the Pathways project and timeline were discussed at the Council of Presidents meeting on September 7, 2011, and the presidents indicated that they understood the timeline and the request to coordinate a written campus response by Nov. 15, 2011.

- Two additional Steering Committee meeting dates were proposed for October. The Steering Committee decided to hold these dates as tentative and it will later decide if they are necessary.

- The committee voted to schedule all Steering Committee meetings for three hours rather than two hours.
III. Steering Committee Discussion of Cross-Curricular Learning Outcomes

- The Steering Committee affirmed that the primary objective of this meeting was to complete the cross-curricular learning outcomes document. The draft will be circulated to the Working Committee on September 13, 2011. Working Committee feedback will be considered at the next Steering Committee meeting on September 23, 2011, and revisions will be made as appropriate.

- Dean Anderson reiterated that the cross-curricular learning outcomes are to be a touchstone for the Common Core, including broad principles about the purposes of general education at CUNY. The cross-curricular learning outcomes will not presuppose particular distribution requirements and are not designed to limit them.

- The Steering Committee focused on a document summarizing all of the cross-curricular learning outcomes proposed by Task Force members at the retreat held on August 26, 2011. Steering Committee members were asked to review the document and consider those outcomes they felt should be included in the Learning Goals at CUNY document.

- Committee members discussed that the Common Core will include 30-credits of introductory study and so cross-curricular learning outcomes should not be granular or assume mastery of complex bodies of knowledge. There was discussion about the connection between these outcomes and assessment. Committee members felt that some outcomes might not be measurable but still would be desirable to include, perhaps in a preamble. There was further discussion about the inter-relatedness of knowledge and skills and about general education as distinct from major requirements.

- Members of the Steering Committee agreed to call the cross-curricular outcomes “Learning Goals” to make clear that mastery is not assumed at the completion of the 30-credit Common Core. The committee further agreed to include a preamble about the broad purposes of general education at CUNY. It was suggested that the first sentence of the preamble should take as inspiration the first sentence of the Statement on General Education/Core Curricula proposed and adopted unanimously by the University Faculty Senate on February 27, 2001.

- All Steering Committee members offered suggestions and dialogued productively to devise the following draft set of cross-curricular learning goals for CUNY:

Preamble

The purpose of general education at the City University of New York (CUNY) is to assure that students graduate with well-rounded knowledge, a critical appreciation of diverse cultural and intellectual traditions, an interest in relating the past to the complex world in which they live today, and the ability to help society create a fresh and enlightened future. General education must also develop students’ intellectual curiosity and commitment to lifelong learning. The purpose of the first thirty credits of the Common Core of general education at CUNY is to expose students to a broad range of knowledge and skills described below, enabling them to engage in more sophisticated study and analysis at successively higher levels as they complete their degrees.
Knowledge of Diverse Cultures and the Physical and Natural World

- Through study drawing upon the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts

Intellectual and Practical Skills

- Inquiry and analysis
- Written, oral, and visual communication
- Critical reading and critical thinking
- Mathematical and quantitative literacy
- Cultural and aesthetic literacy
- Research and information literacy
- Collaborative and creative problem solving
- Ability to integrate knowledge from diverse sources

Social Awareness

- Ethical reasoning
- Awareness of and engagement with local, national, and global issues
- Intercultural knowledge and competence

IV. Multi-Disciplinary Areas and Credit Allocations

- The Steering Committee discussed possible multi-disciplinary areas and credit allocations for the 30-credit Common Core and the advantages and disadvantages of different models. Models could be developed with all 3-credit courses (10 courses total), or a mixture of 3 and 4-credit courses since many science, math, and foreign language courses are currently 4-credits.
- The committee discussed the possibility of developing a model for the Common Core that aligns closely with what is currently required. Dean Anderson called attention to the 18-credits currently required by all senior colleges, including: English/Communications (6 credits), Math (3 credits), Science (3 credits), Humanities (3 credits), and Social Science (3 credits).
- The committee discussed structures that could maximize colleges’ flexibility to develop their curricula and maintain respect for the work colleges have devoted to developing their own general education curricula. For example, broad areas for the Common Core could be developed to encompass various curricular components, allowing flexibility for colleges to populate those areas as desired. Colleges might fill an area with courses from only one component or from all components.
- The committee expressed concern about the curricular changes that may be required at the community colleges. The Common Core will be one-half of the requirements for an associate degree. Many community college programs require one math and one science course, while the Common Core might require more credits in these areas.
• Specific questions were raised about such issues as the placement of Arts with Humanities, the nature of Global requirements, whether History should be grouped with Social Sciences or Humanities (or be on its own), and whether the Common Core should have a variant for those who major in STEM disciplines.
• Dean Anderson encouraged Steering Committee members to develop proposals for the Common Core and credit allocations before the next meeting and to come to it prepared to share and discuss them.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.