

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
of The City University of New York

***Report of the President***  
to the Academic Senate  
**October 13, 2009**

**ENROLLMENT INCREASES** From all the reports received to date, the opening of the fall semester was relatively smooth, even with the unprecedented increase in enrollment. Now, we begin to get ready for the spring, 2010 semester. I have asked Vice President Hartigan to examine a number of variables, including projected retention rates, historical number of transfer students and re-admit students to determine the College's capacity to serve additional students while maintaining excellent quality. Based on the enrollment projections, we will have to determine if we must close admission to new students and, if we must do so, by when.

**MIDDLE STATES VISIT** At this writing, we are preparing for a visit by Dr. Mary Ellen Petrisko, Vice President of the Middle States Association. She is scheduled to spend a day with various college constituencies to provide important advice on how to address the very serious deficiency reported by the Team that visited the College in March, 2009. The team reported as follows:

**Standard 7: Institutional Assessment and Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning:** Essential to meeting Standards 7 and 14 is the presence of an “organized, systematized, and sustained process” of assessment (MSCHE Characteristics of Excellence). While there is evidence that QCC has plans for institutional and student learning assessment at several levels of the institution, the institution lacks an organized, systematized, and sustained process. The committee concludes that the majority of the component pieces necessary to fully meet the standards are evident but that they are not linked into an organized, systematized, and sustained process.

**Description of assessment related documents appearing in the self study:** There is evidence that assessment of mission and institutional effectiveness includes both CUNY system-defined indicators and QCC locally-defined assessments. The system-defined measures are described in the Performance Management Plan (PMP). Locally-defined assessments of student learning are described at four levels: course, department (teaching and non-teaching), program, and institution. In the QCC 2004 Periodic Review Report it is stated that “over the past five years, the College’s Assessment Committee has focused its efforts on developing a method to assess student learning outcomes in general education, in academic programs, and across individual courses.” The Self study shows that locally defined assessments are planned and reported through several documents that are intended to feed one another. These documents can be described as follows: At the course level, assessments are defined by faculty and reported using a standard format prescribed by the QCC Course Assessment Form. There are two versions of the template used for reporting department assessment results. One template is for use in

reporting assessment done in the context of academic departments and the other for assessment done in non-teaching areas. This template for reporting department assessment activities on an annual basis is called the QCC Planning Report: Teaching/Non-Teaching Departments. There is little difference in the assessment related component of the two versions of the templates. The annual teaching department report template includes a summary of course assessment results and action plans while the annual non-teaching department report template includes a summary of assessment results and action plans for departmental functions and services evaluated. The results of the course level assessment are summarized in the annual department report. At the institution level, assessment is described in a document called the College Assessment Plan Schedule of Assessment Surveys Questionnaires and Data Reports. At this level assessment includes analysis of graduation and transfer data as well analysis of student performance on the CUNY Proficiency Examination (CPE).

**Findings:**

While there is evidence of assessment at several levels of the institution the process does not appear to be “organized, systematized, and sustained.” Evidence of course-level assessment provided to the visiting team did not clearly indicate how courses were selected for assessment. Nor is there evidence of a schedule of course assessment. In the Fall 2003/Spring 2004 Pilot Course Assessment Project it states that twenty-three courses from fifteen departments were assessed in fall 2003 or spring 2004. Similar summary data regarding the number of courses assessed does not exist for the years since that report. Review of the 2005-2008 annual department reports indicates that some departments continue to regularly assess courses while others do not. Middle States Standards 7 and 14 also require that institutions provide “clear, visible, and convincing evidence” of student learning. The template for QCC Course Assessment Form provides examples, to the user of the template, of convincing evidence. The corresponding course assessment reports were not available in the evidence room. When asked for course assessment documents, the institution was unable to provide them. While the annual program reports available in the evidence room contained a summary of course assessment results, convincing evidence is not consistently provided in the program summaries of course assessment. The self study states that “all departments have instituted or are in the process of instituting assessments of their progress in achieving general education and curricular objectives. This has been embedded into program review since 2004-2005.” A few program review documents were available in the evidence room. Inspection of the assessment section of the 2006 A.A. degree program in liberal Arts and Sciences revealed a plan for assessment as well as evidence of data collected and actions suggested. Since the Program Review is on a five year cycle follow-up on resulting actions need to be tied back to the appropriate annual department report or course assessment. For example, an attempt to follow one program review action back to the annual and course reports did not come to fruition. Inspection of the assessment section of the 2008 Degree Program in Fine and Performing Arts demonstrated evidence of assessment planning but did not provide evidence that assessment had been carried out. At the institution level there is evidence of use of CUNY system-defined data. The PMP data, which includes placement and exit-from-remediation data, as well as results from the CUNY proficiency examination, is reviewed by the institution. While

