

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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Start: 1:21 p.m.

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HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS: James Vacca  
Fernando Cabrera  
Jumaane D. Williams  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez  
Vanessa L. Gibson

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

Lucinda Zoe, University Dean  
Undergraduate Studies  
City University of New York, CUNY

Marcia Keizs, President  
York College

Paul Arcario, Provost  
La Guardia Community College

Bryan Wigfall, Student  
City College of New York

Dean David Crook  
Dean of Institutional Research  
City University of New York, CUNY

Barbara Bowen, President  
Professional Staff Congress  
City University of New York, CUNY

Kevin Sailor, Chair  
Psychology Department  
Lehman College

James Davis, English Teacher  
Brooklyn College

John Adaramo, Student  
City University of New York, CUNY

[sound check, pause]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quite down, please.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good afternoon. My name is Inez Barron, and I am Chair of the Committee on Higher Education. Today, we're holding an oversight hearing on CUNY's Pathways to Degree Completion Initiative also known as Pathways. Pathways following its adoption by the CUNY Board of Trustees in 2011 was implemented across the University's Undergraduate colleges in the fall of 2013. The initiative established a new system wide framework of general education requirements, and transfer guidelines designed to make it easier for students to transfer from one CUNY college to another. In a press release announcing the new program, the University suggested that this change would "improve graduation rates, help more students earn their degrees on time, and save money for students and the university all while raising academic quality and maintaining high standards." Essentially, the Pathways general education framework contains three elements each of which specify coursework, credit, subject area and learning

requirements that undergraduate students across CUNY must meet. (1) The required Common Core consists of a full course 12-credit requirement for all students in the Associate of Arts, Associative Science and Bachelors-and Bachelors Degree programs. It features courses in English composition, mathematical and quantitative reasoning and life and physical sciences. Clearly, the flexible Common Core consists of a six-course 18-credit requirement for students also in the Associate of Arts, Associative Science and Bachelors degree programs in which they must complete at least one course in each of the five flexible core areas, which includes global cultures and global issues, US experience in its diversity, creative expression, the individual and society, and scientific world as well as an additional six course in one of them. In addition to the 30-credit Common Core requirements that I just described, students in bachelor's degrees program-programs are also required to complete number 3, the College Option Requirement, a specified by their college. The number of required credits range from 6 to 12 depending on whether the student transferred into the college and the number of credits earned at the time of transfer.

Additionally, advanced placement credits, and non-CUNY credits may also count towards a student's Common Core or college option requirements. Once a student has met a Common Core area requirement at one CUNY college, that requirement is considered fulfilled by any other CUNY college. Besides the Common Core framework, Pathways also offers a minimum of three "Gateway" course leading into ten of CUNY's most popular majors. This means that students have the opportunity to take designated courses that will count toward major requirements at any CUNY college that offers that major. However, according to the CUNY Master Plan 2016-2020, the preliminary data strongly suggests that Pathways has significantly eased transfer of general education courses leading to better credit accumulation. Efficient credit transfer in the majors appears to be less successful. Prior to the Pathways Initiative, each CUNY College set its own general education and graduation requirements including which transfer credits to accept, and as a personal note, during the time that I was a student at Hunter College, there were courses that I wanted to take during the summer that were not offered at Hunter. So I had to go to Queens

Colleges, which offered the classes that I needed, but I knew to make sure that both institutions would approve of the transfer before I did that, but there are a lot of students who don't do that because they don't know that. So this Pathways program is designed to remove that barrier for students. As a result, many students that are transferred within the university, especially those who move from a community college to a senior college have previously earned credits rejected or downgraded to "elective credit" at their new school forcing them to spend more time and money to graduate. Moreover, according to CUNY's own analyses, transfer students are less likely to earn a Baccalaureate degree than non-transfer students. Earlier in this legislative session, the Committee held an oversight hearing entitled "Can CUNY's Pathways Program Help Improve Graduation Rates?" during which we heard concerns about the new initiative's impact on shared governments and curricular decision making and change academic standards. The purpose of today's hearing is to gain insight from the CUNY administration, faculty and students about the progress of Pathways since it was implemented. In particular I'm

interested in learning about how successful the initiative has been thus far, what metrics are used in that determination and how CUNY is tracking improvement. I'm also interested in learning about the future of Pathways including CUNY's plan for program expansion to strengthen transfer of major credits and implement a new reverse transfers, reverse transfer process. Lastly, I'm interested in hearing data on time and money saved for both students and the University. I would like to acknowledge the colleagues who have joined me from my committee today. Today present is Council Member Fernando Cabrera, Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member James Vacca and Council Member Vanessa Gibson. I would like to acknowledge—I would also like to thank my Legislative Director Ndigo Washington, the CUNY Liaison and my Chief of Staff Joy Simmons, the Committee's Financial Analyst Jessica Ackerman, our new Counsel Keru Guterrez (sp?) and Policy Analyst Chloe Rivera. In according to the rules of the Council I will now ask my committee counsel to administer the affirmation to the witnesses who are here from the Mayoral Administration.

2                   LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right  
3 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole  
4 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony  
5 before this committee, and to respond honestly to  
6 Council Member questions?

7                   PANEL MEMBERS: [in unison] I do.

8                   CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. The  
9 first panel that we have today is Ms. Lucinda Zoe,  
10 the University Dean of Academic Affairs for CUNY, Dr.  
11 Marcia Keys, President of York College; Paul Arcario,  
12 the Provost for Academic Affairs at CUNY, La Guardia  
13 Community College, and Bryan Wigfall (sp?), a student  
14 at City College. Thank you. You may introduce  
15 yourself and give your testimony. Thank you.

16                  LUCINDA ZOE: Thank you. Good morning  
17 Chairperson Barron and members of the Higher  
18 Education Committee. I am Lucinda Zoe, University  
19 Dean for Undergraduate Studies for the City  
20 University of New York. I am pleased to have this  
21 opportunity today to discuss the Pathways Initiative  
22 Pathways Initiative established by CUNY in fall of  
23 the 2013. With me today to present testimony are  
24 several CUNY colleagues. Allow me to introduce  
25 President Marcia Keizs from York College; Provost



Paul Arcario from La Guardia and City College student Bryan Wigfall. I'll start by providing. I'll start by providing a little background on the initiative and then follow up with an update on implementation and evaluation processes. With more than 245,000 undergraduate students enrolled in our seven community colleges and 12 senior colleges, CUNY experiences significant flows of students transferring between its colleges. In fact, student transfer is a critical aspect of educational opportunity at CUNY. Approximately two-thirds of new students enter CUNY baccalaureate programs as transfer students. While the most common transfer paths is are from the community college to the senior colleges, many other students transfer from one senior college to another or within the community college or the senior college sectors. This is common. Reasons for transfer are many and varied including changes in circumstances such as a new job, a relocation to a different borough or a change in academic focus. In all cases, students are striving to achieve their goals and deserve a seamless effective transfer system that supports their aspirations. New York State Education Law supports

this notion. [banging door] Section 6201 specifies that CUNY is one university, and must have clear transfer paths and curricular alignment across all of its colleges. CUNY has long recognized the importance of student transfer, and we have adopted policies intended to ensure transfer students make efficient progress towards degree completion. The Pathways Initiative was established through the June 27, 2011 Board of Trustees Resolution. The purpose is to enhance transfer students' progress toward degree completion while maintaining CUNY's commitment to the highest academic standards to the faculties' special responsibility for courses and curriculum, and to providing colleges with the flexibility to maintain their distinctive identities and traditions. Prior to Pathways, there is no [banging door] common curricular structure across CUNY Colleges. As a result, students who transferred often found the course credits at one college did not match course requirements at another. Therefore, those credits were not applied to degree requirements. Pathways guarantees that credits will transfer across the system. A 30-credit Common Core has been established, a clear sign that general education

requirements the students must meet at any CUNY college and ensuring that general education credits transfer to any other CUNY college. It makes sense. Students also benefit from greater clarity about which courses they should take for entry into their majors no matter at which college the major is offered. Finally, students are assured that electives they take at any college will transfer with full credit [banging door] to any other college. Together, these three policies are increasing students' efficiency in progressing toward their degree. Since the fall 2013 implementation of Pathways, we have observed positive outcomes and trends. While it's too early to draw conclusions regarding Pathways' effectiveness on graduation rates and time to completion because a full cohort of CUNY students has not yet progressed through the system since the—the requirements were put in place in 2013. However, available data provide an initial view of the impact of Pathways it is already having in various areas, and here are a few examples. From fall 2012 to Fall 2015, the percentage of students who transferred to CUNY baccalaureate programs with an associate degree increased by 31%. Second, the total

number of credits that transfer students have earned and received credit for has also increased. Ah, thank you. Prior to Pathways, the average credit accumulation within a year after transfer was 62. By fall 2014, it has increased to 65. Meanwhile, the average GPAs of these students have remains steady at 2.8. We also found that one-year-retention rates have remained steady as well at approximately 64% for associate degree students and 86 degree—86% for baccalaureate students. Most notably, the courses the students take before their transfer and now much likely to count toward their degree. Before Pathways 32% of all transfer students had at least one course that did not contributed toward their degree at transfer. They're called non-contributory courses. By fall 2015, that percentage had dropped to 13%. All in all, these data make it clear that Pathways is improving the transfer process. I will introduce some more data later. Let me step back and briefly describe the planning and implementation processes of the Pathways Initiative. I need to emphasize here that the initiative would not have been possible without the tireless collaborative efforts between the colleges especially their faculty and central

administration. Over the two-year period following the 2011 Board of Trustee Resolution, faculty across CUNY set to work establishing the broad curricula perimeters for the Pathways Initiative. A task force consisting predominantly of faculty developed the contours of the 30-credit Common Core for all of CUNY's undergraduate colleges with eight areas including English composition, math, quantitative reasoning, life and physical sciences and five additional schematic areas, which was named, were named earlier. Individual colleges within CUNY decided which courses belonged in each area depending on their academic priorities. All courses have been developed by faculty members at the colleges. The Common Core Course Review Committee or the CCCRC, consisting entirely of faculty from across CUNY is tasked with the review and approval of Common Core courses. This committee ensures that all Common Core courses make the learning outcomes set forth by the original task force. To date, the CCCRC has reviewed over 2,000 courses submitted by the colleges, and has approved approximately 88% of the courses submitted. In addition, we wanted to address transfer of major courses. Faculty members from the senior colleges

and community colleges and the biggest transfer majors worked together to select three to five courses that students could take with confidence that they would be counted towards their major at transfer. The big transfer majors included such fields as English, psychology, business, nursing, political science and biology. More than 680 courses have been identified as Pathways' major transfer courses across the university. Due to the diligent work of hundreds of faculty administrators, Pathways was fully implemented in fall 2013. A full complement of general education coursework as well as coursework in popular majors has been available to students, and guaranteed to transfer for credit toward degree requirements. CUNY's registration system as well as its degree audit system, Degree Works, have been updated with the new curricula requirements and college websites outline—outline all the new policies. With each entering class starting in fall 2013, all new students including new transfer students are required to follow the Pathways curriculum requirements. Approximately 81% of all degree seeking students are—were following Pathways in fall 2013–2015 including 75% of those enrolled in

baccalaureate programs and 88% in associate degree programs. We expect even a larger percent of students to be enrolled in Pathways in subsequent semesters. On Evaluation: CUNY recognized that careful evaluation of the Pathways Initiative will be needed to ensure that the goals are met. The board resolution specified that Pathways be evaluated each year for the first three years, and every three years thereafter. The first year review of Pathways was overseen by entering Chancellor William Kelly, and was completed in February 2014. The Review Committee included representatives from the University Faculty Senate, and other faculty members from the Natural Sciences, [banging door] English and the Humanities. As a result of the first year review, three changes were made related to contact hours, waivers for degree programs with special circumstances and selection processes for faculty representatives to the CCCRC. In preparation for the second year review, CUNY's Office of Academic Affairs, OEA, took several steps. First, OEA contacted the Pathways liaison on each campus to discuss the status of implementation, and found that Pathways was running smoothly. There's no major issues reported. Second,

a suggestion form was made available on the Pathways website beginning in February 2015 to solicit input providing the mechanism to gather a wide range of perspectives and concerns. Additionally, in spring 2015 OEA hired an independent consultant to conduct student focus groups on Pathways at four community colleges and two senior colleges to assess student understanding and opinions of the Pathways Initiative. The focus groups' review, and we know that this is part of a larger challenge, that in general transfer and graduation requirements were not well understood by CUNY undergraduates. This pointed to a need for better communication and a more proactive guidance procedures on most campuses. We have begun to address this in several ways. We have created and introduced more straightforward student inspired and student directed [banging door] multi-media informational clips on understanding the CUNY curriculum, general education and the transfer process. These short instructional clips can be accessed remotely by any digital device by all CUNY students. We have also invested in advisement resources to support a better understanding of STEM education and degree requirements adding 50 new



advisors and investing over \$7 million in community college advisement resources in 2015 and '16 funded by the Mayor's STEM Initiative. Additionally, students are being introduced to Degree Works and trained to use it as the go-to tool for tracking and understanding their graduation requirements and progress toward degree completion. After completion of the second four-year Pathways implementation the second review committee was charged by Chancellor James Milliken in May of 2015. The committee included representatives from the University Faculty Senate and a variety of colleges [banging door] and academic disciplines. Commonly submitted CUNY online feedback form as well as the Sunday (sic) Report through the student focus groups was shared with this committee. The committee presented the central office of CUNY with a number of questions and requested data on student transfer, course taking patterns and performance. Data showed that the Pathways Initiative may have influenced students' decisions related to transfer. The number of transfers in the CUNY baccalaureate programs has been on the rise. Mostly due to the increase in the number of transfer students with associate degrees.

