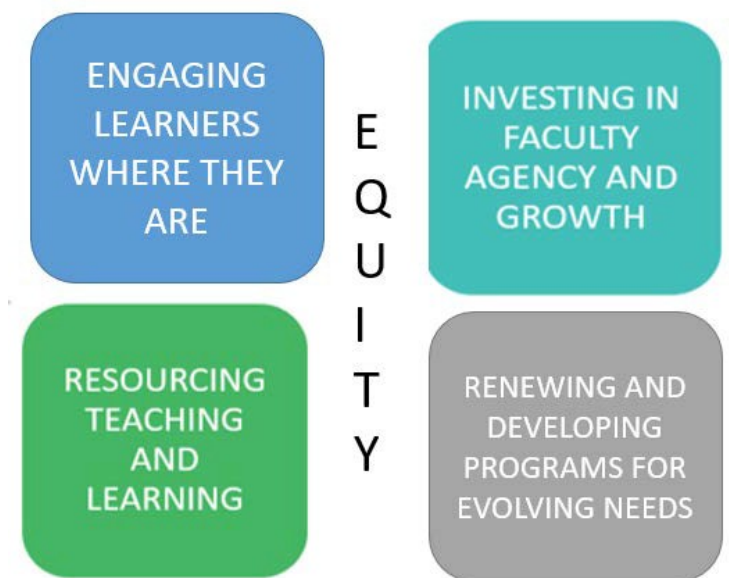


# Kingsborough Community College Academic Plan 2020-2025



Office of Academic Affairs

October 2, 2019

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Academic Plan (AP) of the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) represents Kingsborough's first public and widely distributed plan for OAA, developed through a process of open meetings, feedback sessions, and writing groups, designed to facilitate inclusive faculty participation and feedback. The process began in October 2018 and the AP report is being released a year later. The plan has seven key parts including:

- An *Introduction* that outlines each stage of the faculty/administrative collaboration that led to the publication of this plan and an overview of our work moving forward
- Four chapters, one for each of the AP themes:
  - *Engaging Learners Where They Are*
  - *Investing in Faculty Agency and Growth*
  - *Resourcing Teaching and Learning*
  - *Renewing and Developing Programs for Evolving Needs*
- An *APA References* section documenting and, where possible, linking to the sources of evidence cited throughout the plan
- An Appendix that includes the original recommendations submitted by the four Theme Teams

Each of the four chapters comprises:

- a *preamble* that places the theme within the context of Kingsborough data and CUNY data. In addition, the preamble cites reports and current research so that we can place our AP work within a contextual framework of higher education that will lead to evidence-based decisions as we move forward to fulfill the work stated in the AP.
- a series of *goals* generated as a result of multiple discussions among faculty.
- a *rationale* for each goal explaining its relevance and projected impact in the KCC context. Each rationale for each goal also outlines provisional strategies for implementing the goal, frequently supporting them with relevant evidence.
- an explicit attention to how our institutional commitment to equity will be advanced within and through that theme and its proposed goals.

The AP goals and suggested strategies for implementing them for each chapter are as follows:

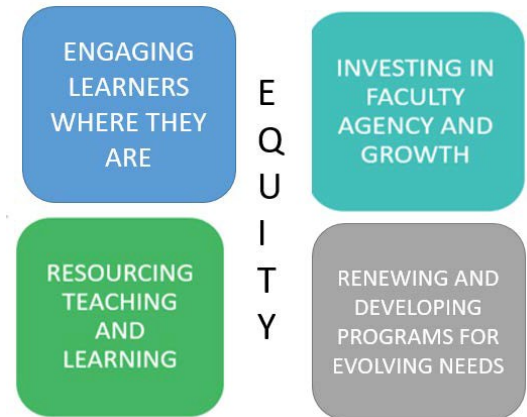
- *Engaging Learners Where They Are* focuses on addressing students' academic needs through equity-minded goals that promote nuanced and complex approaches to college readiness. These include
  - high impact practices such as an expansion of our highly successful learning communities program to fit students' career pathways, programs and majors;

- creation of first year academic seminar experiences;
  - practices and interventions to enable student agency and support student decision making
  - carefully designed, holistic creative “safety nets” for our students that support their academic momentum from enquiry through graduation and transition
- *Investing in Faculty Agency and Growth* focuses on supporting faculty development and success throughout the faculty lifecycle and on creating the formal and informal structures that will enable more inclusive faculty dialogue and more meaningful faculty participation in college decision-making processes. The specific thematic area goals include:
    - increased support for faculty scholarship and diversified faculty development opportunities for all faculty;
    - formal and informal mechanisms designed to foster community dialogue and collaborative problem solving
    - varied and meaningful leadership opportunities for faculty across all ranks and appointment types
    - dedicated faculty development resources for adjuncts
    - recommendations for strengthening shared governance
- *Resourcing Teaching and Learning* focuses on affirming, resourcing and building on KCC’s commitment to excellence in teaching and learning. The specific goals that will advance this larger purpose include:
    - collaborative design of inclusive learning spaces grounded in pedagogical principles
    - emphasis on teaching as a meaningful institutional value
    - promotion of a college-wide learning culture
    - expansion of High Impact Practices (HIPs)
    - enhanced assessment of student learning
- *Renewing and Developing Programs for Evolving Needs* focuses on ensuring that our array of academic programs effectively meet the complex and shifting educational needs of learners throughout Brooklyn communities. The specific thematic goal include:
    - Renewed commitment to Liberal Arts programs, values, and outcomes
    - Increasing, amplifying and simplifying articulation agreements
    - Establishing a college-wide protocol for program development that includes employer engagement and careful attention to labor market data
    - Enhanced capacity to serve adult and non-traditional students
    - Enriched career exploration and career development activities in all programs and throughout the student life cycle

## INTRODUCTION

KCC's inaugural Academic Plan (AP) represents a collaboratively developed, forward-looking vision for our shared academic work. Grounded in the collective expertise of our faculty, and supplemented by KCC and CUNY data, by national trends, and by research within and across disciplines, KCC's AP sets the College's direction across four academic themes or focus areas:

- Engaging Learners Where They Are
- Investing in Faculty Agency and Growth
- Resourcing Teaching and Learning
- Renewing and Developing Programs for Evolving Needs



Woven throughout these themes is KCC's commitment to equity as articulated in KCC's formal Equity Statement and enacted through our ongoing work with the Achieving the Dream (ATD) national network. Both our public statement and our commitments within ATD compel us to think deeply about equity as we implement our four thematic themes. Thinking deeply about equity means more than simply looking at these themes through the lens of difference; rather, to fully achieve all of the goals within the themes, we must commit to an equity-driven change process that will call upon our collective capacity to "relearn where to look and what to see" (Castro, 2015).

In this aspect, as in many others, the AP is aspirational, as much in its overall goals and its expected processes. The vision laid out in these pages will challenge each of us to renew our faith in shared purpose and collaborative effort. In the same year that we were developing the first exclusively *Academic Plan* in KCC's history, KCC also published its first set of institutional values. We believe that the successful implementation of the AP will both support, and be supported by, these values: Respect, Diversity, Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Innovation. Grounded in these values, the AP furthers KCC's mission statement, reaffirmed in 2019:

### Mission Statement:

*Kingsborough Community College responds to the needs of its diverse community by offering high quality, affordable, innovative, student centered programs of study that prepare graduates for transfer or the workforce. The college values equity and seeks to provide the student with the appropriate resources and supports to foster success.*

In the remainder of this introduction, we will explain the reasons for developing an AP for KCC at this historical moment, the process by which the AP was developed, and a brief overview of its thematic framework. Subsequent chapters will flesh out that framework in detail and describe the broad set of recommendations that emerged from it.

## KCC's AP Initiative in Context

The inaugural KCC AP can be usefully framed as a timely and necessary academic response to the multiple internal and external challenges, including decline in student enrollment, transitions in senior leadership, shifts in CUNY policy, and increasing divisions within institutional culture. Taken together, these challenges signaled a need for a shared stock-taking and, more importantly, a broadly agreed-upon path forward that supports KCC's core mission and strong academic foundation while positioning us to respond more nimbly and effectively to the needs of Brooklyn students and the Brooklyn community.

Long recognized for academic excellence, KCC was again named as one of the nation's top ten community colleges by the Aspen Institute in 2019. In the same year, we were designated a Leader College of Distinction by the Achieving the Dream network. While the awards are nominally a function of our best in CUNY community college student success metrics (including retention and graduation rates that are almost twice the national average), they are ultimately due to a faculty and staff who are deeply committed to KCC's academic mission.

Since 2015, KCC has seen transitions at the presidential and senior staff level as well within key leadership positions in Academic Affairs. During the same period, CUNY developed and implemented a series of broad changes to developmental education that, while consistent with national best practices and data, were not fully supported by all KCC constituencies. Finally, the last five years have seen a sharp enrollment decline that has negatively affected KCC's budget. These three factors have put pressure on the campus climate and as was borne out in several data sets, have in particular led to concerns about faculty disenfranchisement and a perceived disconnect between faculty and administrative priorities.

The external policy and funding environment for higher education also contributed to the challenges facing Academic Affairs and the College as a whole. These external challenges are in turn set within the broader context of growing economic inequality in the United States and increasing stratification within our higher education systems. Continual declines in state funding, coupled with increased public scrutiny of graduation rates and other broad metrics, have created a perfect storm in which campuses are expected to demonstrate improved "results" with fewer resources (Century Foundation, 2019). In addition, as the nation's demographics begin to change, students seeking college degrees are becoming more and more diverse, even as troubling indicators of post-secondary equity suggest that colleges may not be fully prepared to serve these students (Cahalan, 2019; Edgecombe, 2019; McNair, 2016; Within et al, 2010). KCC's work as a Leader College of Distinction for the Achieving the Dream network has renewed our commitment to equity as a driving force of our mission, but based on persistent equity gaps in student outcomes, we have yet to identify the best mechanisms for operationalizing equity within Academic Affairs.

In light of these factors, a KCC AP, and an inclusive process for developing this plan, offered a vital opportunity for KCC's academic community. Taking full advantage of that opportunity required faculty and administrative staff to come together to assess the current state of academics at KCC



(programs, resources, instruction, culture, and community relations) in order to build on our considerable strengths and identify new areas for growth and innovation.

## The AP Process at KCC

KCC's AP initiative was introduced to the college community at a meeting with faculty and academic staff on September 28, 2018, when Provost Joanne Russell announced that the Office of Academic Affairs would work with faculty and academic staff to draft KCC's first formal AP over the course of the 2018-2019 academic year. As Provost Russell explained, the AP planning process and ultimately the AP itself would:

- provide a framework for academic planning and decision-making
- guide resource allocation, program planning and facilities planning
- inform priorities for identifying funding opportunities
- clarify action plans for improvement of academic and support programs

Beyond these more instrumental, pragmatic objectives, the Provost also envisioned that the AP could serve the larger purpose of promoting an ongoing, college-wide culture of collaborative inquiry, organizational learning and shared vision and values.

Given the context described above, in which the process for creating the AP was just as critical to KCC's academic future as the AP itself, it was important that the AP's development be facilitated by a joint faculty-administrative team and that the team be charged with designing an open, participatory and inclusive process for creating the AP over the course of the academic year. Accordingly, during the October 2019 meeting of the College Council, three faculty members were elected by the Council to serve on the AP's Facilitator Workgroup (FWG): Ann Del Principe, Ivan Ho, and Rick Repetti. The Provost then sent an open solicitation encouraging other interested faculty to participate, eventually appointing four additional full-time faculty members to the FWG: Tamara Bellomo, Loretta Brancaccio-Taras, Dawn Levy and Jason VanOra. Finally, Provost Russell appointed Mary Dawson to represent the department chairs, Raphael Afonja to represent adjunct faculty and Carey Manifold and Janine Palludan to represent the Office of Academic Affairs. The FWG was co-chaired by Dean Cathy Leaker and Chris Calienes, Director of Administrative, Educational, and Student Support Services and Human Research Protection Program.

The first task for the FWG was to design the AP process itself. Committed to an open, participatory and inclusive process, the FWG decided to ground the AP in the insights, expertise and experiences of broad faculty constituencies. Doing so would require first gathering, organizing, and sharing those perspectives as broadly as possible, and then focusing them and contextualizing them in other data sources in order to generate manageable strategic academic priorities. As the FWG deliberated on an iterative process that would meet these goals, the group recognized that transparency would be fundamental throughout the process. Consequently, the FWG created an online "AP Sandbox" on the CUNY Academic Commons which served as a public repository for tracking the AP's development and sharing each stage of its development.

Listed below are the initial stages of the AP's development through March 2019. The products from each stage were posted to the Sandbox and a notice was sent via email that new material had been posted.

**AP Feedback Sessions:** The FWG decided to begin developing the AP by engaging in a deep dive of the current state of academics at the College as perceived by the broadest possible faculty constituencies. Using a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) assessment framework to accomplish this goal, the FWG invited all faculty to sign up for one of 14 AP feedback sessions (11 conducted face-to-face and three conducted online) scheduled for the end of November and the first part of December 2018. During each one-hour session, AP facilitators lead faculty participants in developing a SWOT analysis of the College's academic profile (staffing, programs, resources, student population etc.). The SWOT analyses were recorded on flipcharts and later transcribed. Transcriptions from all 14 SWOT sessions were collated into an aggregate document: [Aggregate SWOT from KCC AP Faculty Input Sessions](#). This lengthy document represented a comprehensive and detailed internal assessment of academics at KCC as reflected in the analyses, experienced observations and affective perceptions of over 100 KCC faculty members across a range of disciplines, career status and tenure at the College. The document was posted to the online AP Sandbox.

As valuable as the Aggregate SWOT document was as raw data, it had a number of limitations. As SWOT facilitators, the AP team had a goal of generating as much raw data as possible. As such, they did not seek to control the structure, nor did they attempt to steer the conversation beyond a few framing questions and imposing a timeframe that would ensure the groups addressed all four quadrants in the SWOT. In essence, the Aggregate SWOT was a reflective snapshot generated by a series of unstructured and open-ended brainstorming sessions with randomly assorted faculty groups varying in size from two to 15 participants.

