Connected CUNY

AFFORDABLE ACCESS, ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND
STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

THE BRONX
- Lehman College
- Bronx Community College
- Hostos Community College

MANHATTAN
- The City College of New York
- Macaulay Honors College
- CUNY School of Professional Studies
- CUNY Graduate School of Journalism
- Borough of Manhattan Community College

QUEENS
- CUNY School of Public Health and Health Policy
- Hunter College
- John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- CUNY School of Law
- Guttman Community College
- CUNY Graduate Center
- LaGuardia Community College
- Queens College
- York College

STATEN ISLAND
- College of Staten Island
- Kingsborough Community College

BROOKLYN
- Borough of Brooklyn
- Brooklyn College
- New York City College of Technology
- Queensborough Community College
- Queens College
- LaGuardia Community College
- Medgar Evers College

AFFORDABLE ACCESS, ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND
STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY
CUNY’S NEW STRATEGIC VISION

FOR 170 YEARS, THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK has been a beacon of opportunity for all New Yorkers, opening the doors to a high-quality education and great careers no matter where our students started out in life. That mission has been essential to the success of New York and has produced an exceptional record of achievement. CUNY’s colleges have propelled nearly six times as many students from lower-income levels to the middle class and above as all the Ivy League-plus colleges combined.

Proud as we are of that legacy, fulfilling our indispensable mission in the 21st century will be even more challenging. There has never been a time when higher education has been more important. More jobs require a degree and the earnings gap between those with a high school education and those with college diplomas is growing. We know that what we have done in the past simply is not good enough. If we are to best prepare New York and our students for an increasingly competitive, globalized, knowledge economy we must transform CUNY for the next century.

Together with students, faculty and other experts, we spent more than a year developing our new strategic plan, which is now being implemented. To ensure that more New Yorkers, especially those from low-income, underrepresented and immigrant groups, are prepared to succeed, we are significantly expanding access and improving college readiness, dramatically increasing graduation rates, and preparing students for – and connecting them with – high-growth businesses so they graduate with the experience needed to accelerate their careers. The plan is called Connected CUNY because success will be driven by far greater collaboration and partnering between our colleges, between the University and other research institutions, and with the city and state.

The following pages spell out CUNY’s blueprint for an exciting new period of expansion and sharply improved performance. We look forward to your comments and feedback.
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK is a distinctively urban university with a unique mission. Our task, for the past 170 years, has been to provide “a vehicle of upward mobility for the disadvantaged,” through an “integrated system of higher education.” Led by this historic mandate, CUNY has become among the most accessible, affordable and respected universities in the country – covering the spectrum from community colleges to graduate and professional schools. We offer incomparable opportunities to New Yorkers, particularly those from low-income families, underrepresented groups and immigrant communities.

Our special role as New York’s largest-scale engine of social mobility takes on added urgency in the 21st century, as a college diploma becomes an indispensable ticket to the middle class. Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s Excelsior free-tuition program is a clear recognition of the critical role of quality public higher education in providing greater opportunity and success.

An important new study, by a group of respected economists, offers stunning confirmation of CUNY’s role in promoting mobility. According to the data, CUNY propels almost six times the number of low-income students to the middle class and beyond as the eight Ivy league schools, plus MIT, Duke, Chicago and Stanford, combined. There is a place for many types of academic institutions in American higher education, but that research affirmed the extraordinary position that CUNY occupies, where access on the broadest scale, high quality and successful results converge.
A NEW VISION FOR A NEW ERA

Not only have we given generations of New Yorkers the means to reach their aspirations, CUNY and its graduates have been indispensable to New York City’s rise as the country’s media, financial, health care and cultural capital. But sustaining that success will only grow more difficult in the new era we are entering. New York, though endowed with extraordinary advantages, faces great challenges as it competes with other global megacities for talent, influence and economic position in the 21st century.

The knowledge-based economy requires an increasingly well-educated, globally oriented, technologically competent workforce. It requires graduates who are entrepreneurial, innovative and collaborative. In other words, to be successful, New York needs a reenergized CUNY.

While CUNY has done many things well, the University still has far to go to meet these new demands. Talent is distributed evenly across demographic groups and income levels, but opportunity is not. The likelihood of an individual’s success is stubbornly correlated with wealth, and we know that there are great, persistent gaps in the opportunity for college attendance, graduation, and access to the best careers. Those challenges have made our historic mission even more relevant and urgent.