As I mentioned earlier, between fall 2012 and '15, there was a 31% increase in the number of students transferring to CUNY baccalaureate programs who had earned the associate degree. That's a huge jump prior to transfer. There is a concern by some that course taking in some disciplines will decline at CUNY due to Pathways. Yet, the committee concluded that course taking patterns by discipline have remained fairly consistent since Pathways was implemented probably owing to the flexibility of the Common Core curriculum. Course taking for first time freshmen, in fact, increased from fall 2012 to 2015 in a few disciplines. Foreign language course taking increase from 18 to 19%. The natural sciences saw an increase from 28 to 35% and math course taking jumped from 79 to 86% for first-time freshmen. Questions were also raised by the committee about how Pathways might influence student performance. As I mentioned earlier, after the Pathways' implementation, data showed a consistent main GPA after one year for transfer students and a higher main accumulated credits after one year for transfer students. As noted earlier, Pathways has reduced instances among transfer students where their course credits are not

being counted by the receiving college. Among all CUNY students who transferred in fall 2013–2012, 33% had at least one, if not more, transfer course that did not apply to any of their degree requirements. By fall 2015, this decreased considerably to 12%. In some cases, the impact has been dramatic with one senior college going from 64% of their students with at least one non-contributory course in 2012 to 4% in 2015. CUNY took deliberate steps to ensure that students were informed of their rights and the Pathways guarantee. As part of Pathways implementation, we developed a student bill of rights and responsibilities and a process to appeal deny–deny–the denial of restriction of transfer credits at both the college and university level. These analyses suggest that Pathways is enabling students to make more efficient progress toward degree completion. The Pathways program guarantees students that each and every course they take in CUNY will transfer for credit to any other CUNY college. That in general--that any general education course taken at a CUNY college will transfer–transfer for general education credit to any other CUNY college, and that Pathways' major Gateway courses will transfer for

major credit from one institution to another. That is the Pathways' promise that we have made to our students. In conclusion, with the Pathways Initiative the university has clarified the path to degree completion, and put measures in place to ensure that transferring does not set students back. We believe that the best interests of students are being served. A very difficult set of problems that students once had to face themselves has now been addressed by CUNY. This will help students make progress without suffering the discouragement and the setbacks experienced when courses are not accepted for credit toward general education or major requirements. Pathways provides a Common Core structure that is highly flexible and maintains the individual college's freedom to develop innovative courses and programs that are consistent with the needs and goals of the specific student population. CUNY as an institution has stepped up to help students deal with the problem that has bedeviled their earlier peers for decades. We understand further adjustments will be necessary, and we'll continue to address concerns raised by review committees as specified in the Board Resolution. The

third year review is underway and ongoing evaluation and modifications will continue to be made. We welcome substantive feedback and suggestions for improvement—for improving opportunities for CUNY students. This truly is a work in progress, and we at CUNY are committed to better serving our students and empowering their academic futures. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony today. I will now turn this over to President Keizs from York College to present a college perspective on the Pathways design and implementation process on the ground. President Keizs.

MARCIA KEIZS: Thank you very much, Dean Zoe, and good afternoon Chair Barron and the other members of the--the Higher Education Committee. As you've heard, I'm Marcia Keizs, delighted to be here before you again today. I am President of York College, and as President of York I must do a little promo before I go into my testimony, and I'm certainly very delighted, too, that our dean highlighted a number of the matrix-metrics that you're so interested in because some of those metrics clearly are comprehensive, and some of us have had a change to delve into them. I will tell you, however,

that those metrics are not what I'm going to focus on on—in my presentation. It's going to be somewhat different. But as President of York I just want to say that I'm glad to be here. We're celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. We are very much committed to the work that we've done over these 50 years. There were some in—interesting and important people who helped to form us. Among them former colleagues of yours, people who represented you in the City Council like Archie Springer. He was on our campus just weeks ago to talk a little bit about the founding of York, and we continue to try to live up to the mission of our founders. In doing so, it is really important that we serve a role for the students who come directly to us from high school towards the baccalaureate. But it's also very important that we serve a role as accepting students who come to us from our community colleges, and that's a really, really critical role that we serve. And, in fact, as you've heard from Lucinda Zoe's testimony, we rely as senior college as much on freshmen, first year students coming in, as we do on transfer students coming sometimes from the senior colleges themselves because they will leave on institution like Baruch,

for instance, and come to us. They may leave John Jay and come to us. They may leave Queens College and come to us for various reasons, sometimes around the kind of programming they wish to get, sometimes around the kind of college feel they want to have, but they also may leave La Guardia Community College or Queensborough Community College, which is in our borough, and come to us. And so the business of how we handle transfer of students from one institution to another is really very critical. CUNY has grappled with this for many, many years, and it seems to me that they have hit I think an appropriate formula, and the formula through Pathways really comes to recognize that students need to have reliability of information and they need to have their credits valued. And in doing so, of course, we're also looking affordability and cutting costs, and so when we entered into the Pathways journey at York College, we were at a stage when we were attempting to revive our general education curriculum. We had just completed—we had some years ago completed our Middle States Accreditation. We had been charged through Middle States to take a refresh of our general education curriculum. We have

actually started to do that work at York College, and Pathways came along and we frankly embraced it. And so the Pathways journey at York College proved to be a collaborative collegial one. Though, as you can well imagine, providing lots of opportunity for debate, for disagreements, for discussion. It came at the right time since after almost 20 years the college was already in the process of reviewing its general education requirements. The exercise prepared York faculty and students to engage vigorously in this initiative. York College was represented on all of the CUNY Pathways work and committees, many times becoming leading voices and cheering them. York's department chairs, as charged by the Dean of Arts and Science, formed an ad hoc committee that became a crucial body overseeing the Pathways course design [banging door] and submission to CUNY wide Pathways Course Review Committee ensuring the academic leadership participation and approval. The proposal that became York's Pathways requirement was unanimously approved by all our department chairs of the college, a rare occurrence, you can imagine in academia. But the in-depth engagement of the department chairs and the faculty



also highlighted additional opportunities for programs to reassess their majors and the minors and to take a fresh look at what we could offer to students. When it came time for the Pathways Initiative to be discussed in our college senate back in 2012, and our senate included faculty, students, and administrators before we submitted it to the CUNY Board of Trustees, we had a very, very strong vote, 37/01 with all of our ten students who were participating and voting unanimously. So we've really had a very, very good start in order to implement the Pathways process. We also had a couple of things happening at about the same time that enabled us to have a fairly smooth implementation. A number of forces occurring at the same time as Pathways came together to facilitate and enhance the introduction of Pathways, but included CUNY First, which is system that helps us—helps us to manage all of the financial processes of the college, all of the advisement processes of the college, all of the burstering (sic) processes of the college, and we were doing that at about the same time that Pathways came along. Also, at that time, we of the college have undergone a review of our advisement process and

we have come up with the notion that we needed to centralize rather than disburse the way we conduct advisement. And do, at about the same time that Pathways was being initiated, we had a revamp of our whole advisement process, placing the advisement process centrally located in an advisement office with faculty and staff supporting that advisement office from their department. So the advisement innovations and the implementation of Pathways introduced a new reality for our students and for our faculty. As you've heard in my opening remarks and also in Dean Zoe's, we really do rely on transfer student as a--a major course of what they do. They're almost a main course. In some years, in fact, our transfer students come to us in larger numbers than our first year students, and that has been a little bit of a trend over the many years. And so it's really critical that as we look at what we do in taking a look at transfers and assessing the courses that students have taken, that we give them good value. So to date, what have we seen? Student course taking patterns have changed with the reduction of general education requirements at York from 54 to 42. Students now have the ability to

enhance course phasing in their major. Secondly, students now have more room in their studies to add a minor, anywhere between 12 to 18 credits, and that minor may complement the chosen field making them somewhat more competitive in the marketplace or for that matter when they apply for graduate school. Another set of impacts is related to the way we work with our community college partners. In the past, you know, some of our community college partners felt that we would cherry pick the courses that we wanted to take from a particular place, but today we can work more seamlessly and with real confidence that when we establish articulation agreements with say La Guardia Community College or Queensborough College that that call will follow, and the value will be there for students. Transferring students know upfront what courses they need to take at the associate's degree level that they will then carry into the bachelor's degree. Since 2013, we have redoubled our efforts. We always have fairly good relationships with our community colleges, quite frankly. Since I spent most of my career in community colleges, I've always made sure that since I've been President at York that I really reach out

and continue to keep those relationships. Since that time, we have redoubled our efforts under the Pathways umbrella, and we have reached out to our La Guardia colleagues to our Queensborough colleagues, up-up to the Bronx where I came from to assure that we have strong dual joint degrees and strong articulation programs that will help students transfer seamlessly, and we have particular niches that we work with in public health, in the health sciences and in the STEM disciplines as well. As we go forward, it is clear that we don't at this time have all of the data that you need in order to say it is working in the kind of way that would guarantee provides you that kind of evidence. However, we are at the point today where we are undergoing our Middle States Assessment. Middle States is the process that we must undertake as an institution every ten years in order to assess where we have been, and in order to gain accreditation. As we move into our Middle States Accreditation process, we will be accessing some of the data that the university has provided. [banging door] We will be working at looking to see how our Pathways Initiative has—have impacted or transferred. Although, as you've heard already from

the testimony that's provided here, the preliminary CUNY data indicates that Pathways has helped reduce the loss of credit. We know as well that there's been some real change in curriculum. There's been some expansion of opportunity for minors for instance. There has also been for instance at my school a real embracing of the Foreign Languages Department, which has now been renamed Foreign Languages because they have—we have built into our core the requirements for a foreign language to be a requirement for our students. And so, that particular discipline has embraced that. It has revitalizes its courses. It has expanded its courses, and students as they're introducing new courses, which can be taken as part of the mandatory foreign language requirement. In terms of what we see as we talk with students, those students who were at York when this happened, students who have joined us since that time, they appreciate the clarity that Pathways has given. They appreciate the fact that we have committed as a contract to provide value and acceptance to the courses they bring to us. And so, we believe that while all of the data is not in and all of the metrics are not in, and all of the

evidence is not in, we have taken a very good first step forward to really provide value and integrity in the offerings that we—we provide for our students who transfer. So I believe that the Pathways Initiative as it is now experienced is an important first step in the right direction for our York students, indeed for all of CUNY students, and their families. I do thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and would be happy to come back at a future time when we have some more evidence to provide. Thank you, and now I'll pass it to my colleague Paul Arcario from La Guardia.

PAUL ARCARIO: Thank you, President Keizs. Good afternoon, Honorable Chairperson Barron and members of the Higher Education Committee. My name is Paul Arcario, and I serve as the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at La Guardia Community College of the City University of New York. I'm very pleased to join my CUNY colleagues today and one of our students to provide testimony on the Pathways Initiative. On behalf of La Guardia, I would jut first like to express our deep appreciation of your continued support for all of the CUNY colleges and the thousands of students we

educate. La Guardia's mission is to educate and graduate one of the most diverse student populations in the country coming from over 150 countries to become critical thinkers and socially responsible citizens who will help shape our rapidly evolving society. With 50% of our students transferring to four-year colleges within a year after graduation and about 90% of that number to CUNY colleges, facilitating transfer particularly within the CUNY system itself is indeed a critical goal of La Guardia. Echoing my-my two colleagues, I will first say that we will certainly gain a much more complete picture of the impact of Pathways' rate of completion, time to completion, credits needed to complete. Once students who have participated in Pathways entirely have had the opportunity to finish the associate degree transfer and then complete the baccalaureate. In the shorter term, however, we can see that data on the non-contributory courses for students transferring to La Guardia from other CUNY colleges is, in fact, in line with the overall trend just reported by Dean Zoe. So in fall 2012, 29.6% of CUNY transfers to La Guardia had at least one non-counted transfer costs. In fall 2015, this number

fell to 21.9%, which is certainly encouraging for us. On a more anecdotal level, I have reports from our advisors and our Office of Transfer Services that due to streamlined and consistent advisement regarding Pathways, students' stress and anxiety appear to be reduced regarding the number—regarding transfer of credits at least in terms of the general education part of the degree. Students are now assured that their general education courses will transfer and students are indeed appreciative of this increased level of certainty. I—I just want to say I don't think this should be underestimated. I—I can say that we have many students walking in the door in La Guardia and the first thing they say when they come in is I don't know if I'm going to stay because I'm worried my credits won't transfer, and this was a genuine level of anxiety, and it was difficult sometimes to reassure them. I think the fact that even though we knew that students who grad—who transfer with a degree tend to do better at the senior college, they were leaving early, and now we are very encouraged by the data. Dean Zoe reported that 31%, there's a 31% increase in students transferring with a degree. So that increased level



of certainty is very important. I also will notice that both of my colleagues talked a lot about the importance of advisement, and Chairperson Barron, your story when you were at Hunter and you took a course in Queens, right, in the summer, what was important was that you knew to check whether it would transfer. So all of these systems that go into place, if we don't have the proper advisement and communication and let students know what's happening, they're not going to be successful. I personally worked with the advisors to created instructional video, guiding students through the transition to Pathways at La Guardia, while the faculty developed recommended two-year sequences of study in every single major incorporating the Pathways curricular changes, and all of these have been posted on redesigned website. I hear from President Keizs. I just learned you've revamped advisement. So have we. We now have advising teams for every single major. This approach consists of advising staff, faculty and peer advisers who do actually wonderful jobs, the peer advisers. They work collaboratively and they help ensure that students are served more effectively. And I'm very pleased to say that at La

