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Félix V. Matos Rodríguez
Chancellor
The City University of New York

2019-20 Performance Management Process (PMP) Report

Dear Chancellor Matos Rodríguez,

I am writing to update you on Lehman College's progress on its PMP goals. Lehman began the 2019-2020 academic year with its largest enrollment (15,143) since CUNY discontinued free tuition in 1975. By the end of the year, there were projected to be another 3500 graduates, nearly replicating the record number of the previous year. Expanding Lehman's student body and graduating class concretely demonstrates its values and mission as a catalytic anchor institution in the Bronx. In 2017, the college launched the 90X30 challenge, a bold initiative designed to increase educational attainment in the Bronx-- a borough identified by the Equality of Opportunity Project as "among the worst counties in the U.S. in helping poor children move up the income ladder,"-- by awarding 90,000 or more degrees and credentials from the beginning of the initiative through 2030. This year's enrollment and graduation numbers kept the college on pace to meet this ambitious goal.

The college began the academic year on a solid financial footing that was further strengthened by the end of the year. As the academic year began, Lehman had momentum in advancing student success, strengthening its capacity for continuous improvement and completing a successful follow-up on the Middle States visit of the previous spring. We embarked on a new strategic planning initiative which will conclude this fall. Overall, the combination of the college's momentum as it entered the academic year and its deep strengths have given it the needed resilience to continue its extraordinary efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am enormously proud of Lehman College and what it has accomplished this year through the dedication, talent and hard work of its administrative team, staff, faculty and students. I think the following report will make clear why that is so.

Progress Toward CUNY PMP and Lehman Strategic Goals

Online Education (Access and Completion, Goal 1): When we abruptly moved to fully-distant education in March, we were helped by our already-established breadth and depth in online education. At that time, 24.9 percent of courses were already partially or totally online, double the senior college average and the most of any CUNY college. This year the college converted three provisional staff members of the Office of Online Education to tax levy positions, recognizing their importance in sustaining the development of more high-quality online programs. Over the past four years, the percentage of undergraduate and graduate students who had taken one or more courses in those formats increased from 57 percent to 61 percent, and 509 unique faculty members had taught in an online format.

Serving Adult and Returning Students (Access and Completion, Goal 2): As Lehman has substantially increased the number of first-year students (FTFT), we still have the highest proportion (41.8 percent) of undergrads 25 years or older among all CUNY colleges. Our commitment to lifelong learning is integral to our mission in the Bronx, addressing the extreme educational under-attainment in the borough. Later in this report I will mention an exciting new initiative to further strengthen this effort.

Serving Under-represented Minority (URM) Students (Access and Completion, Goal 3): Lehman continues to educate a large number of Black students (33.2 percent of students compared to the CUNY senior college average of 24.1 percent). It has the highest CUNY senior college percentage and the largest number of Hispanic students (52.5 percent and 6832, respectively). Lehman also educates the overall largest number of URM students among the senior colleges and the second highest percentage (85.9). We have been recalibrating our admissions criteria in a way that promotes access, and moves us away from standardized tests. I believe we are leading the way towards a more data-informed approach to admissions that is equity-driven.

Retention (Access and Completion, Goal 4): This year, the one-year (fall-to-fall) retention rate for FTFT students rebounded to 82.5 percent for the fall 2018 cohort. Lehman College set goals for an 84.0 percent retention rate for the Fall 2021 cohort and 86.0 percent for the Fall 2023 cohort.

Momentum (Access and Completion, Goal 4): Lehman College has increased the percentage of fall FTFT students earning 30 or more credits during their first year by 17.2 percent over the past five years. This exceeds by 2 percent our PMP goal of at least 60.0 percent by the fall 2021 cohort. The percentage of fall FTFT students who earn 20 or more credits during their first year of has also steadily increased over the past five years by 4.3 percent, the largest increase among CUNY senior colleges.

