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October 30, 2020

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

2020-21 PMP Goals

Dear Chancellor Matos Rodríguez,

I write to provide you with an update on the progress we continue to make as a college community, and to set forth goals for the next four years in support of our strategic plan, and [90x30 Challenge](#), a bold initiative designed to increase educational attainment in the Bronx by awarding 90,000 or more degrees and credentials from the beginning of the initiative in 2017 through 2030.

In 2019 we launched our [2020-2025 strategic planning process](#), which includes the goals developed as part of the Performance Management Process (PMP). The planning process was slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic, but it has continued none-the-less and is now nearing completion. It will be finalized in fall 2020.

The PMP goals described below are also laid out in an attached Summary Sheet that adds some details to the narrative that follows.

1. Student Success: Five of our major PMP goals center around student success, promoting timely completion of degrees and continually improving the quality of educational programs.

a. Graduation rates:

Six-Year Graduation Rate: Fifty-three percent of full-time, first-time students who entered Lehman in fall 2013 graduated in six years, which represents a fifteen-percentage point increase in comparison to the graduation rate for the 2008 student cohort (37 percent). At the same time, we are keenly aware that more is left to be done in support of our students and. In light of that, **we will aim to increase our six-year graduation rate to 55% for the fall 2017 first-time, full-time student cohort.**

Four-Year Graduation Rate: Lehman College has seen its four-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students similarly improve in recent years. Full-time, first-time students who arrived at Lehman in fall 2015 graduated at a rate (28.2%), which was nearly ten percentage points higher than 2010 full-time, first-time students (18.7%). We will continue our efforts to improve this.

As part of the PMP **we aim to increase our four-year graduation rate by three percentage points to 31% for fall 2019 full-time, first-time students.**

- b. Transfer Outcomes:** Even though the number of first-time, full-time students has grown significantly in recent years, increasing dramatically this year, new full-time transfers still represent the majority of our incoming students. Although the four-year graduation rate of transfer students with associates degrees declined 2.5% points between fall 2013 (57%) and fall 2015 (54.5%) entering cohorts, Lehman has consistently been a leader in transfer graduation rates, with a rate above the senior college average in each of the previous five years. As part of the PMP, **the college plans to increase the four-year graduation rate of transfer students to 57% for the fall 2019 entering cohort.**

In order to reach this goal, Lehman College has and will continue to develop and deploy a number of strategies. Lehman has been a leader with the Bronx Transfer Affinity Group, BTAG, which is enabling more effective transfer from CUNY community colleges to Lehman, and our efforts with BTAG are expanding. The college plans to further expand its use of Degree Works in an effort to enable our students to better plan their courses and track progression towards degree completion. In recognition of the financial difficulties that many of our students face we are continuing our TAP recovery project. Our continuation of the Race to the Finish Line Initiative, which provides students with stipends to offset the costs associated with gaining necessary credentials, will help expand prior learning initiatives.

- c. Retention:** Like many other senior colleges, Lehman will need to advance one-year retention rates in order to improve the likelihood that we will achieve our graduation rate goals. Between fall 2014 and fall 2018, the college experienced an overall flat one-year retention rate around 82.5 percent according to the most recent PMP data. In light of that, and as part of the PMP, **Lehman will strive to increase its one- year retention rate to 84 percent for the Fall 2022 full-time first-time student cohort.**
- d. Momentum:** In addition to one-year retention rates, the pace of credit accumulation during freshmen year is an early indicator of on-time graduation. Lehman has steadily improved the percent of fall full-time first-time students who earned thirty credits or more in the first year, rising by almost seventeen percentage points, from 44.8 percent for fall 2014 entering freshmen, to 62.0 percent for fall 2018 entering freshmen. That is the largest increase among CUNY senior colleges. In an effort to sustain this trajectory, and as part of the PMP, **the college will seek to increase from 62 percent (fall 2018) to at least 65 percent (fall 2022), the percent of freshmen earning thirty or more credits during their first year.** In support of our goals related to graduation, retention, and momentum, we plan to employ a number of strategies which are described below.

Improvements to the process of awarding credits earned during high school (AP, ECI, College Now, and Bridge Programs) have positively impacted the awarding of credit earlier in a student's career and mitigating credit loss. We plan to continue to identify new ways to award credit in ways that promote retention, momentum, and ultimately, graduation.

Additionally, the college has received funding that supports two Accelerate, Complete, and Engage (ACE) cohorts over the next four years. Our first cohort of 124 full-time, first-time students began fall 2019, and another cohort of 150 joined us in fall 2020. The program, which provides students with more engaged advising, career counseling, and financial support will help ensure that students not only are retained after one year, but maintain a pace to graduate within four years.

As the profile of our freshmen class continues to evolve, the need to evaluate approaches to freshmen schedules has grown, and Lehman continues to evaluate this as well as its Freshmen Learning Communities. Enrollment of students who bring extensive amounts of college coursework into the freshman year has led to an institutional commitment to engage in an ongoing assessment of course offerings to ensure that we are able to maintain freshman learning communities while offering students appropriate courses. These efforts will continue on an ongoing basis to ensure a successful freshman year.

Led by the Graduation Specialist unit in the Office of the Registrar, the Senior Success Initiative works with students in their last year of study at the college. This effort begins with a comprehensive review of the academic record to determine remaining courses and culminates with an academic plan which includes opportunities to leverage prior learning to satisfy missing degree requirements. As the college successfully develops a culture of evidence, the ability to leverage data in real-time ways to move the needle on student success will help ensure continued increases in graduation rates.

e. Pedagogical professional development linked to student success outcomes/efforts:

In 2019 I allocated \$180,000 in funding for a combination of course redesign and curriculum renewal. The Student Success Course Redesign Initiative (SSCRI) selected ten proposals from seven departments, focusing on gateway courses with high drop/withdrawal/incomplete/failure (DWIF) rates. Additionally, thirteen curriculum renewal proposals are in development from the four academic schools. They are focusing on pedagogical improvements in those courses. **Our PMP goal is to increase that total to 30 courses redesigned and 30 courses revised with pedagogical innovations by 2024.** External funding will be sought to support these efforts, particularly in light of the constriction in tax levy budget support for CUNY.

