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July 22, 1994

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Dr. Ricardo R. Fernandez
President
City University of New York
Herbert H. Lehman College
Bedford Park Boulevard West
Bronx, New York 10468

Dear Dr. Fernandez:

I have enjoyed learning about Lehman College through your Periodic Review Report.

As the attached statement indicates, you have made considerable progress in addressing the recommendations of Middle States and in moving Lehman College toward its stated goals.

I hope that I will have the opportunity one day to visit with you on your campus.

Sincerely,

Freeman A. Hrabowski, III
President

Attachment
Dr. Arturo Iriarte, MSA/CHE

Report to

The Faculty, Administration, Trustees, and Students
of
Herbert H. Lehman College
of
The City University of New York
Bronx, New York 10468

Prepared Following Analysis of Herbert H. Lehman College's
Periodic Review Report

First Reviewer:

Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, III
President
University of Maryland Baltimore County
Baltimore, Maryland 21228

Second Reviewer:

Dr. Carlos Hernandez
President
Jersey City State College
Jersey City, New Jersey 07305

July 22, 1994

EVALUATION of the PERIODIC REVIEW REPORT
of
HERBERT H. LEHMAN COLLEGE of THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1968, Herbert H. Lehman College is a public, comprehensive, liberal arts institution of The City University of New York, offering bachelor's and master's degrees and serving the Bronx, New York City, and lower Westchester County. It is the site of the CUNY doctoral program in plant sciences and, until recently, sponsored a branch campus in Hiroshima, Japan.

The Periodic Review Report focuses heavily on recommendations made in the 1988 Middle States Report on the College. These recommendations called for action in the following areas: student recruitment and retention; academic program development and evaluation; institutional research; faculty development; governance; affirmative action; administration; financial planning; and physical facilities. It is clear from the PRR that the College has given careful consideration to implementing a number of changes based on these recommendations. The report is a clear description of the changes over the past five years in the administrative, academic, student life, and physical plant areas. Most important, the College has been able to examine closely its mission to ensure that it actually fulfills commitments to its students and the surrounding community.

SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS & CHANGES SINCE PREVIOUS EVALUATION

Administrative Changes

Perhaps the most significant administrative change since the Middle States team visit has been the appointment of the new President, Dr. Ricardo R. Fernandez, effective September, 1990. Dr. Fernandez's strong leadership has resulted in a number of personnel and structural changes, as well as significant academic initiatives.

Personnel changes have included several key appointments: a new Provost, Vice President for Administration, Director of Institutional Research, a full-time Director of Affirmative Action, Chief Librarian, and a full-time Director of the Lehman College Foundation. Other major changes include elimination of the positions of Vice President for Institutional Advancement and Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies. The College also is anticipating nationwide searches to fill two Dean positions.

The College has also proposed to revise the academic divisional structure in order to create a Division of Education and a Division of Nursing and Health Professions.

In addition to making a number of changes in departmental names and reporting relationships, the newly-appointed administration has brought faculty into the decision-making process through the Faculty Personnel and Budget Committee and the Long-Range Planning Committee. The Committee on College Governance will be making further recommendations for faculty involvement in governance in Fall 1994.

Academic Initiatives

For the past year, a Committee on College Requirements reviewed the writing examination requirement of the College and determined to eliminate that examination and to develop a common exam at the end of a first-year English course, with the understanding that (1) enrollments were to be limited to 20 students per class, and (2) that the College establish a Writing Committee to serve as a resource for departments.

In addition to eliminating this writing examination requirement, the College has eliminated 25 academic majors as a result of a comprehensive review and substantial budget cuts. Even with these budget cuts, though, the College has focused additional resources on its retention efforts, with special emphasis given to students through their first 60 credits of course work.

The critical question involves the overall effectiveness of the Freshman Year Initiative. For example, there has not been a formal study or assessment of instruction in basic mathematics, and the ESL and bilingual programs will not be evaluated until 1994-95. The College spends a major portion of the budget on remediation because 70% of the freshman class takes at least one remedial course, and 40% takes at least two. Even when looking at the evaluation of the core curriculum, sponsored by a FIPSE grant, two-thirds of the faculty did not believe that the early courses in the new curriculum satisfactorily prepared students for the later, upper-level courses. In fact, students who took the new curriculum did not do better in upper-level courses than the students who had not.

