# Notes from the 9/8 College Council Executive Committee meeting with the President and Provost

There were a range of topics discussed in our hour:

## Budget

We had asked:

With the ongoing budget uncertainty, can we review actions taken or planned over the summer to position our selves for the quite possible devestating budget cuts coming our way.

We heard several things

* Currently there is no tax-levy budget from CUNY. (CUNY has not received a clear budget from the state, as of writing, so the holding pattern from June continues. The state is waiting on federal funds, and has been clear about the scale of the cuts -- 10-20% -- should support not come to pass.) Rather, CUNY has been allocating just 80% of last year's monthly average for July, August, and September. Payroll, has been handled centrally (payroll for PS regular and adjunct costs are 87% of CUNY wide tax levy allocation). The state has been witholding 20% from CUNY, as it has with all state agencies.
* The FY20 closeout may need 2-3M of *non* tax-levy resources to close out
* As far as adjustments made: plans were made to adjust: adjunct costs (down, but not as much as planned); non-teach-adjuncts and CAs (CUNY asked colleges to appoint month-to-month); temp services; vacancies (VP Iwama's position was used as an example); transportation expenses; energy expenses; and repurposing overhead funds. The 4.1M structural deficit was reduced to about 2.5M, not accounting for potential cuts.
* Tuition revenue is expected to be about 4-600K more than last year, based on a slight enrollment increase; There is no answer to the question of a tuition increase (which could happen should the board choose). This was anticipated to bring in about 2M in revenue.
* The 7.2M of CARES funding has not yet been released. CUNY is waiting for its budget from the state before deciding to move on its plan, in case the plan needs to be adjusted.
* Some adjuncts that were not reappointed were rehired. Both due to higher than anticipated enrollment and support from a Mellon Foundation grant (10M CUNY wide allowing ~150 adjuncts to be supported CUNY wide)

The executive committe pointed out that several faculty, notably part-time faculty, were asked to shoulder overtallies beyond what it typical, and that such approvals may be harder to find in the spring.

## Reopening

We asked

The reopening plan for research was quite delayed, as compared to other CUNY peers, this caused concern amongst the faculty "researchers" who were eager to begin work in their labs. A review of why things took as long as they did (have?) would be welcome.

We heard that some bench-scientists were back in their labs along with some graduate students, as of the week of the 31st. We heard that 6S is the only space currently suitable for usage, though a space for PT students is coming online. As 6S is the space, discussion about relocating other lab scientists to 6S have been held

We heard that spring may be very similar to fall. A guess of 3-600 students maximum on campus was suggested.

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We heard that Spring may be very similar to fall. A guess of 3-600 students maximum on campus was suggested

We heard the residence hall is open for a limited number of students (~50% of capacity). We heard there have been no reported COVID-19 cases. We haerd that 100 identified cases would call for a shutdown.

We asked

When is it anticipated that non-bench-scientists will be allowed to conduct their research, be it in the library or their department office?

The answer seems to be this is unlikely this academic year

We suggested (and had a short discussion) that

Moreover, numerous other faculty researchers found the exclusionary language used by CUNY and others to be off putting. We suggest that the artificial distinction between "research" (for the bench scientists) and "scholarship" (for non-bench scientists) be mothballed.

We asked

Despite no clear statement that this will be the case, there is concern amongst some employees that there will be a mandated return to work. Can the college's/CUNY's position on this be clearly stated, so that we can relay it forward?

It was made clear that very few people would be coming to work for the foreseeable future

## Teaching

We asked

While buoyed to see enrollment did not decline, our likely tuition revenue should rise slightly, and our course efficiencies did rise significantly from last fall, we are concerned that class size issues will be a major discussion area as we map out spring offerings, indeed some in the community are already arguing for "soft strikes" based on class size. Where will the conversation be held, and will faculty be involved in any changes related to class size?

We heard that enrollment held with a 1% overall increase, a welcome relief from mid-summer estimations of a decline on par with the CUNY average (~4%).

In response to the class size question we heard that the college potentially has too few small sections and too few big sections, as compared to a large state school.

We heard that the Middle States accrediation process is ongoing, despite the pandemic.

We heard that the Middle states exemption for allowing all courses to be held online through 12/20 is likely to have have an extension (through 6/21) requested.

## Communication

We had asked

The executive committee has heard complaints that members of the community were late to be notified of significant changes. For example, the student government president was concerned that just a few weeks before classes the students had not been notified of their class statuses. Can we review the college's communication plan?

In response, we heard that bi-weekly communications have been going out and with a consistent message.

We had asked

Any update on the evaluation process from last spring of both the president and provost

We were told that the President thought the process went well; that these personnel discussions are private; and that the campus should not expect any details of the evaluation.