

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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February 25, 2014
Start: 10:19 a.m.
Recess: 01:01 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm,
14th Fl.

B E F O R E:
INEZ D. BARRON
Chairperson

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning. Good morning.

[collective good morning]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We have a somewhat tardy start and I do apologize for that. I respect your coming and adhering to the time and we were going to get started. My name is Inez Barron and I am the Chair of the Higher Education Committee and I want to thank you for coming. And today's hearing is an oversight on can CUNY's Pathways Program help improve graduation rates. And the purpose of today's hearing is to learn from the CUNY administration, faculty, and students about the Pathways to Graduation Program which was adopted by the trustees of CUNY in 2011. It was implemented in 2013 and fundamentally changed the CUNY curriculum, graduation requirements and transfer credit policies. I come to the Council from the New York State Assembly where I sat on the Higher Education Committee which has a legislative authority and oversight over CUNY. So I'm very familiar with the issues of the University. I wanted to devote this first hearing to Pathways because of the last two

1
2 years when I was in Albany a lot of the concerns
3 were expressed about what Pathway is, what it does,
4 and whether it will diminish the value of a CUNY
5 degree. In a time when the free education that was
6 available to me as a student at Hunter College is
7 no longer available to today's students. And where
8 student load debts exceed credit card debt and when
9 it is not unusual for a student at a CUNY Community
10 College to take four, five, even six years to
11 obtain an associate's degree. It is very important
12 to me that students, faculty, and the public have
13 an opportunity to comment on policies that affect
14 the value of public education. Before I begin I'd
15 like to advise my colleagues and they've been also
16 warned before this that there is pending litigation
17 against the University over the issues of whether
18 the trustees have proper authorization to adopt and
19 implement Pathways. And accordingly I ask that my
20 colleagues limit their questions for the
21 administration of areas of policy and refrain from
22 questions regarding the litigation. At the same
23 time I want to assure the faculty and students in
24 attendance that we are here to hear all your
25 concerns about the Pathways policy. Finally I want

1
2 to acknowledge my colleagues, oh great we've been
3 joined by more that are here with me. To my
4 immediate left Vanessa Gibson from the Bronx, next
5 to her Laurie Cumbo from Brooklyn, and on the end
6 Council Member Cabrera from the Bronx. Thank you.
7 And I also want to acknowledge the committee staff
8 to my immediate right is the Committee Council,
9 Jeff Campania. And I also want to acknowledge the
10 Policy Analyst Tanya Cyrus. So on today the
11 Committee on Higher Ed. will be holding a hearing
12 can Pathways Program help improve graduation rates.
13 It's focusing on the new initiative by the City
14 University of New York to streamline graduation
15 requirements and the transfer of process. Witnesses
16 invited to testify include representatives from the
17 CUNY administration, faculty members, students, and
18 other interested parties. In June as we heard the
19 Board of Trustees approved the adoption of the
20 Pathways to degree completion or Pathways which
21 establishes a new general education and credit
22 transfer system across the University. It's
23 designed to standardize core curricula and to
24 streamline the transfer process across the
25 University system. Accordingly it is expected to

1
2 improve graduation rates, help more students earn
3 their degrees on time, and save money for students
4 and the university. In 2013 the Board of Regions
5 approved the new master plan including Pathways and
6 it took affect this past fall. Approximately 39
7 thousand students have registered in at least one
8 Pathways Common Core Course. It aims to rectify the
9 problems many students experience in meeting
10 general education and transfer requirements. Prior
11 to Pathways CUNY general education requirements
12 varied from campus to campus and in some instances
13 Associate Degree seeking students were required to
14 complete a minimum of 60 credits and Baccalaureate
15 students were required to complete a minimum of 120
16 credits. In fact the University's Office of
17 Institutional Research and Assessment estimated
18 that in the 2008, 2009 academic year 17,634
19 Baccalaureate graduates completed an average of 130
20 credits, significantly higher than the required 120
21 credits which costs students and the state 72.5
22 million dollars. Many of those excess credits were
23 due to students not having receive transfer credit
24 for courses they had taken at their original
25 colleges. For decades the CUNY system posed

1 challenges for students seeking to transfer from
2 one CUNY campus to another and lacked an effective
3 process for quality control of the courses that
4 students wished to transfer. Faculty and
5 administration have tried to improve the situation
6 through articulation agreements among the campuses
7 and by matching courses for credit by means of the
8 online transfer information and program planning
9 system tips. In spite of such efforts often times
10 transferring students would be forced to retake
11 classes taken at other CUNY schools even though
12 such classes would not be covered by financial aid.
13 Under Pathways students at all CUNY schools are
14 guaranteed that all of their credits are
15 transferable to all the other schools in the CUNY
16 system. Easing the ability of students to transfer
17 from junior colleges to senior colleges. To
18 accomplish this end a new curriculum has been
19 implemented across all schools. All new CUNY
20 undergraduates, freshman, and transfer students,
21 are required to complete a common core. It's a very
22 popular term. Common Core General Education
23 curriculum consisting of 30 credits in order to
24 make, to attain their degrees. Students enrolled in
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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

baccalaureate programs are required to take an additional six to 12 quote college option credits of general education as defined by each college within the CUNY system. Students who entered CUNY prior to the Fall of 2013 have the choice of deciding whether to opt in to the Pathways requirement and are encouraged to seek the guidance of an advisor or other on-campus resource to help them make informed decisions. However, Pathways has received strong opposition from the professional staff; Congress, PFC, and the Union representing CUNY faculty members stating that the new requirements are too restrictive and lower CUNY's academic standards. Although Pathways would facilitate easier transfer between CUNY campuses advocates against Pathways argue that it would simultaneously limit the opportunities for any student leaving CUNY for another institution. Advocates also argue that CUNY's core curriculum incompatible with general education standards at most other universities forcing students exiting CUNY to start at a new institution at a disadvantage. So at today's hearing the committee seeks to explore the academic value of Pathways,

1 specifically how it aims to increase graduation
2 rates, increase cost savings, and ensure that
3 students receive a high quality education.
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5 Furthermore the Committee seeks to learn how
6 students are informed about Pathways, how opting
7 out of Pathways may affect student outcomes and
8 what areas of Pathways, and what areas of Pathways
9 can be improved to provide students with the
10 adequate support they need to succeed in College.

11 And we're very pleased that we're looking at this
12 issue because as you know for so many people but
13 especially for African Americans higher education
14 is a way towards lifting themselves into other
15 economic opportunities, other levels, and other
16 opportunities in expanding their own knowledge
17 base. So certainly during black history month we
18 want to take this opportunity to put a spotlight on
19 the importance of higher education. And with that
20 we're going to call our first panel. And I have
21 asked that CUNY be the first panel because it's
22 their initiative and we want them to lay out what
23 it is that has happened, how we've gotten to this
24 point, what the program offers, and how they intend
25 to go forward with this. And we've asked that CUNY

1
2 do, does remain for the entire hearing so that they
3 can hear and get the opinions of the other panels
4 and they've agreed to do that. So the first panel
5 is a CUNY panel. I would like to invite Vice
6 Chancellor Julia Wrigley, Vice Chancellor Frank
7 Sanchez, Vice Chancellor and General Council Rick
8 Schaffer, and if there's Mr. Hershens [sp?] and are
9 you a part of that? Okay, so that's the first panel
10 and I'd like to invite them to come. And we are
11 asking to, to highlight the importance and the
12 seriousness of this issue. We're asking that all
13 the panels that will be presenting take an oath. So
14 if you'd raise your right hand. Do you swear and/or
15 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
16 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
17 committee and to respond honestly to all council
18 member questions? Thank you. Please state your name
19 and you may proceed. If you push that red button.
20 Thank you.

21 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Hi, I'm Julia
22 Wrigley. Good morning Chairperson Barron and
23 members of the Higher Education Committee. I'm the
24 Interim Executive Vice Chancellor and University
25 Provost at the City University of New York. Thank

1
2 you for this opportunity to speak with you today
3 regarding what has come to be known as Pathways
4 Initiative. In its simplest terms this initiative
5 was created to make it easier for students to
6 transfer among CUNY colleges. Why does transfer
7 matter? Around the country the traditional model of
8 students attending one college from orientation to
9 commencement has given way to a new pattern, one in
10 which many students change colleges at least once
11 as they pursue their degrees. These newer patterns
12 frequently make the route to a degree more of a
13 swirl than a straight forward linear path. This
14 pattern is even more pronounced at CUNY than it is
15 at the national level due to multiple factors.
16 First, CUNY is a single large innongrated system
17 that contains both community colleges which confer
18 degrees at the associate level and baccalaureate
19 granting institutions. The fact that our colleges
20 are located in a concentrated setting one city with
21 an extensive public transit network also leads to
22 larger than typical transfer flows. In 2010, '11
23 for example, more than 20,000 students transferred
24 within CUNY. These students transferred in every
25 direction but the largest number of students

1 transferred from community colleges to senior
2 colleges. That same year more than 12 thousand of
3 these transferring students moved from our
4 community colleges to our senior colleges. In this
5 trajectory students epitomize the university's
6 crucial access mission. Many of these students are
7 low income and began at community colleges because
8 they demonstrated remedial needs when they
9 matriculated. They achieved academic proficiency
10 and raised their sites towards the senior colleges.
11 It is notable that two-thirds of baccalaureates
12 graduates at CUNY entered as transfer students.
13 While the largest transfer paths are from the
14 community colleges to the senior colleges many
15 students also transfer from one senior college to
16 another or within the community college or senior
17 college sectors. These shifts occur when students
18 move from one borough to another, find new work
19 that makes another college more convenient, or
20 change their academic focus. CUNY's colleges have
21 their own academic specialties with John Jay for
22 example particular known for its criminal justice
23 programs, city college for science in engineering
24 and Baruch for business. CUNY students therefore
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1
2 have many reasons for transferring and they do so
3 in many directions. But again why does this matter
4 so much. Why did CUNY establish the pathways
5 initiative. The truth is the transfer can
6 complicate a student's progress toward a degree.
7 For decades CUNY struggled to offer its students an
8 efficient transfer system. But in practice
9 individual students bore the risks and burdens of
10 trying to make the transfer process work. They had
11 to present their credits for evaluation and hope
12 that they would be accepted. They had to endure
13 sometimes very long evaluation processes. They had
14 to attempt to make sense of conflicting decisions
15 and create awards made by different CUNY colleges
16 for similar if not identical course work. Because
17 the CUNY colleges granted transfer credits based on
18 what is called course equivalencies students who
19 took courses at one college with no clear
20 counterpart at another were sometimes at a
21 particular disadvantage. The colleges' general
22 education programs created some particular
23 obstacles because the programs differed across the
24 colleges. This variation encompassed both
25 curricular content, what students needed to study,

1
2 and size in terms of the portion of a student's
3 program that was dedicated to general education
4 courses. Thi8s meant not only that a student might
5 transfer into a new CUNY college and find the
6 courses previously taken for general education
7 credit no longer counted as such but also that more
8 extensive, more expansive general education
9 requirements, in some cases far above national
10 norms, awaited fulfilment at the new college.
11 Beyond the discouragement and frustration that
12 ensued students in these situations found
13 themselves needing to spend further resources as
14 their path to a degree was delayed. After decades
15 in which progress was to made to fix this broken
16 system CUNY undertook the Pathways Initiative. The
17 basic premise has been to ease transfer by creating
18 a common framework across CUNY's colleges. Most
19 importantly there is now a 30 credit common core,
20 that word again, of general education at all of
21 CUNY's undergraduate colleges. Students in both
22 Community Colleges and Senior Colleges take common
23 core courses. In addition Senior Colleges require
24 an extra 12 credits of general education with those
25 12 credits called the college option. Breaking with

1 a dysfunctional course equivalency model the common
2 core is divided into eight areas. Two courses are
3 required in English composition, one course in
4 math, and one course in life and physical sciences.
5 In addition students must take six courses across
6 thematic areas. Just which courses count in any of
7 those areas is a matter that rest with the
8 colleges. Each CUNY college decided which of its
9 courses belong in the different areas of the common
10 core. The common core is designed in such a way
11 that colleges can emphasize their own academic
12 priorities. If they particularly value foreign
13 languages they can ensure that students take
14 foreign language courses. If they want students to
15 take American History they can ensure this. Or if
16 they want students to take two science courses this
17 can also be required. All courses that the colleges
18 chose to include in the common core are submitted
19 to a university wide course review committee that
20 is composed entirely of faculty. This committee
21 reviews each course to ensure that it meets the
22 appropriate learning outcomes. It is worth noting
23 that special provision is made for math and science
24 courses in the common core. Courses in these fields
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1
2 may be more than a standard three credits. CUNY
3 colleges offer 500 such special math and science
4 courses. They make up two-thirds of the total
5 courses offered in the three areas of the common
6 core that focus on math and science. Any student
7 may take one of these courses which means that all
8 CUNY students have a rich variety of laboratory
9 courses available on the sciences and also have
10 many intensive courses in math available to them.
11 In addition to the Common Core the senior colleges
12 have their additional 12 college option credits.
13 These courses are developed entirely at the
14 discretion of individual requirements in individual
15 colleges and requirements can focus on any academic
16 area. Students benefit in many ways from this
17 general education framework that applies across the
18 university. Most importantly students can now be
19 confident, the courses they have taken in the
20 common core, or college option will meet general
21 education requirements across every undergraduate
22 college at the University. Fulfillment of general
23 education requirements is noted on their
24 transcripts and carries over to any new college.
25 For instance if a student meets the math

1 requirement at BMCC this is noted on her transcript
2 and the student will not be asked to take an
3 additional course to fulfil mathematics area
4 requirement at another CUNY college. Students can
5 complete their general education requirements at
6 their original college or their college to which
7 they transfer or do some of the requirements at
8 each. In any of these cases they could be confident
9 they will not lose time or credits. The same holds
10 true with college option courses. Although the
11 common core framework and general education have
12 received the lion's share of attention when it
13 comes to Pathways coverage this initiative includes
14 another key component that merits attention.
15
16 Another common scenario at CUNY involves students
17 who begin studies in Associate programs with plans
18 to transfer senior colleges in hopes of getting a
19 timely start in the subject area they plan to major
20 in. Either fulfilling prerequisite or introductory
21 courses. Prior to Pathways however taking such
22 courses could be risky. Community College students
23 couldn't be sure that the courses they took with
24 the idea that such coursework would count toward an
25 English or biology major would transfer as such

1 upon arrival at a senior college for all of the
2 reasons that were outlined earlier. Yes, in some
3 fields and between some colleges the process worked
4 smoothly. But in too many cases it worked far less
5 well. To address this problem the Pathways
6 initiative called for faculty members from the
7 senior colleges and the community colleges in the
8 largest transfer majors to convene, deliberate, and
9 select at least three courses called gateway
10 courses that students could take with confidence
11 that they would be counted toward the major or in
12 some cases toward prior requirements. The process
13 wasn't always easy but it marked an important step
14 for CUNY, one in which difficult issues of defining
15 fields and the best preparation for them were
16 addressed. The intellectual debates over which
17 courses were most important and what they should
18 cover were conducted by faculty members as they
19 worked toward selecting at least three gateway
20 courses. Students entering the largest transfer
21 fields are now far better equipped to select
22 academically sound paths leading to the fulfilment
23 of their academic and professional goals. In short
24 with the Pathways Initiative CUNY as a university
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1
2 has removed some of the burden of transfer from its
3 students and cleared what were stubborn obstacles
4 to student success. The clear and comprehensible
5 curricular structure and the guidance it provides
6 are especially crucial because students in CUNY's
7 community colleges has sufficient obstacles to
8 overcome without having to navigate a confusing
9 curricular system. I have already alluded to the
10 remedial needs that many of these students present
11 upon admission. Many are also the first in their
12 families to attend college. They often have family
13 responsibilities and need to work to support
14 themselves while in college. They cannot afford the
15 psychological and practical burdens of taking
16 courses that do not advance them toward their
17 degrees. These are students who in many cases
18 enhance the diversity of CUNY's senior colleges.
19 They need support, clarity of requirements and
20 confidence that they have chosen the right path and
21 that they are making progress toward their degrees
22 without unnecessary anxiety and risk. Pathways
23 provides all of these things. As is the case
24 whenever a large system undertakes an ambitious
25 program we knew that pathways would require careful