Also, Lehman was fortunate to have a Japanese sponsor fund the Lehman/Hiroshima College project. Because of financial difficulty experienced by the private corporation, however, the program has been suspended as of January, 1994. It is significant that 200 Japanese students from the branch campus are now enrolled at Lehman College, and several have already completed bachelor's degrees.

Finally, the College is serving as the lead institution for an exchange program in Chemistry, between European and U.S. universities, a project funded by FIPSE.

Regarding new programs, the College has instituted several graduate and undergraduate majors focusing on the special needs and interests of its students and on employment opportunities in the region, including courses ranging from science and language teaching to computer science. In addition, the College has initiated a variety of collaborative efforts with other colleges and universities, including a variety of programs in the languages and the sciences.

Future departmental efforts include proposed programs in computer graphics, a multi-lingual program in mass communications, and proposed programs in environmental sciences and in American Sign Language. What is particularly exciting about these new initiatives is the emphasis on using interdisciplinarity as an approach.

Perhaps one of the most exciting achievements of the College is the highly successful outreach initiatives involving a variety of community service activities and a number of very impressive school-college collaborative efforts, with special attention given to math-science education and minorities. It is very clear that the highly talented faculty and staff at Lehman have worked assiduously to secure grants from a variety of sources, ranging from the National Science Foundation to the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Faculty

The College has reacted very effectively to the last Middle States team's concern about the need for additional opportunities for faculty development. The College has initiated steps to provide incentives for faculty productivity, and to provide support for faculty generally, including the following: (1) initiating a process for distributing to grant recipients funds from general overhead charges for such purposes as equipment, travel, and research assistants; (2) developing a variety of programs designed to support faculty in establishing and reaching their professional goals -- brown bag research luncheons, computer-assisted instruction workshops, and a variety of faculty workshops focusing on curriculum development and teaching; and (3) establishing faculty awards to recognize merit in teaching, research, and curriculum design.

Finally, the College has also made tremendous strides in reaffirming its commitment to diversity by establishing a President's Advisory Committee to Promote Pluralism and

Diversity, hiring a full-time Affirmative Action Officer, and, most important, through its recent appointments of high percentages of women and members of protected classes to the faculty and administration. Over 50% of the newly-hired full-time faculty and 39% of the newly-hired administration have been women; one-third of the faculty and 44% of the administrative hires have been members of protected classes.

Plant, Equipment, and Resource Enhancement

The College is very proud of its new multi-million dollar Athletics and Physical Education Complex and its refurbished athletic fields, as well as the new greenhouse and computer labs in several of the academic departments. Lehman has proposed in this year's budget a new academic computing center and renovations to some of the original buildings on the campus.

The College also has made substantial progress in automating a variety of processes and systems on the campus, including the evolving computerized registration process, the new Student Information Management System, the institutional research data base, and the automated integrated library system.

It is especially significant that the President has provided the library special funds to purchase books and instructional equipment, despite the fact that the College has experienced major budget cuts. The funds have been used to connect the library to the campus' ethernet backbone, and, with additional support from the CUNY Central Office, to connect several departments to the library through the backbone, resulting in access to the library from departmental offices and classrooms.

Student Life and Retention

Significant developments in student life and retention include the renovated Student Life Building and Student Cafeteria, the newly-created Student Health Center, and the

Student Information Center. Other special initiatives include a new peer counseling program, student training, and a newly-created Office of Student Development focusing on out-of-class activities.

No effort is more important to retention, however, than academic advising. The College is working aggressively to interact effectively with both traditional and at-risk students through early intervention activities, required attendance at meetings by students on probation, and a newly-implemented computerized system for student information.

EVIDENCE OF CONTINUOUS INSTITUTIONAL SELF-STUDY & PLANNING

Over the past five years, the College has worked to coordinate planning efforts and to connect that planning with the College's budgeting and decision-making. The appointment of a Director of Institutional Research has helped the College focus on such areas as budgetary and enrollment analysis and on program evaluation. Of course the ability of the office to be responsive may be limited somewhat because the office has only one staff person.

Although enrollment over the past five years has increased 15%, it is unlikely to increase over the next five-year period. In fact, freshman enrollments have declined 20% during the past three years; these declines have been offset by enrollment of re-admits, transfers, and graduate students. Because of the declining number of Bronx high school graduates, competition for these students has heightened, and the College has lost about five percent of its market share during the early 1990s. The Office of Admission has recently hired a new recruiter, and the College is involved in more outreach to the schools and is providing more financial resources to support recruitment.