**Coding the Feedback:** In order to clarify and organize the SWOT feedback data, a subgroup of the AP Facilitator Workgroup conducted a content driven thematic analysis of the raw data in the Aggregate SWOT. Working in groups of three, the coding team created an AP codebook for each of the four quadrants in the SWOT, ultimately consolidating 194 distinct codes from the code book into approximately 17 overarching, recurrent patterns/topics that seemed to cut across all four quadrants. These 17 topics became the focus of an AP follow-up survey.

**AP Follow-up Survey:** An AP follow-up survey was sent to all full and part-time faculty asking them to rank the 17 items identified in the coding process as either a Strength, a Challenge, both a Strength and a Challenge or neither a Strength nor a Challenge. The [survey responses](#) (posted to the online AP Sandbox) indicated faculty consensus that KCC's biggest strength is the diversity of our students and that our most significant challenges include student preparation, support for faculty research, faculty's role in decision-making, and classroom resources.

**Identifying Themes:** Having collected, coded, analyzed, distilled and confirmed our data, the FWG met together to organize the broad themes into a framework for the AP's development. In weighing potential themes, FWG also considered how the consolidated faculty feedback connected to both larger institutional objectives (for example, CUNY's Strategic Framework and the Achieving the Dream network's focus on student success through an equity lens). The FWG began by delineating the four broad areas that AP would address (Students, Faculty, Teaching and Learning as well as Academic Programs), and then turned its attention to naming and framing the four areas in a way that was consistent with faculty input, current context and, most importantly, with KCC's mission and values. The resulting four themes, Engaging Students Where They Are, Investing in Faculty Agency and Growth, Resourcing Teaching and Learning, and Renewing and Developing Programs for Evolving Needs, structured the remainder of the AP development process and are described in the next section.

## The AP Themes

The AP FWG identified four thematic areas that would become the four pillars of KCC's AP. Each of the themes reflected faculty feedback, as well as CUNY and national data that are shaping the higher education landscape.

### Engaging Learners Where They Are

Whether through their SWOT feedback or their responses to the AP survey, faculty consistently indicated their concern about KCC students' ability and motivation to pursue college level work. To some degree, this concern is supported by national and local data indicating the majority of students, particularly in community colleges, do not meet college readiness standards in English and Math (ACT, GNYC). In addition, KCC students face economic challenges, such as food and housing insecurity, which impact their academic performance (CUNY, Real College). While realistic about these challenges, the Engaging Learners Where They Are theme intentionally avoids a student deficit frame, instead emphasizing our collective responsibility to not simply engage students in college level learning but to do so ethically and equitably whatever the particular combination of strengths and challenges a given student experiences and whatever external factors, like changes in CUNY policy, threatens or seems to threaten to make such engagement more difficult.

### Investing in Faculty Agency and Growth

This theme directly responds to concerns raised in the AP SWOT sessions and follow-up survey, as well as the 2018 Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Report and 2019 COACHE data. The theme is intended to address these concerns by taking action, commensurate with CUNY policy, along two broad trajectories: first, promoting faculty agency, broadly understood as the ability of faculty, individually and collectively, to make choices about their working lives and to participate in decision making about the work of the College; and

second, supporting faculty growth, broadly understood as the ability of individual faculty to grow professionally from the point of hire through tenure and promotion.

### Resourcing Teaching and Learning

On the most literal level, this theme addresses concerns related to the material conditions for teaching and learning at the college, primarily our classrooms and our technology. Careful stewardship of teaching and learning as the core resource of KCC goes beyond material supports to include professional development, institutional reward structures, high-impact practices, and support for innovation.

### Developing and Renewing Programs for Evolving Needs

This theme can in part be framed as a necessary, even urgent, response to the College's persistent and continuing decline in enrollment over the past five years. Yet the theme as it emerged from our SWOT sessions and follow-up survey contextualized the enrollment problem within larger issues related to programmatic quality and offerings and to adaptiveness to both a shifting economy and an increasingly competitive higher education landscape. Thus, even as this theme addresses the need to expand and diversify our academic programming, it asserts with equal force our responsibility to vigorously defend the value of the Liberal Arts, both as a discrete program and as the foundation of general education at KCC and CUNY. In short, the imperative to engage in strategic program development also involves a commitment to program renewal; more importantly both program development and program need to take into consideration preserving KCC as a vital and sustainable resource for the citizens of Brooklyn.

The themes as articulated were intended to signal first, ongoing processes rather than discrete initiatives, and second, a set of institutional commitments that will guide further planning and resource allocation.

While these four themes are the building blocks of the AP, the FWG identified equity as an enduring principle to that holds the themes together as the College moves forward. As an ATD Leader College of Distinction, the College is committed to institutional self-assessment through an equity lens and ensures that our student success initiatives include an explicit equity component. In 2015, KCC's College Council approved the following institutional definition of equity:

Equity, often confused with equality, recognizes that there are hindrances for some in attaining equality. Equity is achieved through inclusion and through the active removal or mitigation of hindrances to full access to opportunities, resources and support for all members of a community. It also means ensuring that all members of said community have consistent and meaningful opportunities to participate in communal life and to play a role in shaping the culture of the community.

In essence, this statement formally recognizes first that that the College's record of academic excellence, faculty achievement and student success is complicated by the structural inequalities

that are defining features of American history and increasingly of the 21<sup>st</sup> century socioeconomic and political environments. Secondly, it serves as our pledge both to actively redress those inequalities and to hold ourselves accountable for equitable student outcomes. *KCC's AP acts on this pledge by establishing equity as a driving principle for all four thematic areas.*

### The AP Theme Teams: Generating Recommendations through Design Challenges

On May 3, 2019 the Office of Academic Affairs convened a college wide AP Planning conference. The goal of the conference was twofold: to provide an update and to move forward with the work of digging into each theme in order to begin the process of identifying action steps. In the RSVP to the conference invitation, attendees were asked to choose the theme that was most important to them. After an introductory plenary session recapping the AP process and outcomes to that point, attendees broke into AP Theme Teams based on their interests.

During the break-out sessions, the work of each Theme Team was facilitated by a Theme Team Leader or Leaders, drawn from members of the FWG who volunteered to take on this expanded leadership role. Theme Team leaders used a modified design-thinking process to guide their teams as they brainstormed preliminary recommendations for the action steps that should serve as the core content for each theme. In the closing plenary session, Theme Teams shared their preliminary recommendations with all attendees and reviewed how they might continue to stay engaged in order to further develop their lists into formal, more fully articulated recommendations. Following the conference, both the preliminary lists of recommendations and the process for continued engagement were shared with the college community via email and were also posted to the AP Sandbox.

Two key features of the Theme Team process are worthy of note: the Design Challenge framework and the extended follow-up. At the AP Planning conference, each Theme Team addressed their theme through a broad design challenge as articulated in the form of a “What If?” question. These questions that structured both the Planning conference activity and the subsequent work of the theme teams are listed below:

**WHAT IF....**

ENGAGING  
LEARNERS  
WHERE  
THEY ARE

*we operationalized our commitment to equity by assuming that every admitted Kingsborough student, regardless of demographic marker or academic background, is qualified (with additional, individualized supports) to successfully complete his or her academic goals? What would we need to do to act on this assumption in a way that ensures substantive learning and growth for each student?*

**WHAT IF....**

INVESTING IN  
FACULTY  
AGENCY AND  
GROWTH

*institutional resources, structures and practices were committed to equitable support for each faculty member's growth as a teacher, scholar and college citizen? What specific changes would occur and who might benefit from them?*

**WHAT IF....**

RESOURCING  
TEACHING  
AND  
LEARNING

*KCC explicitly and intentionally fostered a culture of equity and excellence in teaching and learning? What specific resources-- classroom spaces, educational technologies, professional development, academic support services, policies and practices--would be necessary to support that culture?*

**WHAT IF ....**

*we were to make the following promise to all KCC students:*

DEVELOPING  
AND  
RENEWING  
PROGRAMS  
FOR EVOLVING  
NEEDS

*Your program pathway will lead to a job with a living wage or seamless transfer to a four-year degree. In addition, the learning you acquire in pursuit of that program will allow you to participate and thrive both in your community and in our complex, global society*

*What changes/adjustments would we need to make to our academic programs to make good on this promise and to ensure that the promised outcomes are distributed equitably across all student groups?*

The purpose for engaging the Theme Teams through Design Challenges was to shift the emphasis of the AP from a kind of diagnostic scrutiny of our present context to a more forward-looking, aspirational engagement with where the College will ultimately hope to be. In devising the design challenges, the FWG hoped to liberate the Theme Teams from a narrow focus on “fix-it” solutions and instead empower them to imagine what might be possible both during the AP Planning Conference and during the six-week follow-up sessions.

The AP Theme Teams continued working through May and the first half of June to build on and further develop the recommendations generated at the May 3 Planning Conference. Three Theme Teams chose to flesh out their ideas using a Blackboard site and a mini-conference while the other chose to continue the discussion in shorter, more frequent meetings. By the end of June, all four teams submitted a final list of recommendations, many supported by detailed rationales and documented evidence, to the Office of Academic Affairs. The final list of recommendations from each Theme Team are provided in Appendix 1.

## Identifying Goals and Drafting the AP

In July, an AP Review Team comprising senior leadership in Academic Affairs (Provost Joanne Russell, Associate Provost Sharon Warren Cook, Dean Cathy Leaker and Director of Academic Affairs, Stephanie Akunvabey) and the AP Theme Team Leaders met to review the proposed recommendations in order to convert them into the formal goals that would form the backbone of the AP. In order to adapt the proposed recommendations into goals, the Review Team assessed the former according to the following criteria:

**Fiscal Implications:** Many of the recommendations provided by the Theme Teams were budget neutral, some entailed limited costs, while a few had more significant budget implications. Given the current budget climate at KCC, the Review Team had to balance the potential costs of implementing any particular recommendation with its anticipated impact.

**Alignment with national, CUNY and KCC Policy:** Some of the recommendations submitted by Theme Teams contradicted CUNY or KCC Policy and had to be modified or, more rarely, rejected by the Review Team. In other cases, the Review Team simply noted that specific Theme Teams' recommendations, particularly those linked to KCC governance, were beyond the scope of an academic plan and were more fitting to an institutional policy review.

**Evidence Base:** Many Theme Teams supported their recommendations by citing the literature and/or by referencing other colleges that had successfully implemented the recommended practice or policy in some way. This connection to a larger evidence base helped the Review Team understand the purpose of the recommendation and its potential impact on the College's programs, students and faculty. Whether or not the Theme Teams offered evidence in support of their recommendations, the Review Team consulted national literature, available data, and other community college practices that might further illuminate that specific recommendation and/or the theme overall.

**Altitude:** Within the context of large-scale institutional, multi-year planning, the term *altitude* refers to the degree of abstraction, with mission and vision occupying the highest level of altitude, strategy in the middle altitudes and tactics at the lower altitudes. *Goals* typically fall in the middle altitude range and are connected to strategy; as such, goals need to be specific enough to guide action and allocate resources in a purposeful way, but need to be broad enough to allow for flexible and tactical implementation across multiple



institutional actors. In some cases, the Theme Team recommendations were granular and finite, making it difficult to incorporate them into a more comprehensive, long-term plan. In these instances, the Review Team either included the recommendation as a component part of a larger goal or “raised its altitude” by articulating it as a broader conceptual goal.

**Internal Duplication:** In some cases, multiple Theme Teams made similar recommendations. In such cases, we combined the two recommendations and housed them in the Theme that seemed the best fit for the recommendation.

## Finalizing the AP

After the formal draft of the AP is released to the college community on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will seek feedback from the college community through the end of the fall term. Because of the careful and deliberative process that culminated in the current goals, we do not anticipate making significant changes to these; rather we anticipate the feedback, including additional evidence supporting or qualifying the evidence provided in the AP, will inform the final action plans, timelines and assessment processes through which the goals are implemented by Project Teams. The complete and final AP will then be sent to the Senior Staff and ultimately the President for approval.

## Implementing the AP

In Spring 2020, we will begin to develop an implementation plan, modeled after the collaborative process that resulted in the AP. Each AP recommendation will be developed by a Project Team, comprising faculty and, if appropriate, administrators and/or academic staff. Project teams will be charged with developing goals and strategies for meeting the AP recommendations, as well as a timeline and metrics for assessment.

In order to identify Project Teams, we anticipate using the mixed process that was used to create the AP Facilitator Workgroup: one or members of each project team will be elected by College Council while others will be appointed by Provost Russell following an open solicitation of interest. Because equity is a core objective for every aspect of the plan, we will prioritize representational balance as we create the teams. In the interests of both equity and trust, we will continue to share information as it becomes available through both email and the AP website and to encourage all Project Teams to do the same.

## KCC’s AP: A Hopeful Step Forward

As will become clear in the chapters ahead, this first formal AP for Kingsborough Community College is intentionally aspirational. The breadth and depth of the AP goals are a reflection of the complexity of the challenges we face as community college and as a college community. But even more than that, they are a reflection of our shared commitment, across multiple differences and disagreements, to KCC’s mission and values. Like our mission, the AP is as hopeful as it is aspirational, grounded in the conviction that education and its power to transform lives is eminently worth doing, worth doing well and worth doing together.



## CHAPTER ONE: ENGAGING LEARNERS WHERE THEY ARE

Studies at community colleges across the country, and at KCC, suggest that students enter college without the essential threshold skills and intellectual habits that support student success, whether success is framed as degree completion, as career readiness, or as deep engagement with the ideas, practices, and learning opportunities endemic to the college experience (ACT, 2018; Quast and Castillo-Richmond, 2016; National Center on Education and the Economy 2013; DelPrincipe & Ihara 2017; DelPrincipe & Ihara 2018; Schnee 2017).