Guardia this has resulted in our seeing for the first time in several years an increased level of satisfaction with advisement here at-at the college. The number of students who are now somewhat or very satisfied with advising increased from 68% in 2012 to 83% in 2016, and we measure that with the National Community College Survey of Student Engagement that we administer to students every other year. We have also found that pathways has streamlined the process of developing articulation agreements with four-year colleges. Actually, York has been very easy to develop [laughs] probably because President Keizs has-has that commitment, but sometimes-- Quite frankly, sometimes there is a feeling of some cherry picking going on, but the other thing is that now we only need to negotiate the program part of the degree, half the degree, half the degree. Before, we had to not only negotiate the program with the major, we had to negotiate with every single general education course that was involved. We had to negotiate with five, six, seven, eight, nine departments, which was time consuming and sometimes difficult. So the streamlined fact has now enabled us just one example this past year to articulate our

redesigned education programs with Queens and Brooklyn college ensuring a seamless transition for students. And, quite frankly, we were stuck on those articulations for a while until this—this sort of created an opening for us. Yet, another benefit to students is that Pathways created room in the degree for courses that were formerly not listed as requirements, but embedded as prerequisites. Well, I Guardia did not have a lot of such prerequisites and through curricula review we are now eliminating them. Simply by taking something that was an embedded prerequisite we are now able to move it into the Pathways flexible core. So, therefore, we're not asking students to go over the 60 credits, and I think I'd like to conclude with—with something that I think is probably to me one of the most important points and benefits, and perhaps maybe people did foresee this. I think it was unforeseen by some—by some and—and that point is that for many of us here in the room, college provided a journey of exploration and discovery, and yes for community college students often first generation college student. Such a journey of opening new vistas is often denied. Limitations on credits and a degree,

financial aid strictures often mean that the curriculum can be highly constrained, but we are now finding that the flexibility both into Pathways has opened up students to possibilities that they otherwise may not have even considered simply because such courses could not fit into the degree. And I was very pleased to just hear now from President Keizs that actually you've also had an opening up of possibilities because you're able to put in minors the same concepts. So, for instance, here at La Guardia, we have courses in astronomy that have taken off. All of a sudden, that sounds like a bad pun. I don't mean it to be a pun [laughter] but we're seriously thinking astronomy, philosophy, neuroscience, oceanography, linguistics, that now they're able to take because of the choices made available to them by the flexibility that's in the Pathways core. And I cannot help but think that these expanding possibilities serve to enrich the educational experience for our community college students. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. We're glad that they've taken off, and we look forward to a safe landing. [laughter] Thank you. Next.

PAUL ARCARIO: Indeed. [pause]

BRYAN WIGFALL: Good afternoon, Chair

Barron, Honorable Council Members and CUNY colleagues. My name is Brian Wigfall. I am a proud student leader at the City College of New York. I major in political science, minor in legal studies and I'm honored to report that I was recently accepted to the Student Ambassador Program for the Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs. City College is my second stop on the CUNY express. I began my CUNY career at Bronx Community College and transferred to City earlier this academic year. Throughout my CUNY career, I've been actively involved in student leadership and although I've attended two CUNY colleges, rarely has my leadership been limited to narrowly focused issues on my campus. Indeed, I've supported organizations like the University Student Senate and the CUNY Coalition for Students with Disabilities precisely because they fight for the rights and opportunities for all 270,000 degree seeking students across all of our campuses. They advocate for a singular outstanding experience for every CUNY student wherever they go to school within a single unified truly integrated,

truly connected university system. This vision of a truly interconnected CUNY is now possible because of CUNY Pathways. For me, a truly interconnected CUNY hinges on two important principles that are lifted up by Pathways. First, our university can be considered truly integrated if, and only if we value the education and experiences of our community college students, equally—equally with those of our senior college students. I have been fortunate to give—to take courses both at Bronx Community College, and City College, and I'm pleased to say that my courses at both at Bronx Community College and City College are every bit as rigorous, demanding and challenging as those I've taken at City College. Through the acceptance of four credits from one CUNY institution to another, Pathways has helped to ensure that my Bronx Community and City College general education course work is valued equally. This is not only validating to community college students, but also to senior college students two-thirds of which are transfer students and to our outstanding community college faculty who are every bit as dedicated and accomplished as CUNY's world class senior college faculty. Secondly, as a more practical matter, CUNY

can only be experienced as a truly interconnecting university if our college courses transfer seamlessly when we seek to move from one CUNY school to another. In the past, the general education curricula of CUNY's colleges simply did not align well at all. Colleges accept their students as transfer at general education credits inconsistently. For some students, some gen ed courses transferred only as electives, which did not always help us because elective credits did not necessarily advance us toward degrees. This costs CUNY students their most scarce resources: time and money, and these are the very resources that Pathways has helped students to save. Students are now assured of the transfer of general education credits from one CUNY institution to another, making it easier for us to plan our academic futures and prevent us from unnecessarily taking more credits than we need to graduate. Aside from saving students time and money, it has also empowered us through the freedom of academic exploration. Because I am now absolutely clear about the required general education courses that I'll need to graduate, I am able to fearlessly explore elective courses that interest me simply because they interest me without concern that

they will somehow slow my path to graduation.

Elective credits are now a matter of students' choice rather than an arbiter-arbitrary trash bin. (sic)

Designation given to transfer credits that somehow didn't fit the receiving college's definition of the Common Core. Finally, I'd like to close my comments on the transformative impact of Pathways by

highlighting the impact that it has had on one of CUNY's most vulnerable students groups, that is its population of more than 9,000 students with

disabilities. More than 10% of these students rely on tuition support sponsorship from state agencies

like ACCES-VR and the Commission for the Blind in order to fund the CUNY educations. Students with

disabilities know by heart the three absolute rules of tuition support by these students---these state

agencies. Number 1. You must remain in good

academic standing. Number 2. You must attend school full time, and number 3. These agencies will only

pay for a course one time and one time only. If you're sponsored by these agencies, and you fail a

course and are forced to repeat, the--the cost of repeating is on you. Prior to Pathways, transfer

students disabilities sponsored by these state



agencies frequently found themselves in a Catch 22. They would take and pass the course out of CUNY College in good faith believing that they had satisfied a gen ed requirement only to learn that they are receiving college wouldn't accept the course as satisfying the Common Core elements. Yet, when they sought to take the replacement course at the school to which they transferred, ACCES-VR wouldn't fund the tuition repeat course, which given the ironclad rule of ACCES tuition support wasn't fundable. As a result, students with disabilities would invariably be delayed or get stuck in their effort to earn degrees. Now thanks to Pathways, student-sponsor students with disabilities have been able to avoid this course repeat trap. They have matriculated towards degrees, and thanks to the CUNY Leads Program are employed at a rate of 70% following graduation. I'm especially proud to be able to share the progress that our university has made through Pathways because the movement to create a system of seamless transfer of general education courses from one CUNY schools to another was very much a student led movement. Student organizations like USS, CTSB and other university like student coalitions fought

hard to implement Pathways at CUNY. By working actively with students, faculty and administration to refine Pathways to maximize its ability to save students time and money as they progress towards degrees. I feel as though I'm participating in a great legacy of CUNY student empowerment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I want to thank you for your testimony, thank this panel, and we'll have some questions. I do want to say that we had been joined briefly by Council Member Jumaane Williams, and I will start the questioning. Thank you again for your testimony. You indicated that there's a body that comes together that does the reviews, and President Keizs, you indicated that at York the vote was overwhelming in support of Pathways being adopted. So before I get into what's happening currently, I wanted to go back to the origins because I know that there was some disagreement as to how Pathways should go forward. I know that there were some people who were concerned about a reduction in the academic rigor because classes that had been perhaps four credits were reduced to three credits, and there was a reduction in lab hours and all of that. So I wanted to ask how is that addressed, and

in that panel that presented that boat—that vote how was that panel composed? It said 37 I think 01. Is that open to all faculty? What percentage of the faculty did that represent at that time, and again I'm just laying groundwork for what has—was at the origin before I move forward?

MARCIA KEIZS: So what the process was clearly there was a CUNY committee, and there was a York committee. However, any work that took place on curriculum must go to our own Governance Committee at York, and before it can get to the Governance Committee, which is the Senate, you have to go to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee at that time—it's changed a bit since then because we have had a governance change, but the Curriculum Committee at that time had 18 members of the faculty. It had two administrators, one from the Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar because the Registrar is the keeper of the books, if you will, on these matters. And it had, and this is a bit of an anomaly, 18 students and not always there, by the way. Okay, and just as an aside the governance has changed since then. We did a governance review, and now we only have eight students at curriculum, but we

still have 18 faculty. Even eight students is a lot, but that was the process at the time. So, the Curriculum Committee, which is again sort of the owner. The Curriculum Committee reviews all curriculum items. It reviews courses. It reviews the number of hours. It reviews the assessments. It reviews whether it's going to be done in a class, in a lab, in a lecture, if it's going to be hybrid or if it's going to be something else, and that review committee reviewed all of the Pathways work. Once that was done, it then came before the Senate, which is comprised of some 50--probably it was--let me see what the number is. It's about 42 senators almost equally driven between students and faculty with five administrators. And so that that vote that you heard me report was the 37 view (sic) allowing one-one person actually voted to abstain rather than to vote against it, and that comprised faculty, administrators and students.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

MARCIA KEIZS: So that--that was back in 2012.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right. Okay and how were the students that participated? How were they

were selected, and the faculty as well. How were they selected to participate?

MARCIA KEIZS: Oh, the-the--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Was it voluntary or were they appointed?

MARCIA KEIZS: No, the Senate, you know, the Curriculum Committee is by designation by the department. So the English Department selects a member, and on the Senate, the same thing happened. The faculty are elected by the department once a year, and for students, students are elected by their student body as senators once a year. So, administrators have no--whomever is designated and elected, they serve.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You said that there was a reduction I think you said in the number of credits. Okay, York College had 54 credits--

MARCIA KEIZS: [interposing] 54, correct.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and that was reduced I think to 42.

MARCIA KEIZS: [interposing] To 42. Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So, have you found that those--the part--was there a concentration

of that reduction of credits in any one department or selection of departments, and how has that influenced the faculty selection and departments that are needed now to address the needs of students with that reduction?

MARCIA KEIZS: Well, of course, there was an agreement that we would reduce the 42, although they were capped. There has really been this discussion about some additional kinds of course work that students can take as electives, [banging door] or as part of a minor, and that is the thing that I think has been useful for our curriculum.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But you didn't find a reduction in particular departments because students now only had to take 42 as--as opposed to--

MARCIA KEIZS: [interposing] Well--well, remember now, students would have to take 120 credits anyway.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

MARCIA KEIZS: The--the number of credits for the degree has not changed.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

MARCIA KEIZS: It's a matter of how we have compartmentalized the credits. So that now

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2 instead of having 54 broadly general education  
3 credits, we have 42--

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

5 MARCIA KEIZS: [interposing] --but we now  
6 have opportunity for people to in the majors--

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-  
8 huh.

9 MARCIA KEIZS: --to have additional  
10 credits, and should they wish to have further  
11 electives or to have a minor--

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

13 MARCIA KEIZS: --they have the  
14 opportunity to do that.

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, Mr. Arcario, the  
16 question then to you is you've indicated these new  
17 disciplines. You've seen an increase in students  
18 taking astronomy, philosophy, neuroscience,  
19 oceanography, and nutrition.

20 PAUL ARCARIO: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Has there been an  
22 impact for you at your school with the department  
23 offerings and the number of faculty that are needed--

24 PAUL ARCARIO: [interposing] Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --in those areas?

PAUL ARCARIO: Yes, actually, in the beginning there was, and where we were finding the impact was in performing arts, music, painting, drawing, theater, and because those by New York State designation cannot be liberal arts courses. So the were not really able to in the Pathways course, and most students in the liberal arts majors took that. But, what happened and what I think is sort of the genius of the Pathways model it gives--there was enough flexibility to work around that. So the liberal arts degree is 60 credits, 30 credits is Pathways, 30 credits is the so-called program. The faculty decided that the arts are important to an education, and they put the arts courses in the program part of the degree, and the model allowed for that to happen, and the faculty--that was totally the faculty's will to do that. And, in fact, as the Chairperson of the Humanities Department where all those courses were, I told them I was going to testify today, and they said well tell them I'm very happy so-- [laughs] So, but I-I-I think the point is that their model allows that to happen.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And again I'm still going back to the origins of Pathway before we move



on further. There was a gain the question of whether or not we were maintaining academic rigor as we—we did this revision with Pathways. And I would like to know what have the senior colleges indicated in Pathways? Have they indicated to you, has there been any discussion about students who have come through the Pathways to their senior colleges? Have they indicated any kind of--?

