

**Statement to the CUNY Board of Trustees**

**Testimony of Hollis F. Glaser, Ph.D.**  
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**Before the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York**

**Concerning the Pathways Initiative**  
**June 18, 2012**

I'd like to start by commending the Board of Trustees for lighting a fire under the faculty, and inspiring us to look closely at the problems with transfer. We would never have initiated these discussions without Pathways. My name is Hollis Glaser, I have a Ph.D. in communication, focusing in organizational communication, from the University of Illinois. I'm the Chair of BMCC's academic senate, and have been working on Pathways through our General Education committee, the Senate's Curriculum committee, and I'm on the Pathways Creative Expression committee.

With all due respect, I'm going to explain, from the vantage point of my academic degree and my involvement in this process, why Pathways has become such a hot button with the faculty and how we can all fix this problem together.

First, the Board took a core job (curriculum) away from its core workers (faculty). Even though you have faculty working on this, they were appointed from the top, not from the faculty. The faculty perceive this as you're trying to take power away from us and this is one of the reasons we are reacting so strongly against Pathways.

Second, you rushed the process. Even if we had seen the initial Pathways committee as legitimate, we needed at least a full year to go back and forth with them to work out the kinks in the plan.

Third, the Board initiated this centralized process within a decentralized organization consisting of (for our purposes) 18 autonomous colleges, within which, are multiple autonomous sub-groups (departments). CUNY is not a strict hierarchy; faculty are used to making our own decisions about our classrooms, our courses, and our curriculum.

Fourth, this organization and the transfer problem is a very complex one that demands multiple solutions, responsive to the micro-environments (if you will) that make up CUNY. Pathways is proposing a very simple plan, which is inadequate. So of course you have a flurry of resolutions, a petition with over 5000 signatures, and a lawsuit on your hands. It couldn't go any other way. There was no possibility that the faculty would simply accept Pathways as it has come down to us.

Now I'll tell you how to get out of this mess and fix the transfer issues: Give this problem back to the faculty, to our elected bodies and departments, where it belongs. Give us a year to come up with many solutions. You have our attention. We're good at this, a year is enough time, and you'll have faculty buy-in. Most importantly, our students will be able to transfer easily among the CUNY colleges.

Again, thank you for starting this crucial discussion. I hope we can all move forward and work together to address this very important issue so that CUNY can become a stronger university.