Kingsborough's student body is diverse, both in terms of demographic profile and of academic preparedness. The racial and ethnic makeup of our student population is representative of the overall Brooklyn population. While there is a slight underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students and a slight overrepresentation of Asian students, Kingsborough's student body reflects the demographics of the borough. In addition, nearly half of our student population was born outside of the United States. Many of these students graduated from high schools abroad, bringing with them diverse educational experiences. Incoming KCC students also bring varying degrees of academic preparation. Nearly two-thirds of first-time freshmen in 2018 began their careers at Kingsborough having placed in at least one developmental course in English and/or Math. While placement testing policies continue to fluctuate, the challenge of providing a quality education for all remains. Despite the developmental needs of the majority of our students, many continue to choose challenging majors. Liberal Arts continues to be our most popular major, but large numbers of students choose to study Biology (646 in 2018), Nursing (290 in 2018), and Computer Science (265 in 2018) among others. Finally, changes to CUNY's placement policies designed to limit the time students spend in the developmental pipeline will likely have a positive impact on student momentum in the first year, but their impact on student success outcomes over time remains unclear (Edgecombe and Bickerstaffe, 2018). These data suggest the challenges we face in fulfilling our mission to offer quality education to all who seek it.

Important as it is to invest in institutional strategies for addressing students' academic challenges, those strategies should also be informed by:

- More comprehensive definitions of college readiness that on the one hand, expand beyond indices of math and writing to include more holistic assessments of cognitive and non-cognitive skills, and on the other, recognize the limitations of discrete one-time assessments, arguing instead for more iterative models that can better respond to the ebbs and flows of students' "academic readiness" as they move through the curriculum (Conley, 2007; Duncheon, 2015).
- Equity minded frameworks that push institutions to take accountability for the disparate impact of narrow definitions of college readiness on low-income students and students of color. Assessing readiness models through an equity minded lens, for example, exposes first the predominance of deficit language in many institutions' college readiness models and second demonstrates how that language, particularly when detached from underlying socioeconomic and racial dynamics, functions to at best discourage "underprepared" students and at worst to delegitimize them (Georgetown Center for Education and the

Workforce, 2019; Toth 2018, McNair, 2016, Whyte, 2016, Bensimon et al, 2010).

- Acknowledgment of the multiple pathways by which today’s students—including adult and nontraditional students—come to higher education, bringing with them competencies and challenges that may be invisible within models of college readiness predicated on a high school to college pipeline. Such students are better served by on-boarding strategies, including perhaps credit for prior learning, that take into account their unique context.

Taken together, the three perspectives outlined above caution against reductive definitions of college readiness that might inadvertently disadvantage students who are already disadvantaged by social and economic structures. Thus, while not minimizing the academic challenges our students face, we advocate for a comprehensive response to those challenges based on the core premise that “*all* students arrive in higher education with a complex set of strengths and needs” (Edgecombe and Bickerstaff, 2018; McNair, 2016, Whyte 2016 ).

Listed below are a series of goals intended to help us more effectively engage our learners where they are. Many involve initiatives that have been fully or partially implemented at KCC with much success. As we work toward expanding previous initiatives or implementing new ones, we will benefit from careful attention to their interrelationship and the broader organizational and resource infrastructure that supports them. Given the demographics of our students, the changes to developmental education at CUNY, and our core commitment to equitable outcomes, our institutional capacity to engage learners where they are is predicated upon our shared response to the question, as articulated by Poe et al. (2019) “what is each student able to do and able to be, and how may those capabilities be advanced through coordinated efforts?”.

## 1. Redesign and expand learning communities to create meaningful and various pathways through programs and majors.

### Rationale:

Kingsborough’s nationally lauded Learning Communities (LCs) are a particular point of pride for the College. Launched in 1997 for ESL students, Kingsborough’s Opening Doors LCs came into national prominence when they were involved in a national study on the impact of learning communities on incoming freshmen. Conducted by MDRC, the study found that KCC’s Opening Doors Learning Communities (ODLCs) not only improved student outcomes in the short term (as was consistent with findings for other institutions participating in a follow-up study of learning communities) but also exceeded the performance of those institutions by demonstrating a positive long-term impact on student academic outcomes, including increased likelihood of degree completion. In accounting for the differences between KCC’s ODLC data and that of other institutions, the impact of whose learning communities faded over time, MDRC pointed to three distinguishing features: their comprehensiveness, their enhanced services and their “unusually strong support from college leadership” (Sommo et al, 2012).

In expanding and diversifying our learning communities therefore, we are clearly building from a position of institutional strength. Our new Advising Academy model will enable us to more intentionally design LCs for students in different majors— including Liberal Arts majors—even, where appropriate, from their first enrollment. A long-term objective of this approach is that a given student, or group of students, would be able to complete their KCC education through a strategic term by term enrollment in LCs. In addition, LCs should be flexible enough to ensure that most students—part-time, continuing, and online included—will have access to this high-impact experience. We will also build on our pilot of a MathStart Learning Community to further innovate and adapt our Learning Community models for different students groups (such as Honors students, KCC FLEX students and College Now students). Optimally, these advanced LCs would include experiential co-curricular opportunities and would be integrated with one or more additional high impact practices (e.g., eportfolio, research experience, or capstone course/project).

## 2. Provide varied, evidence-based, first year seminars in order to bolster students' academic skills.

### Rationale:

According to the rigorous research standards of the Institute of Education Sciences' What Works Clearing House, First Year Experience (FYE) seminars have a significant impact on early credit accumulation and less significant but still measurable impacts on academic achievement and degree completion rates (WWC, 2016). The AACU has also recognized FYE seminars as a high impact practice, particularly when they incorporate instructional teams, active and collaborative pedagogies and explicit emphases on skills relevant to students' success in and beyond college (Brownell and Swaner, 2010).

FYE student development courses have been a valued piece of KCC's successful Opening Doors Learning Communities since their inception, and KCC will build on this success in its implementation of stand-alone first year seminars. Stand-alone FYE academic seminars have been successfully implemented at numerous community colleges across the country, [Middlesex Community College](#), [Northern Essex Community College](#), and [FingerLakes Community College](#). CUNY community colleges offering First Year Seminars include [Queensborough Community College](#), [LaGuardia Community College](#), and [Bronx Community College](#), whose one-credit first year seminars were positively evaluated for their long-term impact by researchers at the Community College Research Center (Karp, Raufman, Efthimiou, and Ritz, 2015). Notably, the academic content of the first-year seminars at both LGCC and QCC, and some at BCC, are linked to students' choice of program or major, a model that effectively aligns both with CUNY's Academic Momentum Campaign and with Kingsborough's new Advising Academies. Linking the First Year Seminar to students' academic programs allows program faculty to design seminars that target relevant academic skills while fitting within the constraints of the program.

### 3. Design processes and structures to inform student choice and enable student agency.

#### Rationale:

Researchers and practitioners from a range of perspectives (including advocates of first-generation students, directed self-placement assessment, and guided pathways reform) point out that community college students often come to higher education without a contextual understanding of its structures, norms and conventions. That lack of understanding contributes to confusion and alienation and negatively affects persistence, a vicious cycle that has a particularly pernicious impact on low-income students, first generation students and students of color (Bailey, Jaguars and Davis, 2015). Intentionally providing students with clear information and guidance that “makes the implicit explicit” both supports their retention and positively contributes to their confidence, motivation and sense of belonging (Edgecombe and Bickerstaff, 2018; Fink 2017). In this context, student agency can be understood not as a discrete skill or competency but as a set of tools students can use to confront feelings of dislocation, challenge, and difference and reframe them so that they do not interfere with their ability to engage in academic tasks (Yeager & Walton, 2011. Cited by Karp, 2016)

At KCC, changes in practice driven largely by CUNY’s Academic Momentum campaign have created the following new opportunities that can function as tools for enabling choice and activating student agency:

**Directed self-placement (DSP):** CUNY’s move away from single measure outside placement instruments to a multiple measures approach opens a window for Kingsborough to implement and assess locally designed directed self-placement protocols for at least some subsets of incoming student writers. In addition, while DSP has primarily been used as a placement tool within the field of composition, its guiding principles might usefully inform other student academic decisions, such as around assessment of preparation for online learning or participation in Honors programming.

**Advising Academies:** In 2018-2019, KCC reorganized its professional advising corps into four academies: STEM and Health Sciences, Liberal Arts, Social Sciences and Education and Justice. This new structure will support student decision-making in a number of ways. Academy advisors can develop coordinated, area-specific approaches to using degree maps to give students visual, term-by-term representations of their path toward successful and timely completion of their chosen program (CUNY Degree Mapping Working Group, 2019). In addition, substantive career advising can be more effectively integrated into our overall advising practices rather than provided as a set of add-on services as students prepare to graduate (Karp, 2013). Finally, an advising structure based on academic area, supported by technology tools like Starfish, and integrated throughout the

student life cycle will facilitate a shift from a transactional advising model to a developmental advising model that can more effectively respond to each student (Karp, 2013).

**Targeted First-Generation Student Programming:** Based on limited data, we can estimate that 50% or more of KCC students are first generation students, defined as undergraduate students whose parents or primary caregivers have not participated in postsecondary education. Research indicates that first-generation students experience unique challenges as they navigate post-secondary institutions and are particularly vulnerable to the kinds of information gaps that reduce student agency and ultimately lead to disproportionately low retention and graduation rates (Redford & Mulvaney Hoyer, 2017). KCC's pilot initiative, *Proud to be 1st*, is designed to fill information gaps in order to help first-generation students define and achieve success on their own terms through academic and career coaching, peer networks and informal mentoring. As the program grows and serves a greater number of students, we will more intentionally integrate these service and support elements with the students' academic courses and programs.

4. Develop innovative, flexible, high quality, culturally responsive and integrated academic and non-academic supports for students horizontally (across all disciplines and vertically (over the course of the student life cycle)).

#### Rationale:

The changing landscape of student success in higher education coupled with the varied needs of students, points towards a multi-pronged, adaptable approach to supporting students rather than a "one size fits all" method. Holistic, targeted and individualized to meet the needs of each student, our student support resources will assist in optimizing student learning, support their academic momentum, and maximize their ability to move forward from setbacks (whether academic, financial or life crises) that might otherwise derail their progress. Listed below are some preliminary initiatives to support this goal; ideally, they will work together to remove barriers to students' academic momentum or to support momentum through more effective and adaptive services.

**Policy Review and Revision:** In 2017-2018, the Student Success Subcommittee of KCC's Achieving the Dream Committee began a systematic review of academic policies with the objective of identifying and addressing those that might inadvertently act as barriers to student success without any compensatory gain in either the academic quality or academic integrity of our programs. Continuing this work and moving forward with necessary policy changes will be critical to our ability to provide safety nets for students as they navigate academic challenges. Regular policy reviews will be supported by applicable data; for example, data-driven analyses of the impact of new CUNY placement protocols on incoming and continuing students will be a key determinant of policy revision.

**Flexible Tutoring Models:** KCC offers a range of tutoring options for students that when utilized contribute positively to their learning and their retention. At the same time, our data indicate that we may not be effectively reaching all students; in particular, we know that there are significant equity gaps with regard to students seeking tutoring in Math and significant service gaps for evening, weekend and online students. Uniting all our tutoring services under the umbrella of the new KCC Learning Center, and certifying the tutoring programs through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), will allow us to more effectively assess our tutoring model and determine how we might more effectively adapt them for different student populations, different courses and different modes. Innovation and flexibility within tutoring will be especially important as we adapt to the changes in CUNY's placement policies.

**Starfish:** We will continue to expand on and refine our use of the student success management system, Starfish. Effective implementation of Starfish will allow areas across the College to access information about a student in real time; create greater communication between faculty who observe student difficulties and advisors who can help resolve these issues; identify the types of support a student needs and when (from onboarding through to completion); and support the implementation of a data-driven intrusive advising model that includes early alerts, positive nudging, degree mapping, career coaching, and more.

## CHAPTER 2: INVESTING IN FACULTY AGENCY AND GROWTH

Faculty play a critical and multivalent role in higher education and at Kingsborough: they design and deliver instruction, develop and revise curricula, generate new knowledge and advance critical perspectives, participate in institutional decision-making through shared governance, and in countless other ways contribute to the ongoing work of institutions. Many of the same forces that put pressure on higher education as a whole threaten to constrain or undermine these central faculty functions.

The Pullias Center for Higher Education *State of the Faculty* Report for 2018 listed the following challenges to an effective and sustainable faculty function: a consistently poor job market for new and/or relocating faculty; increasing sector and institutional oversight from government and other external actors resulting in increased expectations of administrative oversight at the local level, blunt and often de-contextualized accountability policies, and attacks on tenure, academic freedom, and faculty unions (Scott, Dixon and Kezar, 2019). Beyond these broad systemic factors, faculty across higher education, but especially in the community college sector, are faced with high teaching loads and limited resources to meet student needs and carry out a research agenda.

Few, if any, of the issues identified in the Pullias Center report are within the scope of an academic plan to resolve, but they do have a bearing on the faculty experience, including at KCC, and therefore provide an important context for how we might most effectively invest in faculty agency and growth. An even more resonant context for that work is the increasing levels of dissatisfaction among Kingsborough faculty, a dissatisfaction reflected not only in the AP SWOT sessions, but in the 2018 Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Report and, even more powerfully, in the results from the Spring 2019 COACHE survey. The latter indicated that faculty overall are dissatisfied with conditions at Kingsborough in almost every vector; notably the level of overall dissatisfaction has substantially increased since the survey was last administered at KCC in 2015 (COACHE, 2019; COACHE, 2015). In all three data sets, KCC faculty concerns go beyond relatively concrete issues like support for research or teaching load to include a broader sense of disenfranchisement exacerbated by distrust of leadership and governance.

As important as the challenges listed above are, perhaps one of the most significant challenges with regard to KCC's collective faculty agency and growth is linked to the persistent equity gaps in faculty hiring, tenure and promotion. Nationally, the data about faculty are mixed; while the proportion of women and underrepresented minorities is growing in proportion to the number of white faculty, these gains coincide with a stunning equity gap: in 2016, 73.2% of faculty across all higher education sectors were white, 9.3% were Asian, 5.7% were Black and 4.7% were Hispanic (Espinosa et al, 2019). At two-year institutions, the proportion of white faculty was roughly similar to the higher education picture overall, with slightly more Black and Hispanic faculty and slightly fewer Asian faculty. To address this disparity, institutions continue to focus on recruitment and hiring. While this is a necessary step, treating equity gaps as solely or even primarily a "pipeline problem" underemphasizes the role of institutional structure and culture in sustaining these gaps and draws attention away from equity gaps in retention and advancement of faculty of color (Gibson, 2019).