LUCINDA ZOE: Well, I would refer to the—you know, some of the indicators that we have that we can look at, which are the—the GPAs. I mean the transfer students are doing fine. I mean the GPAs have held steady. If the courses weren't rigorous—rigorous enough, if—if the students were not well prepared, then they would not be maintaining the same GPAs or, you know, that they—as before Pathways. Also, the Common Core Course Review Committees have continued to meet, and I've always thought this was the great untold story of Pathways was during the implementation, and it was fairly controversial—

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

LUCINDA ZOE: --and there's a lot of questions, you know, we had eight different

committees, and each of those committees reviewing courses have 35, 36 faculties representing every single college, and those faculty reviewed every single course for learning outcomes because they—I mean I was so impressed because they were working against, you know, criticism from the outside and from their own colleagues, and they— It was important to them that the courses were rigorous that the learning outcomes were met. So, there's been a peer reviewed—a peer reviewed process, which continues to this day for every course that—that goes into Pathways, and these committees are so—they—it's really hard work. I mean--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

LUCINDA ZOE: --it's very hard work, and I think that--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] But if you could—if you could perhaps and perhaps my staff could work with you, ask a very pointed question of the senior colleges particularly as it relates to the—I think it's called the Math and Quantitative— [pause]—Well, I'll have to find exactly what it is called.

LUCINDA ZOE: It's Quantitative Math and Quantitative Reasoning.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Reasoning, right. They have found that that has maintained what it is that students are required to especially understanding because we're talking about the STEM programs. So we could find a way. I really am concerned that I don't have any of my senior colleges here to say what they, you know.

LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] Well, York is a senior. York is a senior.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We do have the master program, yes.

LUCINDA ZOE: Yes, they're a senior college.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and--and to talk about what has been the overall, the overall in that regard so--

MARCIA KEIZS: [interposing] Well, I-I--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --at York?

MARCIA KEIZS: Yeah. I-I think the critical things that happened with Pathways. So as we got our colleagues to talk to each other about

what they do in a discipline, and to agree that this course, Math 101, Math 202--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] So--

MARCIA KEIZS: --Science 201 is really the same thing--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

MARCIA KEIZS: --whether it is offered at a community college or at a senior college.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] So can I say then that you're speaking on behalf of the--your colleagues at the senior college level that this is what they have shared with you? And then my other question relates to you talked about articulation with STEM, the STEM Program, and I think you referred to some of the colleges that were involved. If you could speak briefly to that.

MARCIA KEIZS: La Guardia, for instance, and--and Queensborough. Are you talking about from the Community College--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

MARCIA KEIZS: --Isolation Agreement to--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

MARCIA KEIZS: --to the senior college?  
Well, these predated us. You know, we've always had articulation agreements.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

MARCIA KEIZS: What we're saying is that with the sort of package of agreements on for us to do credits let us say, as we've all agreed are valuable credits. That's whether I'm at Queens College or it's York College or La Guardia, the Discipline Council they've looked at it, and they've looked inside of it, and say yeah that's a good course. That's the same course I would offer wherever I am. These are the learning outcomes that we would want, and by agreeing to that, what they've done is they've said we will accept them, right? We will accept them. Our faculty are the same faculty. They have the same PhDs. They went to the same graduate schools. We got together and we said let's break down this particular silo. Now, what you do with the rest meaning 32 from 120--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] 32, uh-huh.

MARCIA KEIZS: --leaves you with quite a number of courses still. What you do with the rest

of your courses later on when they come to us is another matter, but I would imagine that by virtue of having agreements on, you know, one-quarter of the curriculum--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

MARCIA KEIZS: --what you have done is you've sort of built a degree of confidence that the outcomes will be the same. Now, not all students will perform. Some students will come to us with barely passing. You know, they may come in with a 2.0. Others will come in with a 3, or some place in between, and then, in order to get into some of the very specific programs, instead in nursing, in occupational therapy, they may need to perform at a much higher level.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

MARCIA KEIZS: Alright, and so they may not come in and perform at the level they need in order to get into those very selective kinds of programs because they may need the kind of GPA that they have not been able to achieve.

LUCINDA ZOE: I would like to mention, too, the STEM Variant Courses. This is also another

maybe misunderstood, but as part of Pathways we have courses called STEM Variant, and the STEM Variant Courses are in like math, you know, and all of the sciences, and these are the--the traditional--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You're saying Sim Variant?

LUCINDA ZOE: STEM. STEM Variant.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: STEM, okay.

LUCINDA ZOE: So most of the Pathways courses are sort of three hours, three credits.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

LUCINDA ZOE: The STEM Variant courses are all of the original--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Oh.

LUCINDA ZOE: --science courses that were in physics, in chemistry, and bio are exactly the same as they were before Pathways.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

LUCINDA ZOE: You know, they were four credits, five hours.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

LUCINDA ZOE: Those are all still there, and they are all included in the Pathways curriculum. So any student that is a STEM major takes the exact

same kind of science, lab science sequence they would have taken before.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

LUCINDA ZOE: I mean nothing changed. The same thing with math. So if you are a STEM student you're taking the exact same rigorous curriculum that you would have taken before Pathways because all those exact courses are part of the Pathways curriculum all across students--all across CUNY. We have I think close to 700 STEM Variant courses in the Pathways curriculum. So the--the rigor is exactly the same as--as before with all of those--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

LUCINDA ZOE: --basic science courses.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: A couple more questions. I do want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council Member Laurie Cumbo, a member of this committee, and I'm going to turn it to my colleagues. I have lots more questions, but just one other question. So students that--students have the option of joining Pathways, they're not--?

LUCINDA ZOE: Not now, they don't.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Not now?



2 LUCINDA ZOE: I mean it's—it's a  
3 requirement.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Now it's required.

5 LUCINDA ZOE: Any student that starts  
6 after-beginning in the fall of 2013, all transfer  
7 students and all new students.

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

9 LUCINDA ZOE: It's just their curriculum.  
10 You know, I mean, our—one of our directors of  
11 admissions used to say when they were putting this  
12 together he's like, you know, don't. You don't want  
13 to—we don't need to confuse students. And a new  
14 student this is just their Gen Ed. This is just the  
15 curriculum they start with.

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So--

17 LUCINDA ZOE: I mean that's what it is.  
18 So the only option was in 2013 if you were already a  
19 currently enrolled student, you weren't forced into  
20 Pathways.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

22 LUCINDA ZOE: You could stay with the  
23 current program if--that you had--

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] So  
25 since--

LUCINDA ZOE: --the option.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Now, all students are required to follow Pathways. Is there an opportunity for a student to get a pop-up or a flag that says you know that you've already satisfied this requirement, and it's a duplication. It's going to put you--is there a flag or a requirement, something that pops up that alerts a student to the fact that, you know, to duplication of what they needed in the 30?

LUCINDA ZOE: Well, you know, actually we have the--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] It, of course, gets to advisement if they're sitting down, but if they're not there--

LUCINDA ZOE: It gets to advisement. We also like the Degree Works, Degree Audit system--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] The Degree Works. Would that do that?

LUCINDA ZOE: --that really allows students to track their progress.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But it would it alert them to the fact that, you know, you perhaps--

2 LUCINDA ZOE: Yeah, it wouldn't—I don't  
3 think it would even allow them to register for the--

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Oh.

5 LUCINDA ZOE: It would be hard for a  
6 student to register for a course--

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Oh,  
8 okay.

9 LUCINDA ZOE: --they already had a  
10 requirement--

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] So it  
12 might block them from that?

13 LUCINDA ZOE: and the requirement was  
14 already met. Yeah. And by the way, since Pathways  
15 we've had a 250% increase in Degree Works usage by  
16 CUNY students.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, great.

18 LUCINDA ZOE: It's been very—we've really  
19 been successfully at getting students to use it to  
20 track--

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

22 LUCINDA ZOE: --progress and check their  
23 requirements.

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I have more  
25 questions, but I'm going to defer to my colleagues.

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2 I'm going to ask Council Member Cabrera [banging  
3 door] oh, do you want to defer to your colleague?  
4 Okay, Council Member Rodriguez.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,  
6 Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You're welcome.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: You know, we  
9 just hope that at some point one day, you know, we're  
10 leaving the quality behind--

11 LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] We're leaving  
12 it.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --and that  
14 everything is perfect.

15 LUCINDA ZOE: That what?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Everything is  
17 perfect one day.

18 LUCINDA ZOE: Okay. [laughs]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: But, you know,  
20 in our generation they all watch. They see no  
21 inequalities here, and inequality on senior colleges,  
22 community college, education, even among our high  
23 school education in Beacon, North Brooklyn. Tech in  
24 West Stuyvesant is not the same as education in a  
25 school that they just work with the students who are

the level 1 and level 2. Unless you have different daughters, and the daughter is showing that students, 85% or more of students going to community college they need remedial courses, and it takes six years for them to graduate, only 27% to graduate. Not because CUNY is failing. In fact a few years ago the society was failing, by not providing a stronger early child education. So I'm all about exploring, creating, supporting anything that can be the best plan to provide the best path for our students to get their BA, Master's, PhD, continue advancing. Not because it benefits them, but because it benefits most important the society. So we know that there's no more politics in the world than the—in the—than in the academic world, and we know that because I used to be a teacher at high school. And I know that when we would have a permitting license, you know, you feel different because, you know, like you were more entitled to understand most of your rights than if you are like the substitute teacher that we have in the 80s and the 90s. So this plan is a great plan, but you have a lot of good aspects, but how do we sell it to the professor or the senior colleges aren't working with a student who they do the

computes from division. They've been attracting the students who are at senior colleges that many of them just keep going to the senior college especially to the best one. They took other regions when they were in ninth grade. They were taking Algebra when they were ninth grade. They were not a population of kids that work in the schools when I used to teach ten years. So for me, I'm all about what's, you know, been for seven years. We can spend the whole day on the question of how do we go to sleep at night.

LUCINDA ZOE: Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Because we can justify everything. We can say it's a perfect plan. They move from Hostos to Bronx Community. After a year they can transfer, they can survive. They can graduate. We can retain them but, and of course like the City is looking at CUNY from community college to senior college, you know, as the entry doo. Many of us we are here because of that. But again, the ways that seek in education especially in the previous administration we fail. So, the Pathways is a great one. It's a good one, but which is the aspect, you know, that we feel are—should be discussing our challenges that we have? When a

students is finishing her first year and a half in a community college, those 85% that do remedial courses, were Algebra in the community college is not the same than the advanced class of Algebra that the student will be placed if they go to senior college. Like what is the reality that we're facing with those students that they transferred from those community colleges with that population of students? They have the big swing (sic) and which we're supporting, but in reality that we get those fail. But no provider than the best quality best quality education for a K to 12 needed in the year and a half after they spend their—you go through a semester in their community college and then they move into the senior colleges where the professor is working with a group of students that they were born equipped with more tools. They were taking Algebra in ninth grade, and many students who are going to ninth grade many of the high schools in disadvantaged communities they go to ninth grade, but they are level 4. So how is it that CUNY, how is CUNY dealing with that reality?

LUCINDA ZOE: I'm glad you asked that question. You know, I will say, and it's a complicated—I mean it's a complicated situation, but

I—I was—I served at Hostos Community College for 10 years. I was the Provost the last two years I was at Hostos. I am very aware of the challenges that our community college students have. I am also very aware at how dedicated the faculty of our community colleges are, and—and Provost Arcario can also attest to this I'm sure, we are addressing the needs of, you know, developmental math students, and we know it's a challenge, and we're creating alternative pathways for them, and we're creating much more stronger supplemental instruction and instructional supports for the students. So that they can be successful because when our students do get out of community college when they graduate with that degree, and as you know, 31% increase in the number of students leaving with degrees now, they—I feel confident they are prepared when they get to the senior colleges because the community college faculty are so committed and dedicated, but that's not enough. We are in the middle right now of a massive reform or our remediation across CUNY, of developmental education. I mean it's—this is—that would be a different hearing, I can assure you, but we have—we are chained—we are making some major changes and we--



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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing]

3 I, look, we've been--

4 LUCINDA ZOE: --and students can take  
5 that freely.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --have made  
7 some progress.

8 LUCINDA ZOE: Yeah.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Again, some  
10 progress. I hope that my granddaughter and my  
11 grandson--

12 LUCINDA ZOE: Uh-huh.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --will live in  
14 a nation where we can say education in our community  
15 college is at the same level as the senior college.  
16 There are another Howard Jordan a good friend of mine  
17 graduated from Harvard University. He choose to be a  
18 professor at Hostos Community College.

19 LUCINDA ZOE: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I know that  
21 Laura Kaplan, who live in my community, was teaching  
22 there, too. So I know that the people that dedicate  
23 their life--

24 LUCINDA ZOE: Yes.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --because they  
3 choose to live the legacy.

4 LUCINDA ZOE: Yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: However, we  
6 thinking also we--professor that they are not tenured,  
7 that they have to work three jobs.

8 LUCINDA ZOE: Uh-huh.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: That they  
10 don't have any offices, that they're dealing with 25  
11 students in the classroom, that they were level  
12 probably with them and were admitted the community  
13 college, they were 9<sup>th</sup> grade level.

14 LUCINDA ZOE: Uh-huh.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So, I'm not  
16 coming from saying, you know, we should fail to our  
17 students. We should not be there to support them. I  
18 hope that we know with the ASAP with the college now--  
19 -

20 LUCINDA ZOE: Uh-huh.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --everything  
22 that we say that it work. If we put this--keeping--  
23 putting the truth to this kid when they're in high  
24 school, we, the city, the society should be getting  
25 money. Obama make community college a priority. How

much additional money will the republic enable, or what Obama able to bring. He make it his priority. Today, you cannot say that on the basis of his administration we saw a double budget to community college. So, you—those who are working the administrator position you know that you are making miracle. You've been in with the population 85% the new remedial courses. Only 26% of students graduate after seven years when their associate is supposed to be of two years.