Regarding actual retention rates of full-time freshmen, the PRR suggests that the relatively low graduation rates of students (13% within five years; 24% within seven years) are similar to the rates at other institutions in CUNY and reflect primarily financial needs of students because most must work to support themselves. While the number of students graduating in 1992-93 is the highest since 1988, one critical question is to what extent these retention rates reflect poor academic performance or academic deficiencies of students rather than simply students' financial problems.

Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long-Range Planning Committee, consisting of faculty, students, and administrators, has worked with the President in establishing the priorities of the College, including, among others, a commitment to liberal arts education, strengthening faculty development and the role of faculty in governance, and greater attention to student retention.

Financial Planning

The College has cut approximately \$7.8 million from its operating budget while increasing its enrollment by 1,000 full-time students. The budget reductions were handled primarily by eliminating 130 full-time positions. The College is to be commended for working to protect the instructional program as much as possible during this period.

New budgetary procedures include involvement of the Personnel and Budget Subcommittee in the allocation process and greater involvement of departments.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE ISSUES & CHALLENGES

Self-Study and Planning

Although the number of graduates of New York City high schools is expected to increase through 1999, the College will still need to be aggressive in its recruitment efforts

if it is to ensure stability in the College's enrollment. The College should not assume that the increased number of high school graduates will result in increased enrollment at Lehman. This is particularly important because the financial future of the institution will be tied to its enrollment. The College should support the efforts of the faculty and staff focus group to increase involvement of the entire College in the recruitment initiative.

Governance

In its follow-up visit, the next Middle States team should look at the recommendations of the Committee on College Governance and the on-going efforts of the administration to ensure appropriate involvement by faculty in governance activities.

Academic Initiatives

It is clear that the College has concerns about the writing skills of its students and has made changes to address those concerns. It will be important for the College to ensure that the newly-established College Writing Committee receives the support necessary to ensure meaningful involvement with academic departments.

The College also will need to continue looking at relationships between remediation, the core curriculum, and the academic achievement of students.

The College also is encouraged to continue working toward its goal of systematically conducting academic departmental self-studies and external reviews.

Capital Improvements

The College has identified a number of capital improvements that need to be undertaken across the campus. It is important that the College plan carefully, assigning priorities to its needs and developing effective strategies to ensure sufficient funding.

Overall, Lehman College has made substantial progress in addressing the recommendations of the last Middle States team. One senses considerable excitement on

the campus for new initiatives involving outreach, grant-writing, special activities to support students at Lehman, and, particularly, attention to involving faculty in the governance process.

Finally, the College should be given special commendation for its effective efforts to recruit women and members of protected classes to the faculty and administration.

September 7, 1994

Ms. Vivian L. Ellis
Administrative Assistant for Evaluation Services
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

Dear Ms. Ellis:

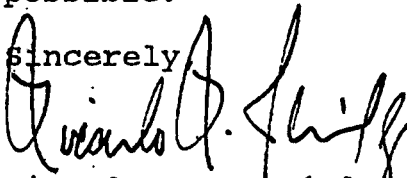
I respond to your August 1, 1994 letter in which you request the institutional response to the External Reviewers's analysis of the Periodic Review Report submitted by Lehman College in June.

The College's response to the Periodic Review Report prepared by Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, III (University of Maryland - Baltimore County) and Dr. Carlos Hernández (Jersey City State College) is attached.

Regarding the financial data submitted in June, the reviewer (Gregory Davis) stated in his report that he had been unable to comment on trends and projections specific to Lehman College because the data were aggregated CUNY-wide. In your absence I sought the advice of Dr. Arturo Iriarte on how to proceed in seeking further clarification as to the type of data required by the reviewer. Dr. Iriarte suggested that we communicate directly with Gregory Davis at Coppin State. Accordingly, I have asked Dr. Sebastian Persico, Vice President for Administration, to contact Mr. Davis to ascertain which materials he needs to receive from us to complete the review of our finances. As soon as we reach Mr. Davis, we will forward the materials to him in order to expedite the process.

I regret this delay and assure you that we are prepared to collaborate fully to complete the Periodic Review as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Ricardo R. Fernández
President

RRF/pm
Attachment