At Kingsborough, the equity gap among faculty is somewhat smaller with Black, Asian and Hispanic faculty comprising 27.9% of the whole in 2017. Yet while these data compare favorably with national data, it is much more problematic when measured against faculty equity data in other CUNY community colleges. With 27.9% combined representation of Black, Hispanic, and Asian faculty, KCC has the lowest proportional representation of these groups among CUNY community colleges, all but one of which record a combined proportional representation of the same groups exceeding 40% (Torres, 2018).

More troubling still, the underrepresentation of faculty of color at KCC is incompatible with our student demographic, which much more closely represents the diverse demography of Brooklyn, suggesting that Black and Hispanic students (representing 29.6% and 17.5% of our total student body respectively) are much less likely to work with faculty that look like them than our White students, an incongruence that can negatively affect the confidence, engagement and sense of belonging for some of our students but not for others (June, 2019; Benitez et al, 2017; Turner, 2015). Further underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic faculty increases the burden on them to provide support and mentoring for students of color that research has established is so crucial to student success (Turner, 2015; Fairfield et al, 2014). Thus, as we work to implement the goals below, equity will be a fundamental objective and a determinant of success.

The goals listed below respond to the challenges above by identifying meaningful investments in faculty agency and growth. Many, if not all, of the goals identified below intersect with two significant KCC initiatives in AY 2019-2020: the governance review and the generation of action steps in relation to the COACHE data. As such, the strategies that are developed to achieve the AP goals will be influenced by outcomes of work related to the COACHE data and the governance review.

## 1. Increase equitable institutional support for scholarship and faculty development.

OAA will work to increase faculty development funds, particularly in the area of research and scholarship. In addition, OAA will work with current faculty development structures, such as KCTL and KCEL, and collaborate with faculty to identify and explore new opportunities that support all three dimensions of the faculty role—teaching, service and scholarship—and link those more explicitly to the formal and informal reward value structures of the College. Our goal is to support both faculty growth and faculty agency, defined in this context as “faculty members’ capacity to construct the context of their own learning and development in professional and intellectual ways” (O’Meara and Terosky, 2010). Finally, we will assess faculty development initiatives and resource distribution through an equity lens to ensure that all faculty get the support they need to succeed and thrive at Kingsborough Community College.

### Rationale:

Like all CUNY faculty, faculty at Kingsborough are expected to fulfill a typical community college teaching load, participate in service to the College and University while also conducting research leading to peer-reviewed publications. Given that these expectations



structure all faculty work, we will more intentionally dedicate faculty development funding and design faculty development activities to align with the recently revised *KCC Guidelines for Reappointment, Tenure and Advancement*. Given the emphasis of publication within those guidelines, coupled with the differential challenges of pursuing research in a community college setting, we will prioritize improved support for research.

Comprehensive institutional faculty development frameworks that on the one hand support faculty through tenure and promotion, and, on the other, promote faculty agency throughout the process, take multiple forms throughout higher education, some of which might be adapted at Kingsborough. For example, the Guidelines for Faculty Evaluation, Tenure and Promotion at CUNY's Hostos Community College provide department specific rubrics with year-by-year benchmarks for tenure and CCE; the goal of this model is to help faculty assess their own progress as they move toward tenure (Division of Faculty Affairs, Hostos Community College, 2014). On the other end of the spectrum, faculty members might be given the opportunity to create individualized development tools (IDTs) like the models listed on the University of North Carolina's Center for Faculty Excellence.

Regardless of the particular formal structures underlying faculty development, a substantial body of both research and narrative testimonials demonstrate first, that informal, often tacit, institutional factors can enable or constrain positive faculty development and second, that these factors have a disparate impact on faculty according to gender, race and rank (O'Meara et al, 2019; O'Meara et al, 2018; Jackson, 2016; Terosky et al, 2014). Factors that enable successful faculty progress include interventions designed to promote agency around specific development bottlenecks (for example, the movement from Associate Professor to Full Professor), self-selected campus support through a number of existing offerings. (O'Meara et al, 2019; Teroksy et al, 2014). Thus, in order to design equitable faculty development practices, we will develop targeted interventions that maximize enabling factors while minimizing constraints for all faculty, but especially for those groups most affected by them.

## 2. Foster community, dialogue and collaborative problem-solving.

### Rationale:

KCC faculty concerns go beyond relatively concrete issues like support for research or teaching load to include declining morale and a broader sense of disenfranchisement. Such characterizations were borne out in the AP follow-up survey where 64% of the respondents ranked administrative-faculty collaboration as a challenge for the College. In addition, the COACHE data indicated that some faculty are far more discontented than others, exposing a growing division among and between faculty that is itself a cause for concern.

All of this suggests that in order to invest in faculty agency and growth, or indeed to address any of the other AP thematic areas in a meaningful way, we will need to work together to rebuild our community, including renewing mutual trust and presumption of

good faith. This kind of community building will involve at least two key activities: open-minded dialogue across difference, and an opening up of formal structures and informal opportunities for faculty participation. In both cases, transparent processes and an explicit attention to equity and inclusion will be paramount in order to ensure that college conversations and decisions are informed by the full range of faculty voices, perspectives and experiences.

A critical outcome of this work will be our improved capacity to solve problems collaboratively. We face a series of complex and difficult challenges: persistent declines in funding for higher education, effectively meeting the needs of increasingly diverse learners, designing meaningful educational responses to growing income inequality, and eliminating equity gaps for students, faculty and staff. Addressing these systemic challenges requires the shared expertise and talents of faculty and administration; as noted above, a large element of collaborative problem solving is developing the institutional structures—both within and outside formal governance through which it can occur. For example, Norman’s study of faculty leadership and institutional resilience highlights the importance of thoughtfully designed, low-stakes deliberative spaces where difficult issues can be discussed, and disagreements articulated informally (Norman, 2019). The importance of such deliberate spaces is further underscored by research on higher educational cultures indicating that a key component of collaborative problem solving is a willingness to understand and engage with the mental frameworks different groups, such as faculty and administrators bring to any particular problem (Kezar, 2018; Del Favero and Bray, 2005).

Finally, as we work to develop our institutional capacity for collaboration, we will continue to learn from campus entities (including KCTL, KCeL, Learning Communities and the English Department’s Composition Review Committee, among others) that have demonstrated consistent success in this regard. Further, the AP Process itself, both in its development and in its implementation, will serve as an ongoing test case of faculty-administration collaboration and will be assessed accordingly.

### 3. Cultivate faculty leadership.

#### Rationale:

Multiple studies of higher education highlight the critical institutional function of faculty leadership (broadly understood) in colleges and universities (Norman, 2019; Matthews, 2018; Kezar and Holcombe, 2018). A key element of this research is the breadth of its terms; rather than simply making a case for formal faculty governance, analyses instead describe a broader understanding of faculty leadership, comprising a range of opportunities and levels. A consensus is emerging that effective faculty leadership involves not only robust governance roles and positional leadership, but a pluralistic leadership culture that is “diversified, distributed and developmental” (Norman, 2019; Kezar and Holcombe, 2017).

Leadership is clearly a concern for KCC faculty. In the COACHE survey, although senior leadership, departmental leadership and faculty leadership were all identified as issues, departmental leadership was rated more positively on average than the other two, and surprisingly satisfaction with faculty leadership scored the lowest. To some degree, this may reflect some ambiguity in the question; it's not clear whom faculty respondents might have been referencing in answering questions about faculty leadership. Nonetheless, it's clear we have room for improvement in regard to the role and effectiveness of faculty leaders in campus.

As we move forward with a more deliberate and intentional approach to providing leadership opportunities for faculty, *and* to ensuring that they are fully supported in these roles, we can build on the work the College has already done in this regard (i.e., through the faculty director roles of KCTL, KCeL, Honors, Immersion and HURFS). A more expansive approach might include the creation of faculty Associate Director roles and/or the appointment of co-Directors (as in the case of the HURFs Resource Center). More importantly, we can provide shorter leadership opportunities tied to particular initiatives or task forces; much of this is already happening at the grass roots level (as in the case of Faculty Initiative for the Teaching of Reading, with its rotating leadership model) but often without formal recognition of *leadership* as a fundamental dimension of the work. In rethinking faculty leadership with the goal of increased opportunities in both degree and kind, we will address issues such as institutional recognition and reward, the relationship of leadership, if any, to the faculty's service expectation, and identifying leadership pathways for those faculty members who have an interest and talent in this area. Perhaps the most overriding rationale for the development of an expansive faculty leadership model is the potential of that model to close equity gaps in faculty campus leadership. Therefore, any and all faculty leadership strategies will include careful attention to transparency and representation.

#### 4. Increase resources and services for part-time faculty.

##### Rationale:

Reliance on part-time faculty remains one of the largest trends in higher education practice as we approach 2020. According to Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) roughly 40% of faculty across higher education are part-time, but the ratio of part-time to full time faculty is as high as 70% at community colleges. Despite their centrality to the educational mission of higher education across the board, there is insufficient data on how part-time faculty affect student learning and educational outcomes, in part because of the wide range of part-time faculty roles across a diverse higher education landscape. What evidence we do have suggests a fairly obviously conclusion: that part-time faculty have a more positive effect on the quality of student learning when they have:

- some degree of contractual security

- the opportunity to participate in evidence-based teaching initiatives (i.e., high impact practices like Learning Communities)
- full access to institutional resources

At CUNY and KCC, we can take pride in the fact that we are ahead of our national peer institutions on the first two indicators. CUNY's pilot of three-year adjunct appointments has provided a measure of stability for long-term adjuncts. Additionally, faculty development initiatives at KCTL and KCeL intentionally include part-time faculty; more importantly part-time faculty have played significant roles in such long established and new KCC high impact practices such as learning communities and civic engagement. At the same time, we know we have a great deal of work to do to ensure our adjuncts feel included and supported in the work of the College.

In 2017-2018 KCC enrolled almost 10,000 FTEs, 38.8% of whom were taught by adjunct faculty. Therefore, most of our students will, at some point in their Kingsborough career, be taught by an adjunct faculty member. Improving resources and services to adjuncts therefore is not merely the right thing to do from the standpoint of workplace satisfaction but can also contribute to student success. We will improve our institutional support for adjuncts through the following actions:

**Data collection:** KCC has not to this point developed a systematic process that might help us better understand who our adjuncts are and what they might need from us. To that end, we will identify a survey instrument comparable to the recently administered COACHE survey for part-time faculty and follow a similar process for sharing and acting upon the results. The Community College Research Center (CCRC) has published open part-time faculty survey instruments that may be appropriate for implantation at KCC.

**Consistent orientation:** We will implement a college-wide adjunct orientation that supplements information that adjuncts receive at the departmental level, and to engage adjunct faculty in the broader college community. In order to reach the widest adjunct audience, we will deliver the adjunct orientation both face-to-face and online.

**Resources that speak to the adjunct experience:** KCC's faculty resources (i.e., the Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Workload Guide, the online Faculty Resources page) are geared toward full-time tenure track faculty, with occasional references to adjunct faculty. Although intended to be inclusive, information in these sources may not include the level of specificity that adjuncts may need. Therefore, we will create expanded resources that speak more directly and fully to the adjunct experience.

## 5. Strengthen Shared Governance.

### Rationale:

Arguably, the most impactful role of faculty leaders lies in their participation in shared governance, but both in KCC's governance survey and especially in the COACHE survey, faculty express dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of shared governance at KCC. In the former, nearly half of respondents reported that they were insufficiently familiar with college governance processes. Nearly a third of respondents also reported that college governance did not provide adequate representation from faculty, and that there were insufficient opportunities for faculty, staff, or students to voice opinions about policies. A similar finding surfaced in the COACHE survey where the mean score among faculty respondents was below 3.0 (on a 5-point Likert scale) for all indicators of governance effectiveness. As such, governance review and reform will be central to the AP strategy, particularly in terms of our capacity to support faculty agency and growth.

While the precise process for, and outcome of, governance reform falls outside the purview of the AP, we support the COACHE effective governance model which defines effective governance through the following indicators: trust, shared sense of purpose, understanding the Issue at hand, adaptability and productivity (Ott and Mathews, 2015). If governance reform is guided by these principles, we believe KCC's governance will not only more effectively support faculty agency and growth but will play a more instrumental role in advancing the core mission of the College.

**Trust:** The COACHE report on effective governance points out that trust can be interpreted pragmatically as "a function of how well decision-making processes meet the expectations of the community" (Ott and Mathews, 2015). To establish a culture of trust, the COACHE report advocates for a system of clearly defined expectations for governance, practices that consistently meet community expectations, and a continuous commitment to transparency. At KCC, this might include greater college-wide sharing of financial information as well as more formally documented processes for institutional decision-making practices.

**Understanding the Issue at Hand:** Because transparency is also central to the COACHE indicator, Understanding the Issue at Hand, information and data-sharing should be a routine aspect of governance processes. Yet, while information and data are necessary for understanding, they are insufficient. In order for all stakeholders to fully understand a given issue, COACHE advocates two additional protocols that should guide proceedings: demonstrated respect for diverse perspectives and governance practices that invite broad participation.

**Adaptability:** In fleshing out the Adaptability indicator, the COACHE report recommends that governance structures be flexible and encourage

developmental approaches to governance service (Ott and Mathews, 2015). KCC's fundamental governance model, its standing committees, has not changed greatly in terms of its core sections, provisions and essential structure. We recommend that the governance review process includes an analysis of how effectively KCC's governance structures respond to the institutional needs.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESOURCING TEACHING AND LEARNING

In the last few years, there has been a groundswell of interest in supporting and assessing the quality of teaching and learning across all sectors of higher education. In support of this work, both the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) and the American Council on Education (ACE) have identified factors that support institutional cultures of excellence in teaching and learning. These include:

- prioritizing teaching quality in hiring, retention, tenure and promotion guidelines
- an emphasis on preparing faculty to teach the new majority of students (adult learners, students of color, and first generation) by introducing teaching practices that are inclusive, mindful and self-aware
- clear benchmarks for faculty development in teaching and learning
- small grants to support innovations in teaching and learning
- excellence in teaching and learning prominently featured within institutional mission
- recognition and reward for excellence in teaching and learning
- nuanced assessment strategies designed to demonstrate impact on student learning (COACHE 2013; Taylor et al, 2017).