LUCINDA ZOE: Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So you know like—and again, I told my daughters like walking through Warm Water (sic) Plaza, I say, you know, this guy who is our council member, I used to be washing dishes and making sandwich without getting opportunity. Every single child deserve this opportunity. We should be supporting, but my concern is more. I mean we had to have challenges--

LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --and we need to identify the challenges especially that those professors face when they're dealing with a group of students come to (sic) the senior college who ask a

teacher who says well I know, if I can get a student that wouldn't make me to look good.

LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Because they will be the A+. We got to hold the teacher, that teacher take credit. Your challenges are with--with your work with the other 10 or 15 that they don't know how to read. They don't know how to do the papers. They can be lawyers, they can be teachers, they can be council members, but I--is the senior colleges ready providing all the support to those students that will transfer to the senior college through the Pathways in order for them--for them to be able to complete at the same level to the order that went directly from high school to senior college, and thank you, Council Member. I have to pick up my daughter from school.

MARCIA KEIZS: May I give you a little bit of assurance? What Pathways has helped do is to get those of us who weren't talking with each other. Ah, that was not--that was not me, that was not me in Queens. It just so happens I have a very, very strong respect for the work that's done at the community colleges. As I said, I started my career

at Queensborough Community College. I was an English teacher. I worked at La Guardia. I also worked at Bronx Community College. So York is my first senior college experience. So—and I'm very aware of the kind of work that goes on at the Community College, and the way students can really be brought right up to par and to succeed beyond their expectations, and I want those students at York. [laughs] Trust me, because they have shown tenacity. They have mastered, you know, some—they have overcome obstacle. They've learned the basics, and sometimes they have on to do better than learn the basics, and so when they come in—when they come in with that first degree, and they have that in their hand, those are the students I want because I know they've finished one degree. They plan to finish the next one. And so we will wrap around some supports, and that's why we try to talk, you know, I mean we're talking a little bit better now. Our counselors are talking with each, our faculty are talking with each other to exchange ideas about what's really in the contents of the course. When the students are finished, and frankly I don't want the students before they have the degree. I want them to have completed the degree

because that gives a boost to their sense that they can complete. And so we have set up not yet with La Guardia but with Queensborough some arrangements where we go in. We talk to their honor societies. We talk to their SEEK and CD students, so we have transfer arrangements. So that the College Discovery students come in and they get with these programs. We have the Men's Initiative. We go. We talk to the Men's Initiative. We say we're going to talk-work with you, and we're going to transfer those students over to York, and we're going to wrap them around in the main center. We go with disabled students. We work with our students who have disabilities. We go to the director of Disabilities and we work with them, and so the same kind of support that they may get at the community college we try to wrap that support around them when they come to us. It's not only the advisement and the counseling. It's also the academic and tutorial support as well as the mentoring that they can get from the faculty. So I assure you we are in the business of attempting, you know, working for success, and we try to do it in those ways. We're not bringing them in so they can think or swim.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]  
3 Right.

4 MARCIA KEIZS: That brings no glory  
5 [laughs] to any one.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic] The  
7 student should the-[on mic] they should have their  
8 reviews. The Black and Latino population has their  
9 reviews at senior colleges big time.

10 MARCIA KEIZS: Not at my school.  
11 [laughter]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: It-not in  
13 York, yeah but-

14 MARCIA KEIZS: Not at my college.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I know, but  
16 there's a senior here. [laughter] But when you look  
17 at the whole City College and others, Hunter, when I  
18 went to City College, 80% of the students were Black  
19 and Latino. Today it's only 60%. So it is. I-I  
20 know my daughter. So, you know, but first of all I  
21 appreciate it, and thank you-thank you to the Chair  
22 and the Council Members that was here, too. I want  
23 to pick up my daughter.

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I want to thank the  
25 Council Member. In addition, Council Member, to the

reduction in the students that you referred to, there's been a significant reduction in the faculty that's Black and Latino, and that's an issue that I continue to raise with CUNY. So thank you very much. Council Member Cabrera.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you so much, Madam Chair, and thank you for allowing our Council Member Rodriguez to go first. You mention—I love data. You mention that there was—that the students coming through Pathways and transfer they had a 2.8 GPA that—and you sustain all the way through, but that's putting all the majors together. Can—can you talk to me about the majors where a student's GPA actually went down?

LUCINDA ZOE: Well, that data that we have I mean I—I would have to get back to you on that because we have it, but I don't have it with me today, and that is the average GPA of just the transfer students.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Yes.

LUCINDA ZOE: The transfer students coming in. But I would assume we have that data somewhere? Yes, we could get back to you on that. We don't, you know, by discipline, by major to see



how it's going, but that is. You're correct. It is the average GPA for all transfer [banging door] students coming in, and it's maintained. It's been very steady.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I'd be curious to see if the more rigorous programs are our students struggling once they go into a four-year college, and so if you could get me that data.

LUCINDA ZOE: Okay, we can. I'll definitely make a note of that. You know, a few years ago, I remember one of our senior college provosts did an analysis of all the community college students that transferred in to his college. It was Baruch, and at the time, and he—I was a provost at the time and he shared this data with us, and—and across the board, you know, the transfer students coming in from community colleges did as well as their native students, you know, when—when they got there. So, I—I think that we—we will look at that. We'll continue to look at that, but we don't—I'm sure we have it by major, by discipline and we'll get back to you, but I'm pretty hopeful. I mean I have great confidence in the community college faculty to prepare these students. I mean again I mean you look

2 at what Provost Arcario he has completely transformed  
3 their--a lot of the developmental education programs.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Yes.

5 LUCINDA ZOE: One of the things that  
6 we've been working on, which is one of my personal  
7 issues is I don't want for students to use up all  
8 their financial aid, taking developmental courses  
9 that have no credit, you know, and he's created these  
10 brilliant new models where students, you know, they--  
11 they don't--if they're going to pay for a course,  
12 they're going to get college credit for it--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] I--  
14 I just--

15 LUCINDA ZOE: --and it's working, you  
16 know.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I'm sorry. Are--  
18 are the students who go through Pathway, are they  
19 taking as long, longer or shorter time to complete  
20 their degree?

21 LUCINDA ZOE: Well, I think I started  
22 with noting since we don't have a full graduation  
23 cycle yet, we don't have any real graduation data yet  
24 because it started in 2013.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]

But you do have recidivism of data, right?

LUCINDA ZOE: Pardon?

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: You have  
recidivism data showing our students dropping out?

LUCINDA ZOE: Yeah, we—we have, you know,  
we looked at retention, and it's holding steady  
exactly as it was pre-Pathways, but since we haven't  
had a full cohort go through since Pathways, it's  
hard to have any solid data on it because nobody, you  
know, wouldn't--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]

But you could compare first year, second year, third  
year. You've—you've done it for three years, right?

LUCINDA ZOE: Right? Well, what we've  
seen is that credit accumulation has increased, and  
the GPA has remained steady or it's not—it's not  
increased. So, so far, the, you know, like they are  
making progress towards degrees.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: But you know  
what I'm asking, right? What I'm asking if you take  
a third-year student, a junior that was in a four-  
year college compared to now a junior who is not in  
by—by way of Path—of Pathway, how many of those

students in their junior year dropped out, in-in the Pathways versus the regular students who were in the program, who were in the college? So you have data? Do you look into that data?

LUCINDA ZOE: I-I would have to ask my colleague, Dean Crook. [background comments] Can you say something? This is, you know, this is Dean Crook. He's our Dean of Institutional Research, and our Chief Data Expert. So the level of data, you know, I mean he has—he knows a lot more about this than—I do off the top of my head. I would be foolish to try to answer if I didn't know for sure. So, you know.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Let me ask that you be sworn in by our counsel, please.

LEGAL COUNSEL: You ready?

DEAN CROOK: [off mic] Yes.

LEGAL COUNSEL: [off mic] Do you affirm to tell the truth?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I'll do it. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this Council—

DEAN CROOK: I do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and to answer all members' questions honestly?

DEAN CROOK: I—I will. I do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Please state your name and give your testimony.

DEAN CROOK: David Crook. I'm Dean for Institutional Research for the CUNY system. So, we've—we've done the kind of analysis that you're describing for cohorts that predated Pathways and—and what we did is compared students who started at a senior college, and with students who transferred in from the point of their 60<sup>th</sup> credit. So typically students transfer in with about 60 credits. If they have the associate degree, they have exactly 60. They might come in with a little bit less than that. So if you want to try to compare the performance of the two group, you—you have to line them up at the same starting point, and when you do that, before Pathways we showed that the graduation rates of the community college students were a little bit less than for the likelihood of graduating in four years from a bachelor's program if you came in with—if—if you were a native student at the—at the 60<sup>th</sup> credit. But there's a lot of reasons for that. The—on

average, as Councilman Rodriguez pointed out, the—you know, the students who start in community colleges are really maybe didn't get quite the same high school background preparation that students who started in the bachelor's program. That explains part of the difference, and there's a little bit of difference in their experience once they get to the senior colleges. But we—but we haven't had a chance to do that analysis for—for the Pathways cohorts yet because they—they basically are just starting to appear in the senior colleges, but we will be doing that. And we'll—we'll be looking at the—the major by major comparisons, as you suggest because we think there will be differences.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So we're looking at another variable other than the curriculum that—that is the quality of students. The preparation of that student is not up to par but, however, wouldn't you say that we could safely assume that if they took English 101 that they had mastered that subject matter. Though it—they took longer to get there, remedial classes but they got there as compared to the other student, and if that is so, then that wouldn't be a variable.

DEAN CROOK: Yes, that's—that's a good point as Dean Zoe mentioned that, you know, the—the faculty panels review the learning outcomes in these courses to make sure that they're as equivalent as—as possible, and—and so that—that does, you know, erase a lot of the difference, but—but it doesn't quite erase all—all of the differences.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. I appreciate your honest analysis because it tells us that we—we still have some work to do, which leads me to the next question. You look at—thank you. Thank you so much. You look at—at the way you have set up Pathways or the work that you have put into making sure you have good execution of that. Can you share with us what's next? What—what is it that we need to do in order to make it better?

LUCINDA ZOE: Well, you know, as I—as I noted at the end, it—it is a work in progress. We're constantly reviewing, accessing, and evaluating it. You know, the next step really the most important next step is the—the major—we need more of the major gateway transfer agreements. We only have ten. You know, with—with the ten largest transfer majors, and that guarantees where a group of faculty have gotten

together and--and picked three to five courses that they would guarantee would transfer for the major at transfer. But that's just ten majors. We need ten more majors because as I said here today, I have student appeals on my desk from students who in accounting, computer science, that they--I mean I have a student who has a--an accounting degree from Kingsborough with like a 3.8 GPA that transferred to one of our senior colleges. He has a 3.6 GPA there, and in his senior year, he's going to have to retake two accounting courses because that particular college just as policy they don't take any accounting courses for transfer. Unlike because we don't have the Major Gateway Agreement in accounting in that--in that filed. So the next step for Pathways and--and our new vice--Executive Vice Chancellor Rabinowitz this is in our goals for the coming years. We need ten more of these disciplines because it's--it's heartbreaking because--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] It is.

LUCINDA ZOE: --you know, and then you get a student having to take the same course again, pay for it again, you know, because we don't have



that--that articulation agreement. But, you know, we've now--we're having conversations with these colleges, but you need that agreement and that is the next step because we--there are too many fields that we need the next ten.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I'll close with--

DEAN CROOK: [interposing] May I just add--add to that, I--I would agree that is the next step and, you know, the committees that you talked about that review the courses are--are community college and senior college faculty, and I think we've must--must do more and more to bring the faculty together. Because our faculty are faculty credentialed. They're equally credentialed, and when they spend time together, they see that because what sometimes happens is a course now may count in Pathways to transfer. But the senior college faculty member may say fine, but will not serve as the prerequisite to get into a certain major. So we had--so in other words it's--it's transferring in a way, but not--so there's a little bit of that that still needs to be cleaned up, quite frankly, and that's taking--bringing the faculty together to be honest with you about that.

LUCINDA ZOE: Conversation by conversation, and--and I'll tell you, it's very challenging to get a committee. If I--I mean I have to pull a committee together of a representative for--an accounting faculty member from every single accounting degree program in CUNY. Get them all in a room over a period of a semester identify the learning outcomes, identify the three to five courses. So at the end, it's great, but it's incredibly labor intensive. It's very--it's very hard work, but it does get community college faculty, senior college faculty in the same room talking and looking at the outcomes, looking at this body, and it's--it's grueling sort of work, but it's important.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] I--I--

LUCINDA ZOE: --you know, because we--we need to do that.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --I'm going to make a speculation here. I want to make a speculation that part of the problems, part of academia culture that perhaps this--the college professors of the four-year college are looking at the fact-- Well, when we start getting all this

transfer, then we're going to lose—we're going to lose the amount of courses that are going to be offered because now we're going to accept those that previously we would not have accept that will mean less courses being offered at the four-year college. That will mean less work for us, less jobs. I think that's probably what you may be fighting, and with that I'll close. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON GREENFIELD: I want to thank you very much. Just a few more questions, and thank you so much for your indulgence. Mr. Arcario, in your testimony, you said that there's an advising team—an advising team approach has been implemented here at the college consisting of advisor staff, faculty, and peer advisors working collaboratively--

PAUL ARCARIO: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --to help ensure that students are served more effectively. Are there any student representatives in that that might, in fact, present directly to you what their issues might be?