THE STEPPING STONES TO SUCCESS – DIPLOMAS AND WORK EXPERIENCE

The new strategic framework provides the vision that will allow CUNY to meet the challenge through a comprehensive series of initiatives. We will strengthen significantly our partnership with the city’s schools to ensure more high school graduates are college ready, and, for those who are not, we will improve the effectiveness of our remediation programs. Diplomas are the keys that can open a lifetime of career success in this new economy, and perhaps the single most important initiative we can undertake is to help more students obtain them more quickly.

And students today need more than degrees; they need real-world experiences that will connect them with their passions and provide workplace skills and the networks to help launch careers in the most promising, high-growth fields. We will also offer flexible learning opportunities so mid-career New Yorkers can advance or change careers in leading sectors of the economy, studying at our campuses or on expanded online offerings. We will expand and bring greater diversity to our faculty and staff so that they reflect the breadth of backgrounds and experiences that have long energized our student body. CUNY will support its faculty as leaders in the world of ideas, knowledge creation and innovation.

THE CONNECTED CUNY MODEL

To achieve these critical objectives, we will re-engineer CUNY into a more collaborative and efficient institution. We will implement new levels of connectivity in a number of ways — within the CUNY system by eliminating barriers and friction that impede the movement of students and faculty between our colleges, with the city and state by partnering with their agencies as well as with other leading universities and research institutions where CUNY will build academic and research collaborations, and globally, by connecting with universities and research institutions in other large urban centers to ensure a robust flow of ideas, students and faculty. We will succeed in our reinvigorated mission by connecting in ways that produce a whole that is far more valuable than the sum of the University’s parts.

Supporting this framework will be a sustainable funding model. We will build a platform for increasing support from foundations, philanthropies, alumni and individuals who are eager to work with us on our common goals. We will focus on improving services to faculty, staff and our partners, while reducing administrative costs with better business practices, all within a strengthened culture of transparency and integrity.

The expectations of New York City and its flagship public university are high, and our strategic framework provides the vision for how we will fulfill our mandate for this new era.
COLLEGE READINESS

One of the best predictors of college success is entering prepared for college-level studies. CUNY will work with its partners to help ensure that a larger number of entering students are prepared, starting with early education and assisting them up to and through high school.

CUNY will deepen its work with the Department of Education to improve successful student transition from high school to college.

- We will expand the pipeline of highly qualified students entering CUNY by increasing opportunities for high school students to take college credit courses and to participate in research programs, internships and summer bridge programs.
- We will promote diversity by implementing new admissions processes to allow a more holistic review of high school student performance.
- We will create opportunities for all NYC middle school students to visit CUNY campuses and gain firsthand knowledge of college expectations and options.
- We will work with the Department of Education to improve academic preparation for college by expanding programs that prepare 12th-grade students to meet CUNY’s math and English standards.
- Will launch the CUNY Tutor Corps to place CUNY students as tutors and mentors in science, technology and math courses in DOE high schools.
- We will expand the number of students who successfully transition from DOE career-focused high schools to relevant CUNY degree programs by establishing partnerships among schools, colleges and employers in high growth industries, such as health care and information technology.
- We will implement innovative strategies to address the needs of populations traditionally underserved by higher education, such as New York’s foster youth.

CUNY will reform underperforming remediation programs with evidence-based approaches and national best practices.

- We will adopt national best practices for determining when students are adequately prepared to take college courses and improving the quality and efficiency of remedial instruction. We will better align remedial coursework with intended academic and career interests and offer rigorous alternative routes to mathematics proficiency.
- We will expand proven accelerated models of developmental education, including CUNY Start and Math Start, as well as successful models developed at individual colleges.
- Our colleges will expand their work as incubators of effective new approaches and programs for teaching remedial subjects and supporting student momentum toward graduation.

CUNY, which produces nearly a third of the city’s teachers, will strengthen teacher education and diversify the teaching force to better prepare high school graduates.

- We will strengthen a diverse teacher preparation pipeline through improved and streamlined transfer between community and senior college education programs, and focused recruitment.
- We will increase opportunities for high-quality clinical experiences for pre-service candidates to observe high-quality teaching in the field, learn from experienced and engaged teachers, demonstrate their own pedagogy and content knowledge, and incorporate feedback through collaboration with the NYC DOE and other partners.
- We will improve alignment between teacher candidate supply and areas of high demand, especially in fields such as computer science and special and bilingual education.
- We will support programs and research opportunities to increase faculty collaboration with the Department of Education to ensure properly focused skills development.
CUNY will be a leader in early childhood learning, integrating research, policy and practice to lift educational success of children, birth to 8 years.