In addition, the authors of the ACE report referenced above cite Kezar and Holcombe's advocacy of shared leadership, defining shared leadership in the context of teaching and learning as "a funded and unified approach to instructional effectiveness as a central endeavor" (Taylor et al, 2017). As this list of criteria suggest, the consensus among researchers is threefold: that faculty development is an essential component of excellence in teaching and learning, that excellence in teaching and learning has a definitive and positive impact on student outcomes and the quality of their learning, and that therefore robust and purposeful institutional investment in resources supporting teaching and learning is both fiscally responsible and critical to the success of both students and faculty (Taylor et al, 2017; Brown and Kurzweil, 2018).

Excellence in teaching and learning is clearly a strength for KCC. Our students persist and graduate at higher rates than any other CUNY Community College with the exception of the Stella and Charles Guttman Community College. In addition, we are proud of our national recognition and leadership in learning communities as a high impact teaching and learning practice. KCC faculty also dedicate time and effort to supporting academic excellence through their participation in the Writing Across the Curriculum program, the Honors program, the CUNY Research Scholars program and the grassroots-initiated Faculty Initiative in Teaching Reading. In addition to funding these programs, KCC provides substantial funding for the Kingsborough Center for Teaching and Learning and the Kingsborough Center for e-Learning, both of which provide supportive spaces for faculty to collaborate and reflect on their teaching. Beyond this, faculty can seek small grants to support experimental practices either through the President's Faculty Innovation Awards or through CUNY's Coordinated Undergraduate Education (CUE) funds.

Building on this strong foundation, we have the opportunity to further advance our commitment to teaching and learning in ways that will help us confront some of the many challenges we face in meeting our mission. For example, persistent equity gaps in student success metrics suggest that we could be more intentional in adopting and/or expanding initiatives that have been proven to reduce equity gaps, such as High Impact Practices (HIPS) or Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). Further, our institutional reward structures don't fully align with the importance of teaching and learning to our mission. Compounding the latter problem are the challenges of assessing teaching at Kingsborough, particularly since the elimination of paper-based student evaluation of teaching. As a result of continuing challenges implementing teaching evaluations administered online, we rely almost exclusively on peer teaching observations—a necessary but insufficient assessment instrument—to assess quality and growth in teaching. Finally, faculty feedback in the AP SWOT sessions, the AP survey, the 2018 Faculty and Staff Satisfaction Survey and the COACHE survey overwhelmingly demonstrate that faculty believe the bulk of our classrooms are not conducive to teaching and learning; further, they are concerned that decision-making around the material resources for teaching and learning are insufficiently guided by pedagogical goals and practices.

The goals listed are intended to how outline how we might best resource teaching and learning over the AP timeframe to sustain and enrich the culture of equity and excellence in teaching and learning at Kingsborough.

### 1. Collaborate to design inclusive learning spaces grounded in pedagogical principles:

We will develop a collaborative process for designing, scaling, and reconfiguring formal and informal learning spaces (including classrooms, library spaces and student common areas). These spaces will accommodate coursework needs and different pedagogies and create an environment that fosters equitable, accessible, meaningful, immersive, and interactive learning experiences. The collaborative design process will be driven by pedagogical purpose and rooted in principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). As such, all contributors to the design process will develop a practiced understanding of UDL and of the relationship between pedagogy, technology and design.

#### Rationale:

The learning environment is a fundamental contributor to successful teaching and learning. We know that learning spaces should represent the inclusivity of learners and educators, as well as be thoughtfully designed to achieve the learning goals for all constituents (Harvey & Kenyon, 2013). We send a strong message about our institutional commitment to access and inclusivity when we intentionally design academic spaces to meet the needs of all members of the college community. This involves moving away from narrowly focused facilities fixes to a larger institutional focus on learning space



design that can accommodate all types of people and all types of learning situations. By using the Universal Design framework established by Meyer et al. (2014) to guide classroom design, we will create spaces that are welcoming, inclusive and supportive of student learning. In creating both a process and a model for learning space design, we will look at the ways in which other institutions, such as McGill University (Finkelstein et al., [2014](#), [2016](#)), have developed and implemented design protocols and priorities grounded in research-based principles and take into consideration layout, furniture, technologies, acoustics and lighting. The design protocol will also include a clear and transparent process whereby the types of technology placed into classrooms and how classrooms are assigned should be driven by pedagogy and made in consultation with faculty and staff who utilize the classrooms. Formal feedback loops and assessment plans will be established to encourage two-way communication about classrooms and other shared college spaces. In addition to focusing on improving classroom spaces, the institutional emphasis on learning spaces we envision will include, for example, redesign of informal library spaces to allow for more comfortable seating, better lighting and more collaborative meeting spaces. Far more than a blueprint for renovation, adopting a learning space design framework prioritizes student learning and student belonging through the creation of inviting, engaging, technologically rich and accessible spaces that physically embody the college's commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

## 2. Affirm teaching as meaningful institutional value.

We will review the College's system of tenure and promotion with the aim of more fully and explicitly articulating a prioritized value on excellent teaching. Our effort to improve recognition and reward for teaching and learning may take multiple forms, including enhanced descriptions of teaching and learning applied to the tenure and review process, expanded funding for pedagogical innovation and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), opportunities to lead significant college-wide pedagogical initiatives, and institutional honors. In all cases, our goal will be to acknowledge and support significant faculty commitment to pedagogical growth, innovative teaching and assessment practices and adaptability to changing educational landscapes and new populations of students.

### Rationale:

All institutions of higher education want excellent teaching but in practice often do not prioritize it as a top metric for faculty evaluation. In order to align this policy with proper practice, a report by the [AAU](#) (2017) identifies the need for a necessary change in culture and offers practical strategies to create an environment where improvement in a faculty member's teaching over the course of their career, in addition to research, is valued, assessed and rewarded. A renewed focus on teaching excellence and innovation in teaching also aligns with the current demand for evidence of value in higher education requiring colleges to demonstrate their impact on student learning (De Courcy, 2015). Kingsborough will demonstrate the value we place on excellent teaching by more

explicitly acknowledging and rewarding it accordingly in the tenure and promotion process. In order to enrich our ability to demonstrate and assess exemplary teaching, we will explore practices like teaching portfolios, teaching fellowships and faculty recognition. In taking on this work, we will be guided by research on the colleges that are developing comprehensive and innovative sets of policies to evaluate teaching in the tenure and promotion process (ex. AAU, 2017; Taylor et al., 2017). A commitment to teaching excellence will entail that teaching ability be accorded more weight in faculty hiring decisions. For example, departments might ask candidates to provide a teaching demonstration or evidence of prior teaching experience during the hiring process. Finally, faculty will be encouraged to develop and document strategies for improving their teaching over time through engagement in professional development activities.

### 3. Promote a college-wide culture of continual learning

We will offer increased, ongoing and intensive professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, both inside and outside of KCC; we will incentivize participation and encourage college-wide dialogue around best practices.

#### Rationale:

We know that teacher professional development positively affects student achievement (Yoon et al., 2007) and helps build communities of practice (Young, 2014). To foster a culture of continuous growth across the College, we will build on what we know about effective faculty development in order to provide multiple professional development opportunities at all levels of the college that are ongoing, sustained and relevant. Intensive and meaningful certification processes such as WAC, FITR and the Preparation for Online Teaching are excellent models for the development of new programs for faculty and staff. Strongly encouraging new faculty and staff to participate in structured and ongoing professional development through their first year will help communicate the value we place on both institutional and individual learning. In addition to implementing formal programs, we will encourage increased inter-departmental and inter-divisional dialogues around pedagogy, culturally responsive practice, student development and problem solving.

Staff from all areas of Kingsborough play a critical role in the success of our students and, therefore, we will provide meaningful and intentional professional development to promote professional growth and contribute to an environment of excellence and equity in teaching and learning at the College. Although KCTL's FIGs include staff, we will explore adapting that model to support staff development specific to their responsibilities (for example, effective supervision). In addition, we will review comprehensive staff development models, such as [the Employee Development Program at Indian River State College](#), that coordinate developmental and training opportunities for faculty and staff by providing strategies, resources, tools and offerings designed to support and increase the effectiveness of the college's employees. Our HURFS Resource Center will be one of the campus entities that will be essential for this work.

#### 4. Expand and develop high impact practices as a core feature of teaching and learning at KCC

##### Rationale:

Since 2007, when George Kuh and AACU brought the phrase “high impact practice” (HIP) into national prominence, research continues to reinforce early claims that HIPs improve the quality of a student’s learning experience and overall success, especially for underserved students (Kuh, 2007; Brownell and Swaner, 2010; Finley and McNair, 2013; Kuh, 2017). Most promising, as noted by Finley and McNair (2013), HIPs have been lauded for much more than their capacity to support deep learning as they also impact retention and graduation rates. The national success of HIPs has been locally replicated at KCC with the success of such high impact practices as learning communities, Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and student research programs like the CUNY Research Scholars Program (CRSP). Given the demonstrated and cumulative contributions of HIPs to equitable academic momentum, improved outcomes and the quality of undergraduate teaching and learning, we will adopt an approach to HIPs that is coordinated, expansive and intentional, ideally ensuring that all students have multiple opportunities to participate in the following HIPs: first-year experience/seminar, learning communities, common intellectual experiences, collaborative assignments and projects, diversity/global learning, civic engagement, writing intensive courses and undergraduate research (Finley and McNair, 2013, Kuh, 2007).

Importantly, research clearly illustrates that the measurable gains in student learning and the improved retention/graduation rates attributed to HIPs are conditional upon the quality of implementation and the strength of institutional support underlying it (Kuh, 2007; Brownell and Swaner, 2010; Kuh, 2017; Kuh and Kinzie, 2018). Our expansion of HIPs will depend upon our institutional capacity to meet the following success criteria outlined in the literature:

**Flexibility and Accessibility:** Because studies show that the very populations who most benefit from HIPs (including students of color, first-generation students and transfer students) are also the populations least likely to participate in them, Kingsborough will design HIPs that are flexible enough to be offered in all programs and modalities. Beyond simply making opportunities available to all students, we will proactively encourage students to choose HIPs by transparently promoting their value and eliminating any barriers to participation.

**Small class size:** Faculty student interaction, measured in both degree and kind, is one of the most significant and consistent moderating variables connected to the success of HIPs (Brownell and Swaner, 2010; AACU). In order to ensure that faculty and students participating in HIPs are afforded the opportunity for rich and sustained interaction, we will follow the model of reduced class size we currently use for learning community/WAC courses.

**Faculty Support:** Faculty development and support are an essential component of effective HIP implementation, and we will meet this requirement by building on our existing models. KCC's most prominent HIPs initiatives (Learning communities and WAC) incorporate intensive and/or ongoing faculty development, supported by reassigned time for participating faculty.

**“Culturally sensitive and contextually smart” Adaptation** (Finley and McNair): As important as it is for us to collectively engage in the national evidence base on HIPs, our strategies for designating and implementing HIPs will be appropriate for the community college setting and for the community of Brooklyn. KCC's ODL and ESL Learning Communities are highly successful examples of culturally sensitive and contextually smart modifications of a more or less generic national model. The culturally sensitive and contextually smart criterion will also impact which HIPs we decide to offer and/or how we frame them for local needs; for instance, we have modified the AAC&U designated HIP, service learning and community-based learning, to align with KCC's commitment to civic engagement as reflected in our mission and our graduation requirements.

**Equity:** As noted, HIPs can be significant drivers of equitable learning outcomes, but too often their equity potential is undermined by inequitable participation rates among student demographic groups. We will monitor the success of HIPs from an equity lens by using an assessment model like AAC&U's *Assessing Equity in High Impact Practices Toolkit*.

## CHAPTER 4: RENEWING AND DEVELOPING PROGRAMS FOR EVOLVING NEEDS

Over the past several years, community colleges and their students have faced a number of fiscal challenges. Decreased state funding has stripped institutions of needed resources, even as they are faced with meeting the increasingly complex needs of students. Students too are struggling to meet financial burdens resulting from financial aid policies that shift more educational costs to students; more and more community college students are working long hours to cover the gaps in the costs of attending college, even when they receive all the aid for which they are eligible (The Century Foundation, 2019; Cochrane and Szabo-Kunitz, 2016). Moreover, research indicates that community college students across the nation and at CUNY experience high rates of both food and housing insecurity (Baker-Smith et al, 2019; Cochrane and Szabo-Kunitz, 2016). These challenges occur, not coincidentally, within a context of increasing economic stratification both nationally and globally, adding to the urgency of community colleges' obligation to support economic mobility and creating a potential and troubling tension between that obligation and our equally important responsibility to provide the hallmarks of a liberal education, broadly understood, to an increasingly diverse citizenry (Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce, 2019).

Despite the clear economic imperative of post-secondary education, and the clear advantage community colleges have in terms of affordability overall, community colleges continue to face declining enrollment, a result of both drops in the graduating high school population, particularly in the Northeast, and fierce competition to enroll students, especially from for-profit colleges. The incongruence between the extent of educational need, particularly in communities with high degrees of poverty, and the drop in enrollment has contributed to a national re-assessment of community college program content, delivery and adaptiveness. In a survey of community college presidents, when asked about approaches to recruit more students, they addressed the issue in the following ways: 81% are developing new programs; 75% are adding options to make it easier for students to transfer to four-year institutions; 71% are adding online programs, while 58% are increasing marketing expenditures (Jaschik and Lederman et al. 2018). These approaches speak to immediate enrollment challenges, but they are also a response to public conversations—across the political spectrum—about the financial returns on college degrees and majors; such conversations are informed and/or complicated by often conflicting studies and dense data sets that measure the economic value of degrees in terms of lifetime career earnings and/or inter-generational mobility (Chen and Sender, 2019; Hill and Pisacreta, 2019; de Alva, 2019; Seligman et al., 2018; Chetty et al, 2017; Georgetown Center on the Economy and the Workforce, 2017a; Georgetown Center on the Economy and the Workforce, 2017b; Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2015). While discussions about the pecuniary value of different degrees are frequently reductive and may not reflect the complexity of the data on career outcomes, they do appear to show a clear connection between field of study and social mobility. Further, they create added pressure on community colleges to provide programming with demonstrable value (however defined) and to communicate clearly and effectively that value to the communities we serve.