1 attention and tweaking throughout its
2 implementation. For this reason a review process
3 was built into the pathways initiative from the
4 outset. The board resolution that established
5 Pathways specified that the initiative must be
6 evaluated each year in its first three years and
7 every third year thereafter. To our knowledge such
8 an inbuilt review process is a first for CUNY but
9 we think it is important as a means of improving
10 the initiative and making it work well. With this
11 in mind interim Chancellor Bill Kelly convened this
12 Fall a faculty group that recommended three changes
13 in pathways, each of which has been adopted. The
14 three changes are first restrictions on the hours
15 of common core courses has been lifted. Second
16 colleges reminded that they can seek waivers in
17 cases where high credit programs cannot reality
18 accommodate the 30 credit common core due to
19 licensing requirements or the demands of intensive
20 programs. And third, faculty member select to serve
21 on the CUNY, common core course review committee
22 will be chosen through regular college governance
23 processes. We are pleased that Pathways has been
24 implemented smoothly. Two years after the Board
25

1 Resolution was approved, two years filled with
2 preparations of countless sorts, CUNY students
3 began coursework within the Pathways framework this
4 past Fall. We are currently in our second semester
5 of our frame construction within this framework.
6 Generally speaking colleges have found that the
7 registration process has gone well and that
8 entering students have signed up for common core
9 courses without difficulty. We know that change is
10 not always easy and that not everyone has
11 embarrassed pathways. We believe though that the
12 best interest of students have been served. The
13 university has addressed a very difficult set of
14 problems that students once had to face themselves.
15 We also believe that Pathways is characterized by a
16 flexibility that means that the individual colleges
17 however change many important prerogatives in
18 developing general education requirements that fit
19 their particular goals and academic priorities. The
20 predictions issued by some have not come to pass.
21 We have not seen layoffs of adjuncts. We have not
22 seen a significant diminution of the number of
23 foreign language courses taken by students. CUNY as
24 an institution has stepped up to help students deal
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1
2 with a problem that has developed their earlier
3 peers for decades. We would be the first
4 acknowledge that Pathways is likely to need further
5 adjustments. This has already happened under the
6 first chairs' review as specified in the Board of
7 Resolution. Let's go forward and see how it works
8 and fix it where necessary. But we are confident
9 that these changes will prove their value. We are
10 proud to be able to offer all New Yorkers our
11 trademark high quality education now with improved
12 Pathways toward degrees. Thank you once again for
13 inviting us to speak today.

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I think
15 I'd like to pose some questions first...

16 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Sure.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...before we move on.
18 First, thank you for your testimony. And in
19 preparation for this hearing I read a lot of
20 information about Pathways. And it's very
21 confusing. It's not clear cut, at least the
22 presentations that I've seen. What have you done so
23 that students are clear about what it is that they
24 need to take and the advantage... what are, is it on
25 the internet? Are there individual counselors?

1
2 Because I've read it and I still would want to sit
3 with someone to get further clarification. What has
4 been the outreach so that students understand what
5 exists be... Before we get to talking about...

6 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Yeah.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...the pros and the
8 cons what has been done so that students know that
9 they have to take this, and this is a now
10 requirement?

11 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Those are very
12 important questions and I'll say a number of things
13 have been done. One is every college has a website
14 with does explain about the Common Core and does
15 explain the student requirements. They also have
16 written materials of our variety of different kinds
17 which explain these matters to students. CUNY has
18 an advisement council that meets regularly. And the
19 advisors were intensively brought into discussion
20 of what the new common core, and college option
21 were. And that is fundamental to the students at
22 their colleges learning about those requirements.
23 There is also a central pathways website with links
24 to all of the college websites so that students can
25 access their college sites from the central one.

1
2 There also has been a great deal of work done on a
3 program CUNY has called Degree Works which is...

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Hold, I didn't hear
5 you.

6 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: It's called Degree
7 Works, it's a big software program, very... where
8 students own information, their personal
9 information about their transcript, their records
10 are available to them on the Degree Works site. And
11 the Degree Works site can tell them which
12 requirements remain for them. So suppose they
13 fulfill requirements in five of the eight areas of
14 the common core Degree Works makes it clear to them
15 they still have three more areas until... [crosstalk,
16 interpose]

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Do you have any
18 method of knowing how many students have accessed
19 degree works? Do we have any way of counting how
20 many students have used that?

21 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Yes, actually that
22 has been done. Just, there is a, Lucinda Zoe who is
23 here... Ah, this is Richard Alvarez who's Director of
24 Admissions at CUNY.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, would you
3 identify yourself since you're offering
4 information.

5 RICHARD ALVEREZ: My name is Richard
6 Alvarez and I'm the University Director of
7 Admissions.

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

9 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: And Richard states
10 that every undergraduate student at CUNY uses
11 Degree Works.

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right, but my
13 question is do you know how many have used it, how
14 many have actually gone onto the site and used it.
15 I know it's available to everyone but how many
16 have actually used it so that they can personalize
17 and know specifically where they are.

18 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: I, I believe
19 there's been extremely widespread use. Perhaps
20 would you mind if I talk, if I refer this to
21 Richard as this is his area of work...

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Alright.

23 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: ...in the University.
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2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And once again do
3 you affirm that you will tell the truth, the whole
4 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony...

5 RICHARD ALVAREZ: I do.

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...and respond
7 appropriately?

8 RICHARD ALVAREZ: I do.

9 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Your
10 name again for the record.

11 RICHARD ALVAREZ: Sure. My name is
12 Richard Alvarez and I'm the University Director of
13 Admission. Degree Works is one of the tools that
14 the students use with their academic advisors...

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: No, I just want to
16 know can you track how many students...

17 RICHARD ALVAREZ: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...have actually used
19 it? Do you...

20 RICHARD ALVAREZ: We have about 230,000
21 plus undergraduate students and I would say
22 probably about 95 to 97 percent of our students use
23 it on a semester basis because it is one of the
24 tools that they determine what requirements they
25 have satisfied and what requirements are yet to

1
2 come in. And it also is attached to their financial
3 aid.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. That, I
5 wanted to know specifically thank you. So that's
6 90, 95 to 96 percent use it. Okay, thank you. And
7 how, how do you... I mean you know that because when
8 they log in you get a count someplace?

9 RICHARD ALVAREZ: Well we, I could
10 certainly get the specific exact numbers per
11 semester of usage if that's...

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

13 RICHARD ALVAREZ: ...something that want.
14 But we do know that that's the primary tool that
15 students use to get information about where they
16 stand in their degree and what then needs to be
17 taken to complete that degree.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and once they
19 get that information do they make an appointment if
20 they want to get further clarification they check
21 with a...

22 RICHARD ALVAREZ: They can...

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, what's the
24 number of advisors that you have. What's the ratio

1
2 of advisors to students so that they can actually
3 find out...

4 RICHARD ALVAREZ: You want to...

5 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: There has been a
6 report done on that and it, it is variable across
7 colleges. It's also slightly a complex matter
8 because advisors come with different titles and
9 designations like they're, they're special
10 advisors... [crosstalk, interpose]

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So what's the range
12 of the ratio?

13 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Perhaps Lucinda are
14 you aware? I'm, I'm not sure. I think we'll have to
15 send you the report.

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And is there a
17 specific advisor that each person can go to so that
18 they can establish a report or do they get
19 whomever's available?

20 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: well I think that
21 also varies by college and also by where they are
22 in their progress toward their degree in that when
23 students are doing their general education
24 requirements they usually would just see an advisor
25 who would be assigned to them. But when they enter

1
2 their majors they'll often have a departmental
3 advisor from the faculty who helps them figure out
4 what they need to do next.

5 CHAIREPRSON BARRON: I have other
6 questions but I'm going to now allow... I want to
7 first say that we had been joined by Council Member
8 Ydanis Rodriguez from the Bronx and we did have
9 Council Member Vacca here but he left. Perhaps
10 he'll come back. But I do want to give an
11 opportunity because we have so many people who want
12 prevent, present their testimony. I want to allow
13 my colleague so I'll pass now to my left and ask
14 Council Member Gibson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Good morning and
16 thank you for your presence here today. I too like
17 my colleagues Madam Chairwoman come from Albany and
18 was very active with the higher education committee
19 and you know this is a long time coming so to
20 speak. I remember conversations with the Higher Ed.
21 Chair Deborah Glick on many students that were
22 coming out of community colleges attempting to
23 transfer with an associates degree going to a
24 senior college and many of those credits were not
25 accepted. Even if you may have the same the

1
2 advisor, the same professor within the CUNY system
3 that was not always a easier path. So I appreciate
4 this initiative and the steps that were made to
5 conform to some of the concerns as far as annual
6 reviews. I guess my question is about the common
7 core courses and students preparation for those
8 Common Core. We know that we have challenges within
9 our Educational system from early education to
10 Higher Ed. And I remember CUNY has always been an
11 advocate in Alban about the burden sometimes of
12 high school graduates coming into college with the
13 requirement of so much remedial work because of,
14 you know the fact that they did not get necessarily
15 the quality of education that they deserved. And so
16 with the Common Core preparation does that replace
17 the remedial classes? Is it a subset? And how do
18 you prepare some of the vulnerable students that
19 are coming out of high school that need remedial
20 work with this preparation on the Common core?

21 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Good questions.
22 That, the Common Core does not replace remedial
23 work. When students come into the community
24 colleges with remedial needs they take courses
25 designed to bring them to academic proficiency in

1
2 math, reading, and writing. Once they obtain
3 proficiency they begin taking common core courses
4 but all common core courses are credit bearing
5 courses which is not the case with the remedial
6 ones. And of course students had many different
7 levels of proficiency. You might have students who
8 come out of high school with high level math skills
9 and other students who come in with very low level
10 math skills. So every college is aware of the range
11 of skills among its students. So they might put
12 into the mathematics area of the common core, they
13 would very likely to put an array of math courses
14 so that students can find a course which challenges
15 but which is possible for them to do at whatever
16 level of math they begin.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: And just a,
18 another follow-up. Does this affect students that
19 are in any of the opportunity programs like College
20 Discovery or Seek in any way? I mean because I know
21 many of them are in specific programs based on an
22 interested, based on a need, how does the pathway
23 program intertwine with any of our opportunity
24 students?

1
2 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I think for
3 any of the opportunity students this, as for other
4 students at CUNY it provides them with a better
5 clearer curricular path and so it allows them a
6 chance to... I think the most critical aspect for
7 them and for other students is that once they
8 fulfilled a requirement it's on their transcript
9 that they had fulfilled it and that requirement
10 doesn't have to be remit at another college and
11 that's true for the opportunity students as well.

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: thank you. We'll
13 now hear from Council Member Cumbo.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you. Thank
15 you very much Madam Chair. I wanted to ask you... ore
16 specifically, you spoke very clearly about it but I
17 would want further clarity on it in the sense of I
18 had no idea that many students were transferring at
19 this very large number. Can you talk more
20 specifically? Is it more economic related? Is it
21 also more location or geography changes? Or is it
22 really specifically moving into the areas of major
23 or focus changes in that way?

24 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well CUNY is a very
25 unusual university. And across the country there

1
2 are very few like it because it is one university
3 that has within it both the associate programs and
4 baccalaureate programs, and then graduate programs
5 as well. So it contains every level of education
6 within it. So we have many many students who start
7 with associate degrees and they have high
8 aspirations. They might have wanted to go say to
9 hunter originally but they began at a community
10 college because they have remedial needs. Once they
11 have met those needs, once they've achieved
12 proficiency they can move on to a senior college
13 including maybe the very college they've been
14 dreaming of that entire time. So we have a lot of
15 transfer students whose hearts lie ahead with the
16 colleges they hope to join so they can get their
17 baccalaureate degrees later. And the community
18 college provides an arena in which they develop an
19 array of skills before transferring. And also
20 because we're just one city. It is easy for
21 students to transfer. You know if you look at the
22 SUNY community colleges they're very different...

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Right.

24 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: ...because they're so
25 widespread that they're very regionally based. And

1
2 that's really not true. A community college, CUNY,
3 like BMCC in southern part of Manhattan it draws
4 students from every borough because they can easily
5 get to it wherever they are.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And also I wanted
7 to ask you, this is such a new initiative; was it
8 rolled out or piloted prior to this so that you
9 would have some understanding of its impact or have
10 an opportunity to tweak it in some ways. Because I
11 know that this is something that has just presented
12 itself. And so were there other institutions where
13 this was piloted to understand what they impact...
14 [crosstalk]

15 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well there are
16 other universities which have something broadly
17 similar...

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: I'm sorry could
19 you start the sentence again?

20 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: I'm sorry. There
21 are other universities across the country that have
22 something broadly similar. University System of
23 Georgia for example.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Okay.
25

1
2 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: And we talked
3 extensively with people from that university,
4 faculty members, and administrators and found out
5 how did it work for them, what they would do
6 differently, what they thought was good about it.
7 And we took many of those issues into account. Also
8 as I mentioned the Board Resolution itself builds
9 in a review process. And so it is our thought that
10 as Pathways, as the implementation continues that
11 if we see things that need to be tweaked or fixed
12 then there is a review process. And the concept
13 behind that was we didn't want the university to go
14 through, to be locked in forever when it could be
15 easily fixed, easily reviewed as an ordinary
16 process of improvement. And we are grateful to
17 interim chancellor Bill Kelly for doing that so
18 skillfully in this first review process. Pathways
19 has been improved and I think those changes have
20 been well received at the colleges. And we will
21 continue with that as we go forward.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: And then one
23 final question. And, and this more relates to your
24 personal experiences with it. But since it has been
25 rolled out what have you found to be the greatest

1 challenges or what have you found to be the
2 greatest stumbling blocks, or issues, or those very
3 tweaks that you talked about in terms of how has it
4 not met your expectations in this roll out?
5

6 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well of course we
7 were afraid that it might be something like the
8 healthcare act where the software would crash,
9 there would be disasters, that didn't happen at
10 all. In fact people met every week for over a year
11 to prepare like a registration systems, the
12 advisors, the, all the different people who work at
13 CUNY to, to understand the system and help students
14 with it. And Degree Works itself had to be what's
15 called rescribed[phonetic] so that the new
16 requirements were in built so that students could
17 get accurate information about their own records
18 and what they had to do, what their new
19 requirements were. And that was a gigantic amount
20 of work to repair all those facets of Pathways. And
21 maybe to our surprise it went very smoothly. We've
22 heard very few cases where students couldn't get
23 the courses they wanted. It seems to be on in a
24 sort of an implementation arena to have worked
25 well. As far as for what we want in the future. I

1
2 guess we would hope to work with the faculty and we
3 believe that some of these changes in Pathways will
4 be conducive to that. For example, selection of the
5 faculty members for the course review committees,
6 through the regular government systems we are
7 hoping that Pathways will become integral to the
8 fundamental workings of the colleges and that CUNY
9 will work together as a university to improve it
10 step by step.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you very
12 much.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Just
14 before I go to Council, Council Member Rodriguez
15 Ms. Cumbo's question prompts a question for me as
16 we talk about the roll out. How do you adjust this
17 rollout in implementation with the fact that there
18 was a 90 percent vote of no confidence from the
19 faculty. So how do you address that... [crosstalk]

20 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well, just to
21 clarify the vote of no confidence.