- With the leadership of CUNY’s Early Childhood Professional Development Institute and college faculty, we will strengthen interdisciplinary studies and practical strategies for enhancing the quality of early childhood education, Pre-K instruction and services, where the foundation for learning is built.
- CUNY will prepare the next generation of the early childhood workforce at the program and policy levels by expanding clinical and academic programs.
- We will develop new degree and certificate programs, including an early childhood track in the Urban Education doctoral program, to support the needs of young children. We will develop new degree and certificate programs to train specialists in areas such as Early Intervention, Maternal and Infant Health and Early Childhood Leadership.
To keep pace with the rapid changes of a knowledge-based economy, CUNY will ensure that more New Yorkers are able to attend college and earn degrees.

CUNY will extend the benefits of higher education to more New Yorkers and the value of our degrees will be improved.

- We will support significantly expanded access to the benefits of higher education through the governor’s historic free-tuition plan, removing a barrier to many low- and middle-income students.
- We will transform recruitment, admissions and financial aid processes to be more competitive and enroll more New Yorkers.
- CUNY will aggressively expand the high-quality online education offered by CUNY’s colleges, supporting the infrastructure, training and incentives necessary to reach ambitious new goals.
- We will focus on degree completion for the more than one million New Yorkers who have some credits but no degree by creating a one-stop service, providing academic and career advisers to support working adults. We will also launch an initiative to connect working and mid-career learners with courses leading to degrees and certificates, and we will expand use of prior learning assessments for degree requirements and competency-based credentialing.

CUNY will double its three-year graduation rate for associate degrees, leading the nation in urban community college attainment. We will also raise by 10 points the six-year graduation rate for bachelor’s programs.

- CUNY’s new culture of completion will be reflected by pervasive “college momentum” campaigns and alignment of advising at every undergraduate college to make annual accumulation of 30 credits the norm.
- The University will expand the groundbreaking ASAP program to 25,000 community college students by 2018-19, including full implementation of ASAP for all full-time students at Bronx Community College, and pilot ASAP-like completion programs at senior colleges.
- We will work with our funding partners to significantly increase the number of academic advisers at colleges and the technological resources to support them, provide better support through increased use of data analytics and technology, and place new emphasis on supporting transfer students, including accelerated evaluation of transcripts on entry.

**Mobility Rates for Four-Year State College Systems**

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Source – NBER Working Paper Series Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility: nber.org/papers/w23618

The mobility rate measures the college’s accessibility to students from the lowest 20 percent of U.S. incomes times the percentage of those students who rise following graduation to the top 20 percent income level.
CUNY will eliminate barriers to registration and credit acceptance between CUNY colleges, and encourage students to take full advantage of the rich academic opportunities throughout the University, across college lines.

- New policies and processes will make it much easier for students at each college to take courses at any other CUNY college and receive full degree credit.
- We will expand joint and dual degree opportunities and stackable degree strategies within and among colleges.
- CUNY will fully implement new planning software tools to improve course availability and implement predictable course scheduling.

CUNY will increase diversity at its most selective institutions and at its highest levels of degree attainment.

- CUNY will strengthen application pipelines and streamline and improve application and transfer processes, expanding the proportion of underrepresented groups at senior colleges.
- CUNY will diversify its flagship honors program by launching a new transfer program from community colleges to the Macaulay Honors College.
- Master’s and doctoral programs will implement strategies to significantly step up recruiting among underrepresented groups within and beyond CUNY.

We will greatly strengthen student services and supports to speed degree completion.

- We will improve student services by integrating them into one-stop centers, improving staffing on evenings and weekends, and expanding online and mobile delivery of information and services, including social media, to provide students with timely, accurate and consistent information on credits and degree status.
- Under the new administrative restructuring program, we will streamline business processes associated with admissions, course registration, tuition payment, financial aid and other student services to sharply improve the overall student experience.
- We will require timely, thorough and efficient orientations for all students — freshmen, transfer students and students of online courses.
- CUNY will deploy student early academic warning systems with backup supports, and connect academic, social, legal and financial services to better support student success.
- We will work with our funding partners to expand Single Stop social service centers from the current eight to all 18 CUNY undergraduate colleges to assist students in overcoming financial and other barriers.

