

Borough of Manhattan Community College Campaign for Student Success Proposal

Borough of Manhattan Community College's (BMCC) Campaign for Student Success proposal emphasizes the student experience from the time students enter the college until they successfully finish their studies. The college defines success as graduation, transfer, or satisfactory completion of coursework, depending on individual student goals. We are particularly interested in ensuring student success in developmental and Gateway courses, but we are also concerned with addressing the specific obstacles students face throughout all their coursework at the college.

Our Campaign will be co-chaired by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. Faculty, staff and students, comprising a Steering Committee of seven members, will work with the co-chairs to implement the proposed plan. The campaign's co-chairs will report directly to the senior vice president of Academic Affairs.

Our proposal revolves around the suggested pillars including "Changing the Culture," "Improving Teaching and Learning," and "Coordinating Services for Students." Throughout the proposal, we have included plans for assessment of the effectiveness of the projects, so that data and evidence can be consistently integrated into the implementation and development of each project. Although increased retention and graduation rates are the long-term goals for many items in this proposal, assessing the direct impact on these outcomes is difficult. More immediate and more direct outcomes, however, can be measured; unless otherwise stated, a two percent change (or difference) in outcome values will be the default measure of success.

I. Changing the Culture: Communicating Expectations of Success

A Campus Culture of Success--Critical to the BMCC Campaign is creating a campus culture that asserts and affirms the possibilities of success for all students. The expectation of success for all students will be accentuated by the accessibility of services throughout the physical plant as well as by the effective level of student support provided by all college personnel. From the President's message at Freshman Assembly to students' daily interactions with faculty, administrative, and maintenance staff, the BMCC community will reflect the college's ethos: "all students can be successful!" Posters with tag lines promoting past students' success will be prominently displayed throughout the campus. Lobby and other video screens in student areas will show continual loops featuring profiles of successful students who have graduated, transferred to public and private four-year colleges, as well as current students who exemplify success in their studies at the college. The BMCC Web site will also be reconstituted to include multimedia biographies of recent graduates who exemplify the college's tagline unequivocally: "Start here, Go anywhere."

"Changing the Culture " College Community Seminars--No amount of printed material (all of which will be available on BMCC's Web site) will guarantee student success unless all members of the college community are available with accurate information and a message that all students can be successful. BMCC's Campaign for Student Success will include seminars and workshops for the college community who have direct contact with students, particularly emphasizing sensitivity to student needs and best practices for ensuring student success. Beyond accuracy, the college community will work together in these seminars to develop supportive strategies for communicating with students.

Assessment: As measured by the Student Experience Survey administered by CUNY-OIRA, "Changing the Culture" seminars will contribute to increases in student satisfaction with each of the following: academic support services, counseling/student services and administrative services.

II. Improving Teaching and Learning: Pedagogical Innovation and Academic Support

Central to students' experience of higher education, by definition, is the process of teaching and learning. The Campaign for Student Success at BMCC will enhance this process by implementing programs for faculty development, student learning support, and the scholarship of teaching and learning.

The BMCC Gallery of Learning Objects (BMCC-GLO)--In order to address specific learning obstacles at the pedagogical level in all courses and particularly in Gateway courses, the college will create an online gallery of multimedia learning objects. These self-contained, discrete tutorials will be available for classroom use as well as review and supplemental enhancement for students outside of class. Each learning object will address a specific type of problem, skill, or exercise which students find difficult to master. For example, an interactive demonstration for students of how to work a specific type of math problem, with real life application of the technique, can be presented in the gallery as a multimedia screen cast. Initial funding for this project has already been budgeted through BMCC's Technology Fee, since the learning objects in the GLO will provide direct educational benefit to BMCC students through the use of technology.

Mentoring Program for New Faculty/Adjuncts--In many departments at the college, large numbers of the Gateway courses, as well as the developmental courses, are taught by newer faculty and by part-time faculty. Several departments have identified this as an obstacle for students navigating the curriculum in their programs. The college proposes to expand and institutionalize its current mentoring program, based in the Teaching Learning Center, to include more significant numbers of new faculty and adjunct faculty. Historically, it has been difficult for adjuncts to participate in programs of this kind because of required meetings that were uncompensated. Therefore, we will structure the program with only one required face-to-face synchronous session for mentors and mentees. After that initial session, the mentoring will be carried out on an ad-hoc basis, with the mentors making active contact to solicit questions or discussion from the adjuncts being mentored by phone or email, and being available as needed throughout the semester. **Assessment: Pass rates in Gateway courses using BMCC-GLO will be higher when comparing rates pre- and post-GLO. Additionally, pass rates in Gateway and Developmental Skills courses will be higher in courses offered by new faculty and adjuncts who participate in the mentoring program when compared to pass rates in the same courses offered by non-participating new and adjunct faculty.**

