



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

September 27, 2012

Dr. Matthew Goldstein
Chancellor
City University of New York
535 East 80th Street
New York, New York 10075

Dear Chancellor Goldstein:

As you know, we have previously written to you and to CUNY board chair Benno Schmidt to convey our Association's concerns about the Pathways initiative, with regard both to the process that was followed in its development and adoption and to its results. You responded to our letters (copies are enclosed for your convenience) without, however, fully addressing our concerns as they related to issues of shared governance and academic freedom. Those concerns have been rekindled by information and documents we have received over the past two weeks regarding developments at Queensborough Community College occasioned by an e-mail message dated September 13 from Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs Karen Steele threatening sweeping reprisals against the QCC English department following its rejection of proposed curricular changes relating to the teaching of composition courses mandated under the Pathways initiative. While the QCC administration has apparently withdrawn its threat of reprisals and Vice President Steele has apologized for her message, members of the faculty at QCC and elsewhere in the CUNY system continue to voice concern about the inhospitable climate for academic freedom and faculty governance suggested by the resort to threats in this case.

You are doubtless aware that Professor Barbara Bowen, president of the Professional Staff Congress, in a recent e-mail message to the faculty union's members concerning this situation, wrote as follows:

The atmosphere of intimidation that now surrounds faculty votes on Pathways curriculum is antithetical to a university. The way for the CUNY administration to change it is to issue an unambiguous message that it respects the faculty's right to vote on matters of curriculum—free from intimidation—according to their judgment of the best interests of their students and the standards of their profession.

The Pathways resolution was imposed on the University without participation by elected faculty governance. While QCC's shift of position and public apology are important, the resort to threats exposes the fear that the Pathways curriculum would not be approved without them. At a minimum, it is time for a moratorium on implementation of Pathways to allow academic freedom and open deliberation at CUNY to be repaired. The PSC calls on the CUNY administration to suspend all implementation of Pathways until at least the

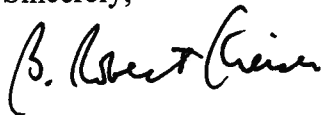
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end of the current semester so that this important curriculum change can receive the free and open consideration it deserves.

We share Professor Bowen's concerns and urge that the administration follow her recommendation.

We look forward to hearing further from you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



B. Robert Kreiser
Associate Secretary

BRK:id
Enclosures

cc: Mr. Benno Schmidt, Chair, Board of Trustees
Dr. Alexandra W. Logue, Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost
Dr. Diane B. Call, President, Queensborough Community College
Dr. Karen B. Steele, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, Queensborough Community College
Professor Linda Reesman, Chair, Department of English, Queensborough Community College
Professor Terrence F. Martell, Chair, University Faculty Senate
Professor Barbara Bowen, President, Professional Staff Congress
Professor David Linton, President, New York State Conference AAUP