### Mobility Rates for Two-Year State College Systems

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Source – NBER Working Paper Series Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility: nber.org/papers/w23618

The mobility rate measures the college’s accessibility to students from the lowest 20 percent of U.S. incomes times the percentage of those students who rise following graduation to the top 20 percent income level.
CUNY will be an engine of economic development, connecting with workplace partners to ensure that students are prepared for successful careers and leadership in the knowledge-based economy.

We will identify current and future economic engines by regions, sectors, institutions and employers and build education and training programs that align with current and future workforce needs.

- CUNY will launch a tech resources group to connect with employers, industry groups, organized labor, alumni and others to align degree programs with workplace skills, job opportunities and industry trends.
- We will significantly increase enrollment in STEM majors, with emphasis on increasing participation of women and underrepresented minorities.
- We will work to bring to scale pilot efforts to introduce computer skills, software and data analytics into the curriculum to ensure all graduates in all fields are competitive in a technology-based economy.
- We will launch a new CUNY Arts initiative to connect our students with experiences, curriculum, internships and jobs in New York's unparalleled arts and culture sector.

CUNY will make pragmatic experiential learning a signature component of a CUNY education.

- CUNY University-wide and on its campuses will work with alumni, employers, industry groups, nonprofits and organized labor to increase the number and quality of paid internship programs.
- We will increase opportunities for students to build global competencies, through study abroad, languages and other programs.
- We will expand opportunities for undergraduate research across the community and senior colleges and with other institutions.
- We will increase opportunities for community service, tied to academic programs, through partnerships with state and city agencies and communities, the CUNY Service Corps and the CUNY Tutor Corps.

CUNY will substantially improve career services throughout the University.

- CUNY will re-engineer career services by creating a central entry portal that connects with and supports college career services offices with information, consistent practices and counseling.
CUNY will invest in and support its faculty’s knowledge creation, research, creative activities and innovation as engaged scholars, teachers and members of the community.

- We will expand our full-time faculty and implement new strategies to build greater diversity in the faculty. Leaders will be accountable for success.
- CUNY will position its leading graduate and professional programs to compete with the best globally.
- We will work with our funding partners and user groups to upgrade teaching and research facilities and infrastructure.
- We will optimize through collaboration and interdisciplinary work the potential of the Graduate Center, ASRC, the High Performance Computing Center, and other University-wide institutes and resources to support CUNY faculty and students.
- We will leverage our strengths through strategic partnerships with leading universities and other public and private organizations.

*CUNY will contribute significantly to the quality of urban life by focusing intellectual resources on key issues including the built environment, sustainable energy, social justice, public health, economic development, cultural enrichment and civic engagement.*

- We will support CUNY-wide faculty collaborations to address great urban challenges, across disciplines and with other institutions around the world.
- We will partner with government, civic and cultural organizations, nonprofits, and the private sector to develop and apply new knowledge that leads to improved policies, products and services.
- We will increase opportunities for faculty and students to promote, incubate and transfer new knowledge and technology through CUNY programs, institutes and partnerships.
- CUNY will support increased opportunities for select commercial translational and applied research and development initiatives.

*CUNY will enhance global perspectives, practice and reach.*

- We will leverage CUNY’s location in the premier global megacity to develop a network with other leading urban universities, providing opportunities for faculty and student collaborations.
- Building on the unique multicultural richness and linguistic abilities of CUNY students, we will help them develop careers in a global economy.
CUNY will effectively leverage the public’s investment by redesigning business processes, using existing space more efficiently and pursuing collaborative efforts to expand our physical reach, and re-engineering development operations, while ensuring the University’s financial operations are sound, transparent and accountable.

- CUNY will implement best practices in policies and operations that ensure financial accountability and integrity in all areas, including establishing a new structure for managing enterprise risk and compliance.
- We will adopt best business practices for high-performing organizations, including redesigning business processes and streamlining administrative functions to improve services and reallocate funds to highest priorities, such as investing in new faculty and student services.
- We will advocate for investments from our funding partners – public and private – that support CUNY’s goals and provide the best opportunities for our students and advance the state’s and city’s priorities.
- CUNY will use national best practices to improve fundraising operations to significantly increase private funding to support University priorities.
- CUNY will work to develop partnerships with institutions that share our goals and extend our reach, such as the city’s outstanding library systems, cultural institutions and others.
- We will expand capacity by making more efficient use of CUNY’s facilities and rely increasingly on technology to meet growing enrollment demands.