Good morning, Finance Committee Chair David Weprin; Higher Education Committee Chair Charles Barron; and members of both committees. I thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on The City University of New York and the FY2004 New York City Budget. I would also like to thank you for all your help and support of the University -- especially during these difficult financial times. I know you all appreciate the need to invest in education on behalf of the future of the people of our great City.

**New York City Executive Budget:**

I and members of the Chancellery have testified on many occasions on the programs and services of the University and in particular the community colleges. I know you understand the critical role community colleges play in educating the workforce, in preparing students for transfer to senior colleges, in introducing students to career and professional opportunities and in meeting the needs of older and non-traditional students.

- In 2001-2002, our community colleges served over 85,000 students in degree programs and over 92,000 students in non-credit and adult and continuing education programs.

- CUNY community colleges have awarded approximately 80,000 associate degrees over the past 12 years. At least 80% of community college graduates remain in New York City after ten years, and 92% of our 2000-2001 community college graduates who are employed work in New York City, primarily in full-time positions.
Our community colleges have a total impact of spending on the New York State economy of over $806 million a year. For every state dollar invested in CUNY’s community colleges ($131.3 million in 2002-3), New York City is seeing a $13 return.

The New York City Executive Budget for the FY2004 fiscal year recommends City support of $124.3 million, which is the same level of funding recommended in the FY2003-2004 Preliminary Budget. The Executive Budget carries forward the $8.3 million in reductions included in the Preliminary Budget. We begin the budget process, therefore, with the funding liabilities of the past.

Among our highest priorities for the City Executive Budget is the restoration of $5.5 million in funding for the New York City Council Peter F. Vallone Scholarships. Since 1998, the Vallone Scholarships have provided much-needed financial assistance— and an academic incentive— for more than 35,000 New York City high school graduates who maintain a “B” average and attend CUNY. The Vallone Scholarships recognize and reward the best students in our educational system, enabling them to obtain a respected and valued college degree from CUNY and thereby realize their goals and dreams.

The Mayor’s Executive Budget also includes a $124,000 cut to the Hunter College Campus Schools. Hunter College High School is the number one public high school in the country in sending students to Harvard, Princeton and Yale. Its prize-winning students from every borough, ethnic group and income range in the City are our future leaders. They will repay our investment in their education a thousandfold. We ask that you work to restore these cuts as the City budget process moves forward.
The Budget does not provide any funding for projected mandatory cost increases of $4.1 million. Without new funding, these costs will have to be absorbed and result in reduced services. In addition, the budget does not provide any new funding to meet the tremendous needs of our community colleges, particularly in the area of greatest concern for CUNY and our highest priority: new full-time faculty.

For a very long period of time, CUNY has hired few new full-time professors; instead, we have relied on disproportionately large numbers of part-time instructors. Part-time faculty teach nearly 60% of class sections at the community colleges. This means only 40% of the class sections are taught by full-time faculty. CUNY’s Master Plan 2000-2004 calls for 70% of instruction to be taught by full-time faculty. We have so far to go that we would need to hire 720 new full-timers – a 60% increase in our full-time teaching workforce– to meet our objectives.

Part-time instructors represent an invaluable component of our faculty, but to make any meaningful and long-term improvement to the academic enterprise, we must invest in the University’s full-time faculty. They are the front-line workers on our campuses. More than anyone, they carry on our core business of helping our students acquire the knowledge and skills they need to realize their aspirations and dreams. Full-time faculty are better equipped to be consistently accessible to students, give them individualized attention, have in-depth knowledge of the institution and its curricula, and therefore teach and advise students effectively.

It is time that we begin to address the issue aggressively; we must have investment now in the full-time faculty at our community colleges. The community colleges cannot be fully integrated with the senior colleges unless they provide instructional service that articulates with senior college study.
Capital Budget:

The City Executive Budget recommends $91.3 million in City capital funds for the four-year period of FY 2004-2007. These funds are allocated throughout the campuses in small but very important projects, mostly to upgrade technologies, remedy space deficits, address health and safety issues and conserve energy. We are pleased that within this recommendation, the Budget provides $58.9 million to match State appropriations for Academic Building I at Medgar Evers College.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the urgent capital needs at our community colleges in general. Those institutions have long struggled to meet the needs of a rapidly increasing student body with facilities that are in desperate need of repair and renovation. The academic life of these campuses simply cannot continue to thrive without addressing the sore need for new facilities and the renovation of older buildings. As technology and the needs of New York City’s workforce change, and as our student body grows, our community colleges must maintain and upgrade their facilities in order to continue the vital work they accomplish in our neighborhoods and our economy.

Bronx Community College is a prime example of the great distress our community colleges are experiencing. 90% of all classroom instruction at BCC takes place in two buildings—Colston Hall and Meister Hall—neither of which provides sufficient classroom size or accommodates modern technology requirements. Hallways in Colston Hall are cramped, and the College’s main library, located in the basement of Meister Hall, does not have an elevator for moving materials, access for the disabled in certain areas, adequate shelving or seating, or group study rooms.

At the State level, capital funding remains at $55 million, as recommended by the Executive Budget. There is an opportunity for further City support of our
community colleges: the City is currently matching only $19.4 million of the capital funds allocated by the State for the Medgar Evers facility. This leaves a total of approximately $30.6 million in State funds that the City could match further to fund projects at other campuses.

For example, Borough of Manhattan Community College, as you know, lost Fiterman Hall in the attacks of September 11th, and my administration has been working closely with President Perez to pursue all options relating to its replacement. I appreciate the fact that Chairman Barron, as well as Chairman Alan Gerson of the Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Committee, held a hearing last week on Fiterman Hall, which will continue to be a particularly high priority for the University.

We are also especially grateful that the City Council's Alternative Financial Plan proposes to support CUNY's Capital Budget with approximately $150 million of new City Funds in FY 2004. With matching State funds, that could bring the total capital funding available for the community colleges and Medgar Evers College to $300 million. I urge you to demonstrate and communicate, as you have in the past, your strong support for the University and its request for capital funds as we proceed through the budget adoption process.

**Conclusion:**

I have attached a preliminary analysis of the Senate/Assembly budget agreement as it relates to the University and would be pleased to answer any questions you have on recent State developments. Our citizenry needs to have continued and expanded access to the opportunities CUNY's community colleges provide for educational growth, career advancement and personal fulfillment. Chairs Barron and Weprin, and Members of the New York City Council, in the past we have relied on your assistance in supporting our critical needs, and we appreciate all that you have done. We are proud of our historic role as an urban University that
for over 155 years has enabled all New Yorkers to meet their personal and professional goals. We ask you now to help us continue our tradition of helping students of all backgrounds participate fully in the life and the economy of this City. Thank you.