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

23 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: It is true that
24 among those who voted it was a very high level of
25

1
2 negative vote but many faculty members did not
3 vote. So I don't think it's...

4 [background talking]

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Please let's have
6 order. Please, please. You'll have a chance.

7 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: I think what I say
8 is correct. So I don't think it's 92 percent vote
9 of the entire faculty.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: right but how do
11 you rectify that number... [crosstalk, interpose]

12 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: We recognize that...

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...moving forward as
14 we're talking about a rollout and such a large...

15 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Right. We recognize
16 that there has been opposition to Pathways on the
17 part of faculty members and I think that in fact
18 many colleges were able to take their existing gen.
19 ed. requirements, general education requirements
20 and, and really carry them through into the new
21 Common Core because the Common Core is quite a
22 flexible structure. So again we are hopeful that as
23 Pathways continues faculty will increasingly
24 recognize that they maintain a fundamental level of
25 control of the curriculum because they develop the

1
2 courses, they decide which courses go into the
3 areas of the final core. And they can change that
4 at any point. It's also faculty members who do the
5 review, entirely faculty composed committee that
6 reviews the courses. So we are hopeful that as this
7 change sort of settles into the university that
8 people will recognize that it does not strip the
9 faculty of their fundamental prerogatives. It in
10 fact creates better arrangements for our students,
11 it creates us as a more workable integrated
12 university.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, Council
14 Member Ydanis Rodriguez who was the former chair of
15 the Higher Ed.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you
17 Chairman and say congratulation for the leadership
18 that I know that you will be having this important
19 committee. It, for me, was a honor to chair this
20 committee and now I know that you will do a great
21 job. Transferring is not an easy thing and I know
22 that as a former student that I was at City
23 College, very involved in the student movement
24 since the 80s and 90s and 2000. I can say that I
25 have some idea a, a, on how CUNY been operating

1 from the student perspective, from, from the
2 student activism point of view. And one I can say
3 that if we know that we had challenges when it come
4 to transferring today imagine in the 80s and the
5 90s. Like there was a moment where a student was
6 transferring from also community college, from BMCC
7 graduating with assisted credit and get into city
8 college and they only recognize 10 and 15 credits
9 at that time. So I believe that no doubt CUNY has
10 make important progress when it come to be more
11 accurate. It when, rate, it, having a system in
12 place where if the system, if a student is spent
13 two year, today four or four year or five year to
14 get a associate when he or she go to a senior
15 college those a student should be able to complete
16 their other 65 credit that we take then to get a
17 BA. However I also understand that there's
18 legitimate concern from a professor perspective who
19 is teaching city college. A, the question will be,
20 did the student get enough signs, were the student
21 provide enough quality service of life, and signs,
22 and language at the community college so that that
23 student is ready when they get into city college,
24 to get into engineer. So I know that even today,
25

1
2 like it's a challenge that we have. Like how well
3 prepare are those a student when they get a
4 associate so that when they get to their senior
5 college they read it, got it, all their resources
6 and support so their good. So my question is, one
7 of my question is like how are we doing, how is
8 CUNY doing today to provide all the resources that
9 a professor at a community college need to be sure
10 that they provide all the signs, language, labs
11 that they need in order to be ready when they
12 transfer to a senior college?

13 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I think that
14 one aspect of the common core which is perhaps
15 being too little recognized is that it provides
16 faculty members with insights about courses at
17 other colleges in the system. Because the faculty
18 members and the course review committee see the
19 courses, the syllabi and the plans, the
20 assignments. When they review the courses it means
21 they have more insight into the nature of these
22 courses and it allows for a more comprehensive
23 understanding of what the curriculum of the
24 university as a whole is. And I think this has been
25 a big benefit. Also we mentioned that in the major

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2 committees the faculty members from the biggest
3 transfer majors sat down together from the senior
4 colleges and the community colleges and they talked
5 about their courses and what standard those courses
6 should meet and what standards those, what would be
7 the key elements of the courses, that students
8 should cover. So I think that making the university
9 a more integrated university from the standpoint of
10 student transfer has also been helpful for the kind
11 of issues you raise about ensuring a quality, a
12 common understanding of quality at the different
13 units at CUNY.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: ...everyone who
15 talk about CUNY look at CUNY from the city and
16 state perspectives especially from the city
17 perspective you know. They institution that provide
18 know only that the degree to the 260 thousand a
19 student but also the institution that a provide all
20 the trainings and create jobs, although
21 stopper[phonetic] expectation. How much, how, has
22 CUNY been going through a reduction or increase of
23 funding? How is CUNY doing financially to provide
24 those labs, services that a student need? Like
25 point blank when I was in city college I know in my

1
2 schedule like how many hour, how many hour did we
3 have in our labs for writing, for reading, for
4 math. Can we say that's they, throughout senior
5 colleges and our community college that CUNY had
6 the financial support to provide enough hours or
7 labs so that a student can do the work?

8 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I believe so.
9 I mentioned that CUNY has right now, in the common
10 core, over 500 science and math courses. And these
11 courses of a special kind, they're called stem
12 variant courses, and those courses have more than
13 the standard three credits. They have as many hours
14 and credits as the colleges want. So they are
15 designed to allow students to do intensive lab work
16 or to invest heavily in learning difficult kinds of
17 math and levels of math. And 500 such courses is a
18 lot of courses and those are just the ones in
19 common core. Of course there are many others in the
20 majors. So I believe that CUNY has invested its
21 resources to make such courses available to
22 students. That's not to say that you know there
23 couldn't be curricular improvements but I think
24 that there has been a, a significant effort to
25

1
2 sustain that kind of very valuable lab learning
3 that you mention.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. We do
6 have another presenter from the panel so at this
7 time you would like to give your testimony.

8 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Great. Good
9 morning Chair Barron, members of the Higher
10 Education Committee. My name is Frank Sanchez and
11 I'm the Vice Chancellor for student affairs at the
12 City University of New York. I very much appreciate
13 this opportunity to address the committee on higher
14 education and share with you student feedback on
15 the challenges of the transfer process prior to
16 Pathways initiative. Much of the student feedback
17 and comments I'm going to share with you this
18 morning have been based on testimony made at the
19 Board of Trustees hearings, borough hearings as
20 well. It's through a variety of other student form.
21 For decades there have been ongoing discussions and
22 frankly complaints about the challenges associated
23 with students transferring from one CUNY college to
24 another. As mentioned previously there are now
25 significant numbers who transfer students across

1 the CUNY system in need of a simplified system of
2 transfer. During this testimony I will like to
3 briefly highlight some of the most common and
4 frequently articulated challenges faced by transfer
5 students. To better understand the challenges
6 associated with the transfer process CUNY officials
7 listened to students' comments formally and
8 informally on numerous occasions. In particular
9 forms were conducted with students who had enough
10 credits to graduate but had not done so. CUNY
11 continues to be interested in seeing whether
12 transfer problems contribute to students
13 accumulation of excess credits. Students during
14 these focus groups and other gatherings have
15 expressed a variety of challenges including the
16 following. The transfer system is confusing,
17 complex, hard to understand, and uncertain.
18 Students commented that they were often discouraged
19 to the point of delaying their college education
20 when hearing how few credits would actually
21 transfer. Students experience significant delays in
22 having their transfer credits evaluated. This delay
23 often impacted financial aid and availability of
24 course selection for the following semester. The
25

1 inability to transfer credits also reduces the
2 availability of students' federal financial aid and
3 TAP support. Students reported running out of TAP
4 and financial aid as a result of not being able to
5 transfer credits. This is particularly concerning
6 for students with disabilities who often progress
7 at a slower rate without these additional
8 obstacles. Students complained how the transfer of
9 courses in the Major can vary depending on the
10 judgments of individual faculty members and across
11 the different CUNY colleges. To students there seem
12 to be no logic on why some courses could transfer
13 at one institution and not another. Student forms
14 also revealed unique challenges for CUNY's LGBT
15 student community. Students testified at CUNY
16 hearings that LGBT students often come out during
17 the college years and are frequently often
18 displaced from their family home as a result. These
19 personal circumstances often force these students
20 to have to consider transferring to other college
21 options at CUNY. Before Pathways this difficult,
22 personal, and academic transition was made more
23 challenging as a result of the confusing transfer
24 practices. Students have complained about the
25

1
2 number of general education credits required at
3 CUNY. Prior to Pathways CUNY students on average
4 were required to take 52 credits in general
5 education with some CUNY colleges general credits
6 as high as 62. With the average credits, the
7 average path, with Pathways the average credits
8 have gone down to 42 credits providing the
9 flexibility in completing degrees. Students also
10 made comments about the inability to have double
11 majors and minors as a result of the large general
12 education requirements. I hopefully briefly have
13 attempted to provide the Higher Education Committee
14 with some of the student challenges related to the
15 transfer practices and policies prior to the
16 Pathways initiative. Thank you for the opportunity
17 to share this perspective on this important
18 Pathways initiative.

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you for your
20 testimony. We have a large number who are, who are
21 here to present testimony so I'm going to ask my
22 colleagues if we would limit ourselves to two
23 minutes and I'm going to also put myself on that
24 two minute limit to do that as well. There's a
25 question about students transferring in. Yes you

1
2 can keep it. Thank you. They are transferring in
3 and we heard that students who are transferring
4 into CUNY are sometimes off, also not receiving
5 credit for the coursework completed at non-CUNY
6 schools because of the extensive requirements for
7 our community colleges. Are you aware of such
8 situations that have occurred, the problems, is it
9 widespread, and how are you addressing that?

10 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: I'm going to
11 probably defer to either of my colleagues here but
12 I have certainly have heard students who have come
13 from outside of CUNY coming in and facing what many
14 of our students faced, kind of a confusing, you
15 know matrix of trying to figure out what courses
16 are going to be able to transfer in, particularly
17 the time frame in which this all occurs when
18 they're trying to get financial aid, they're trying
19 to figure out if in fact they can register for the
20 following semester but I'm, I'm going to defer to...

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well let me just
22 jump to my other question because my two minutes
23 will run out.

24 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: How does CUNY
25 plan to measure Pathways impact? What's going to be

1
2 your criteria for determining Pathways' success?
3 What are going to be your objectives to say this
4 has worked?

5 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I think what
6 we'll do is we'll look at whether students in
7 practice have been able to take their courses with
8 them when they take their fulfilment of
9 requirements with them when they transfer to
10 another CUNY college. That's the way the system is
11 supposed to work and we believe it will work that
12 way... [crosstalk]

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So will it also
14 include the length of time that it takes for a
15 student to graduate. Will that be a part of your
16 evaluation as well?

17 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Yes, certainly but
18 that will be a little down the road because our
19 students unfortunately do not graduate super
20 quickly but we hope that they will graduate more
21 quickly once they have the common core and they
22 have a clear set of requirements to meet. So we
23 believe that will be manifested but not
24 immediately.

1
2 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Yeah I, I
3 would add I, I think from a student perspective
4 certainly the level of satisfaction students are
5 having with the transfer process. We work very
6 closely with the University Student Senate. When
7 students were raising issues and concerns we sat
8 down with them and talked about how this process
9 would occur. I imagine we're going to continue our
10 close relationship with the University Student
11 Senate, gather feedback and see if in fact this
12 process is improving the transfer ability of
13 students from one institution to another.

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, so it will
15 include student satisfaction as well as faculty
16 satisfaction that the program's working.

17 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I'm going to
19 pass now to my colleagues Council Member Gibson.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you. Just
21 a quick question. It's a follow-up on Madam
22 Chairwoman's point. Including all of the
23 stakeholders in assessing the performance of
24 Pathways, the success, the failure, any of the
25 challenges, during the annual review which I

1
2 imagine will be coming up this fall right, if it's
3 annual basis, how willing are you to entertain some
4 of the changes or some of the concerns that may be
5 posed by any of the faculty or the students as it
6 relates to streamlining this process a little bit
7 better? And I say that because a lot of times
8 whether it's the website, whether it's the guidance
9 counselors, the advisors, you know we recognize
10 that with any new concept there are students that
11 always fall through the cracks. And to the extent
12 that we can try to prevent that and provide a
13 smoother transition and really allow students to
14 really understand. Because in the past many
15 students that fell into these scenarios where
16 they're, they have a choice of a senior college but
17 one college is accepting more credits versus
18 another at times that's their decision and that
19 ultimately determines what college they're going to
20 go to. And that may not necessarily be their first
21 choice but it's because they know that they would
22 be a year or two behind. So how willing are you to
23 entertain any concerns that may come about as you
24 undertake your review of the performance of the
25 program?

1
2 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: I, I think that
3 will be fundamental, that we'll want to understand
4 what the issues are for faculty members and
5 students for colleges. We need to include as much
6 information as we can in considering the success of
7 the program. I might mention one other thing that
8 we haven't touched upon so far which is that
9 because students can, with confidence, complete
10 their general education at their community colleges
11 it means it provides an incentive for them to
12 complete the associate degree before transferring.
13 This is much safer for students because CUNY has
14 quite a few students who start off to get an
15 associate degree, they're anxious about their
16 credits not transferring so they jump to a senior
17 college as soon as they can and then they never get
18 the associate degree. They may ultimately, life may
19 intervene, they may not end up with a Bachelor's
20 degree. So they might have been in CUNY for some
21 time and end up with no degree. With the confidence
22 that they have in the common core that they fulfil
23 requirements which will work when they transfer to
24 senior college it provides an incentive for them to
25 stay and get their degree. So I mention that just

1
2 by way of saying it's another factor we'll
3 evaluate.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Council
5 Member Cumbo. Two minutes, question and response.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you very
7 much for your presentation. I just wanted to, I
8 have a comment and then a question. It's going to
9 be very important for us in the council to have a
10 very keen understanding of what your benchmarks for
11 success are. And I recognize that this is a rollout
12 program and that it's going to take years to
13 understand the impact. But it would be very
14 effective for us to know what are your goals, what
15 are your benchmarks, and what is going to be the
16 very formal evaluation process that you're going to
17 utilize that is already built in and created so
18 that effectively every year we can start to
19 understand how progress is being made and are we
20 meeting those realistic benchmarks. But I know that
21 we're going to hear a lot of testimony but I wanted
22 to make sure that you could provide us with some
23 information in terms of where, where the school is
24 at currently and how this program will create the
25 impacts that we all want to see in terms of the

1
2 betterment of our student population. But my
3 question is, I know that there will be testimonies
4 afterwards but wanted to know, in your own words
5 what would you describe seems to be the challenge
6 that the faculty is having with the Pathways
7 program, and obviously we will hear from them, but
8 want to hear from you in terms of what is your
9 understanding of what the challenges are.