Training in both online instruction and in effective assessment has also ramped up and **we aim by fall 2024 to have increased by 69% above the 314 faculty who received training in online course delivery in fall 2020. We also aim to increase faculty training in assessment by 46% above the 141 trained in fall 2020.**

Both faculty training and course redesign and improvement address a major factor in student success, which is the efficacy of the curriculum and of instruction. Research is clear that improving both of these is critical to increasing student success.

2. Career Success: Lehman College remains committed to serving as an engine of upward mobility by providing opportunities for experiential learning and career engagement. As part of our strategic planning efforts, **the college has set a goal of increasing the percent of students who participate in internships by four percentage points between 2020 and 2024, from 25% to 29%.**

To meet this goal, the Career Exploration & Development Center (CEDC) will leverage a number of strategies. It is important to increase and improve the opportunities we provide our students for employer engagement. Programs begun the past academic year like Braven and the Braven Career Booster help build relationships and networks that are critical for finding and landing job opportunities. Braven had 68 registered fellows in the spring and over 100 were recruited for the Fall 2020 cohort. Developing those relationships virtually and utilizing online networks is particularly helpful during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. We expect to continue to strengthen partnerships with the CUNY Innovative Sector teams and support platforms like Symplicity, a database that enables us to maintain effective contact with all current students and alumni, as well as to update and maintain jobs/internship postings, post upcoming events and workshops, review and approve résumés, and coordinate the Alumni Mentoring Network. We will continue to seek paid micro-internship and virtual internship opportunities, as well as external funding to support internships. The CEDC also utilizes a Virtual Mock Interviews module for students, and recently began to import career videos from LinkedIn Learning.

3. Faculty, Staff, and ECP Diversity: Lehman College is committed to recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse workforce. This commitment is especially important given our highly diverse student population. In addition to having the only majority-Hispanic undergraduate population (52.5 percent) among senior colleges, nearly 68 percent and 86 percent of our undergraduates are women and underrepresented minorities, respectively. It is important to undertake efforts to have that diversity reflected in the totality of our staff. In light of that, the college has used the PMP and Strategic Plan to set goals in support of this aim across a number of dimensions, which align and comply with the University's Policy on Affirmative and non-discrimination laws. They are listed below.

Gender: We aim as part of the PMP to increase by two percentage points the percentage of full-time employees who are female, from 53 percent in 2020 to 55 percent in 2024.

Race/Ethnicity: Additionally, we have set a PMP goal to increase, from 60 percent in 2020 to 62 percent in 2024, the percentage of full-time employees who are minority. Since Lehman's staff already have a higher diversity, these efforts will be focused on faculty recruitment, as budgets allow for faculty replacement. This fall Lehman College added 26 new faculty members, 17 of whom are URM faculty and half of whom are female.

Italian American: As part of the PMP we will increase the percentage of full-time employees who are Italian American, from 5 percent in 2020 to 6 percent in 2024.

To meet these goals, the college plans to: employ best practices to attract diverse applicants, complete searches efficiently and effectively and provide fair and equitable treatment in the search and selection processes; implement a continuous improvement plan to refine and strengthen the search process; administer a search effectiveness survey annually to assess

stakeholder satisfaction and impressions of the search process and use findings to improve processes; communicate with and educate the campus community on strategies to promote diversity and inclusion, and cultivating a positive and authentic campus climate where all members of the community experience a sense of belonging.

These efforts will be reinforced by the President’s Task Force on Campus Climate and Inclusion that began its work summer 2020 and will submit recommendations in December 2020.

4. Diversity of first-time freshmen:

Gender: We aim as part of the PMP to increase by two percentage points the percentage of first-time, full-time freshmen who are male, from 38 percent in 2020 to 40 percent in 2024.

Race/Ethnicity: As previously noted, Lehman College has the second highest percent of URM students among CUNY senior colleges and the largest absolute number of URM students. We aim to maintain that percentage over the next four years.

5. Sustainability:

Sustainability is not one of the areas identified in the PMP process as a CUNY priority, but I include a sustainability PMP target because our response to climate change is integrally linked to our commitment to social justice. The social determinants of income, educational and health inequities are the same ones that are producing disproportionate impacts from climate change on vulnerable communities, including those in the Bronx and New York City. Lehman has a long-running composting program that handles over 60 tons of organic waste per year and it will be expanded through a SAMS grant of \$340,000. **Our PMP goal is to increase the percentage of our total waste stream that is either recycled or composted to 60 percent from 59% by 2024.**

There are a number of additional areas that are immediate and long-term priorities for the campus, which are detailed in our [Strategic Growth and Investment Plan](#) and noted below:

- Research and Entrepreneurship,
- Building and Developing the Team,
- External Engagement,
- Funding Support and Telling Our Story,
- Strengthening our Data and Technical Infrastructure, and
- Strategic Finance and Organizational Sustainability.

We are mindful that this academic year is dramatically different from all previous ones due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, we aim to move forward and pursue ambitious goals. Developments beyond our control may interfere with progress in some areas, and if so, we will adjust our 2024 goals accordingly, but we will not abandon their intent.

We are grateful for this important opportunity to look ahead, and for your continued support and partnership as we make progress towards our shared goals and priorities on behalf of our students and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Lemons', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Daniel Lemons
Interim President

Enclosures (1)