Gateway Courses (Access and Completion, Goal 4): Lehman leads senior colleges in the percentage of fall FTFT freshmen in baccalaureate programs who passed Gateway Math in the fall and spring semesters (79.8 – preliminary data). This metric has increased an astounding 44 percent in five years! Lehman is also second in CUNY senior colleges in the number of fall FTFT students in baccalaureate programs who passed Gateway Math in the first year. Remarkably, Lehman also increased this pass rate from 51.5 percent to 85.2 percent over the past five years (a 65 percent increase), jumping over 20 percent from Fall 2017 to Fall 2018. These data clearly demonstrate the results of innovative change in the math program. No other CUNY school has come close to this level of improved pass rates in Math.

Opportunity Gaps (Access and Completion, Goal 5): We are one of only three CUNY campuses with a reverse equity gap for the one-year retention rate of FTFT students (URM minus non-URM=1.5), a standing that is more significant because Lehman's gap was the only one derived from data from more than 25 students. Like all CUNY colleges, Lehman has a negative gap along gender (men minus women=-4.6); that is less than the CUNY college average but remains a longstanding concern.

Actual vs. Predicted Six-Year Graduation Rate (Access and Completion, Goal 6): FTFT students from the Fall 2013 cohort graduated at a rate 6.2 percentage higher than predicted for the students in the cohort. This is due in part to development of [147 Degree Maps](#) that have clarified the curriculum pathway to a degree. We are also building on the success of dedicated graduation specialists in each school, and we are drawing upon a number of other innovative actions such as micro-grants that help students who are close to crossing the finish line.

Six-Year Graduation Rate (Access and Completion, Goal 6): 52.9 percent of full-time, first-time (FTFT) students who entered Lehman College in the Fall 2013 cohort graduated in six years. That is a 15.1 percentage point increase in comparison to the graduation rate for the 2009 cohort, or a 40 percent increase in five years. This is, by a large margin, the greatest increase among CUNY senior colleges over the last five years. This increase keeps the college ahead of the trend needed to achieve a six-year graduation rate of 56 percent for the Fall 2016 cohort and 60 percent for the Fall 2018 cohort.

Four-Year Graduation Rate (Access and Completion, Goal 6): 27.9 percent of FTFT students who entered Lehman College in Fall 2015 graduated in four years. That is a 7.5-percentage point increase in comparison to the graduation rate for the 2011 cohort, a 37 percent increase over five years. Lehman's expanding initiatives to promote timely graduation, including new Fall 2019 and Fall 2020 ACE cohorts, reinforce confidence that Lehman College will attain its goals of raising the four-year FTFT graduation rate to 31 percent for the Fall 2018 cohort and 33 percent for the Fall 2020 cohort.

Transfer Outcomes (Access and Completion, Goal 6): 54.5 percent of the transfer students who entered Lehman College in Fall 2015 graduated in four years. This stabilized transfer graduation rate suggests that the college is making progress in reversing its recent decline in transfer graduation rates. Lehman College set goals of increasing the four-year transfer graduation rate to 57 percent for the Fall 2018 cohort and 61 percent for the Fall 2020 cohort.

Enrollment in STEM Programs (Career Readiness, Goal 1): Lehman has steadily increased the percentage of students enrolled in STEM in each of the past five years, increasing it by 28 percent over that time period. Given the large overall increase in enrollment at the college during those years, that represents a very large increase in the number of STEM majors.

Internships (Career Readiness, Goal 2): The college is firmly committed to being an engine of upward mobility by providing opportunities for experiential learning and career engagement. During 2019, 25.0 percent of Lehman students participated in internships. The college has set a goal of increasing the percentage of students who participate in internships to 30 percent in 2024. In support of that goal, the college began a new mentorship-based career prep program with Braven that has had robust and enthusiastic participation. Its second cohort of over 100 students is enrolled for Fall 2020.

Post-Graduate Success (Career Readiness, Goal 3): One year after graduation, Lehman students earn \$40,048 annually, the third highest among CUNY senior colleges, and \$2500 above the senior college average. That is encouraging, but still well below the national average, and one of the reasons we have begun working with Braven. Only 25 percent of about 1.2 million low-income, first-generation college graduates will attain a quality first job. The Braven program specifically addresses the failure of URM graduates to earn beginning salaries even close to non-URM college graduates.