10 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I think each
11 college was very accustomed to having its own
12 general education and you know the colleges had
13 their own histories and traditions, their own
14 academic priorities. And they each had a
15 distinctive general education that they had worked
16 out. And so that was fine when, when CUNY didn't
17 have so much transfer. But once CUNY became an
18 institution where the students were going from one
19 college to another at very high rates as we
20 discussed then it was no longer so workable for the
21 students to have these highly varied general
22 education programs. But the faculty had invested
23 time and effort and thought into creating those
24 programs and didn't necessarily want to see them
25 change to fit the common core. But we believe the

1
2 common core is actually is able to accommodate
3 rather varied academic programs but in a framework
4 which makes transfer safe for students. So I think
5 that's the core of it.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, we want to
8 acknowledge we've been joined by Council Member
9 Williams. Council Member Rodriguez do you have a
10 question? Two minutes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Why, why CUNY
12 realize that you needed to create the Pathway? What
13 was the working at CUNY? What was a need that the
14 student had that realized CUNY to stay there is
15 something that isn't working, that we had, that
16 Pathway can change?

17 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Well certainly
18 in, in the short time I've been at CUNY for the
19 last three years but I learned decades before that
20 in different student forms whether it's a
21 University Student Senate, Student Body Government
22 Presidents, this issue of transfer increasingly
23 became an issue and, and we've, we've heard in, in
24 again forums with trustees, with the Chancellery.
25 Where consistently year after year gradually this

1
2 was a common theme that would come up with
3 students. And so I, I think it again, I, I've only
4 been to City University for, for three years but
5 the, the administration had been hearing this for
6 many, many, many years. And this is a, a very, it's
7 a difficult topic. If it was easy it would have
8 happened decades ago but it's a very tough thing to
9 change because you're talking about a large system.
10 The university decided after hearing from students
11 over and over and over again it's time to move this
12 forward, move the dial and improve transfer for
13 students. [crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Let me ask my
15 second question. [crosstalk]

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I think your time
17 is just about up... [crosstalk, interpose] 30
18 seconds... [interpose]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: How much
20 hope...

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: For an answer too.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: How much hope
23 are the professor in this process of Path, they
24 were creating the Path for, and we know that the
25 professor, they have to work with a group or a

1
2 student that they come with a lot of need. No, we
3 know that reality... some of the student getting into
4 community college they need a lot of remedial
5 courses, they need, they need math, they need
6 science, they was not ready. DOE did not prepare
7 them to go to college many of those a student. How
8 much, what role does professor play when it come to
9 providing all the support they need, so that they
10 can prepare the student better to go to a, go to a
11 senior college.

12 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I think that
13 is fundamental to the work of professor and, and
14 faculty members bring a lot of dedication to that
15 task. I might also add just to make sure we have a
16 balanced understanding of the issue that many many
17 hundreds of faculty members did participate in
18 working on Pathways as it was developed and that
19 same dedication they bring to their students they
20 also brought to thinking through how these issues
21 could be resolved. They've served on the course
22 review committees, they served on the steering
23 committee, they worked at their own colleges to
24 create new courses, to evaluate courses. There was
25

1
2 very large scale faculty involvement in this
3 initiative.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, Council
5 Member Williams. You have two minutes to pose a
6 question and have a response.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I didn't sign
8 up but okay. Thank you Madam Chair and it's nice to
9 have the Barron name back. And thank you for
10 testifying. Oh no, the other Chair Council, Chair
11 Rodriguez was also very well, very good. So I'm
12 not, I'm sorry I missed your testimony but my, my
13 statement of the question, I'm still trying to get
14 a lot of information based on testimonies that were
15 here. I thought Pathways was supposed to fix a lot
16 of things that were broken. A lot of feedback that
17 I've gotten was that it's not working. It's
18 disenfranchising some students particularly black
19 and brown some, and some lower income students. I'm
20 just concerned about that. So from your experience,
21 and you may have answered this already are you
22 finding that this is working better for the broad
23 section of students that were having trouble
24 before? And if, is there a study that kind of talks
25 about that?

1
2 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I think that
3 this initiative is actually very geared to helping
4 students who were exactly as you described that
5 come into community colleges. They haven't been
6 adequately prepared in their prior coursework. They
7 have remedial needs. These, they're low income
8 students. These are the students who begin in the
9 community colleges in many cases and then transfer
10 and this entire initiative is geared to helping
11 that set of students as well as all the others who
12 transfer at CUNY.

13 RICHARD ALVEREZ: And I think, Richard
14 Alvarez, University Director of Admission, I do
15 think that it has allowed us to guarantee students
16 and their families. That it doesn't matter which
17 unit of the university they begin.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I'm sorry I
19 know that the chair is very strict of the time but
20 I just want to make sure, the question was is
21 there, have you gauged whether those students are
22 doing better under this Pathways than they were
23 previously before the Pathways and what mechanism
24 have you used to gauge that.

1
2 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Well for the
3 new students that entered the University this fall
4 this is the only curriculum they know. So what
5 we've done is we have outlined exactly what they
6 need to do to complete their 30 credit common core
7 and when, once they move onto a four year
8 institution they'll know what their additional
9 courses are so that it does provide an assurance
10 that it doesn't matter which unit of the university
11 they start that all of their requirements and their
12 courses are going to go with them if they decide to
13 move to another unit within the City University of
14 New York.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I'm sorry
16 Madam Chair. My question wasn't really addressed.
17 I'm trying to figure out if you have a mechanism to
18 figure out whether the students who are using this
19 current pathway system are doing better than the
20 students who were using the system before?

21 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: It's too early for
22 us to have that information since they just started
23 in September but it is our goal to look at how many
24 students that transferred, how many of those
25 credits transferred in. And I think part of what

1
2 we've been trying to do is not be content with just
3 providing access to higher education but looking at
4 outcomes and completion. So we'll be looking at
5 graduation rates, we'll be looking at credit
6 accumulation rates because the goal is to get more
7 students not to get started but to complete their
8 goal whether it be an associates degree or a
9 baccalaureates degree.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you
11 Madam Chair. I know my time is up but I would ask
12 you to, to ask, to CUNY if we can get when they
13 would know or the mechanism and what time frame
14 they're going to use to gauge that. That'll be
15 good. Thank you we'll do that. One final question.
16 What impact does budgeting have in terms of the
17 courses that are offered through Pathways as
18 opposed to courses that were offered previously.
19 How is this impacting the budgeting, the fact that
20 there's a three hour class and it doesn't have the
21 lab and those kinds of considerations?

22 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well I don't
23 believe that Pathways was ever designed to
24 economize from the University standpoint. It's
25 designed to help students economize by not having

1
2 to repeat courses or take excess credits. But
3 there's no reason that, that Pathways would be any,
4 any less costly for a university. The students
5 still have the same number of credits to take to
6 graduate. An associate degree, they still need 60
7 credits. For a baccalaureates degree they need 120
8 credits. So they still have the full array of
9 courses to take and it, they have more freedom,
10 they have more electives, they have more
11 intellectual choice... [crosstalk]

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So you don't see
13 any... because there was some, something in your
14 testimony that talked about the cost of students
15 having to take courses... [interpose]

16 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: There is a cost for
17 students. There's no doubt about it. If the student
18 cannot... [interpose]

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So you don't see
20 any budgeting... [crosstalk]

21 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: ...progress...
22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...impact because of
24 Pathways as opposed to what existed before? There's

25

1
2 no budgeting impact in terms of staffing or classes
3 or... There's no difference... [crosstalk, interpose]

4 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Well we...

5 [crosstalk]

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...that Pathways will
7 create?

8 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: We believe there
9 will ultimately be a savings generated by students
10 who can more efficiently... [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But not on...

12 [crosstalk]

13 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: ...and successfully...

14 [crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...not on facilities...

16 [crosstalk, interpose]

17 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: ...for their degrees...

18 [crosstalk, interpose]

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...not on...

21 [crosstalk, interpose]

22
23 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: ...but... [crosstalk,
24 interpose]

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...labs, not on...
3 [crosstalk, interpose]

4
5 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: I don't think so
6 because it's the same number of total credits.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, well we thank
8 you for your testimony and we do expect that those
9 two questions I believe that we had you'll get back
10 to us on them.

11 CHANCELLOR WRIGLEY: Okay.

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much.
13 And we're now going to call our second panel. And
14 Jarold Chanowolf [sp?] I hope I'm pronouncing your
15 name properly, Michael Batson, Professional Staff
16 Congress, Manfred Phillip, from Professional Staff
17 Congress and we are going to have, oh you're
18 staying good, okay, Barbara Bowen Professional
19 Staff conference, Congress I'm sorry, and Michael...
20 what is it Fabricat[phonetic], Fabricant okay.
21 Thank you. Say again. Savic Ford [sp?] is also a
22 part of this panel.

23 [background comments]

24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: If you could please
3 Savic Ford [sp?] if you could please complete one
4 of these forms, it must be a part of the record.

5 SAVIC FORD: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay as you're
7 getting settled I'm going to ask you all to raise
8 your right hands. Do swear and/or affirm to tell
9 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
10 truth in your testimony before this committee and
11 to respond honestly to all Council Member
12 questions.

13 [collective affirmations]

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Please
15 introduce yourselves as you give your testimony.

16 BARBARA BOWEN: Good morning. I'm
17 Barbara Bowen. I'm a Professor of English at Queens
18 College in the CUNY Grad Center and I'm President
19 of the Professional Staff Congress CUNY,
20 representing the 25,000 faculty and staff at the
21 City University. My other colleagues will introduce
22 themselves as they speak and as you know there are
23 many, many other faculty, staff, and students in
24 the room who are eager to talk to you. First of all
25 Council Member Barron I want to thank you,

1
2 congratulate you on your Chairpersonship and thank
3 you for convening this hearing and recognizing the
4 importance of this subject. And I also want to
5 thank the other Council Members, some of whom are
6 veterans of the Higher Ed. Committee, some are new,
7 and we look forward to working with all of you. We
8 very much appreciate your interest in and focus on
9 Pathways and we see Pathways as vital to the
10 meaning and the health of the University and our,
11 our criticisms of Pathways you will hear as we
12 speak, we share your sense that this is not about
13 asking the council to have decision making on
14 curriculum but rather in your role of advocacy for
15 students and for the quality of CUNY, something you
16 have always supported. There are a couple of things
17 I wanted to say first. Just some responses to what
18 you heard earlier. You mentioned Council Member
19 Barron that you were looking forward to other
20 studies from CUNY. I think it's important to note
21 that there was no data offered by, interim Vice
22 Chancellor Wrigley in her statement about the
23 difficulty of transfer. And in fact when you look
24 carefully at the data you see that the credit load
25 of courses, of students who have transferred is not

1 significantly different from the students who have
2 not transferred. So I think it bears attention. We
3 do not at all deny that there's difficulty with
4 transfer but I think we, the council to be fair,
5 you should ask for the data and look carefully and
6 see that the difference the transfer makes and does
7 not make. Second in Dr. Wrigley's own study the
8 qualitative data offered by the students show that
9 the, it, the issue they site most frequently for
10 their difficulty in completing colleges is not
11 transfer, it's finances, it's the difficulty of
12 staying in college particularly with the increased
13 tuition. So if there were one thing CUNY could do
14 to help students progress through college it would
15 be to reduce the tuition. That is the major barrier
16 that students face. Also I want to correct
17 something that was said about the 92 percent vote
18 of no confidence in Pathways. Doctor Wrigley
19 suggested that there, it was not a valid vote. I
20 know that she didn't use that word but she
21 suggested it wasn't a valid vote because many
22 faculty didn't vote. In fact it was extraordinarily
23 high level of participation by the full time
24 faculty. Nearly two thirds voted and out of those
25

1
2 who voted 92 percent voted no confidence in the
3 curriculum. That's faculty from every discipline,
4 every college, every political stripe, and I think
5 when you get 92 percent of the faculty voting no
6 confidence there is something much more going on
7 than simply adhering to old patterns which is what
8 was, was, was the answer when you asked before,
9 that faculty had invested in their previous
10 curricula. The reason faculty voted no confidence
11 is that we believe the Pathways curriculum degrades
12 the quality of education for CUNY students. We
13 believe it sacrifices quality for speed and for
14 quote efficiency and is part of a national agenda
15 which we also see in K through 12 education that
16 focuses on standardization and testing rather than
17 quality and teaching. So let me say a few things
18 and then I'll turn it over to my colleagues. So we
19 ask as the union why is the CUNY administration
20 risking so much for Pathways. If you accept the
21 premise that Pathways is about facilitating student
22 transfer the CUNY position seems inexplicable.
23 Apparently for the sake of implementing a new
24 transfer policy the CUNY administration is willing
25 to degrade general education, alienate almost the

1
2 entire faculty, withstand two lawsuits, resort to
3 threats and intimidation including threats of
4 firing for faculty who didn't go along with it,
5 force Department chairs to choose between academic
6 integrity and departmental survival, give college
7 presidents the message that they may be fired if
8 they don't deliver votes on Pathways, and risk
9 national censure for violating academic freedom and
10 face certain administrative chaos as things unfold.
11 It doesn't make sense. If Pathways really were
12 about facilitating transfer there would be rational
13 ways to address the problem and restore
14 equilibrium. Elected faculty governance bodies
15 which is what was missing from the testimony you
16 heard before. We heard about faculty. What was not
17 said was that every single elected faculty body
18 that has representatives designated to work on
19 curriculum, every single one was bypassed in the
20 formation and early implementation of Pathways.
21 There has been, as was mentioned before now a
22 change where some elected faculty bodies are
23 participating in the selection of people for the
24 common core course review. But it's important to
25 notice that. Connections between two and four year

1 colleges could be extended. We have existing
2 pathways already that could have been invoked. Most
3 of the difficulty students experience in
4 transferring would disappear if CUNY were funded at
5 a level that allowed enough sections of classes,
6 enough full time faculty, and enough counselors as
7 you said to give students the individual attention
8 they need. The problem of transfer is a problem of
9 resources. The CUNY administration hasn't
10 considered the obvious alternative approaches to
11 improving student transfer problems because
12 Pathways is not about transfer. It is about the
13 quote college completion agenda, a national higher
14 education agenda that while it names a worthy goal
15 is ultimately tailored to reinforce economic
16 austerity. It is promoted by many of the same
17 interests that are behind the testing, not
18 teaching, reform movement in K through 12
19 education. Even the name Pathways is not original.
20 It has appeared since 2005 in documents by the
21 Lumina foundation, one of the main proponents of
22 the agenda and a foundation whose assets derive
23 from profits from student loans. We make a serious
24 error of scale if we think of Pathways as purely a
25

1 CUNY phenomenon. In a policy world where
2 universities are increasingly judged and funded on
3 a single measure of success, college completion,
4 CUNY is attempting to make sure that the university
5 measures up. And I want to be clear that not a
6 single faculty member here or staff member believes
7 anything other than that our students should
8 graduate and should be supported to do that but not
9 graduation at the cost of quality. That's what
10 we're talking about. Instead the College Completion
11 Agenda like its better known counterpart quote
12 Education Reform in K through 12 schools suggest
13 that private corporations can fill the void left by
14 public funding withdrawal. And this relates to the
15 question that Council Barron, Council Member Barron
16 mentioned before. While Pathways itself may not be
17 an economy it accommodates to scarcity. The real
18 solution to helping students at CUNY is to fund the
19 university adequately. If every one of our students
20 were funded per student at the 5,000 dollars more
21 that ASAP students are funded at we would not see
22 transfer problems. We believe that Pathways is an
23 accommodation to underfunding and that the only
24 response to underfunding is to insist on full
25

1 funding. Faculty and staff are here because we
2 believe that the students at CUNY deserve the best
3 education not a just in time second best quick
4 education that is standardized and imposed by the
5 administration. We believe they deserve the best.
6 However benign the goal of improving graduation
7 rates Pathways is not politically innocent. It is
8 austerity education for jobs in an austerity
9 economy. It is about spending less per student. It
10 is about graduating more students in a shorter time
11 at lower cost. Most cruelly it about lowering the
12 expectations of working class, poor, and middle
13 class students. Pathways like everything else in
14 America is about race. If you need to be convinced
15 that education is being rationed by Pathways take a
16 look at the full page ads for the new for profit
17 school avenues whose tuition is more than 40,000
18 dollars a year. It's chairman is Dr. Benoschmit
19 Junior, chair of CUNY board of trustees. While the
20 general education curriculum Schmitt ushered
21 through for CUNY students does not mandate even a
22 single required foreign language course. The
23 curriculum at Avenues starting in elementary school
24 promises fluency in at least one additional
25

1
2 language. Fluency is essential I guess for the
3 children of the rich apparently. But even one
4 required three hour language course is too
5 extravagant for the children of the poor. When the
6 Chicago teachers went out on strike largely over
7 the dilution of education and de-
8 professionalization of teachers their president
9 Karen Louis announced we are fighting for the soul
10 of public education, something very like the soul
11 of public higher education is at stake in Pathways.
12 Thank you.