PAUL ARCARIO: Absolutely. All of the peer advisors are students, and they are and—and we have over 50 of them, actually more than the staff

advisors we have, and they are involved in planning and giving us feedback, and we value their contribution very strongly. In fact, we have some data showing they are as effective. Interacting with them can be as effective in terms of retention as interacting with--with staff, all faculty. So yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Great, and in terms of students who are transferring, and the question was raised the 2.8 that was raised, and you said you would get back to us with the data. If we could have that disaggregated by students who are transferring within CUNY and students who are transferring from institutions outside of CUNY as well as students who are doing the reverse transfer, if we could disaggregate it by those categories that would be helpful.

LUCINDA ZOE: Okay, we will make a note of it yeah. We can get back to you on that yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes, the--the staff will send it to you in writing--

LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] Yes, excellent.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --so that you'll have it. Thank you. And in terms of those students

who are transferring from community colleges to senior colleges, which have higher requirements, and the nursing program comes to mind. So if a student was transferring in with a 2.7 or 8 and they want to get into the nursing program, my understanding is you have to maintain a 3.0 to be eligible and to remain in the nursing program. Are there opportunities for students who don't yet have that 3.0 who are transferring in but want to become a nurse? Is there an opportunity for them to somehow try to pull up their GPA so that they can get into the program?

MARCIA KEIZS: So let me just talk a little bit about nursing because it's a very different kind of arrangement. The interesting—for the—for the most part, students who may be transferring from a community college to a senior college for nursing they are already nurses for the most part because those students, the nursing students with an associate degree are the students who are generally speaking seeking to come into the baccalaureate degree nursing say at York, alright? So they're already nurses and, in fact, they have already passed the same NPLEX (sic) exam that the baccalaureate nursing students pass. So they are a

very unique kind of breed, alright. Now, when they come in if they're accepted into our nursing program, they pursue a particular core curriculum-set of curriculum, okay. And this is at that time that they have to establish the standard GPA. I couldn't quote to you what that now, but this is very likely [banging door] to be a 3.0.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

MARCIA KEIZS: Okay. So they may come in, they may have graduated with a 2.7. They may have with an associate, but they've passed the NPLEX, which is a big benchmark--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

MARCIA KEIZS: --and then they come into us and they have to achieve that 3.0. Now, small cohorts, not large cohorts, no more than 25 or 30. They get quite a bit of support within the curriculum. Some of them still have some clinical work to do. Much of it is not clinical, however, because they've really mastered the clinical part, and much of it is the wraparound of the baccalaureate degree, the nursing program, the--the other general education, the higher-higher level nursing program--

courses that they need to take. But there is support within the nursing program for that to happen. Now, those students, however, who are let us say--let's just say they're a sociology major. Alright, they're a sociology major. They had a 2.7 Suddenly, they've decided they want to become nurses. That's a very different breed.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

MARCIA KEIZS: A very, very different breed, and yes that would be a difficult call, and they would need to take all of the prerequisite courses and apply themselves and get the support they need, because we do also have a track that leads from start to finish starting in the--in the freshman year, and that is much difficult, much more difficult track, and you are right there can be big bottlenecks and there can be lots of frustration, and those are not always very easy to solve.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and just finally two more points. We talked about the initial cohort will be coming through in June is it, that the initial cohort will come? From the start of Pathways will that initial cohort--

2 LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] [off mic]

3 Well--

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --conclude in June?

5 LUCINDA ZOE: [off mic] -the first cohort  
6 started in 2013.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

8 MARCIA KEIZS: We need four--we need at  
9 least a minimum of four--

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

11 LUCINDA ZOE: --or six years from then  
12 for a full cohort.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So that brings me to  
14 another point that I often raise. Are you using four  
15 or are you using six?

16 LUCINDA ZOE: Well, in terms of the  
17 graduations and the graduations and the graduation  
18 rate.

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In terms of the  
20 graduations?

21 LUCINDA ZOE: [off mic] Yes. Yeah, we  
22 looked at, you know, three-year graduation, four,  
23 six. I mean typically we do look at four, but we  
24 also looked at six. We looked at four--

25 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.



LUCINDA ZOE: --so we need a minimum of four years to complete whole cohort of students that started at a--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay and then how will you then determine the success of increasing graduation rates for this cohort as a part of Pathways? How will you be able to determine the effectiveness of Pathways? How can you target well all of these came through Pathways so this increase is due typically or totally to Pathways as opposed to other factors? How will you be able to verify that the increase in graduate-graduation is from Pathways?

LUCINDA ZOE: I'm going to turn to my data person.

MARCIA KEIZS: [interposing] But-but it's the real role of the courses. There are variables.

DEAN CROOK: [interposing] Right there are--

LUCINDA ZOE: There are many variables here.

DEAN CROOK: Yeah, the causation goes along with all the staff.

MARCIA KEIZS: And okay with them. (sic)

DEAN CROOK: I don't—I don't have all the answers to that either, and invite a fellow panelist. But—but one thing I think that we would want to look at is whether students are getting their degrees, associate degrees or bachelor's degrees on time or close to on time with taking fewer credits along the way. So, whether they've—if—if they are taking few excess credits to—to get a six, what's supposed to be a 60 credit associate degree or few—you know, fewer credits were to—to get to where they're supposed to be, 120 credit bachelor's degree.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: That's right, uh-huh.

DEAN CROOK: Pathways is designed to improve the advisement and to allow students to proceed from one point to another within CUNY with—with more efficiency. So I—I would look at that first, and to see whether the—the percentage of students who graduate on time or close to on time is—is increasing.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, thank you so much. I do have some other questions, and we'll just print them out and send them to you there, data questions about the demographic makeup of transfer

students, the metrics that are used and some other questions that are base, and we would share them with you and ask that you get those answers to us, and just finally, in the briefing paper which the-the staff prepared there is a notation that says as follows: While-pri--while preliminary data strongly suggests that Pathways has significantly eased transfer of general education courses leading to better accredited accumulation, efficient credit transfer in the majors appears to be less successful, and that's cited from the website, the courses into majors listed as the CUNY site. So that's something that I am concerned about and, of course, you do say you have your annual review. So we've looked to see how that trend changes, and how we can get better results in that. But I do want to thank all of you, and I especially want to thank the student because you brought to light the issue that students with disabilities face, which have not been presented to this panel previously that if they are required to repeat a course, and on paper it looks like a course--not repeat a course but take a course that on paper resembles another course that they don't get financial aid for that. So, that's an important

point that you've raised, and I do appreciate it.

Thank you so much for coming—

LUCINDA ZOE: [interposing] Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and sharing your testimony.

LUCINDA ZOE: Thank you very much.

Thanks for the opportunity. I appreciate you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And we will now call our second panel. We've been lengthy, but I think we've gotten some good information to share and to reflect on, and the second panel is from PSC, Professional Staff Congress. Barbara Bowen, President, will be here presenting; James Davis, from PSC CUNY; and Kevin Sailor from PSC, Professional Staff Congress. Thank you. [background comments, pause]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Our Counsel Keru Guterrez (sp?) is going to swear—is going to swear you in.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee, and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

2 PANEL MEMBERS: [off mic] Yes.

3 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You can give your  
5 name and present your testimony.

6 BARBARA BOWEN: Great. Thank you very  
7 much. Good afternoon, Chairperson Barron. On behalf  
8 of the Professional Staff Congress, CUNY, and I  
9 really want to thank you for holding this hearing,  
10 for giving us time and for asking such probing  
11 questions. It's been very informative to us, and we  
12 really appreciate your digging into this critical  
13 subject, because this--this is a key subject. This is  
14 how we teach, and what our students learn, and it's  
15 central to us at the PSC. So we appreciate that very  
16 much, and also the comments and questions of the  
17 other council members. Most of the testimony today  
18 is going to come from two faculty colleagues  
19 Professor Davis, and Professor Sailor who both worked  
20 extensively on Pathways, but I'd like to just say a  
21 few things in opening. At the start, I think the  
22 most important thing to say, and I think you know  
23 this is that the membership of the PSC, the people I  
24 represent, the faculty and staff we are at CUNY  
25 because we want our students to succeed. That's why

we're there. So any-any comments we make about Pathways are not comments about not wanting our students to be able to graduate and succeed up to the maximum of their desire and abilities. That's where we start from. The problem with Pathways--we've heard various things today, and I think your questions were very good in elucidating some of the gaps in the data. For instance, the one you asked about, the associate degree completion rate or transfer rate. There's--we didn't see any causal relation between that statistic and Pathways. So we have a master or statistics here, and you will hear more from him later. But I want to say that the--the problem is--the problem at CUNY, and you know this, it's not that faculty don't talk to each other. I--I just find that completely mythical that idea, and the problem is not that our students want to or they take disorganized programs or whatever. The problem is lack of funding. Pathways is an austerity curriculum. That has been our critique from the union all along that it's a response to economic austerity and that, in fact, it offers students less rather than more. We hope that as the data become more available, and as the four years, at least four

years to look at a full cohort elapses, we will be able to see how Pathways is working. We have questions about it ourselves. We don't feel that yet we're in a position to see how it is working, but we want you to know, and I'll just read a little bit, but I just wanted to say a few things. We want you to know that the faculty, in fact, do talk to each other, and we talked to each other a lot about Pathways, the community college, and senior college faculty was unified in opposition to Pathways. There was not a kind of gap there that I think was implied earlier. That, in fact, we like nothing better than talking about curriculum to each other. The description you heard earlier about the ten biggest majors, and having shared courses. There was tremendous pressure from the Administration to develop those courses. People did it under protest, and also you—you asked very good questions about the votes among faculty. I think if—if we look back and see not at York where we heard Professor Keizs, President Keizs speak, but at some colleges especially Queensborough there was tremendous pressure on faculty to vote in ways they do. Initially one of the administration there told people

that they would lose their jobs. There would be no more expansion of the English Department. Adjuncts had to look to their jobs. So it was a--there was a very difficult atmosphere when Pathways was initiated. S o we have listened. We have some questions, and you'll hear some of them today, and I just want to read a little bit from one of the things that PSC has provided as part of our initial response, and I want to say very clearly that we are certainly open to evidence to seeing if Pathways is succeeding. Our initial response was based on exactly the concern that we heard raised earlier today that Pathways would diminish rigor rather than increase it. That it presented itself as increasing rigor, but we feared that it would diminish rigor. When you heard earlier about the STEM variant courses that were the full number of hours of original science courses, those were created after--only after faculty protest about the courses that were planned to be introduced under Pathways, the reduced science courses. So, and the--as you know, I think the union opposed Pathways very strongly. We sued the university over it. We did not win that lawsuit. We had a petition more than 5,000 faculty signing in



opposition to that that-to Pathways, and have continued to hear from faculty about problems. Professor Davis in a moment is going to speak about some of the continuing issues that arise with Pathways, and Professor Sailor is going to speak about the statistical basis. But I'd just like to say a word about the foundation of Pathways. We believe that Pathways was created in part to save money, and above all to move students more quickly to college completion. Every single person who works at CUNY works there because we believe in college completion, but not at any cost, not at the cost of rigor and richness of curriculum. So we believe that Pathways at least as initially conceptualized, and again, I want to say that we remain open to seeing a result that we didn't predict, but Pathways was initially conceptualized would reduce academic richness and rigor. We believe the solution is to give students more not less. What-what CUNY needs is a dramatic reversal of the deliberate economic austerity policies that have been used to justify starving public higher education of funds, and I know you know all about that. However, benign the goal of improving graduation rates, Pathways we believe is

not politically innocent at least in its initial conception. The result has been different. We look forward to seeing that. We believe that Pathways is austerity education for jobs in an austerity economy. It is about spending less per student and graduating more students in a shorter time at lower cost. Most important, we question whether it will [banging door] in fact lower the expectations of working class, poor and middle-class students. Pathways we believe like everything else at CUNY and I would say within America is also about race. Ultimately, Pathways and its analogs in other states, because it's not alone, are means are rationing higher education. The great expansion in access to higher education that characterize the last 40 years is already being reversed precisely as the majority of the college age population becomes people of color. Working class and poor students who do manage to stay in college may find a stripped down just enough college education. That's not what we came to CUNY to do. It's a public institution. It's a university that is battling for funds, but we believe that the education it offers here should be the inferior of none should be equal to the very best we can offer. We feel that

many of our students have not had that opportunity before they come to us, and they should have it with us. So our concern in looking at Pathways was twofold--and I'll just finish with this: (1) Is that we saw it as driven by a college completion agenda, which may sound terrific, but actually has been used to privatize higher education, and find a rationale for reduced funding; and (2) and this is something you pointed to, while there has been faculty involvement in Pathways, sometimes because we pushed and insist, the initial critique--and I think you alluded to this--is that all the elected faculty representatives were excluded from the decision making bodies about Pathways. There were selected faculty, and I'm sure, and I know them. I know how hard they work, but there was an exclusion of the representative faculty bodies, and that was where part of the faculty concern about the integrity, the academic integrity of Pathways arose. So, we retain our initial questions. We retain our openness, however, to seeing if Pathways turned out to be a better solution than we thought, but our concern is that the Council understand that the PSC's opposition started with the understanding that Pathways was

about providing less and being able to spend less on students, and we believe that the state and the city should be spending more and doing more. So, I'll leave it at that, and I'll turn it over to—who wants to go next? Kevin. Okay, great. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.[background comments]