Research Awards (Knowledge Creation and Innovative Research, Goal 1): New awards increased from \$2.9 to \$5.9 million. Gaining external funding is an area for growth at the college.

Faculty, Staff and ECP Diversity (Knowledge Creation and Innovative Research, Goal 2): As CUNY's only senior college with a Hispanic majority undergraduate student population and a significant Black student population, Lehman has a longstanding commitment to diversity. Lehman's long-term aspiration is a workforce that increasingly reflects the student population it serves. During AY 2019-20, 53 percent of full-time employees were female, and we are on track to reach the goals of 56 percent by 2022 and 58 percent in 2024. At this time, 58 percent of full-time employees are from minority groups. Among full-time employees, 19 percent are Black/African-American and 30.4 percent are Hispanic. Lehman College remains committed to its goals of 60 percent in 2022 and 62 percent in 2024. We have made significant strides towards that with faculty hiring for Fall 2020.

COVID-19 Response

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in March led Lehman to convert five partially-online classes, 815 web-enhanced classes, and 1,367 in-person classes to fully distance learning. The Lehman Information Technology Division (ITD) and Lehman's Office of Online Education provided a robust set of supports to full-time and adjunct faculty for successful distance learning, including: an online Digital Toolkit, extensive training and support, live FAQ sessions, "How-to" webinars, Blackboard/Teams Office Hours, and, "FAQs for Faculty Going Online in a Hurry."

Throughout the academic year, the Office of Online Education has continued to offer monthly, hour-long, lunchtime webinars for faculty on innovative teaching. These fully-online webinars are facilitated by the Office of Online Education, and each features a presentation by a faculty co-host with expertise on the topic. During AY2019-2020, 453 faculty attended at least one webinar.

Since mid-March, Lehman College has loaned more than 800 devices to students. The majority of student loaner devices are Chromebook laptops, with a small number of iPad loaners. The college has also separately provided laptops, Chromebooks, and iPad loaner devices to approximately 150 faculty and staff members to assist with their remote work.

The Lehman community was kept up-to-date on developments by regular communication from me, Provost Nwosu and others. Between February 28 and April 3, I disseminated [28 messages](#) devoted entirely to COVID-19. Additional messages also conveyed COVID-related content, including developing the FY2021 budget. Beginning the second week of May, I have held weekly live Instagram sessions, attended mainly by students, as well as President's Live Briefings on Zoom, mostly attended by faculty and staff. Attendance for both has remained high at 150-300 participants for each session. Provost Nwosu

also disseminated [messages](#) related to academic continuity and student support. A planning document titled *Guidelines for Preparation for Summer 2020 and AY2020-2021* was developed to guide instructional modality and support services for the college.

Food insecurity has become an even more urgent issue for Lehman's students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly 90 percent of responders to a survey of food bank users indicated they were often concerned about running out of food. Almost 31 percent indicated that they had often run out of food before they had money to make more purchases, while nearly 54 percent indicated that they sometimes did. To assist its students, the Lehman Food Bank continued to operate after distance learning commenced. During the March 13-May 18 period, 108 grocery bags were distributed. Subsequently, 400 \$25 Target gift cards, and 300 \$75 Target gift cards were provided to students. The college also launched an online "[Lehman Cares](#)" giving campaign for the student emergencies fund and the 2020-2021 General Scholarship Fund. The College also established a Taskforce on Food Insecurity, and recommendations from the group have led to the development of the Basic Needs Center that will be launched in Fall 2020.

We hosted the first drive-through COVID-19 testing site in the Bronx and also NYC's serological testing for the Bronx. We also have kept our Daycare Center open through the pandemic for health workers.

Major Initiatives in Progress

Strategic Plan: Work on the development of the 2020-2025 College Strategic Plan continued during the spring. I asked the college community to reflect on nine fundamental questions as the planning process began. In light of the changing health and fiscal climate, the goals and objectives of the emerging plan have been revised and refined. I expect the new Strategic Plan to be in place by the end of the fall term.