Success Agreements—In this pilot project, students on academic probation will work with their assigned counselor to develop the success agreement. Students will sign this success agreement as well as track this information to ensure progress toward these goals. Through attendance at Success Workshops sponsored by the Department of Student Affairs, students will be introduced to formal goal setting, and counselors and faculty will work together to monitor the students' academic performance early. Also, counselors will help the students address college adjustment issues. For students who enter the college needing two or more developmental courses, a similar system, using the Title V advisors for liberal arts students, academic advisors from the career departments for career majors, as well as peer mentors for extra support, will be implemented. **Assessment: Semester change in GPA among probationary students will be higher after attendance at Success Workshops and completion of Success Agreements compared to pre-Agreement period. Similarly, students requiring developmental skills courses and who sign agreements will complete their developmental courses earlier in their schooling than similar students who do not sign the agreement.**

Honors Students – The Campaign wants to ensure the success of all BMCC students, meeting the needs of the underprepared as well as those who are capable of taking on more challenging coursework. These

stronger students come directly to BMCC with high SAT scores and/or other academic proficiencies. Others are certain to emerge through their performance in BMCC's developmental and/or General Education classes.

To address these students' academic needs and facilitate their continued success, the college will re-examine its Honors Program, which is currently based on individual student contract. We will look at other CUNY Honors Programs, with the goal of expanding the BMCC program to appeal to the best and brightest students who may be transferring to senior colleges before they attain their associate's degree. Possibilities for Honors Program expansion include the creation of dedicated Honors sections in all disciplines as well as involving Honors students in peer coaching/teaching. **Assessment: There will be an increase in the number of Honors students who graduate from BMCC after the Honors Program changes.**

Early Feedback System--The college will pilot a computerized version of its Early Warning System, adding a web-based interface, and positive feedback opportunities. Throughout the semester faculty will input information about student performance and achievement and thus will have a profile of student course performance at any time via the web. This profile will include attendance information before the fifth week roster submission, as well as performance, lateness, class participation, assignments, quizzes/tests, and attitude. Positive comments will be included in order to reinforce students' behavior and performance that is considered desirable. When appropriate, faculty will flag at-risk students thereby automatically alerting via e-mail the student, the Counseling Department and the Learning Resource Center (LRC) to the students' need of additional assistance. **Assessment: To assess the efficacy of this computerized system, pre-and post-computerization comparisons will show an increase in the number of early warnings to the Counseling Department and the LRC. In addition, baseline data will be collected on the percentage of at-risk flagged students who report to either the Counseling Department or the LRC in response to the automatically generated alert.**

Roving Information Services--Web-based information technology has made it possible for our students to seamlessly access library resources and services without ever having to visit the physical library facility. This program will bring pairs of library staff with laptops to places where students congregate (cafeteria, lobby, breezeway), to provide on-demand consultation and referrals to students working on or preparing for academic research. Students will become more familiar with library resources and how to use them, in a format that is supportive and efficient. **Assessment: Evidence of the success of these services will be an increase over time in students' information literacy; baseline data on information literacy will not be available until the fall 2008, however, as set forth in the BMCC General Education Assessment Plan.**

Teaching Learning Center—The Teaching Learning Center (TLC) is where members of the BMCC instructional community come together to talk about their work in the classroom, and as such, is the ideal forum for workshops and symposia centered on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. For the Campaign for Student Success, the TLC will sponsor a series of workshops for full- and part-time faculty on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, to determine the most effective pedagogical techniques to enhance student success.

In addition, under the auspices of the Campaign for Student Success, the TLC will provide a platform for turnkey discussion of the already-existing Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) projects involving faculty coaching; e.g., Writing, Reading, ESL, and Math Across the Curriculum, whose individual objectives are to improve the overall effectiveness of instruction throughout the disciplines, especially in General Education and Gateway courses. Finally, the TLC will utilize *Inquirer*, its long-standing faculty journal devoted to teaching and learning, to generate ongoing dialogue of reflective practice and pedagogical innovation. **Assessment: This project will contribute to an increase over**

time in the percentage of faculty who publish in journals or present at conferences their original research on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. In addition, projects will increase over time faculty use of innovative pedagogical techniques (as measured by BMCC's pedagogical innovations survey) and will in turn result in a college-wide increase in students' self-assessment of their classroom learning (as measured by BMCC's Assessment of Student Learning Survey). Finally, a) TLC workshop participants and b) faculty published in the BMCC *Inquirer* will be more likely than other faculty to present conference papers/publish peer-reviewed journal articles on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

BMCC TWT Spotlight--The BMCC Teaching with Technology Web site <http://socrates.bmcc.cuny.edu/twt/> will be expanded to include the BMCC TWT Spotlight, a regularly-dated podcast, with downloadable audio and enhanced audio files of informal conversations about teaching and learning with technology. In these conversations, faculty members will discuss their own history of pedagogical innovation; techniques and tools they are using in their classrooms; and their experience in researching the most effective means to enhance student success, particularly through the use of educational technologies. As an on-demand conversational sharing of ideas, the TWT Spotlight will encourage more faculty to question and research their teaching, and to collaborate across and within disciplines to develop their pedagogy. **Assessment: There will be an increase, over time, in the pageviews and downloads from the TWT Spotlight site. In addition, as a result of the TWT Spotlight podcasts, there will be an increase, over time, of faculty who report introducing technological innovations into their classrooms (as measured by BMCC's pedagogical innovations survey).**

III. Coordinating Services for Students: Scheduling, Advising, Navigating Degree Requirements

Although structures exist to guide students through the system, freshmen are often bombarded with so much material that they are unable to process it. The Campaign for Student Success is designed to provide consistent, accurate, efficient information for students throughout their time at the college.

