Committee members present:

- Michelle Anderson, Dean and Professor of Law, CUNY School of Law (Committee Chair)
- Paul Attewell, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, 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, City College of New York
- William Fritz, Provost, College of Staten Island
- Anne Lopes, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Central Office staff support present:

- David Crook, University Dean for Institutional Research and Assessment
- Erin Croke, Director of Undergraduate Education Policy
- Erika Dreifus, Director of Communications for the Office of Academic Affairs

Dean Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

I. Announcements and Preliminary Discussion

a) Dean Anderson reported that, following discussions conducted via email among members of the Task Force, a paragraph within the summary of the October 14, 2011, Task Force retreat had been amended with new language suggested by a faculty Steering Committee member. The revised text was read aloud and acknowledged as accurate. The new text has been incorporated into the summary, which is available on the Pathways website.
b) Dean Anderson said that the purpose of this meeting was to review and refine the learning outcomes that had been drafted at the retreat on October 14.

c) A question arose about whether the Steering Committee could or should revise the basic structure of the Common Core framework that passed at the retreat on October 14. It was suggested that the Steering Committee should honor the full Task Force vote from the retreat and proceed with a focus on revising the learning outcomes within the approved Common Core structure.

d) Concern was expressed that attention should be given to how the framework will affect those associate programs with very specific sequences of courses. The examples of forensic science and teacher education were cited. Dean Anderson said that the Central Office of Academic Affairs is reviewing specific degree programs with highly sequenced requirements to ensure that students can complete their degrees in four years.

e) A Steering Committee member suggested that when the framework and outcomes are distributed, specific feedback should be requested. For instance, rather than just objecting to an aspect of the proposed recommendation, responses should include specific suggestions for revision. The group agreed with this suggestion.

f) Before the Steering Committee turned to its task of reviewing and refining the learning outcomes that had been drafted at the retreat on October 14, a member of the Steering Committee said that the Common Core framework itself needed to include more credits and that the Task Force needed more time to complete its charge. It was suggested that more credits and more time might lessen the opposition to the Pathways project that some faculty have expressed. A lengthy discussion ensued.

g) On the issue of possible additional credits, there was a detailed discussion about how the 30-credit number had been reached before the Board of Trustees Pathways resolution passed. A Steering Committee member explained that a Common Core with more than 30 credits would be untenable for CUNY community colleges. There was also discussion about the 12 College Option credits and the step function for associate to baccalaureate transfers, whereby transfer students with an associate degree will complete 6 College Option credits, those with more than 30 credits but no associate degree will complete 9 College Option credits, and those with fewer than 30 credits will complete all 12 College Option credits. It was noted that the original draft of the resolution included 36 Common Core credits and 6 College Option credits. The final resolution that went to the Board of Trustees reflected dialogue with faculty members from both community colleges and senior colleges, with the step model providing the senior colleges with 12 credits to use freely and providing the community colleges with a core that would not require more than half the total credits for their students. It was also noted that the step function is intended to uphold the spirit of the 1999 Board resolution which allows the receiving senior college to require one additional general education course for AA or AS degree holders.

h) On the issue of possible additional time for the Task Force’s work, some Steering Committee members agreed that it would be desirable to have additional time to deliberate. Others said that the deadlines have provided the Committee with a sense of focus and momentum that can be rare within academic settings, and they expressed satisfaction with the quality of the work that has been accomplished to date and optimism about the quality of the final product.
i) The Steering Committee member who raised the initial objections then presented three specific suggestions to pursue with the Central University and Board of Trustees: 1) an extended timeline for the work of the Task Force of at least one month, but preferably three months; 2) moving from a 30-credit to a 33-credit Common Core framework; and 3) if the second option is untenable, moving from a 12-credit to a 15-credit College Option. Other Steering Committee members expressed strong opposition to all three suggestions. Members emphasized the importance of the Steering Committee focusing on its charge, which is to carry out the mandate of the Board of Trustees’ Pathways resolution. The suggestions were then withdrawn and the group decided to turn to the learning outcomes.

II. Refinement of Learning Outcomes to Define Areas of the Common Core

a) At the outset, the question of how many learning outcomes an individual course must fulfill in order to be included within an area of the Common Core was raised. After dialogue and reflection on some of the learning outcomes in different areas, the Steering Committee agreed that, for the three areas “above the line” (English Composition, Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning, and Life and Physical Sciences), courses submitted for inclusion must meet all the listed learning outcomes. Courses “below the line” in the Flexible Common Core areas, however, must meet at least three of the listed learning outcomes.

b) It was suggested that, once the learning goals had been incorporated into the learning outcomes, a separate list of learning goals in each area of the draft document would no longer be necessary. The Steering Committee agreed.

c) The draft learning outcomes for each of the seven areas within the Common Core were then analyzed and discussed extensively. The Steering Committee made numerous small changes to the learning outcomes to make them more consistent with one another, clearer, and stronger. In later dialogue, it was also agreed that a provision should be added that a foreign language course taken to satisfy the World Cultures and Global Issues area must be a course at a higher level than or in a language different from the foreign language a student had studied in high school. By the end of discussion, the Common Core structure with draft learning outcomes had been developed as follows.