13 [applause]

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I will
15 ask that we hold on questions so that we can get
16 the testimony. So the next panel..

17 JAROLD CHANOWOLF: Hello, my name is
18 Jarold Chanowolf [sp?] I left my glasses at home so
19 I'm going to have to try to read this as best I
20 can...

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well you can
22 summarize.. that would.. that would be..

23 JAROLD CHANOWOLF: Okay, and I'll
24 probably have to do that.

25

1
2 CHAIRPERON BARRON: And we do have your
3 testimony in the record.

4 JAROLD CHANOWOLF: I have been an adjunct
5 associate professor at BMCC for about eight years
6 and have taught at various other New York Colleges
7 for 15 years. I'm also a licensed psychoanalyst and
8 I'm the author of 13 books on psychology and
9 psychoanalysis. I think it's impossible to know
10 whether Pathways will improve the graduation rates
11 as its goal states. My guess is that graduation
12 rates won't be affected by Pathways because the
13 problem of declining graduation rates goes deeper
14 than the choice of a curriculum. Declining
15 graduation rates are linked with social problems
16 that plague our culture including a declining
17 literacy rate. We are now 37th in the world where
18 as we were once number one, a high divorce rate, a
19 rising rate of crime, and drug addiction. These
20 social problems are all related to changes in our
21 values that have made parenting less important and
22 careers more important. They are also related to
23 changes in values that have made being an educated
24 person less important in getting a degree as a
25 career stepping stone more important. The decline

1
2 in the quality of parenting and the devaluation of
3 education for education's sake is I think at the
4 heart of the declining graduation rate. Another and
5 more important problem with Pathways is that it is
6 no longer education in the traditional sense.

7 College education has traditionally had as it's
8 goal to teach students how to think for themselves.

9 It attempted to provide a basic knowledge base in
10 the liberal arts, sciences, social sciences that
11 would equip students with the skills to perform
12 advanced cognitive linguistic literary mathematical
13 and scientific and analytic operations. As the, as
14 the center of the Pathways curriculum is a
15 required, at the center of the Pathways is a
16 required course on diversity. My question is why do

17 we need to require students to take a course on
18 diversity? How will that help the graduation rate?

19 I, I think that you know that there should not be
20 any political or religious agenda that is, that is
21 imposed on our educational system. We wouldn't
22 require a course on religious tolerance as a core
23 curriculum course and I don't think it's correct to
24 require a course on diversity as, as a required
25 course in the curriculum. I think the, the bottom

1
2 line here is that Pathways will no longer have as
3 its goal to teach students to think for themselves.
4 Instead it will teach them what to think. Thank
5 you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

7 BARBARA BOWEN: Council Member Barron if
8 I could just say that it's my understanding that
9 while some colleges had a required course and a
10 wonderful course actually like at your college on
11 diversity there is not that requirement in the
12 common core of Pathways so we might develop that
13 further as we talk some more.

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, glad you
15 clarified that.

16 MANFORD PHILLIP: Hello.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Hello.

18 MANFORD PHILLIP: See if I can arrange
19 myself here properly. I'm Manford Phillip. I'm a
20 Professor of Chemistry at Lehman College in the
21 Bronx. I'm a Professor of biochem.

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I'm sorry your name
23 again?

24 MANFORD PHILLIP: Manford Phillip.

25 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

1
2 MANFORD PHILLIP: Okay. I'm a Professor
3 of Chemistry in, at Lehman College in the Bronx, a
4 Professor of Biochemistry and Chemistry at the
5 Graduate Center of CUNY. I'm a former Chair of the
6 University Faculty Senate and former Faculty
7 Trustee of the University. I have written testimony
8 about Pathways but I thought I'd toss that out
9 initially in response to some other comments. We've
10 heard about how Departmental Advisors can, can
11 advise students through the process of Pathways. In
12 my department at Lehman we have a departmental
13 advisor. Two afternoons a week is what we get paid
14 to have a Departmental Advisor. If a student can
15 only come in at night they don't get any
16 departmental advice. Why are we so short on these
17 things? If you look at the budget of CUNY, CUNY
18 spends about 13 thousand, maybe 14 thousand at the,
19 at the various colleges per student per year. New
20 York City schools according to the New York Times
21 spend over 20 thousand dollars per student per
22 year. CUNY is enormously short changed. We're short
23 on money for almost every little thing. Pathways
24 you've heard has been opposed by a huge number of
25 faculty. At the same time Pathways is coming in at

1
2 the, at, at the same time that CUNY's adopting a
3 new electronic system called CUNYfirst that to, put
4 it mildly, is chaotic. Is... very hard to use for
5 students and faculty. So Pathways even if it had
6 come in at the best possible time would have been
7 problematic it's coming at a time that's even worse
8 because of the new centralized computer system that
9 the City University is using. We just heard a
10 little while ago about how Pathways facilitates
11 former difficulties in having double majors and
12 minors. Lehman College used to require a minor for
13 all students. We thought that was a good idea when
14 students would get out into the world that they
15 would have a minor because 120 credit course limit
16 provides a space for that and it helps the students
17 to do that. Under Pathways we're prohibited to
18 require that minor. And let me tell you with a
19 budget kind of, with a kind of budget we have if a
20 course isn't required we can't easily offer it. We
21 can't, let's put it this way, we can't offer non-
22 required courses very well given the budget we
23 have. Because of there are very few students in a
24 class those classes necessarily get cancelled.
25 Remember that the public schools don't have

1 adjuncts, they don't have part time instructors.
2 Why? Because they're getting more than 20,000
3 dollars per student per year. More, the majority of
4 our instruction is now done by part timers who
5 aren't there when they're not working in class
6 except for maybe one hour a week because they have
7 other things to do with their lives. Pathways was
8 being done at the time when the University is being
9 enormously deprived of financial resources. And
10 nobody can say that it has not, one has not
11 something to do with the other. They have to be
12 connected okay. Now in my department I'm a chemist.
13 We don't like the Pathways curriculum as it applies
14 to chemistry. But in my department we also don't
15 like the Pathways curriculum as it applies to other
16 things such as US History. My department voted
17 unanimously to ask Lehman College to reinstate a US
18 History requirement for all students. We think that
19 students who come from a foreign country where
20 they've never had a US History course should at
21 least have one before they graduate with the US, an
22 American Baccalaureate degree. Let me tell you. In
23 my department we're not just US origin people. We
24 have people from the US mainland, Iran, Puerto

1 Rico, Romania, Germany, and Sri Lanka. We all voted
2 for a US History requirement bypassing Pathways. We
3 don't think Pathways is a good idea. There are
4 other reasons to oppose Pathways. Lehman used to be
5 extraordinarily generous, especially in the core
6 curriculum for community college graduates who
7 actually graduated from their community college.
8 Now those preferences are lessened or removed. We
9 think that Community College students coming into
10 Lehman should get, have the associates degree. If
11 they don't there's a chance that they, they might
12 not get any degree at all because the Community
13 College faculty are uniquely equipped and skilled
14 in getting these students to the point where they
15 can succeed at the senior colleges. That's their
16 job. Letting students transfer freely, which
17 Pathways does, makes it also harder for students to
18 come up against courses that they're not yet
19 equipped for because the Community College faculty
20 didn't have a chance to equip them for. We don't
21 think that Pathways is going to help graduation
22 requirements. We think it's going to increase the
23 number of students who end up with nothing, no
24 associates degree, no baccalaureate degree because
25

1
2 they transferred too early. We think the university
3 should have strong mechanism for encouraging people
4 to actually complete their associates degree before
5 they go to a senior college. That's at least my
6 opinion and the opinion of many of colleagues.
7 Pathways destroys that. Is Pathways good? No. Good
8 for the faculty? Hardly. Takes, takes a lot of
9 things away that we think are good. Good for the
10 students? I can't imagine. Not the students that I
11 teach. So that's my testimony. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

13 [applause]

14 MICHAEL BATSON: Hello, my name is
15 Michael Batson. I'm an adjunct lecture in history
16 at the college of Staten Island and at Kingsborough
17 Community College. First I would like to thank this
18 committee for holding these very important
19 hearings. Personally I think it's too early to talk
20 about the impact of Pathways on graduation rates
21 per say but I am confident that whatever happens
22 with the time it takes our students to graduate
23 under Pathways it will come at the expense of their
24 skills and knowledge. I teach at a program at the
25 college of Staten Island that all incoming freshman

1
2 take. It is designed to introduce them to the major
3 ideas, institutions, and issues of the United
4 States. The course plays an important role in
5 socializing freshman to the college experience,
6 helping them to move from merely summarizing to
7 analyzing, working with them on building critical
8 thinking skills, and teaching them how to create,
9 sustain, and support arguments. Additionally the
10 course provides mass lectures which enrich the,
11 which enrich the classroom activities. We have
12 introduced tape lectures to free us up to do more
13 hands on work in the classroom. And we continually
14 innovate where we feel it beneficial. Now that the
15 course has been reduced from four credits to three
16 we are being asked to cover the same material in 45
17 hours instead of 60. That reduction in contact
18 hours can only come at the expense of depth,
19 breadth, and rigor. What is happening in this one
20 particular course is taking place across the entire
21 curriculum from humanities to the natural sciences
22 and across every campus at CUNY. It is clear to me
23 and majority of my colleagues and I might add most
24 of the students I speak to, that whatever time
25 frame the class of pathways graduate in there will

1
2 likely be a diminished achievement in terms of
3 skill and knowledge gain. I would ask that this
4 policy be revisited. Where the motivation is to
5 help the students we can find common ground. The
6 administration faculty and students working
7 together can talk about the real issues affecting
8 graduation rates; rising tuition, poverty,
9 inequality. And we can work on solutions that don't
10 water down our students' education. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I know I
12 had said I'd asked the panel to present all their
13 testimony but I'm giving a courtesy to Council
14 Member Rodriguez. He does have to leave and so
15 he'll have two minutes to pose a question and get
16 and answer or make the comment.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.
18 Thank you. And I'm sorry I just need to go to this
19 meeting that I have scheduled at 12. But I just
20 want to say that no doubt that when I hear there's
21 a 92 percent of professor who object this plan
22 there have to be something there that we have to
23 look at it. My concern when it come to transfer is
24 I have, first of all I understand how hard you have
25 to work. I mean I used to be a, a, a teacher at a

1
2 high school and I used to work with the population
3 on new coming and student from Latin America. So I
4 know the special services and need that that group
5 bring. So I know that also at community college our
6 professor have to be working so hard to prepare the
7 student when the DOE, after we invest 150 thousand
8 dollar per student did not prepare our student to
9 be a college, at a college. My concern is, being
10 practical my concern is also what can, what's going
11 on. And I, and as you know I've been advocating
12 before being a council, before being a chair, I
13 will continue doing the same thing for providing
14 more support, more resources to our, to our
15 professors so that they can do a better job, that
16 we invest more at CUNY. But what's, how can we fix
17 the problem where a student is graduating from
18 Bronx Community College, 60 credit and then they
19 transfer to City College and those classes that
20 they took at the community college, they are no
21 getting credit for all those classes. Who's failing
22 in that part? Like when the student are no getting
23 credit for those classes that they took at the
24 community college when they moved to the senior
25 college?

1 BARBARA BOWEN: We're out of time.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Quick response. 30
3 seconds please.

4 MANFORD PHILLIP: At Lehman College we
5 had an articulation agreement with Bronx Community
6 College so that the courses would transfer. We had
7 a deal between the two colleges. There may not have
8 been a deal with city college. At the outset of
9 trend, at Pathways there were a lot of faculty who
10 was saying let the Chancellery facilitate and
11 advocate for more such articulation agreements.
12 They guaranteed transfer between the college that
13 I'm at and Bronx Community. We, the faculty, went
14 over to Bronx Community, had consultations with our
15 colleagues at that place. We thought that they were
16 doing a better job than we were. We accepted their
17 transfer. Did it work at City? Obviously for you it
18 didn't. there were problems there. Nobody argues
19 that there weren't problems. But we had a way of
20 fixing it. And I think at Lehman we did.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Thank you.
22 Back to the panel for your continuation of your
23 testimony.
24

1
2 MIKE FABRICANT: I'm Mike Fabricant,
3 treasurer of the PSC and also a professor at Hunter
4 College. I have testimony I'm going to read from
5 another member. But before I do that I want to take
6 a liberty that Manford took in responding to some
7 parts of what we just heard. What to me was quite
8 extraordinary is I didn't feel as though many of
9 the questions that were being posed were being
10 answered. So I want to go back through, at least
11 briefly some of those questions. The question of
12 the website for example and the degree to which
13 students use or don't use the website. We can have
14 197 thousand different students with hits on that
15 website. What were they in fact asking, what kinds
16 of responses did they get, and what is the
17 relationship between Pathways and the kinds of
18 questions that are being raised and answered
19 through that website, what is the relationship
20 between those students and the website. I didn't
21 hear a answer to that. I heard that 95 percent use
22 it. I hear that it's a tool. What I heard was a
23 kind of very frankly a management speak in
24 relationship to that website. And we need sharper,
25 clearer answers it seems to me from the point of

1 view of students who are using it and, and, and
2 evaluating that point of access or portal in
3 relationship to movement through the university.
4 Secondly one of the things that we have raised as a
5 union and we've raised as faculty from the very
6 beginning is the question of data. This particular,
7 and Barbara alluded to it very early, this program
8 has been rolled out in my estimation, and the
9 estimation of many others, with insufficient data.
10 When you make the claim, and we understand that
11 transfer is a problem, but when you make the claim
12 that transfer is such a problem that it rises to
13 the level that the entire curricula of the
14 university the curriculum of the university has to
15 be so radically restructured and reassembled. Then
16 it seems to me at the very least; one, it has to
17 present the data that substantiates the magnitude,
18 the corresponding magnitude of the transfer
19 problem. All that we've received really frankly at
20 this point is through the Wrigley report,
21 impressionistic data. In fact it was the governing
22 structure and the PSC that developed a report on
23 where is the data, again that Barbara alluded to
24 earlier. This is not an anomaly in my estimation.
25