the self study suggests that the Annual Completion Report “aligns CUNY’s master plan and the college’s strategic plan with outcomes across departments, program, and divisions,” there is a lack of evidence of sustained use of locally-defined institutional assessment data. Institution level assessment was reported in the 2004 Periodic Plan Review Report. There is no evidence that this or a similar report has been made since 2004. No evidence of either a new or updated assessment plan was found. The Assessment Committee which developed these criteria and templates for this plan stopped functioning around 2006 and no evidence could be found of any college-wide assessment activity since then. The current on-line course offerings do not contain any plan for assessment.

**Suggestion:** The Team suggests that the College gain expertise by familiarizing itself with best practices in the area of assessment.

**Recommendations:** In order to develop, implement, and document an organized and sustained assessment process that evaluates and improves student learning as well as the achievement of institutional mission and goals, the institution needs to:

1. Create a conceptual framework for assessment describing the relationship between assessments at all levels.
2. Establish criteria for selection of courses to be assessed. These criteria may include department specific criteria.
3. Establish and implement a schedule of course assessment.
4. Include in annual department reports convincing evidence of course embedded assessment.
5. Establish clear links between the goals selected for assessment at the course, department, and program levels.
6. Utilize an appropriate departmental annual report to report on follow-up assessment of actions appearing in the assessment component of Program Review reports.
7. Establish a clear link between mission and assessment of institutional effectiveness. Reporting on institutional effectiveness needs to done on a regular basis.
8. Create a central repository for assessment data.
9. Assure that the assessment process is monitored and reviewed for effectiveness.
10. Ensure that all departments, teaching and non-teaching, are participating in assessment of student learning, including assessment of distance learning.

Please note that a recommendation must be addressed. We were asked to prepare a monitoring report to be submitted by October, 2010. Monitoring reports are requested when issues are more complex or more numerous, or when the issues require a more substantive, detailed response. The Commission also will request a monitoring report when it is concerned about the potential for future non-compliance with one or more standards of accreditation and when a non-compliance action is taken.

**BUDGET** The Chancellor and the Chairman of our Board of Trustees have expressed their concern that, while this year’s budget is in relatively good shape, we can fully expect a mid-year reduction. Also, future years may prove difficult for New York State. So, as we prepare to meet the challenges of the over-enrollment, and as we release new faculty and administrative lines, we must be ever vigilant that we can sustain the financial impact of these decisions. We will be

monitoring our expenses very carefully but, at the same time, we will be adding sufficient personnel to ensure that our students receive the best possible educational services.

Please take note of the following important dates on campus:

October 7 - The very first event as part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, will be sponsored by the Visual and Performing Arts Academy. Called *Fifty & Fabulous*, it features dance, music, drama and art beginning at 3:00 in the Humanities Theater.

October 14 - Open House for Queensborough faculty and staff in the new Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center, from noon until 6:00 p.m. We hope everyone will have the chance to stop in and see the fruits of the extensive labor that has been going on for the past year.

October 15 - Annual 20 Year Celebration of Service in the Student Union, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

October 18 - Grand Opening of the Kupferberg Holocaust Resource Center

October 28 - Presidential Lecture Series at 4:00 p.m. in M-136. This Fall's lecturer is the internationally recognized, *Dr. Michio Kaku*, a Henry Semat Professor of Theoretical Physics and Professor of Physics at the CUNY Graduate Center.

October 30 - Conference of the College

We kick off CUNY Month on Sunday, November 1, with an Open House from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.