

## Brooklyn College's COACHE Task Force Recommendations – December 11, 2020

### Preface

The goal of the COACHE Task Force is to make *recommendations* to the Provost and the President regarding faculty satisfaction. The Task Force suggests that the role of *planning* and *implementation* should be shared by a wider cross section of faculty to have greater legitimacy.

The work of the COACHE Task Force was interrupted by COVID-19 in March 2020. As this group reconvened in October 2020, it was difficult not to focus on the changes that have taken place due to the remote work environment. Nevertheless, the Task Force believes that the broad themes that were evident from the COACHE survey results are being accentuated by the COVID-19 era. Thus, our recommendations take both time periods into account.

Given the resource-scarce environment in which public higher education and CUNY, in particular, finds itself, we think that it is critical that these recommendations be leveraged by the work that is being done by other committees across campus; there are many potential synergies. We also note that the CUNY-wide COACHE recommendations<sup>1</sup> match up with many of our needs; we hope to also leverage the work that is being planned system wide.

### Recommendations based on the results of the COACHE survey completed by faculty in 2019:<sup>2</sup>

Recommendation 1: Increase support for research (see CUNY-wide recommendation 4). This will involve coordinating with the Faculty Council Research Committee, which has already prepared a report with recommendations, with the newly formed Research Support Working Group, chaired by Dean Peter Toliás, and with research hubs that exist in other schools and institutes across campus.

Recommendation 2: Clarify tenure and promotion expectations for teaching, scholarship/creative work, and service and how it may vary by school and department (see CUNY-wide recommendation 1). This will include reviewing the work of the Promotion & Tenure Rigor Working Group from academic year 2019-2020 and President Anderson's document, "Brooklyn College Memorandum on Expectations for Promotion and Tenure." We encourage departments to create mentoring documents for faculty that outline departmental and school expectations based on past successful candidates.

Recommendation 3: Based on the differences in satisfaction among groups across multiple themes, engage in anti-discriminatory work (including but not limited to anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-ableist, anti-ageist work) that addresses equity gaps in order to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. This will include work on communicating in uncomfortable situations, encouraging civility and collegiality in departments, and fair distribution of work (see CUNY-wide recommendation 3).

Recommendation 4: Improve faculty recognition and appreciation across all areas of work, including teaching, scholarship/creative work, mentoring, advisement, and service. These efforts should take place at the department, school, and college levels.

Recommendation 5: Improve facilities and maintenance (see CUNY-wide recommendation 2). This will involve coordination with a number of entities across campus, including the Faculty Council Campus Planning Committee and the Ingersoll/Roosevelt Planning and Oversight Committees. As facilities are in the process of renovation, special attention should be paid to temporarily displaced faculty and programs.

Respectfully submitted by the Brooklyn College COACHE Task Force:

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<sup>1</sup> CUNY-wide Task Force's draft recommendations as of September 30, 2020:

1. Given that satisfaction with tenure policies and clarity and promotion at CUNY is in or near the bottom 30% of all COACHE institutions and women and faculty of color at some CUNY colleges are particularly concerned with these issues, we recommend that CUNY work to provide more clarity and clear guidelines/policies about how research, teaching and service are considered and evaluated when faculty are being considered for tenure and promotion.
2. Given that satisfaction with facilities and work resources at CUNY are in the bottom 30% of all COACHE institutions and in 2015 and 2019, quality of facilities was among the top three worst aspects of working at CUNY, we recommend that CUNY prioritize the improvement of facilities that faculty need to conduct their research and ensure a safe and productive learning environment for our students.
3. Given that women and faculty of color at many CUNY colleges are less satisfied than their colleagues in numerous COACHE benchmark areas and in the CUNY-wide custom questions that were included in the 2019 survey, we recommend that CUNY develop a university task force comprised of faculty and administrators to identify policies and procedures that will ensure a more equitable workplace at CUNY and that CUNY then works to implement those policies and procedures.
4. Given that lack of support for research was among the top three worst aspects of working at CUNY in 2015 and 2019, we recommend that CUNY prioritize increased support for research across the university.

<sup>2</sup> Although the charge of the COACHE Task Force did not include planning and implementation, the committee spent considerable time thinking about these issues. There are a number of ways that these recommendations could be carried out. One possibility is to assemble an implementation team for each recommendation which would be tasked with developing specific plans and timelines to improve each area. These five implementation teams would coordinate with each other and with other relevant committees across campus to streamline and maximize their efforts. Coordination would be critical. The first task of each team would be to identify the work that is already being done by other groups on campus to determine what gaps need to be addressed and what ways other groups' work could be amplified by the COACHE implementation teams. In terms of process, the implementation teams would solicit feedback from relevant faculty sub-groups through a variety of means including focus groups and town halls. In terms of composition, each team would have faculty members from all five schools, represent the diversity of our faculty, and include administrators with the authority to help move plans forward.