1
2 When you ask the question how are we evaluating
3 Pathways... in fact what we got was a tautology
4 frank, what was the tautology, how much easier is
5 it for folks to move with the credits that they
6 have from community to senior colleges. Well, that
7 is the very basic structure of Pathways. Of course
8 they're going to move because it's a lockstep
9 program. There are many other factors that need to
10 be considered not the least of which is graduation
11 rate which was the larger promise is that
12 incurring. But what is the shrinkage and change and
13 experience of students as they move through what is
14 the consequence in relationship to marketability
15 once they come out? How do they transfer outside
16 the university when certain credits may or may not
17 be there or missing or ways in which certain
18 classes have been severed from, for example labs,
19 has consequence in a larger world? It seems to me
20 those are all questions with which we should be
21 struggling but again that it seem, is, is simply
22 not addressed in the response to the important
23 questions that you were posing. And I want,
24 conclude before I get to this testimony with this.
25 There is a sort of you, the question was raised how

1
2 does this represent an economization right. And if
3 greater efficiency and economization are reducing
4 costs I would argue that it happens in stages. I
5 think Professor Wrigley rightly points out to same
6 number of credits. But we all know same number of
7 credits, larger classes, same number of classes in
8 a, in a compressed environment of fewer course
9 offerings means that isn't economization and
10 efficiency even in a circumstance where it's the
11 same number of credits. And so presently we have
12 students making choices. Clearly they're right at a
13 certain point but then what right or authority do
14 we have as a university to make certain, that
15 certain courses are in effect part of the
16 experience. Art is disappearing in some parts of
17 the university. Philosophy is increasingly an
18 endangered discipline. That is all part of this
19 compression and economization. And I'll leave you
20 with this. The very language that's used here apart
21 from Pathways is common core. Common core you think
22 is an apt way of character and it's particular if
23 we begin to create analogs between what's going on
24 here and K through 12. And so I'll leave you with
25 that. I want to, Johnathan Notoff [sp?] is a, this

1 is a two minute presentation. He's a person in
2 applied mathematics at New York Tech. And he
3 essentially says the following. The applied
4 Mathematics Program at City Tech was designed to be
5 practical with extensive input from our industry
6 advisory board we put together a professionally
7 oriented program. A key feature of the areas of
8 concentration which allowed students to study
9 mathematical applications at depth. In 2007 our
10 external evaluator praised our program as being an
11 exemplarily. Under Pathways we face the challenge
12 of having diluted degree requirements. Essentially
13 the problem is that the Baccalaureate of Science
14 degrees can no longer specify courses in the common
15 core. The result is that specified upper level
16 courses are replaced by lower level unspecified
17 courses. Pathways is a common core of liberal arts
18 courses guaranteed transfer within CUNY. But it
19 takes away the right of faculty to select
20 appropriate courses for a given major. The result
21 is that students are using up their financial aid
22 on lower level courses and not adequately prepared
23 to reach the upper level ones. Ultimately this may
24 hurt graduates seeking employment in a highly
25

1 competitive workplace. For example the progress to
2 upper level engineering course students need to
3 take, need to take physics. Under Pathways we must
4 accept any science. To ensure students take physics
5 and keep our degree requirements to a strict 120
6 credit limit we must now make room for physics by
7 cutting other courses. Unfortunately the cut
8 courses have to be upper level. Clearly we cannot
9 cut the lower level engineering courses as they're
10 prerequisites for upper level under... And so
11 Pathways calculus was the minimal contributory math
12 course and that is appropriate for applied
13 mathematics. Under Pathways the first contributory
14 class is likely to be a lower level course, algebra
15 course. Surely the intention was not to lower the
16 standards of a Baccalaureate science degree but
17 that is exactly the result.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Have you
20 submitted that testimony? I didn't have that.
21 [crosstalk] Okay, I want to make sure that I get
22 that. That's very specific and very helpful.

23 K.E. SAAVIK FORD: Good morning. My name
24 is K.E. Saavic Ford and I am...

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CHAIRPERSON BARRON: One second please.

Were you here at the initial swearing in.

K.E. SAAVIK FORD: Oh, no. I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, then do you swear and/or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to the Council Member questions?

K.E. SAAVIK FORD: I do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

K.E. SAAVIK FORD: So I'm K.E. Saavic Ford and I am an Associate Professor at Borough of Manhattan Community College. I apologize for my lateness. I came directly from class. I am also a member of the CUNY Graduate Center Doctoral Faculty in the Physics Department. I'm a Research Associate at the American Museum of Natural History in the Department of Astrophysics. I am Karli Scholar at the renowned Karli Institute of Theoretical Physics at UC Santa Barbara, home to three Nobel Laureates. I am a member of an instrument team on the successor to NASA's Hubble Space Telescope JWST, and I have published in the most prestigious journals in astronomy and astrophysics. I have

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2 taught at public and private universities across
3 the country and have collaborators at universities
4 around the world. So when I offer my professional
5 opinion on teaching astronomy and physics I know
6 where of I speak. We are required by Pathways to
7 include a lab in our science classes. And this is
8 an essential component of any rigorous science
9 course. And the National Association of Science
10 Teachers also recommends this as good practice, as
11 a standard of practice to have laboratory
12 integrated into the classes that we teach
13 thoroughly on an ongoing basis. But we are given
14 only three hours, although that's now been somewhat
15 adjusted, but still we've only been given three
16 credits per week with our students to incorporate
17 this laboratory requirement. Current national best
18 practice is a four credit laboratory which meets
19 for a minimum of five hours a week for non-science
20 majors and for science majors it is often somewhat
21 higher. I feel that we are inviting National
22 ridicule and I say this as someone with many
23 contacts as I mentioned. By, not to mention
24 transfer problems for students who may transfer
25 outside of CUNY. I teach at a community college and

1
2 many of our students have gone onto other four
3 years. By shortening our courses at the expense of
4 understanding. And in our increasingly scientific
5 and technical world when people must be
6 scientifically literate to participate in many of
7 our political discussions cutting time on science
8 leave our students from CUNY disenfranchised as
9 citizens of the future. I can sight some statistics
10 at BMCC pre-Pathways. Our liberal arts majors took
11 two science courses each with a rigorous lab, each
12 for five hours per week. Now they take two science
13 courses only one with a lab each meeting for only
14 three hours per week. And I feel that our students
15 especially here at CUNY deserve more than three-
16 fifths of a science course. But more important than
17 the numbers are the students. And I'm going to
18 share a story with you from my very first semester
19 teaching at BMCC. I wanted to discuss magnetism
20 with my astronomy students and I began by asking
21 them to recall an experiment they would have done
22 in middle school. They would have made a magnet
23 using a batter, a bolt, and some wire. And I asked
24 them to recall this and they, I got a blank stare
25 from the class. But this was different from other

1 blank stares I had gotten so I waited. Finally a
2 student at the back of the room raised his hand and
3 said; 'Ma'am we went to New York City Public
4 Schools. We didn't have fancy equipment like
5 that.', a battery, a bolt, and some wire. And now
6 they're going to get three hours of college science
7 maybe with a scientific linguistics class added on
8 and they're educated. Many adjustments had been
9 made to Pathways to correct the worst absurdities.
10 In the sciences we've be asked to design co-
11 requisite courses which meet for six hours per week
12 worth six credits. Among the problems with this is
13 that this is credit inflation and this is going to
14 embarrass us. No other school will take a six hour
15 a week per, six hour per week class which has two
16 hours of lab in it and call that a six credit
17 class. That's a four credit class. This is going to
18 embarrass us on the national stage. Given CUNY's
19 long and proud history as a leader in science and
20 the fact that this is CUNY's decade of science I
21 would ask that the faculty be allowed to fix the
22 transfer situation because we know our students and
23 we know what they need to know. And we need to do
24 this without diminishing the scientific rigor of a
25

1
2 CUNY degree. I know this is about graduation rates
3 in part and I would say that no one can yet know
4 whether Pathways will improve the graduation rates.
5 But we know right now that doing it this way will
6 devalue a CUNY degree for those who earn one.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I want
8 to thank the panel for their presentation.

9 [applause]

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I think it's a, a,
11 a great representation of the issues that I have
12 heard over the past two years regarding the
13 implementation of Pathways in which I raised with
14 the Chancellor at that time. So it's not just
15 something that I've just come to. We have about an
16 hour and 15 minutes so I would ask my colleagues if
17 they would please frame their questions so that we
18 can get a response. Because panels coming forward
19 we're going to really ask you to summarize your
20 testimony so that we can get to hear all of it And
21 if it's written it will be in the record. And I
22 certainly affirm to you that I will read all of it.
23 So if you don't get a chance to read it and ask you
24 to summarize it please bear with us. But we did
25 want to have both panels a balance because they're

1
2 the two positions, the basic positions and we
3 certainly are going to give additional time but
4 please be considerate coming forward. I will forgo
5 my questions and I'll ask my colleagues if they
6 would pose a question with two minutes for
7 presentation as well as response.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Oh great. Thank
9 you very much. And thank you faculty PSC, thank you
10 for your presentation today. So after listening to
11 this I mean obviously we certainly have many
12 challenges with the implementation, with the idea
13 of pathways. We recognize that we generally have
14 problems with students transferring within the CUNY
15 system. I think that's something that we can all
16 acknowledge. I guess I am concerned because I know
17 that funding and resources have been challenges in
18 the CUNY system. I'm not a fan of imposing tuition
19 increases on the backs of students to deal with the
20 lack of government funding. That has been a
21 problem. I recognize we have children that are
22 living in poverty and we have social factors that
23 are also included in this conversation. And
24 financing is a huge component of the problem. I
25 guess my question for the faculty is what

1
2 alternative approaches would you think would make
3 Pathways successful? Why do you not think this is
4 the ideal solution to streamlining graduation rates
5 and the transfer process? And do you think Pathways
6 should be eliminated altogether or do you have
7 areas within the program that you think could be
8 changed that would benefit both faculty members as
9 well as students in order to make Pathways more
10 successful? Because I think we can acknowledge we
11 do have a problem.

12 BARBARA BOWEN: If I may, I'll try to
13 answer very quickly and we could talk more later.
14 The position of the faculty whom I represent is
15 that the faculty through our governance mechanism
16 which is part of the CUNY bylaws is best equipped
17 to design a transfer system or curricula that
18 transfer more easily. So our solution would be to
19 resend the resolution that was passed in June 2011
20 imposing Pathways and bypassing faculty governance
21 and ask the faculty governance bodies which as
22 Professor Phillip said, are very well equipped to
23 work on the problem of transfer which we do not
24 deny. I mean none of us deny that and we want to
25 help students to transfer. That in fact the

1
2 Departments with their elected representatives and
3 the Faculty governance CUNY wide could actually
4 devise a solution that maintains quality and helps
5 students to move more quickly.

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Council
7 Member Cumbo.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Very quickly, and
9 this may have been addressed but more specifically...
10 Do you feel that a lot of your objections to the
11 Pathways may be predicated on the fact that you
12 believe that community college faculty may not have
13 prepared students adequately for transfer?

14 MANFORD PHILLIP: It's the opposite.
15 Community College faculty do a great job with
16 preparing students for transfer. But they have to
17 be given the opportunity. They have to be given the
18 resources, more resources than they're getting now.
19 But at the same time students should finish their
20 degrees at the Community Colleges. Pathways makes
21 it all too easy to go without a degree. This was a
22 problem before Pathways. Community college
23 administrations were complaining that their
24 students were leaving not getting a degree. And in
25 the iPads[phonetic] accounting that it's a national

1 system. Colleges that don't graduate their students
2 with a degree are put at a disadvantage. Pathways,
3 I think, makes this worse. It, at Lehman we gave
4 students benefits if they actually came in with an
5 associates degree from SUNY or CUNY. That's not
6 there anymore. I think we should scrap Pathways
7 entirely. We had systems that needed development
8 such as TIPS. TIPS was a computer transfer system
9 that allowed students to say okay, I'm planning on
10 going from BMCC to Lehman but what courses should I
11 take that make it easy. But TIPS was never working
12 very well because it was underfunded and wasn't
13 updated regularly. We were really worried about
14 transfer before Pathways. We, that means the
15 faculty. It was a primary interest. We want the
16 students to make it. At the same time we can't gut
17 the degree because it means that the students will
18 fewer opportunities when they leave CUNY. Students
19 should come out of CUNY with a degree that makes
20 since that the faculty can approve. What does it
21 mean national, and this is known all over the
22 country, what does it mean when you have a
23 university with a curriculum that the faculty have
24 no confidence in?

1
2 MIKE FABRICANT: I want to just weigh
3 in.

4 MANFORD PHILLIP: That's the reality
5 here.

6 MIKE FABRICANT: ...for 15 seconds which
7 is that the answer to the question is no.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Mm-hmm.

9 MIKE FABRICANT: And two, we do not have
10 problems between community colleges on transfer in
11 every senior college. There are greater problems at
12 some community colleges and senior colleges and
13 that's why we needed to first look at the magnitude
14 of the issue with specificity in relationship to
15 parts of the system rather than to take a, a
16 basically, a sledgehammer to curricular. We should
17 have been using more refined tools to figure out
18 how to address this question.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, thank you so
21 much for your testimony. My math was off. I don't
22 have an hour, I have 45 minutes. But I do want to
23 thank you. And I am a proud graduate of CUNY. I
24 went to Hunter, class of January '67, yes January
25 '67.

[comments, applause]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And I, I can stand up to anyone with any other degree from whatever IVY league college you want to name and match with them. And I certainly don't want to see a diminution or dilution of the CUNY degree. And you really resonated with me when you put that phrase in there, three-fifths.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Three-fifths carries great significance for me.

K.E. SAAVIK FORD: It was on purpose.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So that really resonated with me. Thank you so much for your testimony. Plan is coming up. Please, please, please, we're trying to divide 40 minutes among 20 witnesses so please help us. Yes, you can give your testimony please to the Sargent of Arms and you can please what it is you have to say. Third panel is Kevin Graves, David Rosenberg, Juquana Hardie [sp?], and Doctor Anthony Gronowicz. You may please come forward. And once again your written testimony please submit to the clerk and please summarize your testimony. Okay, if you don't have written

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2 testimony, let us know you're just going to give us
3 a summary. Please identify yourself. I'm going to
4 swear you in. Do you swear and/or affirm to tell
5 the truth, please raise your right hand. Do you
6 swear and/or affirm to tell the truth, the whole
7 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony
8 before this committee and to respond honestly to
9 all Council Member questions.

10 [collective affirmations]

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, please
12 introduce yourself and give your summary please.

13 DOCTOR GRONOWICZ: Me first.

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

15 DOCTOR GRONOWICZ: Okay. My name is
16 Anthony Gronowicz. I teach American Government at
17 the Borough of Manhattan Community College, BMCC
18 where one of my specialties is the interface
19 between race and class that I examined in my book
20 Race and Class Politics in New York City before the
21 Civil War. I want to thank Councilwoman Inez
22 Barron, the Chair of this City Council and the
23 other Council Members for the opportunity to
24 address my concerns about the proposed imposition
25 by CUNY administration of the misleadingly named

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2 Pathways curriculum changes that serve to dilute
3 the CUNY degree. For example a three credit science
4 course without a lab instead of the normal four
5 they make it easier to transfer within CUNY from
6 let us say community college BMCC to four year
7 college John Jay but the course would not be
8 transferrable to Pace or Columbia or St. Johns. As
9 an elected Faculty Advisor to BMCC Student
10 Government Association I observe that our million
11 dollar annual budget derived from student fees is
12 spent on student activities run by 70 student clubs
13 ranging from the chess club to the soccer club from
14 at resurgent and Christian to the Muslim student
15 association. Student governments have come and gone
16 over the years but one thing has remained the same.
17 Regardless of the students who are elected to serve
18 on the government by the student body all have been
19 unanimous, and I repeat unanimous in their
20 opposition to Pathways in resolution after
21 resolution. Students see it as a crude attempt to
22 turn most of the colleges in, to CUNY into
23 vocational schools. No longer will a BMCC student
24 be able to live up to the school slogan; start
25 here, go anywhere. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

[applause]

KEVIN GRAVES: My name is Kevin Graves.