At KCC, we are proud of consistently high graduation rates that are the best guarantor of economic mobility and that lead all other CUNY Community Colleges with the exception of the specially designed Stella and Charles Guttman Community College (CUNY OIRA, 2019). At the same time, in the widely publicized and rigorous College Mobility Report Cards published by Opportunity Insights and rightly celebrated within CUNY, KCC's 71<sup>st</sup> overall ranking is commendable but is also among the lowest ranked CUNY community colleges, behind Hostos, Borough of Manhattan Community College, and Bronx Community College, all of which ranked in the top fifty (Opportunity Insights, 2017). KCC has also lagged behind our community college counterparts in new program development. Although the correlation between programming and social mobility is complicated, the data compel us to consider developing more programs that are responsive to local employment opportunities and to a rapidly shifting economy.

Given the unpredictability and volatility of that economy, however our commitment to developing new career-oriented programs will be matched with an equally vigorous affirmation of our Liberal Arts program and the multiple transfer pathways it provides. The Liberal Arts program is and has been KCC's largest program, accounting for 36% of our enrollment in 2018 and 37 % our 2018 graduating class. Providing students with an affordable, high quality on-ramp to the baccalaureate has obvious economic value, but the rewards of a Liberal Arts education extend beyond career outcomes and lifetime earnings. Our Liberal Arts program fosters critical habits of mind that prepare graduates to be creative problem solvers capable of engaging with multiple dynamic, disciplinary, and cultural viewpoints; importantly these are the very skills that, according to multiple employer surveys, are most valued in the workplace (Hart Research, 2018; Hart Associates, 2013; Handshake, 2011).

The goals listed below reflect our collective commitment to our comprehensive mission. Taken together, they caution against an institutional approach that would pit one aspect of that mission, career programs, against another, Liberal Arts and transfer programs. The depth and breadth of the educational and economic challenges in Brooklyn demand a "both/and" strategy. Moreover, no matter what particular major or program students choose, our collective obligation to provide the best elements of a liberal education, broadly understood, remains. Every student, regardless of economic need or career goal, deserves the opportunity to cultivate the habits of mind (creativity, collaboration, inquiry, problem-solving, skepticism, ethical responsibility, social engagement, and flexibility) that will inspire them to become lifelong learners, enable them to navigate an increasingly complex economic and social environment, and empower them to contribute to a global society that demands the active engagement of all citizens.

1. [Develop seamless transfer articulation agreements, including pre-college articulation agreements.](#)

**Rationale:**

According to the [US Department of Education](#), almost half of Americans who receive bachelor's degrees and one-third of those receiving master's degrees attended community college at some point in their lives. This fact supports the significance of KCC having sound,

transparent transfer procedures and multiple up-to-date articulation agreements. We will review our existing articulation agreements and update the articulation agreement information on the KCC website. We'll also continue developing new articulation agreements with Brooklyn College, since transfer data indicate that most of our students transfer there. Given the challenges nontraditional students face in navigating higher education (particularly those students who have attended multiple institutions without earning a credential), we will prioritize identifying and developing articulation agreements--beginning with CUNY's online School of Professional Studies--that will support flexible pathways through the baccalaureate beginning with CUNY's online School of Professional Studies. Transfer information and articulation will be updated regularly and written in such a way that they are meaningful to students ([Taylor 2018](#)). In addition, we will monitor KCC student transfer and bachelor degree attainment and use these data to inform decision making ([Stern 2016](#)).

KCC has one of the largest College Now (CN) Programs in CUNY. However, while the percentage of CN students that enroll full-time at KCC has shown a recent uptick in response to targeted interventions, the current 15% conversion rate is still lower than is optimal. We will continue to develop streamlined pathways between College Now and such desirable programs as ASAP and/or Honors in order to encourage CN students to continue their postsecondary education at Kingsborough. In addition, we'll create similar relationships with second chance high schools in order to benefit students who are, for the most part, nontraditional students.

## 2. Review existing and develop new programs using labor market data to respond to trends in job development and engage with workforce/industry partners.

### Rationale:

Over the past several years, other CUNY community colleges, such as BMCC, have initiated the development of new programs to attract students and address the employment opportunities in New York City. Strategic and purposeful new program development that aligns with our institutional mission will be an important strategic goal for Academic Affairs. Careful analysis of labor market projections will be a key component of the program development process. In order to take full advantage of the actionable insights such analyses afford, we will foster a collaborative culture of workforce data analyses that both draws on the relevant expertise of our faculty and provides them with support in the form of reassigned time and access to digital tools (like Burning Glass technologies). To facilitate the necessary consultation, we will design a cross-functional, collaborative program development protocol so that multiple voices and talents are included in the program development process. Ideally the protocol will also serve a capacity building function that will allow us to make the best decisions on the basis of the best available evidence. As we design this protocol, we'll review research on best practices and assess protocols at other colleges such as the one used at [Algonquin College](#).



In building a new program development protocol, particularly for career programs, we will seek advice from existing or to-be-created advisory boards to provide strategic advice and build connections between KCC and industry. Here again, our approach will be informed by local context, by accreditations standards when applicable and by the available literature on best practice such as that provided by [Garewicz \(2017\)](#). KCC's advisory boards will assist in the development of new programs and in the design of the curriculum, particularly the skills, concepts, and competencies students will need to thrive in industry and be gainfully employed. To maximize the benefits we receive from advisory boards, we will develop and implement a set of guidelines about the formation, duties, policies and procedures of advisory boards similar to that of [Cape Cod Community College](#). Ideally, the guidelines will specify the goals and scope of work of the board (meeting frequency, setting of meeting agendas and communication plan minutes, post-meeting action items) as well as the composition of board (industry experts, KCC faculty, KCC administrator, current KCC students as well as alumni). In addition, we will explore making the advisory board members and the work of the board available in a public place so that a potential pipeline of talented students are well informed about KCC's program offerings and outcomes ([Olson 2008](#)).

### 3. Build capacity to serve adult and non-traditional populations.

#### Rationale:

Based on 2018 enrollment data, only 23.2 % of our students are over the age of 25, lower than the CUNY Community College average of 27% and significantly lower than the percentages at Hostos Community College (39.2%), Bronx Community College (32.3%) and LaGuardia Community College (CUNY OIRA, 2019). More disturbing still is national data indicating that students over 25 represent 55% of enrolments in two-year for-profit institutions as compared with only 21% in two-year public colleges (US Department of Education, 2018). The relatively low enrollment of adults over 25 at Kingsborough is of concern because it is disproportional to the need. Between 2013 and 2017, only 35.2% of Brooklyn adults held an educational credential at the bachelor's level or higher (US Census Bureau, 2018).

The demographic data cited above suggest that by developing more and better options to serve adult and non-traditional students, we will both be able to address enrollment decline and more fully fulfill our mission to provide access to quality, affordable education for students who might otherwise be left behind. The new KCC Flex option, funded by a two-year ECMC grant and designed according to evidence-based best practice for adult learners, is a promising model with unlimited potential for growth, particularly if provided with full institutional backing. Equally, KCC's prominence in CUNY's new Adult Learner Completion Network both positions us as leaders in the field of adult learning and increases the urgency of promoting and scaling KCC Flex, since other CUNY community colleges are also committed to increasing their market share of non-traditional students. As we seek to both expand and institutionalize KCC Flex, we will also build its capacity both to meet the disparate needs of adult and non-traditional students and to enrich the range



of educational opportunities we provide them. Effective capacity building in this regard will allow us to implement some or all of the following: an improved pipeline between KCC's non-credit continuing education and our credit-bearing Associate programs; cohort models in specialized fields; online, evening and weekend high-impact practices; and reduced residency requirements for CUNY stop-out students.

4. Provide students with career and future education information as part of their program of study.

Rationale:

A majority of employers believe recent graduates have the skills to fulfill entry-level positions but a minority of employers feel these graduates have the skills for career advancement and promotion ([Hart Research Associates, 2018](#)). KCC students would benefit from being exposed to more information related to their future career and educational aspirations. Nationally, although campus career centers provide valuable information and services to students, fewer than 20% of college students use them ([Fadulu 2018](#)). Therefore, we will provide career services to our students throughout their academic pathway, starting from freshman orientation within Advising Academies. ASAP's model of progressively rich and sophisticated career activities mapped to the curricula and including clearly defined benchmarks offers a robust model on which our Advising Academies can build. Depending on the program or major, career exploration/development content will be provided within a co-curricular framework and/or included as a module within an academic course. Finally, we will work toward creating a co-curricular transcript that will acknowledge the career exploration activities in which KCC students have engaged as they earn credits towards their degree.

5. Renew commitment to the Liberal Arts program by celebrating its values and more purposefully linking program structure and learning outcomes to students' interests, career aspirations or future educational goals.

Rationale:

Recent research from the Community College Research Center suggests that the Liberal Arts are thriving on community college campuses. The number of humanities and liberal arts Associate degrees has increased since the year 2000, and about one-fifth of all courses taken by community college students are in the humanities/liberal arts ([Pippins and Belfield 2019](#)).

Despite these encouraging national trends, not all students intentionally choose a Liberal Arts program for its core values and learning outcomes; many simply land in the Liberal Arts either because they do not declare a more defined pathway as first year students or because they fall off a structured pathway and default into Liberal Arts as a way to graduate. This situation is not unusual among colleges at all levels; in 2019, Gallup/Inside

Higher Ed conducted a survey of college provosts in which 91% agreed that the liberal arts are central to an undergraduate education, 85% strongly agreed that the liberal arts are not well understood across the United States and over 60% agreed that the liberal arts are increasingly vulnerable to unsympathetic politicians, boards and publics (Gallup/Inside Higher Ed, 2019). This point is echoed by research from AAC&U and the Mellon Foundation indicating that the Liberal Arts is frequently confused with general education requirements, a blurring of boundaries that does not serve the Liberal Arts well (Hill and Pisacreta, 2019; Humphreys, 2005).

Given the central contribution Liberal Arts program makes to academic excellence, to student learning and transfer, and to signature KCC initiatives like learning communities and civic engagement, affirming the value and sustaining the vibrancy of the Liberal Arts program is mission critical for KCC. A key institutional strategy for affirming the Liberal Arts program will be helping students to be more intentional about their decision to pursue the Liberal Arts, gain a better understanding of the structure and purpose Liberal Arts program pathways (including transfer) and connect both structure and purpose to their personal, educational and career goals. To support this approach, we will develop a comprehensive communication plan that conveys the programs' value to students and community stakeholders in terms that are meaningful to them. Resources like AAC&U's *Communicating Commitment to Liberal Education: A Self-Study Guide for Institutions* (Humphreys, 2005) will help us coordinate a coherent message about the purpose and outcomes of both the Liberal Arts and liberal education more broadly.

Equally important to sustaining the long-term vitality of the Liberal Arts program will be our willingness to engage fully—amongst ourselves and with our students—with the complex national and institutional data regarding career opportunities and outcomes for students with Liberal Arts degrees. The purpose of such data-driven analyses goes beyond improving how we communicate about Liberal Arts. Rather, they are essential to our capacity to strengthen and clarify the intellectual goals and curricular structure of Liberal Arts programs. Equally important, thoughtful data analyses combined with employer engagement will allow us to be more intentional about how and where essential 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (like teamwork, digital literacy and intercultural competence) are fostered within and across the Liberal Arts program in this latter context, a [skills mapping](#) of the Liberal Arts program, similar to that conducted at the University of South Florida, might assist in making visible the actual skills students develop as they study liberal arts (Dorio, 2019). In engaging in this ongoing review process, we also emphasize aligning our programs with our transfer partners, both to ensure that students don't lose credit in the transfer process and to provide all stakeholders with earlier and clearer information about our full range of transfer options.

Finally, we will promote the goals and values of our Liberal Arts program and program pathways and develop student intentionality throughout those pathways by continuing to improve our advising. The 2019 creation of the Liberal Arts Academy provides an ideal vehicle for this work because it will allow advisors to cultivate expertise in the Liberal Arts and provide students with multiple opportunities across the student lifecycle to build

relationships with a cohort of other students also pursuing a degree in Liberal Arts. Most importantly, the Advising Academy model will streamline routine advising encounters and thus facilitate a shift from a transactional advising model focusing almost exclusively on registration and degree audits to a developmental model designed to support student agency and informed decision-making about both college and career.

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## APPENDIX: THEME TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS (June/July 2019)

Theme	Engaging Learners Where They Are
Design challenge	What if we operationalize equity and assume that every admitted Kingsborough student, regardless of academic background, is qualified (with additional, individualized supports) to successfully complete his or her academic goals? What would we need to do to act on this assumption in a way that ensures substantive learning and growth for each student?
Team members	Annie Del Principe (team leader), Lesley Broder, Eileen Ferretti, Faith Fogelman, Richard Fox, Esther Gabay, Gabrielle Kahn, Stuart Parker, Peter Santiago, Emily Schnee, and Elizabeth Tompkins.

### I. Process Summary

Our theme team began its work on May 3, 2019 at the AP planning conference. There were 8 participants present during this activity. We followed the design charrette protocol and generated an initial list of 7 preliminary, possible recommendations. By May 10, Annie Del Principe had constructed a Blackboard site to facilitate the group’s continued work. The site contained a folder of resources for each of the initial recommendations. The resources included data reports (on Kingsborough students, CUNY students overall, and the Brooklyn area), scholarship, and examples of initiatives at other institutions.

From May 10-30, theme team members reviewed these materials, gathered and added more materials to the Blackboard site, and engaged in online discussions of the issues raised by those materials.