Strategic Growth Investment Plan (SGIP): The [SGIP](#) is designed to strengthen the long-term health and financial sustainability of the college through data-informed decision making, continuously increasing institutional effectiveness. Under the plan, approximately \$847,000 in Provost Strategic Funds were identified by giving individual schools greater budgetary control over their adjunct budgets. Subsequently, there was a reinvestment in hiring five new faculty lines, a curricular renewal initiative, support for large-lecture courses, and a proposed EdD. I allocated an additional \$180,000 to support educational program development and innovations in pedagogy specifically related to redesigning GE lower division courses with high failure rates. \$80,000 has also been allocated for the Lehman Professors of Excellence Program, which is designed to recognize outstanding faculty members with national and international reputations whose work enriches the college across scholarship, teaching and service.

Continuous Improvement: During the past academic year, Lehman College continued to strengthen its continuous improvement infrastructure and processes. As documented in its [Supplemental Information Report](#) (SIR) submitted to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), the college took major steps: It established a dedicated Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness (OAEE); expanded the role of the Academic Assessment Council (AAC) to include Administrative and Educational Support (AES) units; launched the governance process to make the AAC a standing Senate committee; codified Institutional Effectiveness activities into a formal Institutional Effectiveness Plan (IEP); conducted an Institutional Transformation Assessment (ITA) in partnership with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), which focused on developing robust IE structures that enhanced teaching, learning, advising, and student transitions; and, invested \$25,000 to support professional development opportunities to strengthen faculty and staff expertise in assessment. On June 25, 2020, the MSCHE accepted the SIR, setting the next re-accreditation for 2027-2028.

Academic Planning and Student Success--Course Redesign and Pedagogy Initiatives: During Summer 2019, the provost commissioned a comprehensive analysis of lower division General Education (GE) courses to identify bottlenecks that impact students' progression, retention, and completion. Subsequently, a series of campus-wide conversations focused on continuing improvements in GE

outcomes, after which I allocated \$100,000 for innovative and promising pedagogies that advance student learning. The college launched the *Student Success Course Redesign Initiative (SSCRI): High DWIF/High Enrollment General Education Courses* and redesigned courses will be launched in Fall 2020. Ten course proposals were approved for redesign from four schools.

In addition, thirteen curriculum development proposals were approved for funding under the provost's Curriculum Development Initiative supported by \$80,000 in funding from the college. The selected proposals offer different instructional modalities, demonstrate potential student impact, anticipated return on investment, impact on Lehman's 90X30 strategic initiative, and linkage to the overall goals and mission of the college. When fully implemented, they will expand Lehman's in-person and online footprints as part of its Strategic Growth and Investment Plan (SGIP).

Through a partnership with CUNY, the National Association of System Heads (NASH) and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE), sixty Lehman faculty members will participate in ACUE's professional development workshop on innovative pedagogy to strengthen student achievement and close equity gaps in courses with high enrollment and high failure rates.

During AY 2019-2020, Lehman College's Senate approved the following new programs: the Ed.D. in Higher Education Leadership and Change, Post-baccalaureate Pre-Med Certificate Program, Advanced Certificate Program, Human Rights Education and Transformative Justice; Advanced Certificate Program, Bilingual Extension - Intensive Teacher Institute/Clinically Rich Program; Arabic Minor and Chinese Minor. Lehman College also began a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program.

Lehman Extension (LeX) is designed to address the needs of the region for flexible educational pathways, bringing new and existing programs in many disciplines to students whose needs are not met by current programs, scheduling or delivery mode. LeX degrees and credentials will be fully attainable through evening and weekend courses and hybrid/online offerings. LeX will advance the 90X30 initiative and expand our impact on the Bronx. Launch of a pilot is planned for Spring 2021.