I'm a student at LaGuardia Community College. I'm the President of Psi Beta which is the Psychology Honor Society. I'm in a Psychology club and I am a Sophomore at LaGuardia. I do not have a sworn testimony, written testimony. I just wanted to give a very brief statement as, and I, also make myself available to answer questions about the realities as a student. I was advised in my student seminar course last year to not opt into Pathways. Every faculty member that I've spoken with has said to not opt into Pathways. However unfortunately the reality for me after being advised last week is that I transfer to Hunter College, Hunter will automatically require all students to transfer in to take the Pathways Curriculum so I was advised to actually now transfer, switch to Pathways at LaGuardia so that I can start getting the correct courses now that I will need to transfer. I have used the website the Degree Audit, DegreeWorks. It shows you, what I need now under my current curriculum and what I would need if I switched to

1 Pathways. Without actually switching to Pathways it
2 shows me a comparison contrast. I, I'm really glad
3 I heard the faculty speak about the reduction of
4 hours in the science classes. I did see that before
5 I would have had to take human anatomy one and two
6 as a psychology major. Now I can choose, and those
7 were four hours each, now I can choose of, between
8 different science classes, biology, chemistry,
9 astronomy, and physics for three hours and I'm also
10 required to take one more science class which I
11 think most of them are labs with four hours. But
12 I'm also able to take a language science class
13 instead of one of those. And I just wanted to make
14 a statement that I feel like we've been, as
15 students we've been caught in the crossfire between
16 the, the right opposition to Pathways because I
17 definitely don't want my degree to be lessened as
18 far as quality as a CUNY student. I've worked very
19 hard to, at LaGuardia. And by the way LaGuardia for
20 me has been a very rigorous coursework experience.
21 The teachers there are really great and the
22 coursework is great. I just want to make sure that
23 the classes I take transfer to Hunter but I also
24
25

1
2 want to make sure that I have a good education at
3 both schools so... Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

5 JUQUANA HARDIE: Hi, good afternoon the
6 honorable city council and the Higher Education
7 Committee. I'm Juquana Hardie. I'm a transfer
8 student and I'm a product of the City University of
9 New York. I'm coming deforth[phonetic], this
10 afternoon to speak for the 260 thousand student and
11 the thousands of faculty, faculty and staff.
12 Pathways, I'm not saying Pathways is a bad program,
13 it's a good program. But at the same time it's
14 affecting a lot of transfer students to the point
15 that a lot of transfer students are saying listen,
16 I want to go somewhere else because CUNY's Pathway
17 system isn't working for me. It's even to the point
18 that Pathways has even done, students have already
19 taken remedial math have to go to a four year
20 senior college and take another level of remedial
21 math which, which, which is a problem for most
22 students because they already spent about three or
23 four years trying to pass the remedial courses at a
24 community college. And they're like but, I said,
25 it, it, I feel that Pathways is a good program but

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2 at the same time it's missing a lot of links
3 between administration, faculty, and students. It's
4 a very good concept but you can't have a good
5 concept and have a whole bunch of missing links.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

8 DAVID ROSENBERG: Good afternoon. Thank
9 you Chairperson Barron, the committee. I also want
10 to thank Council Member Williams. I'm a proud
11 resident of the 45th district. My name is David
12 Rosenberg. I'm the student government president at
13 Brooklyn College. I have written testimony that's
14 submitted but I wanted to take the opportunity to
15 comment on a few things that have been said. My
16 testimony is going to be a lot different than what
17 we've heard for the last hour plus. First, to the
18 most recent point the comment about unanimous
19 opposition from student governments to Pathways.
20 That's not true. At some of the senior colleges
21 that's not always been the case. In Brooklyn
22 college in particular. For a while we've had a
23 transfer problem. We've had our students coming in
24 as much as 60 percent and university wide as much
25 as two-thirds coming in from two year schools and

1 not having their degrees. About a year and a half
2 ago I had, there were two students who came to
3 Brooklyn College from Kingsborough. One of them
4 finished their associates in business. The other
5 one had 58 of the 60 credits in business. The one
6 with the associates degree got their entire credit,
7 all 60 credits transferred, the one with 58
8 credits, two credits short of an Associate's
9 degree, lost almost 30 credits in the transfer
10 evaluation process. Before Pathways the transfer
11 evaluation process was arbitrary at best. And
12 students just like that, with very similar profiles
13 were getting very different results when they would
14 come for transfer evaluation. And Pathways at the
15 end of the day, though it does need some work and
16 we see very clearly when you have a vote of 92
17 percent of the faculty saying that this is no good,
18 we need to work on it. But, and I understand where
19 there app, where their opposition comes from but
20 their opposition has led to a much bigger problem
21 which is the gridlock between faculty and
22 administration at the different colleges. At, I go
23 into a lot of meetings at Brooklyn College where
24 faculty and administrators and every initiative
25

1
2 that myself or my other colleagues in student
3 government have brought forward that require the
4 faculty to be involved we were told no because of
5 Pathways. We went in, we asked for a roadmap to
6 graduation where students can come in and when they
7 start can get a path of what classes they will need
8 to take over their two years, or four years, or six
9 years and when those classes would be offered. The
10 faculty council looked at us and said no because of
11 Pathways. We asked for other courses to prepare
12 students for test preparation for courses like the
13 MCAT or the GMAT [sp?]. We were told no because of
14 Pathways. At the end of the day the students don't
15 care about the politics of how Pathways got here
16 but we need faculty and administrators to be
17 working together to make it work for all of our
18 students and that's not happening now. Thank you.

19 [applause]

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very
21 much. I'm going to ask my colleagues to please
22 forgo the questions so that we can make sure that
23 we hear everyone. And then we can ask, we can have
24 comments pose as questions at the end which we can
25 present and ask to have questions, have response.

1
2 Okay, thank you so much for your testimony. I do
3 appreciate it. And I'm going to call the next
4 panel. Sandy Cooper, ex-chair of the University
5 faculty, faculty senate, Elizabeth Hovey, CUNY
6 adjunct from John Jay, Sigmund Shipp, CUNY faculty,
7 and Professor Seth Lipner from Baruch College, and
8 Ana Maria Hernandez, PSC from LaGuardia. If you
9 would all come forward. If you have testimony,
10 written testimony, please present it. But we are
11 asking that you summarize your presentation to
12 about two minutes. First I would like to swear you
13 in. Please raise your right hand. Do you swear
14 and/or affirm that you will tell the truth, the
15 whole truth, and nothing but the truth before this
16 committee and respond honestly to the Council
17 Member's questions?

18 [collective affirmations]

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Please
20 introduce yourselves.

21 SANDY COOPER: My name is Sandy Cooper.
22 I'm the former Chair of the University Faculty
23 Senate, a Professor of History at the Graduate
24 School in the College of Staten Island, and a
25 faculty member for 55 years, most of which have

1
2 been in CUNY. In those years obviously I have
3 watched a large number of curricular changes in
4 American higher education but never have I seen
5 those changes produce a low grade outcome. Two
6 years ago when I chaired the faculty senate the
7 outgoing Chancellor Matthew Goldstein called me in
8 and told me he was appointing an administrator to
9 create a, a system for cutting down the difficulty
10 students had in transfer. I pointed out to him then
11 that the University Faculty Senate had worked on
12 this issue for 15 years and made one recommendation
13 upon another having set up faculty committees to
14 study this issue, we are well aware of the fact
15 that many of our students face this problem. Nearly
16 ever proposal we made was ignored. When this system
17 was imposed and the administrator put in charge of,
18 of creating it I assembled a committee of 55
19 faculty representing the curricular at specialist,
20 at all the undergraduate colleges. And we met with
21 the administrator. And we were treated as if we
22 were flies on some paper. The University Faculty
23 Senate was created when the University was created
24 in 1962 and it is charged with the oversight of
25 trans campus educational programs. And if this is

1
2 not a cross campus educational program I don't know
3 what is. From the very outset every single member
4 of our specialist committee was ignored. And the
5 people who were appointed to develop this process
6 created a process which follows the playbook as
7 Barbara Bohlen said of the Gates Foundation, the
8 Lumina Foundation, and the so called reformers most
9 of whom have in mind something resembling the RAND
10 study in 1998 of transforming public institutions
11 into a second tier for training second tier
12 personnel. We were presented with these documents
13 that indicated, mostly the Wrigley report, how much
14 students were suffering under the current system.
15 Some of us statisticians took a look at those
16 figures and we discovered that instead of it
17 costing 75 million it came to about four million,
18 4.1 million...

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Instead of 75 it
20 came to four?

21 SANDY COOPER: 70, I forgot the original
22 number, 72 or 75 million in, in...

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I see 72 in this...

24 SANDY COOPER: ...cost of students...

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Our
3 statisticians came up with the following number.
4 And in addition we discovered it wasn't too hard to
5 do that many students graduating with 130 credits
6 which is now standard at Wisconsin, and Michigan,
7 and California. We're not that unique. Did so
8 because they changed majors. I have been an advisor
9 now for I've forgotten how many years and I get a
10 student who comes in and wants to take history.
11 That student tried to be a nurse, the student
12 didn't make it. The student loses credits that
13 didn't work for that and transfers. So maybe a
14 semester is lost. We try to help make it up over
15 winter semesters and summer semesters. It's very
16 difficult for people to graduate with a degree in
17 four years from baccalaureate institutions.
18 Nationally it's six to eight years these days. And
19 we all know the social reasons. I won't tell you
20 what you don't, what you know already. I wish to
21 reiterate the fact that as chair of the Faculty
22 Senate myself, my predecessor, my successor have
23 been devoted to the notion that this is an issue
24 which can be contained and reformed by the existing
25 faculty mechanisms. We have discipline councils,

1
2 the chairs of English, math, foreign languages,
3 biochemistry, and so forth meet. They have ways of
4 knowing what goes on in the courses of both the two
5 and four year colleges. We have conferences that
6 the University Faculty Senate holds of faculty in
7 which we discussed campus curricula and how to
8 streamline and make changes. We have exchanges
9 between faculty at the two kinds of, two levels of
10 colleges. It's not as if we have been standing like
11 stubborn mules trying to keep students from
12 graduating. The one thing I, I am also a CUNY
13 graduate like you Chair Barron, very proud of it,
14 and I was very delighted when I got out of City
15 College in 1957.

16 [laughter]

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

18 SANDY COOPER: That I could talk to
19 people from Harvard without being ashamed of
20 anything and not knowing what they were talking
21 about. We are now able to graduate students under
22 Pathways who do not have to take a class in
23 literature, a foreign language, history, political
24 science, economics, art, music, anthropology,
25 sociology, philosophy, and can weasel out of real

1
2 math by taking some scientific linguistics course.
3 This is what we call devaluation. This is not the
4 education I know you had at Hunter because I also
5 taught there and I had it city. This is not the
6 reason I left a very good job at Rutgers to come
7 and teach at city. Because I wanted very much to
8 ensure that these students had what I had which was
9 an opportunity to go forth out of a social
10 background that didn't give you that opportunity to
11 begin with. We are afraid as faculty when we sign
12 off on diplomas that they are not going to be much
13 better than those for profit things that you read
14 about in the newspaper. We may give students a
15 diploma when they, why don't we just give them this
16 diploma when they're admitted and..

17 [laughter]

18 SANDY COOPER: ...give them a graduation
19 thing and then tell them if they'd like to come to
20 class they should.

21 [laughter]

22 SANDY COOPER: I have a final point
23 which is somewhat tangential to this hearing. Five
24 of CUNY's trustees are mayoral appointees, some of
25

1
2 them were originally appointed in the Giuliani
3 years.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I, I don't mean to
5 be disrespectful or rude but could you please wrap
6 up because...

7 SANDY COOPER: Okay, I'm just...

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: ...we have about four
9 more panels.

10 SANDY COOPER: ...finishing. I was going
11 to suggest that some, that somebody urge the Mayor
12 to look at the list of mayoral appointees to the
13 board of trustees and perhaps think that some of
14 the Giuliani era people have overdone it a bit.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

17 [applause]

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Please if, two
19 minutes please.

20 ELIZABETH HOVEY: I'm overwhelmed with
21 gratitude for this hearing. Chair Barron, Council
22 Member Gibson and Cumbo. I am an adjunct historian
23 at John Jay College and I can't claim the light of
24 having been a CUNY product myself. I can tell you
25 that I went to an ivy league undergraduate

1 institution and an ivy league graduate institution
2 for my doctorate degree and I knew I wanted to
3 teach the students who needed it most. And all
4 things fly out of my head right now. But among the
5 things I want to summarize is that I have made an
6 unfortunate hobby of looking at the consequences,
7 the negative consequences of Pathways and I'm going
8 to put my number all over the place and you can
9 call and ask me any questions you want until the
10 end of time if I can share of what I see as my
11 insights. But yesterday was a special day. It was
12 my birthday and I had three things go wrong that I
13 can directly relate to Pathways. One, is that I
14 heard a judge has dismissed the notion that we have
15 had our faculty governance subverted by this
16 proposal. I, I really want to get back to the fact
17 that when the trustees changed the number of units
18 and they talk, they, the representation that it's a
19 30 unit core is fault because of the, the thematic
20 portions of it. The thematic portions really mean
21 that there's 40 percent less units being asked
22 because a computer science student could take
23 almost exclusively computer science classes and
24 graduate under this new common core. So, so when
25

1
2 you hear 30 units I want you to think it's
3 actually, I believe it's 18 that are really
4 required and even those can be snuck. Back to
5 yesterday. So I heard a judge made a faults, a bad
6 decision and I have already heard by your comments
7 today that you understand better than that
8 unfortunate judge and I understand that my union is
9 going to appeal and I'm so glad. Two, I heard one
10 student, a pretty bright student, in my class say I
11 don't have to do the reading. I find that if I pay
12 attention in class I can get an A or a B. He's not
13 talking about my class. He's talking about his
14 experience. And then I also heard on the subway on
15 the way home. I'm not kidding, this all happened
16 yesterday. I heard a man, actually fairly well
17 spoken say I've been looking all day for a job. I'm
18 a college graduate. I can show you the papers that
19 show that I'm a college graduate but the system did
20 not work for me. And my point is that yes,
21 graduation rates, I understand the administration
22 wants to help. Transfer is not the issue. I hope
23 you understand that. It's not the issue. This is a
24 smokescreen and Mr. Rodriguez, Rodriguez asked
25 earlier, why now after decades of this discussion?

