CUNY Pathways to Degree Completion
Steering Committee Meeting
Friday, October 28, 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, 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
- 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 9:03 a.m.

I. Announcements

Dean Anderson summarized the work that had led up to this meeting. She thanked the members of the steering committee for completing the tasks that had been requested of them, and for sending in such constructive material. She explained that she had done her best to incorporate these contributions into the latest draft of the learning outcomes, although on some occasions material she received had conflicted with other material she had received, and she was unable to use all of any individual committee member’s contributions. She also acknowledged the helpful and specific feedback she had received from a team at Queens College that has been keeping up with everything posted on the Pathways site thus far.
II. Refinement of revised learning outcomes in the multi-input draft

The steering committee reviewed each area of the Common Core structure and deliberated over proposed changes to learning outcomes associated with each area. Revisions were noted for incorporation, and the next iteration, for distribution to the campuses became:

Draft Common Core Structure
November 1, 2011

I. Required Common Core of 15 Credits

A. English Composition: 7 credits

English composition courses must meet all of the following learning outcomes. A student will be able 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) using appropriate technology, critique one’s own and others’ texts, and improve them using standard English, grammar, mechanics, and clear prose.
- Demonstrate research skills using appropriate technology, including finding, evaluating, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources.
- Support a thesis with a well-reasoned argument and communicate persuasively across a variety of contexts, purposes, audiences, and media, using appropriate rhetorical modes and technology.
- Formulate original ideas and integrate them with the ideas of others by employing the conventions of ethical attribution and citation.

B. Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning: 4 credits

Mathematical and quantitative reasoning courses must meet all of the following learning outcomes. A student will be able to:

- Interpret and draw appropriate inferences from mathematical models, such as formulas, graphs, and tables.
- Use algebraic, numerical, graphical, or statistical methods to draw accurate inferences 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.
- Identify and apply logically valid arguments.
- Apply mathematics in a real world context.

C. Life and Physical Sciences: 4 credits
Life and physical science courses must meet all of the following learning outcomes. A student will be able to:

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and research methods 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 appropriate laboratory settings.
- Obtain, analyze, and interpret data and present it in an effective written laboratory report.
- Apply scientific ethics and unbiased assessment in the reporting of scientific data.
- Retrieve, evaluate, and interpret information from a variety of sources.

II. Flexible Common Core of 15 Credits: five 3-credit liberal arts courses, with at least one course from each of the four areas and no more than one course in any discipline. All Flexible Common Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will be able to:

- Retrieve, evaluate, and interpret information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

A. World Cultures
A course in this area must meet at least three of the following additional learning outcomes. A student will be able to:

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and research methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures, including, but not limited to, anthropology, economics, foreign languages (non-duplicative of previous language acquisition), history, political science, and world literature.
- Analyze the concept of culture and global cultural diversity and describe any given event or process from more than one cultural viewpoint.
- Analyze the historical development of a non-U.S. society.
- Analyze the significance of a major movement that has shaped the world’s societies.
- Identify and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, or belief plays in cultural systems.
- Speak, read, and write a language and use the conceptual skills to appreciate and respond to cultures other than one’s own.

B. U.S. Experience in its Diversity
A course in this area must meet at least three of the following additional learning outcomes. A student will be able to:
• Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and research methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the U.S. experience in its diversity, including, but not limited to, anthropology, economics, history, political science, sociology, and U.S. literature.
• Analyze the major themes of U.S. history from different social, economic, demographic, cultural, or political perspectives.
• Evaluate how immigration and slavery have shaped the development of the United States.
• Explain the role of the United States in international relations and how this role has influenced the country and the rest of the world.
• Identify and differentiate among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and analyze their influence on the development of U.S. democracy.
• Analyze common institutions or patterns of life in contemporary U.S. society and how they influence or are influenced by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or other forms of social differentiation.

C. Creative Expression
A course in this area must meet at least three of the following additional learning outcomes. A student will be able to:

• Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and research methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring creative expression, including, but not limited to, communications, creative writing, media arts, music, and theater.
• Analyze how arts from diverse cultures of the past serve as a foundation for those of the present and describe the significance of works of art in the societies that created them.
• 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.
• Use appropriate technologies to conduct research and to communicate.

D. Individual and Society
A course in this area must meet at least three of the following additional learning outcomes. A student will be able to:

• Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and research methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, computer science, philosophy, psychology, religion, and sociology.
• Examine how an individual’s place in society affects experiences, values, and choices.
• Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.
• Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions.
• Analyze the transformational impact of science or technology on the individual and society.
• Identify, analyze, and engage with local, national, or global trends and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

III. Additional matters regarding learning outcomes

Matters concerning the placement of computer science and communications in the Common Core were discussed and resolved during the earlier discussion of the revised learning outcomes.

IV. Drafting the cover memo to accompany the Common Core draft when it is submitted to the colleges

The committee recognized the importance of a cover memo and suggested several clarifying statements and requests that might be included within. For instance, to encourage constructive feedback that the committee will be able to apply to the work that it must complete within a short span of time in November, the memo should request that college responses offer specific suggestions for changes in language and content rather than express general approval or disapproval.

V. Next steps

The draft Common Core will be circulated to the colleges early on Tuesday, November 1. Feedback will be due on Tuesday, November 15. The formal responses will be compiled, and patterns and themes identified, as quickly as possible prior to the Steering Committee’s meeting of November 18, 2011. This material will also be circulated to the Working Committee for feedback and comment. A final Steering Committee meeting will be held on Monday, November 28. The committee’s recommendation will be submitted to Chancellor Goldstein by Thursday, December 1.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.