The Freshman Year Experience (FYE)--The Campaign will emphasize apprising first-year students of the most effective ways to succeed at the college, including successful practices in registration, testing, financial aid, bursar and work-study. The college will expand its two-day orientation for incoming freshman (Freshman Assembly and Freshman Year Experience) which already provides students with face-to-face introductions of the President, the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, and the President of the Student Government Association. Afterwards, the students break-out from the plenary and attend sessions in the students' area of study led by faculty. Following area sessions, students take part in an activity in which staff and faculty from both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs highlight the divisions' support services. On the second day, the pre-enrolled first-year students attend workshops that provide information to facilitate their orientation to college life. Some of the topics covered in the workshops include academic protocol, note taking, test taking, advisement, and CPE. The facilitators of these workshops are administrators and staff from both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

Further, the orientation will focus on advising students to fulfill their developmental / remedial obligations in reading, writing, ESL, and mathematics in a timely fashion through distribution of and elaboration on the BMCC Basic Skills Guide which delineates the developmental prerequisites for all credit courses. The Freshman Assembly will also continue to provide motivational and cultural speakers, providing students with the cultural support for success, and introducing habits and examples of success. **Assessment: When compared to other first-time freshmen, FYE participants will complete remediation sooner, take the**

CPE earlier, see advisor more often, be less likely to register late, be more likely to utilize available academic resources (e.g., LRC) and be more likely to file on time for financial aid.

Title V Academic Advisement for Liberal Arts Students--In 2004, BMCC was awarded a \$2.329 million Title V grant to develop and implement a developmental academic advising model for our Liberal Arts students. In this model faculty advisors are assigned a cohort of Liberal Arts majors. They work with their students holistically and serve as their academic advisor for their entire career at BMCC. The goal is to improve the persistence and graduation rates of the Liberal Arts students. A partnership with Student Affairs has been developed to facilitate immediate student intervention. When the faculty advisors identify a personal problem that the student may be experiencing, the advisor sends the student directly to the Counseling Department of Student Affairs. In addition, the Office of Financial Aid (which reports to Student Affairs) conducts workshops with the Title V faculty advisors to ensure that they are well versed in most of the financial information that students need to know. The Academic Advisement and Transfer Center (which reports to Academic Affairs) works with the Admissions Office (Student Affairs) to identify and contact Title V Liberal Arts students to see that they have been properly admitted, submitted their appropriate documents, have taken their placement exams, and are scheduled to meet with their Title V faculty advisor. **Assessment: Liberal Arts students who participate in the Title V program will have better persistence rates as compared to those of other Liberal Arts students.**

Success Handbook--The Campaign for Student Success will ensure that in addition to the academic calendar, support services, policies and regulations, the student success handbook will include processes such as testing, registration, advisement, paying for classes, and seeking BMCC scholarships. These handbooks will be distributed to all incoming students at Freshman Assembly, Freshman Year Experience, and Immersion workshops. In addition, they will be made available to all students through a variety of offices in the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

Additionally, printed information guides will be available throughout the campus and on the BMCC Web-site. For instance, Financial Aid would have notices about Pell checks and book vouchers which would also be available in the book-store; procedures for registration would be in both Admissions and Registration areas; advisement information would be in academic departments as well as in the Advisement and Transfer office. **Assessment: As measured by the Student Experience Survey administered by CUNY-OIRA, there will be an increase in student satisfaction when comparing pre - and post - handbook measures of each of the following: financial aid services, testing office, academic advisement, and registration procedures.**

CONCLUSION

This plan has been derived through a series of discussions among faculty, staff, and students at BMCC. We have worked to address what we believe to be the major obstacles to student success, and to develop new initiatives to promote student success and help students to move towards success in their own goals, by identifying those goals clearly, strategizing specifically, and making effective use of the college's resources and support structures.

BMCC's Campaign for Student Success will function simultaneously from the "top-down" and from the "bottom-up." Our plans are designed to give students the messages and tools that will help them succeed, throughout their time at the college. At the same time, the Campaign will make the students themselves into exemplars and messengers of success, reinforcing what they are hearing and experiencing in their encounters with faculty and staff. When students are informed, supported, empowered and instructed, as these projects are designed to accomplish, the students themselves become a powerful force to promote and ensure their ultimate success at BMCC and beyond.

BMCC CAMPAIGN FOR SUCCESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>
Professor Susan Brillhart	Nursing
Professor Dorothy Coiffe	Library
Dean Marva Craig, Co-chair	Student Affairs
Dean Michael Gillespie, Co-chair	Academic Affairs
Mr. Orville Hill	College Discovery
Professor Jianguo Ji	Modern Languages
Professor Carmen Martinez-Lopez	Business Management
Ms. Michelle Pierre	Nursing Student and SGA representative
Professor Paula Saunders	Social Science

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