1
2 The reason why, and I'm telling you this as a
3 historian who's been looking at the record. The
4 reason why it happened now is because it was an
5 opportunity to use transfer as a way of totally
6 undermining faculty governance, the union, and
7 departmental leadership. And I would be happy,
8 happy, happy to show you the ways that that has
9 been the case. I am a rare, rare adjunct. I have
10 economic security but I look at my colleagues who
11 teach with integrity and every one of us, every one
12 of us adjuncts has to think about which is more
13 important holding my students to the high standards
14 and giving them the help they need or ensuring my
15 popularity by, by giving them an easy grade. I
16 foresee a future as long as there's mostly
17 adjuncts. And I, I plan to be an adjunct my whole
18 life. As long as there's mostly adjuncts I imagine
19 most of the courses in stark contrast to yours at
20 Hunter College in 1966. Most classes, see a movie,
21 take a quiz. And that's not the kind of degree that
22 CUNY should be churning out. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

24 SETH LIPNER: Good afternoon I'm Seth
25 Lipner. I have been a professor at Baruch for 32

1
2 years. I chair the curriculum committee there for
3 21 years. I keep trying to get out of it and they
4 keep electing me. They, two years ago the
5 chancellor's office asked me to chair the business
6 pathways subcommittee that produce those gateway
7 courses. And we produce some very nice results in
8 terms of defining learning outcomes and making
9 education for entry level courses in business more
10 uniform across CUNY. But the general education
11 component is hurting our curriculum and I want to
12 give you two specific examples of how it hurts our
13 curriculum. And with due respect to the advice
14 chair it's not just a matter of holding onto
15 something old in the sense that we like it. This is
16 something that was developed for a reason. And I
17 think you'll agree with me for good reason. And
18 we've done great things with it. And we're going to
19 be precluded from continuing it because of
20 pathways. The first is we created communication
21 intensive courses. A requirement that students take
22 a certain number of these communication intensive
23 courses that have either written communication or
24 oral communication in them. We won't be able to
25 continue that with the Pathways initiative. The

1 second thing is that we required students to take a
2 liberal arts minor because our students took
3 courses that was more convenient to their subway
4 schedules and their work schedules than their
5 educational schedules. And it was Chancellor
6 Goldstein who inspired me to think about this
7 problem 21 years ago and to make something great
8 out of our educational system. So we require that
9 business students take a four course minor that
10 includes a base level course in a specific
11 discipline, two, three thousand level courses in
12 that discipline and a capstone course the four
13 thousand level that require students to engage in
14 critical thinking and engage in communication
15 exercises. And we can't do that anymore with these
16 transfer students because of Pathways. I'm sorry
17 I'm out of time. I refer you to my written
18 testimony and thank you for the opportunity to be
19 here today.

21 [applause]

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much.
23 I do thank you for your presentation. And I'm ready
24 to call the next panel. Our time is ticking. Oh I
25 apologize. I'm rushing. I apologize.

1
2 SIGMUND SHIPP: That's alright, yeah.
3 Thank you Chair Barron and thank you higher
4 education committee...

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Please two minutes.

6 SIGMUND SHIPP: Yeah sure. My name is
7 Sigmund Shipp. I teach English at LaGuardia
8 Community College. As we heard from Doctor
9 Wrigley's testimony this morning they've been
10 trying to humanize Pathways in the last year
11 because of faculty opposition. But at my campus,
12 LaGuardia, they have already begun to renew on the
13 assurances of last year. We see one example of this
14 in ENG 101, English composition. The research and
15 writing course is required of all majors to
16 graduate. After spending much of the last two years
17 trying to reduce our commitment of contact time
18 with our students by 25 percent, from four hours
19 per week to three, they are now getting their
20 second wind I guess, renewing their efforts to
21 designate that fourth hour in a separate and
22 invulnerable category. That's what they mean when
23 they use the flexibility. Flexibility means you
24 want a fourth hour, your college can pay for it,
25 CUNY is washing its hands of it. At the University

1 of Minnesota Foreign Language and History are among
2 the minimum requirements for graduation. The
3 English Chairperson there found it ironic that
4 quote unquote transfer has mutated into such a mind
5 erasing buzzword for us because in Minnesota their
6 buzzword is transfer evaluation. They are
7 evaluating these incredible shrinking courses of
8 ours and they're not impressed by what they see.
9 One of LaGuardia's senators reported last year that
10 Skidmore College already walked out of an
11 articulation agreement with us because of the
12 pathways attempt to reduce time for writing
13 instruction. We believe CUNY students are not quote
14 unquote customers to be lured in by artificially
15 inflated graduation rates and then sent on their
16 way with a piece of paper. CUNY students are an
17 investment that we make. They are the creators and
18 leaders of our shared future and they deserve a
19 well-rounded rigorous education. I graduated in
20 1991, a semester late from Queens College because I
21 found too late that even though I was an English
22 major I was still required to take a science with a
23 lab. By the way I've had several students who were
24 great writers, imaginative thinkers and didn't
25

1
2 quote unquote believe in evolution. But I could
3 never have learned to respect the scientific method
4 if I hadn't been pushed outside of my comfort zone.
5 My wife gave birth to our daughter last June. When
6 I look into her trusting eyes the future has never
7 been more real to me. The long term consequences of
8 my every action never more palpable. 18 years from
9 now my incoming students will be her age. I will
10 not be asking how fast can they graduate, what is
11 the minimum they need to know, I will be asking how
12 well rounded, how rigorous of an education do they
13 deserve. Whether they got the experience of a real
14 world lab in bio 101 or will they be fed justified
15 excuses for an increasingly meager education where
16 decisions are carried out under threat and
17 administrative thiot[phonetic]. Will I be able to
18 tell my daughter that I am proud of where I work or
19 will I have to tell her honey we shrunk the
20 curriculum. Please stand with the 92 percent of
21 faculty who voted to preserve the richest college
22 education we can provide to the people of New York
23 City.

24 [applause]

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I thank you. I
3 thank the panel for your presentation. And I will
4 in fact read all of them. And I'm calling now Panel
5 five which is a CUNY student panel. Tafooey Guaco?
6 Guaco [sp?], Jamie Robinson [sp?], and Washica
7 Torres [sp?] please come forward. Thanks. And since
8 we are down to about 10 minutes I'm going ask each
9 of the remaining panel if they would come down to
10 90 seconds, a minute and a half.

11 UNKNOWN MALE: We're going to protest
12 that. Okay, it'll be a three word chant.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Do you swear or
14 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
15 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
16 committee and to respond honestly to all Council
17 Member questions.

18 [collective affirmations]

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Please
20 90 seconds, a minute and a half. Please summarize
21 your testimony.

22 TAFOOEY GUACOO: Thank you very much
23 Madam Chair and other member of the board. My name
24 is Tafooey Guacoo and I'm currently a graduate
25 student at Brooklyn College and also an adjunct

1 lecturer in mathematics at your college. I was also
2 the Chairperson of the University Student Senate.
3 I, in addition to be a member of the board of
4 trustee from 2011 to 2013. So I'm very well aware
5 of all the issue Pathway, in regard to Pathways.
6 When I took office in 2011 as the chairperson the
7 senate before mine did approve a resolution
8 supporting Pathways. In my, in my two years as the
9 chair we will reiterate our support to Pathway. And
10 there is a simpler reason for that. We student
11 don't understand why if we're moving from one
12 college to another one, and we talking about CUNY
13 being one university, we should be losing credit
14 off any kind of sort. We should be able to transfer
15 any credit we have from one college to the other
16 one without having a problem. I was one of those
17 student **that** lost credit when I started at CUNY. I
18 came from an internationals institution. I lost
19 some credit. I sat in some of those classes that
20 were very boring. And by the way we do learn the
21 history of America because somebody mentioned that
22 some countries outside the US don't know anything
23 about a US history. That's wrong. I know how to
24 draw the United States map on top of my head. So
25

1
2 that's something we do internationally. So that's
3 out of the way. But we supported Pathway because we
4 understand that our student are paying money to
5 take a course and later on are required to take the
6 same course and pay them money for it. It doesn't
7 work that way because Financial Aid does not cover
8 when you're retaking another course. So we
9 supported Pathway for all those year and we
10 continue to support Pathway. When I took office I
11 met with. I met with the Chancellery to tell them
12 these are the student concern. How can we make
13 Pathway better? We were never in favor of removing
14 Pathway completely. We were in favor of making
15 Pathway better. And that's what we've been
16 advocating for. I met with the Chancellor Goldstein
17 and I met also with Chancellor Frank Sanchez to
18 make sure that we have those thing. And Pathways
19 currently under review and we really appreciate
20 that. So thank you and we still here advocating in
21 support of Pathways.

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much.
23 Next panelist. Please introduce yourself.

24 JAMIE ROBINSON: Good afternoon
25 Chairwoman Barron and honorable members of the

1
2 Committee. I'm going to try to summarize really
3 quick. I signed up for 120 credits, not 146. So
4 change the literature if you're going to do this. I
5 just want to respond to a couple of things that
6 were said. The name of this hearing is can Pathways
7 help improve graduation rates? The quick answer is
8 yes. I've been made to feel during this committee
9 meeting that as someone who supports Pathways I'm
10 somehow racist or I, I view things in an
11 inappropriate way. It's this type of dialogue that
12 we got to stop. Okay, it reminds me of Obamacare.
13 The minute you say you like Obamacare to a
14 republican they just burst into flames.

15 [laughter]

16 JAMIE ROBINSON: The same thing with
17 faculty. You cannot have a rational discussion
18 with, without them flipping out. We got, we got to
19 ratchet this down a little bit and just listen. I'm
20 a former Wall Street Professional. I worked at a
21 major fortune 500 company. I've been formerly
22 trained in currencies, credits are a student's
23 currency okay. How ridiculous would it be if you
24 deposited 90 dollars in Queens in your bank today
25

1
2 and it would be only, worth 50 dollars in the
3 Bronx.

4 UNKNOWN FEMALE: [off mi] Counterfeit.

5 JAMIE ROBINSON: It's ridiculous. You
6 got to also ask some questions like how long has
7 faculty had to make this universal articulation
8 agreement work? How long? A year? No. We're looking
9 at 15, 20 years okay. What do we have? Nothing. We
10 had to have CUNY do it for us okay. And I think in
11 closing I want to say is this. Any department can
12 still do whatever they want. So the
13 polly[phonetic], political science department at
14 Queens college could say we want a semester of a
15 foreign language. And if they vote on it it's done.
16 And thank you for your time.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I have
18 to comment on what you've said. I think we've had a
19 rational discussion here. We've had a respectful
20 presentation of differences of points of view and
21 we've allow people to present themselves without
22 attacking or demean...

23 JAMIE ROBINSON: I meant the ongoing
24 conversation.

25

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Let me finish.

Without attacking or demeaning anybody. So I want that on the record. We've had rational, we've had, not made anyone appear to be out of sorts with anyone else. We've allow people to present their differing points of view respectfully. Next Panelist...

[applause]

DONOVAN BORINGIN: Good afternoon Madam Chair. My name is Donovan Boringin. I'm a graduate from LaGuardia Community College and I currently attend Baruch College. And listening to the testimony today I came up with a little bit of data regarding Pathways. As a student transferring I decided to opt in because I wanted to see what it was like and after a conversation with my advisor I find out that it was the best option for me. I don't receive financial aid. I pay out of my pocket. I'm a part time working student so it's very difficult for me to attend school. And Pathway, under Pathways I will graduate with 120 credits. Before Pathways my advisor told me that I would have to graduate with 136 credits. So that is about 16 extra credits to which I would have to pay

1
2 for out of pocket. And here's the data to show the
3 success. For a student like myself that's about
4 4,000 dollars in tuition, 500 dollars in book
5 money. When you think about lunch I spend 10
6 dollars a day for lunch. I visit campus twice.
7 That's 20 dollars a week on an average of a 12 week
8 semester that's 260 dollars I may not have. So in
9 terms of financial need for a semester I'm saving
10 about 5,000 dollars. You know when I think about it
11 that's a tremendous save for me. When you think
12 about the public sector giving money to students on
13 financial aid that's a lot of money that the state
14 may be saving across the university. And before
15 like my colleague mentioned there was no agreement
16 that helped us across the university. It just
17 seemed ridiculous to me that I can go from one
18 campus to another and lose almost 30 credits within
19 the same university.

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I
21 appreciate it. And our last panelist.

22 WASHICA TORRES: Hi, my name is Washica
23 Torres. I'm the graduate student government
24 president at Brooklynn College. I'm also the Vice
25 Chair for disability affairs for the University

1
2 Student Senate. I'm also an academic advisor at the
3 New York City College of Technology. But today I
4 actually don't want to tell you my personal story.
5 I want to tell you the story of my mother. My
6 mother was a single mother of two who got her GED
7 and made her way through Bronx Community College
8 and eventually graduated from Baruch in the summer
9 of 1996. My mother who's one of the greatest
10 inspirations I have when it comes to education and
11 three generations of women who gone to CUNY, my
12 mother, my great grandmother, my grandmother. But
13 this story is yes triumphant but it had a major
14 setback. After she transferred from Bronx Community
15 College she was told that almost none of her
16 credits were going to transfer to relic, related
17 classes within any of the major or minor that she
18 decided to do. Instead they were going to be
19 considered electives that weren't really going to
20 transfer to anything useful. She's still waiting
21 for her half credit in computer science to transfer
22 from Bronx Community College to Baruch. Like I said
23 I'm not here for myself but my mother who is the
24 archetype of the growing trend of nontraditional
25 students within the university system who have to

1
2 take out loans in their last year or two of school
3 because TAP and PELL won't pay for them. But
4 another good resumption here to represent our
5 students who have transferred from one community
6 college to another. And yes their GPA was high
7 enough for them to transfer from BCC to Baruch but
8 their classes that were equivalent, English 101,
9 Math, you know introductory Math, statistics,
10 they're not good enough to transfer. You know my,
11 in, in terms of Pathways, Pathways is not for
12 majors. It is for general education and as they've
13 said before you should be learning the same thing
14 at each school. You should be getting good grades
15 in the same areas and you should be learning the
16 same thing in English 101 at, from the Community
17 College that you are from a senior college. And if
18 you are, and if they, if the faculty and staff at
19 these colleges are saying you are then that credit
20 should transfer and why won't it? And I think that
21 that's a very important question we need to ask
22 ourselves. Why weren't these classes transferring
23 when my mother had to take an extra year to
24 graduate when she took out loans, she had to quit
25 her job to help take, make sure she took extra

1 credits in school to graduate within a year and not
2 an extra two years. These are questions that I wish
3 I could get a straight answer on. And I, as an
4 academic advisor there is a system in place at C
5 Tech where if a student is coming in from a
6 specific major you can require a minimum level of
7 math but if you're taking another class they
8 require different minimums of math. So I think that
9 a lot of, I appreciate a lot of the data that we've
10 heard today. And I appreciate a lot of the
11 conversation that we've had today and I really hope
12 this fosters communication, not just within faculty
13 but also within the City Council and amongst other
14 students who are the prime students in their
15 families who are the primary people being affected
16 by a broken transfer system that is now hopefully
17 will be fixed.

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Thank you.

20 There's one of the members of the panel who did not
21 feel out a slip. Please make sure you do that. Did
22 you fill one out?

23 WASHICA TORRES: He filled it out after
24 me.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. We have, well
3 please fill out another one so we can make sure you
4 have it. We're being displaced. But everyone's
5 testimony is important. What we are trying to do is
6 locate space in the basement. It's a room that's
7 there so that I can get to hear the rest of the
8 testimony. So I, I do apologize for not getting to
9 everyone but ask if you would please remain or
10 gather in the rotunda then we can let you know
11 where we can continue our hearing. Because I think
12 it's important.

13 [background comments]

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I've been told that
15 we don't have the facility and the capacity to
16 transcribe and record. I do apologize for the other
17 panels. If you have your written testimony. I
18 assure you that I will review that. And if you'd
19 like to come and personally meet with me it
20 wouldn't be a hearing as such but I would certainly
21 accord you that opportunity. But I do want to thank
22 everyone who came and again apologize. And this
23 hearing is now adjourned. Thank you.

24 [gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date _____ March 13, 2014 _____