KEVIN SAILOR: Thank you, Chairwoman Barron for calling this oversight hearing today. My name is Kevin Sailor, and I'm Chair of the Psychology Department at Lehman College. As part of today's review of Pathways I'd like to present some findings from a study of CUNY students who graduated shortly before Pathways' policies were implemented. The study used both transcript data from a large cohort of students, and data on how these courses transferred across CUNY from the TIP's database of course titles. In contrast to analyses that were presented by the university to initiate Pathways, this study directly analyzed credits that were lost when students transferred from a community college to a senior college. That was not done as part of Pathways. The key findings highlight some of the mistaken assumptions that underlie Pathways about the kinds of

difficulties that occur during the articulation process. First, the establishment of a common general education curriculum was an overly broad solution to a transfer problem and a relative handful of courses. Examining the transcripts of nearly 11,000 students revealed that, in fact, they took 6,000 unique course titles. But if you looked at it closely, 100 to 120 of those titles accounted for 42% of all the credits earned by those students. Similarly, if you looked at the courses that didn't transfer—course titles that didn't transfer just 58 courses accounted for 50% of the credits that these students earned that would not have been counted at a senior college. These patterns indicate that the effectiveness of transfers are largely driven by specific high enrollment courses. Second, the reduction of the number of general education credits required by many of the senior colleges was not necessary to facilitate timely graduation. In fact, students who transferred into schools with a larger curriculum, actually lost .67 fewer credits during the transfer process than students who transferred into schools with a smaller curriculum, a jana (sic) curriculum. Third, the mandate that popular majors

have established common Gateway courses across the university was ill conceived. This mandate was based on the belief that transfer students were having to take more credits within their major discipline than students who started at senior college because the seniors colleges weren't, if you will, honoring those credits, counting them toward the major. Analyses of credits taken [banging door] within a student's major discipline indicated that there was, in fact, no difference between transfer students and students who start at a senior college. Moreover, when I looked at the correl—the correlation between the number of credits that a students earned in a discipline at the community college, there was no correlation with the total number of credits at graduation from the senior college. In other words, it wasn't belonging or exacerbating the problem of excess credits. Four senior college residency requirements, which were not considered as part of the Pathways restructuring are, in fact, a major contributor to the loss of credits. If you looked—when I looked at transfer students who transferred having earned more than the number of credits that would be accepted by a senior college, on average they lost 12 credits. If they transferred

before that number, they lost on average 2 credits.

It was about a 1.75 loss in credit for every credit

earned over the cap. This was not considered at all

under Pathways, and is not addressed by Pathways. If

the argument that the CUNY Associates Degree policy

was outmoded because community colleges—college

students are choosing to forego coursework at the

community colleges to begin a bachelor's degree

program at a senior college was at odds with the

credit earning pattern observed for transfer students

in this data. Students who transfer who accumulated

more than 60 credits are in general on average

accumulated more than 60 credits. If they earned a

degree, it was about 67 credits on average, but quite

surprisingly students who did not earn a degree and

transferred had earned on average 59 credits at the

community college. Sixty should be what is required

for an associates degree. Moreover, half of all the

students who transfer without a degree did so having

earned more than 60 credits. The failure to earn a

bachelor, an associates degree can have a significant

implication on future earning for transfers who fail

to earn a bachelor's degree. Pathways does not

address this issue. Unlike the associate, the older

associate's degree policy it does not provide any incentive to finish the associate's degree and earn that. So in conclusion, I just don't think it's possible to evaluate Pathways for its effectiveness in support student transfers because Pathways was based assumptions about the causes of excess credits that aren't really supported by the data. If there has been any reduction in excess credits or improvement in graduation rates, I don't think it can be attributed to Pathways. It's probably more likely to be attributable to things like reverse transfer policies. Pathways is—was a solution to a misdiagnosed problem, and its implementation continues to compromise the quality of education at CUNY. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I was just discussing something in your testimony, but I'll question you about that a little later. Thank you. Next panelist.

JAMES DAVIS: Thank you, Chairperson Barron. My name is James Davis. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you. I teach English at Brooklyn College, and I want to speak about the resistance among the faculty members at Brooklyn



College, the why and the how. You referred to that in your questioning before, and so I just want to tell the story from the perspective of one campus. It's dramatically at odds with what you heard previously about the situation at York College, and I think that although the Brooklyn College story is at— at another extreme from that, it's only—it's representative because we—we were perhaps more organized in—in our resistance, but that it expressed similar ambivalence and opposition toward the initiative. So I want to talk about why. For one reason, as faculty members, we don't have the view from 30,000 feet that administrators have, but what we do have is expertise in pedagogy and curriculum development, and we know what our students need to succeed in our fields of study, and so we understand that in many cases in general education courses that's the only exposure that a student is likely to get to a particular field of study. The Pathways' curriculum flew directly in the face of what many of us knew was best for our students. Decisions were made that were divorced from academic merit. An example: The limit on the number of credits in particular courses to the students. If a college had

determined for instance that the best way to teach a first year student how to read and write in college, if—if that was a four credit course, that was considered ruled out of compliance with the new mandate if a college had determined that the best way to introduce students to the sciences was a combination of lectures and—and a lab experience that was four credits or even five. That was ruled out of compliance and I understand now there—there has been some negotiation in response to the resistance, which was indeed welcome. But I think the opposition derived from that—from that sense that the integrity of the courses was at issue. If a college determined that an overall total of 46 credits, for example, was advisable for general education that was ruled out of compliance with the mandated maximum of 42 general education credits. The second sense that my colleagues and I had was that—that Pathways articulate a very short-sighted vision of what a well rounded education means, what it represents. For instance, this is just one example among many. The issue of—of foreign languages. Should students be required to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language, and a language other than English? That's

debatable, but the answer across CUNY has been resoundingly yes we're at a university that not only exists in a multi-cultural city, but that also claims to prepare students for global citizenship for an increasingly globalized economy for engagement in a global community, et cetera. So, what could be more provincial? What could be more antithetical to that spirit of preparation for life beyond one's neighborhood, beyond one's city than to remove the foreign language requirement from a general education framework, and that's exactly what Pathways did. Now, granted, colleges were allowed on their own, on an individual basis to include foreign languages in the college option, which you heard about before, the 12 credit layer. But having to put it there rather than baking it right into the cake of the core of the general education means bumping other things out of the college option. So moves like this made it difficult to take seriously the claims that that university was making about their rigor and the forward thinking quality Pathways represented in preparing students for 21<sup>st</sup> Century citizenship and employment. So Brooklyn College faculty we refused to cooperate. Faculty Council, which is the Faculty

Senate, which is the governance body, and elected governance body charged with overseeing matters of curriculum and degree requirements. The Faculty Council passed two resolutions, one in 2014, one in 2015 overwhelmingly opposed to approving courses for Pathways. This was, in fact, a reflection of the broader faculty sentiment at Brooklyn College, and in April 2014 meeting of all full-time faculty, the state meeting of all full-time faculty in the spring of 2014, a resolution opposing Pathways passed. 298 ayes, 9 nays and 18 abstentions. Now, can you imagine what issue could unite 300 college professors about anything, but yet on this we were united, and the resolution called on the Brooklyn College administration and the CUNY administration and the CUNY administration to abide by the decisions of the local faculty in designing a general education program, and that sparked a two-year faculty driven, actually faculty driven process in revising general education at Brooklyn College. The committees involved were aware of Pathways, but they did not treat Pathways' stipulations as a foregone conclusion, and in the end our revised general education program was approved by the Faculty Council

by an overwhelming majority and our provost refused to even send it forward to the CUNY Academic Affairs Office, which was point-and point in fact in violation of our governance plan. But he felt that as it was not fully Pathways compliant it did not warrant review by the central office. Now, in the end and after a full year really of negotiations and further revisions to the general education curriculum, the program was finally submitted to and approved by the committee-by the CUNY administration. Along the way, and I'll-and I'll end with this point, along the way faculty members faced intense pressure to go along and President Bowen alluded to this. Department chairs for example-for example felt that if they didn't capitulate, they'd be passed over for resources from the college administration. Individual professors were offered stipends to write curriculum that was compliant with Pathways. The administration pitted departments against each other saying that those who refused to participate they would obviously lose the FTEs, the Full-Time Equivalency students credits that come with offering general education courses and, of course, at CUNY resources follow FTEs. And the administration

frankly pitted professors against students noting that failure to cooperate would gum up the works and would jeopardize the educational progress of the very students that we claimed we cared about. So overall, the imposition of Pathways created at Brooklyn College a toxic environment. It soured the working relationship between professors and the administration, and many administrators knew they were carrying out some very ill conceived marching orders, and it reminded us of the precariousness of our students' educational experience, which could be subject in this way to an efficiency model that diluted what were--what they were entitled to receive. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very much for your testimony, and you reminded me that I overlooked the question about finances. I had it on my notes but did not include it, but we will certainly send it to them because we want to know what has been the financial impact of Pathways in all of the ways and--and all of the aspects so we can look at them. We want to be able to target has been the financial impact especially for students, but also for the university and for agencies. We want to

be able to have that data as well. In your testimony, Dr. Sailor, you talk about--your second point was a reduction in the number of general education credits. And that was something that I was trying to elicit from the first panel. If you reduce the number of credits it has to be within certain departments, and I wanted to try to understand is it concentrated in particular departments, or is it spread across all departments? And what has been the impact on the number of faculty? It seems to me that if--and they said well no, it's all around because it's going through now. I said I'm trying to get that further information, but have you found that there's been a reduction in faculty based on the fact that there's been a reduction in the number of credits, and is there a correlation that you think is attributable to Pathways?

KEVIN SAILOR: Well, I--I can't--yeah, I can't speak directly to that, but I'd like to emphasize that--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Did you--is your mic on?

KEVIN SAILOR: Oh, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Use the mic.

KEVIN SAILOR: I'd just like to emphasize that what I did here was I compared the—I used the designations that CUNY used in terms of large and small credit general education programs across the senior colleges, and I really couldn't find any effect in terms of how many credits that students were either losing or graduating with. So it just tells us that this isn't—wasn't the cause of students, you know, not making good progress toward a degree. You know, I think it's kind of—

BARBARA BOWEN: But just to pick up on that, one of the premises for Pathways was that students at CUNY particularly at some colleges have many, many general education. Pathways--Pathways is basically a general education distribution requirement program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

BARBARA BOWEN: That's what it is, and one of the premises was that Pathways would address something that they saw as a problem, which was that at some colleges there is quite a high number of general education required credits. And that has been developed by the faculty over years to address our particular student population, and make sure that



our students get the kind of rigor in their grounding of college education that we felt was necessary for them. And as Professor Sailor said it varies at different schools. We have not seen a drop in the overall number of full-time faculty at CUNY, but there's so many factors involved in that, as you know. One is that enrollment reached its highest number in general--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

BARBARA BOWEN: --last year. So how that balances out with Pathways is, you know, it's hard to determine at least for--for me. Also, one of the things that one would have to look at is the part-time professors, the adjunct faculty. We certainly have heard anecdotally from many adjunct faculty that if a course let's say languages, which Professor Davis talked about, if a language let's like a Queens College, my college, at least a full year of foreign language was required previously in general education. Once that requirement dropped out of the Pathways central requirement, it did mean that fewer students-- Again, I haven't looked at the data at CUNY, so at--at Queens. So I perhaps should say it

should mean, could mean that fewer students would be taking that--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

BARBARA BOWEN: --and then, sometimes because there had been an adjunct teaching something for a long time, that full-timer's curriculum needed to--the full-time needed to work full-time, the adjunct would end being bumped. We certainly saw that with art classes, other classes like that. So while I think it's a good question, I think we'd have to look at the whole effect but--and that's why when Council Member Cabrera said well isn't part of the resistance because full-time faculty were worried about losing their jobs? I have to say that is a red herring. That is not part of the resistance. Full-time faculty did not get bumped from our positions because of Pathways, but there may have been fewer sections offered of certain courses that were bumped out of the general ed curriculum.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing]

Exactly. That's what I would think--trying to think logically about what happens when you reduce the number of--of all required classed.

2 KEVIN SAILOR: [interposing] [off mic]  
3 Could I answer?

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In your testimony,  
5 Ms. Bowen [pause]—In—in your testimony, you made  
6 reference to the college completion agenda, and you  
7 said that it was an attempt or provided the  
8 opportunity for privatization. So I wanted to ask  
9 you to expand a little bit on that.

10 BARBARA BOWEN: Thank you, and again, I  
11 want to preface this by saying that everybody who  
12 spends their time and dedicates themselves to being  
13 at CUNY, which is not an easy place to work, we  
14 believe 100% in college completion, and we wouldn't  
15 be here if we didn't. But, and I know you've seen  
16 this. There has—as the public funding for public  
17 higher education has been shifted away and directed  
18 towards other areas such as consolidating the tax  
19 benefits for the wealthiest 1%—

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

21 BARBARA BOWEN: --there's been a  
22 withdrawal steadily in all the states over the last  
23 30 years of public funding from cut—for public  
24 universities, and one thing that has come into that  
25 void is private foundations making—presenting policy

on public higher education, and often that policy could lead to enrichment of the private sector. So for instance the year that I looked at when I was looking at that was back. It was 2011. In that year, there was \$88 billion of public spending on public higher education. It wasn't enough, but that's what there was. There are certain private entities, the very same ones that are driving the K through 12 standardized testing--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] yes.