On May 31, 10 theme team members gathered for a three-hour meeting in a computer classroom on campus. Members spent the first hour of this meeting continuing to review online materials and engaging in online chats, in Google docs, regarding the various materials and recommendations. After this “warm-up” hour, team members had an open discussion of the “hot spots” during the online chat and of each recommendation. We prioritized our discussion based on which recommendations and issues generated the most chatter and conversation online. The team revised the initial recommendations together using shared Google docs during the remainder of the meeting. For five days after the meeting, the team continued an online chat with further thoughts about the recommendations.

On June 6, the team’s online chatting and revising of recommendations ended, and Annie Del Principe began to consolidate the recommendations into their final form.

## II. Recommendations

We offer the following six recommended actions the college can take over the upcoming years to reach and support our students more effectively as they transition into college and as they navigate their way through their experience at Kingsborough.

1. **Academic first-year seminar** | Create a mandatory three-credit first-year academic seminar designed and taught by faculty across the disciplines that develops college readiness through critical reading, writing, and thinking and offers an engaging transition-to-college experience for first-year students.

**Rationale** We know from studies done at community colleges across the country, and at KCC in particular, that students enter college without the essential threshold skills and intellectual habits that will help them both succeed in college and engage deeply with the ideas, issues, and learning opportunities offered in individual courses (National Center on Education and the Economy 2013; Del Principe & Ihara 2016; Del Principe & Ihara 2017; Ihara & Del Principe 2018; Schnee 2017). Further, we know that true first-year seminars and common intellectual experiences are proven high-impact practices for college students (AACU 2008). We propose that Kingsborough's current "freshman seminar" course be radically redesigned to provide our students with a more engaging and academically relevant transition to college experience. This recommendation was influenced by the CCRC's 2015 report on the improved outcomes from Bronx Community College's redesigned First-Year Seminar, as well as by numerous examples of similar seminars at other institutions, such as: [Queensborough Community College](#), [UW Madison](#), [Finger Lakes Community College](#), [NYU](#), [Bronx Community College](#), and [Trinity College](#).

2. **Expanded learning communities** | Redesign and expand learning communities to create more meaningful and various pathways for all students, such as: advanced (ENG 24) LCs that might be designed for students in different majors, including Liberal Arts majors. These LCs should be flexible enough to ensure that most students—part-time, continuing, and online included—will have access to this high-impact experience. Optimally, these advanced LCs would include experiential co-curricular opportunities that would culminate in a senior experience (e.g., An eportfolio).

**Rationale** | Given the positive long-term outcomes for community college students that we know are associated with even a single experience in a learning community (LC), we suggest that Kingsborough expand its LC offerings beyond the incoming year (Visher et.al. 2012). As students progress through their English and Math courses, they should be offered a rich and relevant selection of LCs that will both: enhance and deepen their learning in these foundational, core courses by making them relevant to their field of study and tailor their learning in verbal and quantitative literacy in ways that will have the greatest connection to and impact on their future lives.

3. **Directed self-placement** | Design and initiate a directed self-placement protocol that allows some incoming and continuing students to select the English and Math courses that they think will work best within their academic, personal, career, and financial goals and realities.

**Rationale |** For far too long, CUNY has relied on outside measures to determine which composition course is appropriate for any given students. With the current move away from single measure outside placement measures (CATW, Accuplacer), we see an opportunity for Kingsborough to join the vanguard of progressive community colleges around the country and recognize that institutional placement measures are not the only salient factors in determining which literacy course is most appropriate for students. Further, we know that placement done entirely by an institution often does not result in the highest possible success rates for students, as measured by retention and completion, and that it often does perpetuate racial inequities that are rampant in our society (Gilman 2019; Henson & Hern 2019; Poe, Nastal, & Elliot 2019). Given this reality, we recommend that Kingsborough carefully and thoughtfully design a process of directed self-placement for incoming students. We further suggest that this process be designed to take several years to accomplish and that it be driven by local data on student success in gateway courses and beyond.

4. **Smaller classes |** Reduce class sizes to caps informed by research on academic achievement and retention in classes in various disciplines.

**Rationale |** While much attention is being paid recently to increasing faculty efficiency in community colleges by increasing class sizes, we propose that Kingsborough conduct an intensive and patient self-study of student outcomes and learning in courses across the curriculum with the highest course enrollment caps. It is only by reducing the total student load for faculty members that faculty will be able to reasonably and effectively enact various high-impact practices in their teaching, such as: building close relationships with students, increased opportunities for writing and for collaborative projects, increased opportunities for undergraduate research, and implementing eportfolios.

5. **Liberal arts habits of mind |** Emphasize the value of those habits of mind frequently associated with the Liberal Arts, which all citizens need to succeed in multiple careers and to fully participate in a democratic society, such as: creativity, collaboration, resiliency, communication, problem-solving, skepticism, reasoning, flexibility, and argumentation.

**Rationale |** While it is appropriate for there to be attention given to helping students focus, in overt and seemingly practical ways, on their future careers, much evidence points to the need for contemporary higher education to focus on helping students develop deep character traits and behavior patterns that will serve them in multiple capacities. These are often referred to as “habits of mind” or “soft skills,” and they are vital for our students’ future success not only in multiple workplaces and careers but also in their roles as parents, community members, and citizens (Kallick 2008). We find that much focus in higher education skews toward career preparation, and the development of new career programs, without acknowledging the vital responsibility of helping students grow into dynamic, thoughtful, patient, creative, and resilient who understand the value of collaboration and who know when to ask good questions. We

believe that these habits are fostered most overtly in liberal arts disciplines, and we would like to see the college re-brand the liberal arts to emphasize and foster the teaching and learning of these capacities and to emphasize the value of these capacities—to future career and life in general.

6. **Safety nets for students** | Develop innovative, flexible, high-quality academic supports for students horizontally (across all disciplines) and vertically (over the course of experience). These resources would support students' progress and maximize their ability to recover and move forward from a period of academic struggle or failure.

**Rationale** | While we herald the upcoming shifts in CUNY policies regarding placement into developmental courses, we also want to ensure that, in our desire to accelerate students' progress, we recognize that, for many students, this acceleration will require initial and ongoing support in order to help them succeed. We would like to see the college acknowledge this fact and to plan, in various ways, for increased struggle for some students as they inevitably fail on their first attempts in co-req courses or as a result of over placement via our new directed self-placement protocol. These supports could take many forms: new grading policies regarding F grades earned in co-req and gateway courses (e.g., NC or R grades), new policies regarding the permanent expungement of F grades in a student's record once a course is retaken and passed, new tutorial and studio-class supports throughout a student's tenure at Kingsborough rather than only in the first year, among many other possible structures.

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THEME	Investing in Faculty Agency and Growth
DESIGN CHALLENGE	What if institutional resources, structures and practices were committed to equitable support for each faculty member's growth as a teacher, scholar and college citizen? What specific changes would occur and who might benefit from them?
TEAM MEMBERS	Chris Calienes and Raphael Afronja (Theme Team leaders) Anthony Alessandrini, Carlos Arguelles, Reabeka King, Jennifer Radtke, Anna Rozenboym, Red Washburn

### PROPOSALS

Kingsborough's official equity statement:

*Equity, often confused with equality, recognizes that there are hindrances for some in attaining equality. Equity is achieved through inclusion and through the active removal or mitigation of hindrances to full access to opportunities, resources and support for all members of a community. It also means ensuring that all members of said community have consistent and meaningful opportunities to participate in communal life and to play a role in shaping the culture of the community (approved by College Council on 5/21/2015)*

The group strongly believes that the AP should be put through an external review process that includes another community college, a four-year college, and the Graduate Center.

#### Scholarship

- Encourage and recognize collaborations with researchers on and off campus, at CUNY and non-CUNY campuses, in institutions and industry
- Provide funds to support a Faculty Development Plan (teaching, scholarship, service)
- Connect reward structures (reassigned time, tenure, promotion, merit increases, public recognition, etc.) to teaching, research, and service expectations of the faculty
- Equitable faculty development that includes adjuncts.

#### Work conditions

- Set up a system for appointing faculty to committees and other campus activities that is collaborative and democratic
  - o Rotate responsibilities and opportunities for participating in decision-making initiatives
  - o Implement term limits for committee membership and leadership
  - o Prioritize the inclusion and representation in faculty (full-time, and adjunct) governance across different social identities
- Professional code of conduct
- Listen to diverse perspectives and faculty voices in decision making about improvement of work conditions and addressing the issues of inequity

- Respect and support work/life balance (child-care, health care, etc.)
- Improvement and improved usage of facilities with faculty input
- Equitable faculty development that includes adjuncts

#### Transparency/Accountability (Governance/Administration/Labor; Communication)

- Engage faculty *talent* in addressing and solving institutional and system issues
- Administration – review and uphold the CUNY by-laws and the institution’s policies and practices to remove barriers in identifying or resolving issues of inequity
- Transparency – assignment of college-wide committees – such as College-wide reappointment, sabbatical, etc.
- Evaluations – transparency in the evaluation process.
  - o Chairpersons should be required to evaluate all faculty at least annually to ensure service, scholarship and responsibilities
- Rotate responsibilities and opportunities for participating in decision-making initiatives
- Professional code of conduct
- Transparency about resource allocation (revenues beyond tuition)
- Equitable faculty development that includes adjuncts
- Review and properly address historical and documented data about the barriers and challenges that impede faculty progress or retention.
- Specific process where people are held accountable for progress and that there are specific and public implementation plans and timelines.

#### Community building

- Provide an opportunity for interdisciplinary and faculty-administration collaboration
- Administration – review and uphold the CUNY by-laws and the institution’s policies and practices to remove barriers in identifying or resolving issues of inequity
- Equitable faculty development that includes adjuncts

#### Curriculum

- Faculty and directors who are doing curricular work within the curriculum committee need to have the power to vote on curricular issues
- Need a mechanism to plan interdisciplinary work which is predominantly performed by marginalized faculty.
- Prioritize the inclusion of programs and curricula for transformative and holistic educational experience for students

THEME	Resourcing Teaching and Learning
DESIGN CHALLENGE	What if KCC explicitly and intentionally fostered a culture of equity and excellence in teaching and learning? What specific resources and processes--classroom spaces, educational technologies, professional development, academic support services, policies and procedures--would be necessary to support that culture?
TEAM MEMBERS	Janine Palludan and Dawn Levy (team leaders), Tsubasa Berg, Esther Gabay, Matthew Gartner, Sherrye Glaser, Marina Ouedraogo

#### I. PROCESS SUMMARY:

At the AP Planning Conference on May 3, 2019, our theme team began to tackle our design challenge centered around resourcing teaching and learning. After we introduced ourselves and independently generated ideas for our group's focus, we came together to share our thoughts in an engaging and spirited conversation. The Design Charette activity resulted in eight preliminary recommendations based on the collaborative efforts of our initial group.

Dawn Levy then created and populated our team's Blackboard site with a summary of the AP process up until that point, links to the CUNY Academic Commons AP information, our initial recommendations (including summary minutes from our planning session) and various resources including internal and external data reports, scholarly articles, and studies of national trends relating to teaching and learning.

Between May 3<sup>rd</sup> and June 3<sup>rd</sup>, our team added additional resources to the Blackboard site and utilized a shared Google folder created by Janine Palludan to collaboratively comment on and edit language of the evolving recommendations. We also communicated throughout the month via email exchanges to share thoughts and hone our suggestions. We were able to synthesize three of our sub-themes from the planning session into one more comprehensive one and ended up with five sub-themes we agreed would turn into our five recommendations. Members interested in a specific topic were encouraged to take the lead in that area and share any ideas or research with the group.

On June 3, 2019 our group convened for a three hour in-person meeting in a computer classroom on campus. The team leaders reviewed the team's theme, reminded everyone of the design challenge, and summarized the progress to that point. The members then reported out on any research they had done or resources they had reviewed related to specific sub-themes either orally or using the Google and Blackboard sites. The comments, questions and challenges by team members that followed helped refine our priorities and shape our work going forward. At the end of each sub-theme discussion, the group worked together to agree upon general language that should be included in each recommendation.



Over the next three weeks the team emailed each other various iterations of the recommendations asking for input and suggestions. Once the team agreed upon the basic language of the five recommendations, Dawn Levy and Janine Palludan finalized the recommendations and began to prepare this report to share our findings, recommendations, and reflections.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following five recommendations aim to provide guidance for how the college might best resource teaching and learning over the next few years to foster a culture of equity and excellence in teaching and learning at Kingsborough.

1. **Commitment to Learning Spaces:** Invest in designing, expanding, and reconfiguring formal and informal learning spaces (including classrooms, library spaces and student common areas), in ways that accommodate coursework needs and different pedagogies, and that create an environment that fosters equitable, accessible, meaningful, immersive, and interactive learning experiences, all of which reflect cross-functional purposes, and is rooted in principles of Universal Design and U.D. for Learning.

**Rationale:** The learning environment is a fundamental contributor to successful teaching and learning. We know that learning spaces should represent the inclusivity of learners and educators, as well as be thoughtfully designed to achieve the learning goals for all constituents (Harvey & Kenyon, 2013). We send a strong message about our institutional commitment to access and inclusivity when we intentionally design academic spaces to meet the needs of all members of the college community. This involves moving away from narrowly focused facilities fixes to a larger institutional focus on learning space design that can accommodate all types of people and all types of learning situations. When the Universal Design framework established by Meyer et al. (2014) is used to guide classroom design, the result can be a better learning environment for everyone. We recommend looking at the ways in which other institutions, such as McGill University (Finkelstein et al., [2014](#), [2016](#)) have designed or renovated classroom space features to support student learning in ways that are grounded in research-based principles and take into consideration layout, furniture, technologies, acoustics and lighting. Decisions about the types of technology placed into classrooms and how classrooms are assigned should be driven by pedagogy and made in consultation with faculty and staff who utilize the classrooms. We suggest that a formal feedback loop be established that encourages two-way communication about classrooms and other shared college spaces. Redesigning some library spaces to allow for more comfortable seating, better lighting and more collaborative meeting spaces would reflect the college's priority on reading and create an inviting space where all students feel a sense of belonging. Investing in additional Access-Ability Services staff and resources would also contribute to more accessible and welcoming learning spaces by supporting students with disabilities during class time and testing.