AASCU's Center Student Success (CSS) is a new Gates Foundation-funded initiative in which Lehman is one of five colleges in the national pilot group. I have attended two Student Success Academies (SSA) with our team, and based on our work, the Gates Foundation asked to spend a week on campus studying our approaches. COVID-19 interrupted those plans, but we are continuing with the initiative which is developing analytic tools for targeting student success efforts. Lehman produced the winning plan at the SSA this winter. That plan, SEEMLSS: Seamless Education Experience to Maximize Lehman Student Success, became the basis of a Title V grant proposal and is a template for more student success efforts.

A Bronx Climate Justice Summit and the Launch of the Urban Climate Justice Studies Initiative at Lehman College is the result of a discussion with Dr. Adam Falk, President of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. He invited the college to submit a proposal through his special projects fund. This is a broad interdisciplinary initiative including environmental science, botany, political science, philosophy, and media studies among other departments. We are partnering with the New York Botanical Garden and other environmental organizations, envisioning a career-focused program that is unique in the region.

The Lehman College Center for Global Performing and Visual Arts and Study Center for Latino Arts and Culture is a \$2.4 million proposal before the Ford Foundation that grew out of a year-long strategic planning process for the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts carried out by Michael Kaiser of the DeVos Institute. It envisions combining the work of the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, the Lehman College Art Gallery, Lehman Stages, and the Lehman College Multimedia Center. This would make it a beacon of Latino performances, visual arts exhibitions, cultural festivals, arts symposia, and studies for the United States. If funded, we envision a companion proposal to the Mellon Foundation

that enables linking Lehman's academic programs to the center. Currently, there is virtually no connection and these four entities are almost entirely outward facing with little relevance to the college.

The Herbert H. Lehman College Foundation has for many years been a steady but poor-performing fundraising arm of the college, and this year has marked a turning point in its operations. For a variety of reasons, five directors left the board and six new directors were added. The board adopted a \$15,000 "give or get" policy and has committed to supporting its operations through director donations. I am actively recruiting new board members who will support the foundation financially and help link it to individuals and foundations that can offer the substantial funding needed to build a strong endowment for scholarships and other needs of the college.

The Campaign for Lehman was launched in response to the great need of students for food and emergency grants due to the COVID-19 pandemic and also to the loss of a spring gala, which was also due to the pandemic. The campaign goal of \$1 million was met in June, and has been increased to \$1.5 million.

Campus Climate: Issues of Race and Inclusion. In Fall 2019 the English Department, in response to a letter from the student LatinX Alliance, began a comprehensive review of its curriculum with a view to diversity and inclusion, and remarkably, by spring had produced a revised English core—lightning speed. This spring, students in Speech and Hearing Science also requested a thorough review of curriculum and practice. These departments have been positive models for the other departments, digging deeply into their curriculum, departmental hiring, and work with a largely URM student body. I established a Task force on Campus Climate and Inclusion in the aftermath of the George Floyd killing, charging it to make recommendations by December on a range of actions on campus to address issues of race, racism, gender bias and bias based on sexual orientation.

COVID-19 and the financial situation it has created are our greatest challenges. At the start of the Spring 2020 semester, Lehman College had a fund balance of approximately \$12.8 million, which has afforded some flexibility in addressing the rapidly-developing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. This balance was born of prudent hiring over a number of years (\$5 million in unfilled positions) and strong enrollment growth. I have frequently updated the college's stakeholders about the budget, educating them and building understanding. I have emphasized that the structural deficit that predated COVID-19 is widening, and is cushioned by, but ultimately not solved by, the fund balance. Though not without some marginal dissent, we have maintained a constructively-engaged environment in which the administrators and chairs have offered their best efforts to strategically trim their budgets in the face of the uncertainty of our current NY State and CUNY budget environment. I am concerned, but I am also confident that we will do more than survive these next few years. Beyond budget tightening, we have identified significant ways to build our programs and strengthen our revenues.

Like all of CUNY, Lehman College is a transformational place, holding a unique position in the Bronx. The degree to which the college can build upon its distinctive qualities, its own version of being a scholarly and creative leader, of engaging with its wider community, and of building student success, the brighter it will shine as a beacon in the Bronx and the nation.

Thank you for your steadfast support and partnership as we pursue that vision.



Daniel Lemons
Interim President, Lehman College