**Common Core Structure of 30 Credits with DRAFT Learning Outcomes**

**Oct. 21, 2011 DRAFT (to be revised Oct. 28, 2011)**

**Required Common Core of 15 Credits**

**English Composition: 7 credits**

Meeting all of the following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:

- Demonstrate critical reading, listening, and analytical skills, including identifying an argument’s major assertions and assumptions, and evaluating its supporting evidence.
- Produce coherent texts (such as formal essays, research papers, and reports) and demonstrate the ability to revise and improve such texts in order to achieve clear prose that exhibits standard usage of English grammar and mechanics.
• Communicate persuasively across a variety of contexts, purposes, audiences, and media, using appropriate rhetorical modes.
• Demonstrate research skills, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate sources.
• Integrate original ideas with those of others, by applying the conventions of attribution and citation.

Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning: 4 credits
Meeting all of the following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:
• Represent quantitative problems expressed in natural language into a suitable mathematical format.
• Use algebraic, numerical, graphical and/or statistical methods to solve mathematical problems.
• Recognize valid and invalid deductive reasoning, and use valid deductive reasoning.
• Apply mathematics in a real world context.
• Effectively communicate solutions of mathematical problems and/or quantitative analysis in written and/or oral form using appropriate media.
• Check solutions to problems through a variety of means, including informed estimation.

Life and Physical Sciences: 4 credits
Meeting all of following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:
• Understand the fundamental concepts of a scientific discipline.
• Apply the scientific method to explore natural phenomena, including observation, hypothesis development, experimentation, measurement, data collection, evaluation of evidence, quantitative analysis, and presentation of data.
• Use the tools of a scientific discipline to carry out collaborative investigations in an appropriate laboratory setting.
• Obtain, analyze, and interpret data and present it in an effective, written laboratory report.
• Understand issues of scientific ethics and unbiased assessment in the reporting of scientific data.
• Retrieve, evaluate, and interpret information from a variety of sources.

Flexible Common Core of 15 Credits: five, 3-credit, liberal arts courses in the following four areas, with at least one course from each area and no more than one course in any particular discipline.

1. World Cultures and Global Issues—courses drawn from anthropology, economics, foreign languages (at a higher level or in a different language than previously learned), history, political science, world literature, and other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of study addressing world cultures or global issues. Meeting at least three of the following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:
• Demonstrate an understanding of culture and global cultural diversity.
• Develop informed perspectives on the historical and geographical development of non-U.S. cultures, focusing on the interrelationship among cultures in an increasingly globalized world.
• Understand the significance of major movements, processes, and themes that have shaped the world’s cultures and societies.
• Investigate the roles that race, ethnicity, class, gender, power and economic and belief systems play in past and present cultural systems.
• Develop the language and conceptual skills needed to appreciate or respond to cultures other than one’s own.

2. U.S. Experience in its Diversity—courses drawn from economics, history, political science, sociology, U.S. literature, and other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of study addressing the U.S. experience in its diversity. Meeting at least three of the following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:
• Analyze the major themes of U.S. history from social, economic, demographic, cultural, or political perspectives.
• Evaluate how immigration and/or slavery have shaped the historical and contemporary development of the United States.
• Understand the role of the United States in international relations and how this role has impacted the United States and the rest of the world.
• Examine the political, judicial, and governmental processes fundamental to the creation and evolution of U.S. democracy.
• Analyze common institutions and patterns of life in contemporary U.S. society and how they affect race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, and/or other forms of social differentiation.

3. Creative Expression—courses drawn from communications, creative writing, fine arts, music, theater, and other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of study addressing creative expression. Meeting at least three of the following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:
• Articulate an understanding of the diverse forms of creative expression, including communications, creative writing, fine arts, music, theater, and other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of study addressing creative expression.
• Understand how arts from diverse cultures of the past serve as a foundation for those of the present.
• Evaluate and explain the research methods and the testing of competing theories in the arts or communications.
• Think critically about how meaning is created in the arts or communications and how experience is variously interpreted.
• Demonstrate knowledge of the skills involved in the creative process.

4. Individual and Society—courses drawn from anthropology, computer science, philosophy, psychology, religion, sociology, and other disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields of study addressing the relationship between the individual and society. Meeting at least three of the following learning outcomes, courses in this area will teach students to:
• Examine how one’s place in society and the world affects one’s experiences, values, and choices.
• Understand, use, and communicate the major ideas and methods employed in at least one discipline used to explore issues of human behavior within society and across cultures.
• Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.
• Identify, evaluate, and share information from a variety of sources.
• Identify, analyze, and engage with local, national, and global issues and understand their impact on individual and collective decision-making.

III. Next Steps and Timeline

a) Several committee members could not remain beyond the three hours that had been allotted for the meeting. Among those who were able to stay to continue work, there was a consensus that certain issues that remained to be resolved required the attention of the full group. It was agreed that the group would convene next Friday, October 28, to finalize the draft recommendations to circulate to the campuses for feedback on November 1.

b) At its meeting of October 28, the group will continue to discuss, refine, and improve the draft learning outcomes.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.