Many years of state disinvestment made CUNY increasingly tuition-dependent. Enrollments were suppressed by the COVID pandemic. Federal stimulus funds are expiring, and the budget cuts from City Hall mean CUNY is in need of strong public investments. But management won’t propose anything other than deeper austerity.

A central Vacancy Review Board was reestablished in February 2023 to oversee most hiring decisions. Adjunct budgets were slashed.

After directing colleges to cut $41.5 million in Academic Year 2022-23, CUNY tripled the total “savings targets,” demanding $128 million in savings for Academic Year 2023-24.
Nine colleges were projected not to meet their savings targets for this fiscal year. These colleges of concern were directed to make additional mid-year cuts in December 2023 and implement “Enhanced Deficit Reduction Plans.”

Enhanced Deficit Reduction Plans Undermine Academic Quality

- **Increasing enrollment caps on classes**
  - Less classroom attention for students

- **Cancelling course sections**
  - Student schedules in chaos; required courses not offered when students can take them

- **Reduced services in libraries, labs, offices, meal halls**
  - Less student support; diminished learning environment for students

- **Hiring freezes, allowing only one rehire for every three staff departures**
  - Rising workloads and unmanageable caseloads for staff; longer waits for students

- **Abrupt layoffs of adjunct faculty and full-time faculty/staff on contingent appointments**
  - Lost jobs and health insurance; demoralized workforce

FY 2024 is from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. FY 2025 is from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.
CUNY MANAGEMENT: TURNING FISCAL CHALLENGE INTO FULL-BLOWN CRISIS

UNNECESSARY CUTS AT NINE COLLEGES

CUNY Ended FY 2023 with $143.7 Million in Reserves

$105 Million in Unspent Federal Stimulus Funds Must Be Spent by June 30, 2024

$46 Million in Combined Unspent Federal Stimulus Funds at Brooklyn College, John Jay City Tech, & BMCC

Only 3 Colleges Ended FY2023 in a Deficit: CSI, York, & KCC

7 out of 9 Colleges of Concern Project Tuition Collections Above their FY2024 Revenue Targets

Management must not preemptively cut. They should use expiring stimulus funds to help prevent campus cuts and advocate for greater long-term investment from the State and City.
CUNY MANAGEMENT: TURNING FISCAL CHALLENGE INTO FULL-BLOWN CRISIS

UNNECESSARY CUTS AT NINE COLLEGES

For the third year in a row, management has made cuts well before the City and State budgets are final. PSC and CUNY Rising campaigns and growing support in the State Legislature and City Council have led to real victories.

$400 Million in State Funding Increases in FY2023 and FY2024

$32.4 Million in City Council Restorations to the Mayor’s Planned Cuts in the FY2023 City Budget

$11.8 Million in Planned Cuts to CUNY, Rolled Back by the Mayor this February

CUNY needs strong investments to avert a crisis. Management must not preemptively cut – they should insist on new operating resources from the State and City.
CUNY MANAGEMENT: TURNING FISCAL CHALLENGE INTO FULL-BLOWN CRISIS

CUNY’S UNIVERSITY BUDGET REQUEST: A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP

Management cut $221.8 million in programmatic needs from their preliminary budget request to the State and City for Fiscal Year 2025. The reduction coincided with an added request for $184.2 million to fund collective bargaining costs for the PSC and other unions at CUNY. The Hochul administration has been funding state labor contracts, unlike her predecessor.

Preliminary Budget Request June 2023
$524.7 Million Total Operating Request
$329.7 Million Programmatic Needs
$TBD Collective bargaining

Final Budget Request Dec 2023
$429.0 Million Total Operating Request
$107.9 Million Programmatic Needs
$184.2 Million Collective bargaining

Change from June
↓ $95.7 Million
↓ $221.8 Million
↑ $184.2 Million

Most egregious changes from June 2023 to December 2023:

Reducing the enrollment and retention request by two-thirds, from $20 million to $6.7 million, when CUNY’s fiscal stability depends on increased enrollment and retention.

Failing to request City budget restorations of $61.5 million after the Mayor’s repeated cuts.

Reducing the maintenance and enhancement request by two-thirds; only 8% of CUNY buildings are in a state of good repair.

CUNY submitted a hollowed-out final budget request, nearly $100 million dollars less than their preliminary request. CUNY drastically slashed funding for vital programs. While collective bargaining cost increases are in the final request, CUNY decided to include that funding at the expense of huge cuts to the University’s overall needs.
CUNY MANAGEMENT: TURNING FISCAL CHALLENGE INTO FULL-BLOWN CRISIS

ENROLLMENT IS REBOUNDING

INCREASES IN FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT ENROLLMENT
FALL 2022 - FALL 2023

- CUNY-WIDE: ↑2%
- SENIOR COLLEGES: ↑1%
- COMMUNITY COLLEGES: ↑5%
- TRANSFERS: ↑7%
- FRESHMAN: ↑4%
- CUNY-WIDE APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2024: ↑386%

Initiatives that helped this Year
- CUNY Reconnect, a program sponsored by NYC Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, has brought back 25,000 CUNY students to complete their degrees.
- Waived application fees
- Targeted recruitment letters to NYC public school seniors

Proposals from Governor Hochul that Will Help Next Year
- Guaranteeing CUNY admission for top 10% of NY state high school graduates
- Requiring FAFSA applications from all graduating seniors

While full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment remains lower than the pre-pandemic level, it is on a strong upswing.
CUNY management is sabotaging progress on enrollment and exacerbating CUNY’s retention crisis, by failing to fight for funding we need and cutting academic programs and services.
Hiring freezes and attrition have caused declines in the ranks of most PSC and classified titles, while the number of managers in the Executive Compensation Plan has increased. Full-time faculty still decreased despite the PSC winning $53 million in state investment in the spring of 2022 to fund more than 500 full-time faculty lines.
As CUNY’s staffing and retention crises deepened, the Board of Trustees gave CUNY executives massive raises in November 2022.

- Hector Batista, Chief Operating Officer: ↑ 27% from $330,000 to $420,000
- Derek Davis, Senior Vice Chancellor & General Counsel: ↑ 30% from $300,000 to $390,000
- Other Vice Chancellors: ↑ 15%

Overall, the CUNY Central Office increased spending on Executive Compensation Plan staff by $8.68 million, between Spring 2019 to Spring 2023.