2. **Governance and Decision-Making:** Align college governance, administration, and management -- including resource allocation, faculty hiring, faculty tenure and promotion decisions, student enrollment processes, student support services, internal and external communications, information technology, and investments in the physical plant -- to reflect the primary institutional mission of excellence and equity in teaching and learning.

**Rationale:** To best promote student success, decision-making relating to teaching and learning should be driven by input from multiple stakeholders and be reflective of a shared governance model. Policies and practices that emerge from governance frameworks impact all aspects of an institution's operations, including teaching and learning. The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education ([COACHE, 2015](#)) has identified the five aspects of effective shared governance as: trust, a shared sense of purpose, understanding the issue at hand, adaptability and productivity. To establish a culture of trust, the COACHE model advocates for a system of clearly defined expectations for governance, practices that consistently meet community expectations, and a continuous commitment to transparency. At KCC, this might include greater college-wide sharing of financial budgeting information as well as more formally documented processes for institutional decision-making practices. Both would help enhance communication and foster community building. We suggest the college create a working group of stakeholders from across various constituencies at the college to study and report on what best practices and excellence in governance looks like at other higher education institutions, and create a process whereby the group's recommendations can be shared, discussed, amended, and adopted at Kingsborough.

3. **Teaching as Meaningful Institutional Value:** Adjust the college's system of tenure and promotion to reflect a prioritized value on excellent teaching by rewarding significant faculty commitment to pedagogical growth, innovative teaching practices and adaptability to changing educational landscapes that contribute to successfully executing good classroom experiences for students and that are aligned with higher education and Departmental outcomes and expectations.

**Rationale:** All institutions of higher education want excellent teaching but in practice often do not prioritize it as a top metric for faculty evaluation. In order to align this policy with proper practice, a report by the [AAU](#) (2017) identifies the need for a necessary change in culture and offers practical strategies to create an environment where improvement in a faculty member's teaching over the course of their career, in addition to research, is valued, assessed and rewarded. A renewed focus on teaching excellence and innovation in teaching also aligns with the current demand for evidence of value in higher education requiring colleges to demonstrate their impact on student learning (De Courcy, 2015). Kingsborough can demonstrate the value we place on excellent teaching by acknowledging and rewarding it accordingly in the tenure and promotion process. Suggestions for objectively demonstrating exemplary teaching include teaching portfolios, teaching fellowships and recognition of a few faculty each year for their

demonstration of outstanding teaching. We suggest looking at novel ways that colleges are developing comprehensive sets of policies to evaluate teaching in the tenure and promotion process (ex. AAU, 2017; Taylor et al., 2017). A commitment to teaching excellence would also mean that teaching ability be accorded more weight in faculty hiring decisions. For example, departments might ask candidates to provide a teaching demonstration or evidence of prior teaching experience during the hiring process. Finally, faculty should strongly be encouraged to engage in professional development activities that address pedagogy and best teaching practices.

4. **College-wide culture of continual learning:** Offer increased, ongoing and intensive professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, both inside and outside of KCC, that incentivize participation and encourage college-wide dialogue around best practices to foster a collective culture of lifelong learning as well as support excellent teaching, and retain and attract high-quality faculty and staff to the college.

**Rationale:** We know that teacher professional development positively affects student achievement (Yoon et al., 2007) and helps build communities of practice (Young, 2014). To foster a culture of continuous growth we suggest providing multiple professional development opportunities that are ongoing, sustained and relevant.

Intensive and meaningful certification processes such as WAC, FITR and the SPS Preparation for Online Teaching are excellent models for the development of new programs for faculty. To demonstrate its commitment to faculty development, the college should continue to provide incentives to faculty to participate in these intensive programs. KCTL's successful FIG model and workshops indicate that faculty want to engage in meaningful professional development. We suggest additional resources be allocated to expand KCTL's and KCeL's offerings and programs. Strongly encouraging new faculty to attend a structured professional development program as part of the new faculty orientation would also convey the message that the college values these activities. An institutional commitment to professional development should be encouraged despite some of the challenges that arise at community colleges because of demanding workloads, high numbers of adjunct faculty and scheduling concerns (Smith, 2007). In addition to implementing formal programs, we recommend encouraging increased inter-departmental dialogues around pedagogy and best practices to learn from colleagues and build community. Cross-departmental information sharing is another form of collaboration that strengthens teaching and learning.

Staff from all areas of Kingsborough play a critical role in the success of our students and, therefore, should also be afforded and be encouraged to take part in meaningful professional development to promote professional growth and contribute to an environment of excellence and equity in teaching and learning at the college. We recommend looking at comprehensive models, such as [the Employee Development Program at Indian River State College](#) that coordinates developmental and training opportunities for faculty and staff by providing

strategies, resources, tools and offerings designed to support and increase the effectiveness of the college's employees.

5. **Optimizing student learning:** Develop a culturally responsive holistic approach to student success focused on the needs of individual students that serves to eliminate barriers to student success through a cross-divisional network of academic and non-academic supports, and that serves to create an environment that fosters equity and inclusive excellence in learning by providing opportunities for growth for high achieving students.

**Rationale:** The changing landscape of student success in higher education points towards a multi-pronged, adaptable approach rather than a “one size fits all” method to best serve our students. Support systems should be targeted and individualized to meet the needs of each student. Non-academic challenges, such as basic needs insecurity (including housing, food, and transportation) and financial insecurity, should be considered and addressed as part of the overall success strategy. We recommend that specific data about Kingsborough and CUNY students, from resources such as the [Hope Center Real College survey](#) and [Single Stop reports](#), be used to guide support and outreach. Interventions cannot exist in silos; we must replace the practice of implementing localized interventions with supports that are coordinated collaboratively and communicated effectively to students by all relevant areas of the college, including Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, Registrar, Bursar, Admissions, and Advisement, among others, so as to provide clearly defined paths for students that prevent confusion, miscommunication, and duplication of efforts. To that end, we encourage the College to expand its use of a Student Success Management System, such as Starfish, to: allow areas across the college to access information about a student in real time; identify the types of support a student needs and when (from onboarding through to completion); and support the implementation of a data-backed intrusive advising model that includes early alerts, positive nudging, degree mapping, career coaching, and more.

Keeping in mind equity and inclusion as core values of our institution, we should also look to create an environment that challenges our highest achieving students and provides them with opportunities for growth. Research indicates that High Impact Practices (HIPs) improve the quality of a student's learning experience and overall success, especially for underserved students (Kuh, 2008). Therefore, we believe Kingsborough should expand the Honors Program as one way through which high achieving students can participate in High Impact Practices such as experiential learning opportunities, faculty/student mentorship programs, undergraduate research, civic engagement experiences, and leadership opportunities. Since participation in HIPs is not equal across all student demographics, with traditionally underserved student populations engaging in less HIPs than the traditional non-transfer, not first generation, and white student population (Finley et. al 2013), we suggest that Kingsborough intentionally increase student engagement in HIPs as a way to address this equity gap.

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Theme	Renewing and Developing Programs for Evolving Needs
Design challenge	<p>What if we were to make the following promise to all KCC students:</p> <p><i>Your program pathway <u>will</u> lead to a job with a living wage or seamless transfer to a four-year degree. In addition, the learning you acquire in pursuit of that program will allow you to participate and thrive both in your community and in our complex, global society</i></p> <p>What changes/adjustments would we need to make to our academic programs to make good on this promise and to ensure that the promised outcomes are distributed equitably across all student groups?</p>
Team members	Loretta Brancaccio-Taras (Theme-Team leader), Stephanie Akunvabey, Tamara Bellomo, Jessica Cinelli, Karen Columbo, Nick Cromie, Rachel Ihara, Marisa Joseph, Marina Ouedraogo, Sharon Warren Cook, Christine Zagari

**Recommendations**

1. Seamless transfer, articulation agreements, joint 2-4-year degrees, pre-college articulation agreements

Rationale:

According to the [US Department of Education](#), almost half of Americans who receive bachelor’s degrees and one-third of those receiving master’s degrees attended community college at some point in their lives. This fact supports the significance of KCC having sound, transparent transfer procedures and multiple up-to-date articulation agreements. The team felt it was important to begin this work by reviewing our existing articulation agreements and updating the information the KCC website about articulation agreements. The formation of new articulation agreements will need to involve participation from appropriate academic departments since the initial discussions begin at the departmental level. Based on KCC transfer data, most of our students transfer to Brooklyn College. Therefore, a logical place to begin the pursuit of new agreements will be an outreach to Brooklyn College.

Currently KCC has 2-4-year degree programs for Criminal Justice and Brooklyn College. These formal agreements can benefit our students and if advertised might be a way to attract students to particular KCC programs.

### *Pre-college articulation*

KCC has one of the largest College Now Programs in CUNY. However, the percentage of CN students that enroll fulltime at KCC is relatively low. The team recommends developing better agreements with CN high schools so that these students enroll at KCC. In addition, forming similar relationships with second chance high schools would benefit these students who are, for the most part, nontraditional students.

2. Employer engagement through the formation of advisory boards (to address employer expectations, such as soft skills required for the workforce) and connecting through internship opportunities (work outside of the classroom)

#### Rationale:

Advisory boards provide strategic advice and build connections between KCC and industry. These boards should assist in the development of new programs and in the design of the curriculum, particularly the skills, concepts and competencies students will need to thrive in industry and be gainfully employed. To maximize the benefits, we receive from forming advisory boards, the team recommends KCC develop a set of guidelines about the formation of an advisory board based on the sample displayed in Appendix 1. These guidelines should specify the goals and scope of work of the board (meeting frequency, setting of meeting agendas and communication plan minutes, post-meeting action items) as well as the composition of board (industry experts, KCC faculty, KCC administrator, current KCC students as well as alumni). KCC should make the advisory board members and the work of the board available in a public place so that a potential pipeline of talented students is aware of the KCC offerings.

3. Review existing and develop new programs using labor market data to respond to trends in job development.

#### Rationale:

Based on the number of new programs KCC developed over the past several years in comparison to other CUNY community colleges, such as BMCC, the team believes this is an important focus area for Academic Affairs. Program development needs to be strategic, purposeful and align with the KCC mission. The team felt that to truly address this recommendation, Academic Affairs needs to provide better support for faculty who are completing the necessary paperwork to create a new program. In addition, KCC needs to develop a culture that has access and examines workforce data. There is untapped expertise on campus regarding gathering workforce data and more people need to have access to Burning Glass, with the cost covered by Academic Affairs. If a faculty member is developing a new program, release time should be provided to complete this important work for the college.

Finally, a program development protocol capturing the aforementioned is recommended. One proposed example comes from [Algonquin College](#).



#### 4. Examine approaches to better serve non-traditional populations

##### Rationale:

Currently, two-year colleges serve the most ethnically diverse student body in the history of the United States. Based on KCC's recent enrollment data, KCC has a rather traditional college age student population. Reaching out to nontraditional students will provide KCC with an opportunity to attract students that have previously been ignored. In addition, alternative scheduling options (weekends, evenings, online, hybrid, block programming) for current and prospective students might be another strategy to address the number of Brooklynites with some college and no degree. Some of this work is already underway with KCC Flex. The team thought it was important for Academic Affairs to have greater internal communication about new initiatives, such as KCC Flex, so that the campus community and important stakeholders can plan and promulgate the information to students. In addition, resources should be devoted to creating curricula to serve nontraditional populations and cohort-based models be implemented. In addition, KCC would benefit from Academic Affairs making better connections with the noncredit to credit pipeline. Many non-traditional students are enrolled within OCE and can be targeted if credit transfer was simplified.

KCC has experience in do this with the EMT and Community Health Programs.

#### 5. Provide students with career and future education information as part of their program of

##### study Rationale:

A majority of employers believe recent graduates have the skills to fulfill entry level positions, but a minority of employers feel these graduates have the skills for career advancement and promotion (Hart Research Associates, 2018). KCC students would benefit from being exposed to more information related to future career and educational aspirations. Although campus career centers provide valuable information and services to students, fewer than 20% of college students use them (Fadulu 2018). Therefore, bringing these services to students in existing courses such as an introductory/gateway course, at the start and end of their program of study, might be a more effective approach. In addition, placing a career component within a course can provide a better context for students. KCC students should be rewarded for completing career exploration activities as they earn credits towards a degree. As cited by Hanc (2019), "Over a lifetime of learning,

individuals can assemble, or stack, a series of traditional degree-based and/or nontraditional credentials -- certificates, certifications, licenses, badges, apprenticeships and more -- that recognize achievements and provide an accurate assessment of knowledge, skills and abilities." Williamson and Pittinsky (2016) report that individuals holding credentials receive higher wage premiums than those without a credential.

#### 6. Review the structure of the Liberal Arts Program to better align with students' interests, career aspirations or future educational goals

##### Rationale:

Liberal Arts is the largest degree program at KCC. However, the team felt that there is a lack of information about what do students do after earning an AA in Liberal Arts. A data driven examination of

this program would help to rethink the intentions of the AA in Liberal Arts, the purposes of the current concentrations and whether they lead students towards a future career/educational trajectory. Data about what do KCC students who earn a degree in liberal arts would help start this review process. This work is particularly important since the number of humanities and liberal arts degrees has increased since the year 2000 (Pippins et al. 2019) and about one-fifth of all courses taken by community college students are in the humanities/liberal arts (Pippins and Belfield 2019).

A skills mapping of the Liberal Arts program, similar to that conducted at the University of South Florida, might assist in making visible the actual skills students develop as they study liberal arts (Dorio, 2019). In so doing, guided career explorations can be incorporated into the curriculum. As part of the skills mapping process the current liberal arts concentrations should be reconsidered to ensure our offerings enable our students to make informed decisions about their interests, career paths, and future educational goals.

Advisement related to liberal arts needs to be reexamined. Historically at KCC, students have been placed in liberal arts as a “default” major. In addition, students are placed in flexible core courses simply to fulfill a degree requirement rather than what fits their interests and future goals. Students need to be given the opportunity to explore their interests and the make informed decisions by KCC providing them with clear information on the college’s website.

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