BARBARA BOWEN: --standardized curriculum movement who are saying well let's look at that \$88 billion and see if that could be used to generate profit rather than being public funding. So the more curriculum can be standardized, the more you can use standardized tests, the more you can use--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

BARBARA BOWEN: --standardized implements, and the more those can be contracted out--

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CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

BARBARA BOWEN: --to a profit making company.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So the whole standardization process that is driven towards the test--

BARBARA BOWEN: [interposing] Can, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --industry.

BARBARA BOWEN: Opens the door.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Opens the door.

BARBARA BOWEN: I won't say, you know, you know has the test happened yet--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] I understand.

BARBARA BOWEN: --but it opens the door.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] I understand.

BARBARA BOWEN: --to privatization, and profiteering out of a big sector in the economy--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

BARBARA BOWEN: --that looks very appealing to the profit industry.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right, and--and I plan in the future to have hopefully next month a hearing looking at the whole concept of the foundations, and what they do and the money that they give, and the impact that it has. So that might be a

correlation to that as well. My counsel reminds-- indicates that perhaps you had a comment that you wanted to share, Dr. Sailor.

KEVIN SAILOR: Sure. In terms the general--you asked about the general education had there been changes--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

KEVIN SAILOR: --in--in terms of the kinds of course offerings and how has that affected faculty. A couple of the panel from CUNY kept mentioning how they were now offering minors at the--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

KEVIN SAILOR: --at my college, we used to require a minor for the BA. We--we were told that we could not require--require a minor. So actually participation in minors has gone down. That's not been--so in other words, it's not been our experience that the result has been an increase in a student's ability to take minors.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. [pause] Okay, another point in point 5, Dr. Sailor, you talked about the fact that the--the Pathways program does not address the issue that you cite here, and the question then comes to the new--I understand that the

new initiative, which is implemented at-at Bronx  
Comm-Bronx Community College.

BARBARA BOWEN: [off mic] I think it is  
university wide.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: University wide,  
which talks about transferring down, which you heard  
them talk about. It started this fall. So we will  
certainly want to see if that addresses the issue  
that you have with students who transfer with 60 ore  
more credits don't get acknowledgement or don't have  
the opportunity to get an associate's degree. But we  
want to see if, in fact, that addresses the issue  
that you've raised. The newest initiative called the  
Transfer so that students are transferring not just  
form community to senior, but also laterally between  
schools, and even from the senior college down. So  
that's an issue that we want to make sure we follow  
up on, and see how--

KEVIN SAILOR: In fact, that started at  
Lehman.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: It started at  
Lehman?

KEVIN SAILOR: Yeah, the pro-the previous  
provost it was something that she initiated with the

two community colleges in the Bronx. [banging door]

We had done that informally for a long time. I mean

this is one of the other frustrating things about

Pathways was that we kept telling people no we're

doing these things, or no we do not do these things,

and it just—we—were not heard. Anyway, there is, if

you look at the data, the structural problem where

people get to their—they have to take 15 credits or

12 credits to get financial aid. They hit a point

and they have to make a choice whether to take them

to a the community college or take them at the senior

college. And I think that the reverse transfer, the

notion that they can go ahead and start taking

classes and then have them count and complete the

associate's degree is a good idea, and I think it's

going to have much greater impact than any of the

things that have been, you know, part of Pathways.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, that's

interesting, and perhaps an iteration of that existed

at Medgar Evers College, which you know, was

community college, two-year college, had a four-year

program, and I know that there was an opportunity for

students there to also perhaps get them associates

even though they had not completed all of—even though



they were in a program for a baccalaureate, they were able to get the associates. So an iteration of that may have existed before, and so I do want to thank you for your testimony, and thank you for your input and for your forward thinking as to what else might be coming down the line, and to put us on the alert to be on the lookout for that. Thank you so much. I appreciate you coming.

KEVIN SAILOR: Thank

BARBARA BOWEN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and our last panel John Adaromo (sp?). You may come forward. If there is anyone else who is here for testimony, please make sure you give your slip to the clerk because this is the last panel. No one else? Okay, great. Thank you. Counsel will swear you in.

LEGAL COUNSEL: Raise your right hand, please. Great. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee, and to answer the committee's questions honestly? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Please give us your name, and then your testimony.

JOHN ADAROMO: Okay. Good afternoon, City Council Members of the Higher Education Committee, and members of the City University of New York. My name is John Adaromo. I'm a proud graduate of the Borough of Manhattan Community College, where I received a degree in computer science in 2015. I transferred to Hunter College in 2016 where all my 69 credits were accepted, but most of my classes, my major classes were taken as electives. In a system that claims to be a university, it is important that my major classes that are already required of me to take prerequisites in particular colleges are not also--are not downgraded to electives forcing me to--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Could you, Mr. Adaromo, could you speak a little slower because we don't have your testimony? We want to make sure that we get all your points.

JOHN ADAROMO: Oh, okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. [banging door]

JOHN ADAROMO: So I transferred to Hunter College to 2016 where all 69 of my credits were accepted. Most of my major classes were taken as electives. In a system that claims to be a

university, it is important that many of my major classes are required [banging door] that I already took at my previous college, and—and required prerequisites are not downgraded to electives in my new college where also I have to take prerequisites to prerequisites to the major classes that I have to take there. [pause] Furthermore, the addition of extra classes needed in each college curriculum makes it difficult for students to branch outside the majors and take classes across the board. I'm presently obtaining a baccalaureate for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies, student concentration in computer science and math, but my own college is Hunter College. Ensuring that a graduate is equipped for the dovetail process of any university. I'll prefer taking classes required to advance my scope of understanding and make contributions to the field. After consulting with the Executive Officer at the Computer Science Department at City University of New York Graduate Center, I acknowledged that as a student at Hunter a profound understanding of my work (sic) concept. It is essential to be on the—to be on the upper core in graduate computer science degree. It is limited in creating the transition from a

graduate, on the graduates or doctoral level. The solution, however, would be to take classes outside our major and subsequently going over my required credits for graduation, and an extra semester to have a shot at any university doctoral classes. We've seen about doctoral program for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies and all of its initiative and permits the flexibility in determining what will aid the actualization of my dream. It encourages students to take classes across all CUNY campuses while maintaining the rigor of bachelor's degree, and also [bell] affording the opportunity to take master classes for good standing students. To graduate with a degree, a mix of intermediate and advanced level classes must be taken in both concentrations or single concentration. Creating my own major gives me the freedom to study on my—study my interest in my own sense, and open endless possibilities to big barriers beyond the classroom. The baccalaureate program I believe is the future of post-secondary education, and ensures the value of one's decision to take charge of their education, and we will be rewarding that student. With all the benefits of this program, you would assume that a student—a lot

of students know where the program is or not a proper program at all. The program only has about 500 students of the 500,000 in CUNY. That's less than 0.001 of the population. The main problem that this program faces is a lack of funding. Even with the continued talk of tuition increase, the program is on a limited budget foregoing the amount of--foregoing interested students. Just to make it clear, the Pathways curriculum improves the program. The importance to tap the process cannot be overstated in serving a city that houses millions of people with various backgrounds and--and--and various different backgrounds in education. It would greatly benefit the city to fund the CUNY Unique and Anti-Disciplinary Baccalaureate Program, as serves the city greatly. And I just wanted to add to some of the issues voiced by the committee earlier. You have a question, Chair, Councilwoman Inez Barron, about what pops up for a student to note they have completed their required Pathways classes. The reply--the reply from the university was that Degree Works would show what--what classes students have--have taken, but the students--there is--there is no actual pop-up. Nothing alerts you. You just have to be a

very inquisitive student to find out. It took me my fourth semester at BMCC to understand I had a Degree Works work account. It is a good resource, but it's greatly underutilized. Actually, and it's just when I got it. So the—the amount of 250% increase since the Pathways extremely because students just do not bother with it at all. I challenge our administration to give a general survey and come back and report it to the City Council. For the question on remediation. I must commend the job being done by the University to tackle the issue, and especially with the improvement of the CUNY Start and CUNY Summer Start program, and also the ASAP program. In my time in the city government, and BMCC was a was a big issue, but now it's been greatly elevated by attention paid by the University. On the standard of BMCC as a—as a community college, even with the transfer of my classes, I—I believe BMCC was great, and used a lot of full-time professions unlike Hunter College that relies a lot on adjunct professors as a result of funding they do not have. On the topic of transfer students, I would like to mention that the transfer students at senior colleges receive especially at Hunter College, receive very little

attention or very little care when--when they come in the new college because they--they leave, the proceed to believe, to--because they already know the process of the City University of New York. And in reference to what the PSC President's view on Pathways, I partially--I partially agree that students have now reached it but what other version of the baccalaureate program because--but--but--but what the--what--what I do disagree with is the motif behind the difference of the change in--in the--in the--in the critical one. (sic) She mentioned how this is about privatization, but I completely disagree because I believe students that come in from all different programs should have a chance at getting a good education. But one solution I--I do--I do advise is the continuous increase and expansion of the CUNY baccalaureate and the Unique Interdisciplinary Studies. Another will definitely--definitely be to receive more funding, but from both the state and the city, and to better help students. We know previous experience of the American University Educational System. Months of delay and to deprive a generation of New Yorkers from getting the best possible education, and giving each student this--the benefits

of a rising tuition they are forced to pay. To get with the part right (sic) you have to come up with an--with a way to address the issues properly as addressed. I do have friends that graduated--that graduated from BMCC, pre-properly and post-properly. (sic) The ones that transferred even--even without graduating--even without graduating from BMCC with an estimate--with-with--with enough credits in computer science that all the credits--all their credits except that at--at Columbia University. The ones that transferred after Pathways was introduced lost a lot of Common Core credits. This might be a testament to the drop in quality for--for the degree. In response to the gentleman from Brooklyn College earlier, I personally believe the idea of imposing--imposing a language on a college level is a last ditch effort for students to speak a second language. This should be done at an earlier age when the students in elementary schools take them for the rest of the world. (sic) A two-year of languages is supposed to be taken in college. It doesn't really make you a good speaker of the language. All it does is make you get maybe a couple of seasons be in classes you probably only remember verbs in in the future. And I



believe especially of learning a language absolutely,  
you emerge in the area where the language is spoken.  
Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, Mr.  
Adaromo. I have just a couple of questions. So you  
were a student at BMCC and you transferred to Hunter?

JOHN ADAROMO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And you're presently  
there?

JOHN ADAROMO: I'm still a Hunter  
student, but a CUNY baccalaureate a Unique  
Interdisciplinary student. I get to design my own  
major.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. What year are  
you in at Hunter?

JOHN ADAROMO: I'm an upper junior.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: An upper junior and  
did you—were you a participant of Pathways? Were you  
enrolled in Pathways?

JOHN ADAROMO: Yes, I'm a student in  
Pathways.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And were all of your  
credits accepted when you transferred to Hunter?

JOHN ADAROMO: Yes, they were all  
accepted.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Did  
you graduate from the BMCC with--

JOHN ADAROMO: [interposing] I did.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and associate?

JOHN ADAROMO: I did.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But I heard you say  
or I thought I heard you say that prior to Pathways  
students who graduated from BMCC and transferred to  
Columbia had all of their credits accepted at  
Columbia.

JOHN ADAROMO: [interposing] Yes, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And then subsequent  
to Pathways students who transferred to Columbia--is  
it still Columbia?

JOHN ADAROMO: Columbia University.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Did not have their  
credits. Now, you're saying that they had exactly  
the same transcripts, exactly the same classes--

JOHN ADAROMO: Exactly the same--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and exactly the  
same grade?

JOHN ADAROMO: No, so--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

JOHN ADAROMO: --exactly the same process it's being--in fact after Common Core before pre-Pathways, it was completely different. So it required you take a--a couple of classes that were then accepted at Columbia University, but after Pathways they weren't accepted any more.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

JOHN ADAROMO: So, I--I think one thing that you might have missed is although my classes I--I--I've at BMCC or at Hunter Colleges all 69 of them. A couple of my major classes were taken as electives meaning now I have to spend the last maybe--maybe another three years if I stayed at Hunter College fully. It would be another three years just taking major classes, and probably the added classes given by Hunter College for their own requirements.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So you're not finding that Pathways is reducing the time or maximizing or as efficient in terms of the courses that you need to take--

JOHN ADAROMO: [interposing] Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --to help you graduate within the two years.

JOHN ADAROMO: It is not efficient if I stayed at Hunter College only, but I didn't stay at Hunter College. I'm now a CUNY baccalaureate student. So the baccalaureate students makes it efficient. It's the only program that makes it efficient.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So for you, Pathways has or has not been an advantage or benefit?

JOHN ADAROMO: So, but if you asked me those questions last semester when I was just a student at Hunter College, and I only just transferred back to being from BMCC, I would have told you now, but now as a CUNY baccalaureate and Interdisciplinary Unique student, I will tell you yes because all my credits are used with this.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Alright, I had one more question for you. What is it that you want to study? What area?

JOHN ADAROMO: Computer science.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I want to thank you for your testimony, and if you could give us a hard copy of what it is because I want to make sure that I don't miss any of the testimony that you wanted to share with us. So if you could give us a

2 hard copy that we could review, I would appreciate  
3 it.

4 JOHN ADAROMO: Okay.

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Seeing  
6 that there is no further testimony coming from  
7 forward, this hearing is adjourned. [gavel]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date November 28, 2016