



Office of the President

March 15, 1999

Dr. Ricardo R. Fernandez
President
CUNY - Herbert H. Lehman College
Bedford Park Boulevard West
Bronx, NY 10468

Dear Dr. Fernandez:

Please find enclosed the final copy of the report of the Middle States Evaluation Team which visited your campus on February 7-10, 1999. I wish to express my appreciation for the hospitality afforded the Team during the visit and the outstanding cooperation we received from faculty, staff, students and the Board of Trustee member. It was without question a very delightful visit and we wish you the best of luck in your continuing effort to achieve excellence at the College.

Sincerely,


Earl S. Richardson
President

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Enclosure

**Report to the
Faculty, Administrators, Trustees, Staff, and Students
of
Lehman College
City University of New York
New York, New York**

**By
An Evaluation Team Representing the
Commission on Higher Education
Of the
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools**

**Prepared after
Study of the Institution's Self-Study Report
and a
Visit to the Campus on February 7-10, 1999**

This report represents the views of the evaluation team as interpreted by the Chair; it goes directly to the institution before being considered by the Commission. It is a confidential document prepared as an educational service for the benefit of the institution. All comments in the report are made in good faith, in an effort to assist Lehman College. This report is based solely on an educational evaluation of the institution, and of the manner in which it appears to be carrying out its educational objectives.

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At the Time of the Visit

Date when instruction began: 1968

Year of first graduating class: 1969

President: Ricardo R. Fernandez

Chief Academic Officer: Rosanne Wille

Chair of the Board of Trustees: Anne A. Paolucci

Executive Summary

Lehman is an urban institution with a particularly challenging mission. It is the only public four-year institution serving the entire Borough of the Bronx, New York City. The Bronx, with a population of over 1 million people, is primarily minority, with a significant concentration of immigrants. Its population is largely economically and socially disadvantaged. Hence, the College represents the main source of opportunity for Bronx residents of all ages seeking the education necessary to achieve middle class status in the contemporary economy.

The students that Lehman serves typically do not enter college with the preparation and financial resources of the average college student. The College historically has accepted the challenges posed by such students and has structured its programs to maximize their opportunities for successfully completing a degree. It is fair to say that Lehman, like many other institutions serving disadvantaged populations, performs a critical role in our educational system, the importance of which is often not recognized in academia or by the public beyond the market it serves. Despite the fact that the mission carried out by Lehman requires above-average concentrations of resources, it is in competition for funding with campuses not facing challenges of the same magnitude but with more traditional and prestigious missions and broader political support.

There is no question on the part of the accreditation team that Lehman College suffers from insufficient fiscal support. This is reflected in its high degree of reliance on adjunct faculty, lack of middle management staff, essential student support programs operating with minimal resources, and an uneven distribution of technology across campus.

Despite its inadequate resource base, the College is carrying out many aspects of its mission very effectively. Lehman's faculty is well qualified and highly regarded by the student body. It takes its arts and science tradition seriously and is in the process of updating its general education program to ensure it remains relevant and an integral part of the entire campus program. The library is a very important resource for the campus and able to keep pace with technology. The campus is well maintained and recently-added buildings are excellent facilities. Student service programs are staffed by energetic and effective personnel, although their numbers need to be substantially increased. The campus also has sound plans for adding technology for administrative as well as academic purposes. Finally, Lehman exhibits its commitment to serving the community in which it is located through a variety of public service and outreach activities.

The evaluation team, as does the campus community, believes in the importance of Lehman's traditional mission of serving as broad a segment of the Bronx population as is educationally prudent. Without a campus such as Lehman, the vast majority of

residents of the Bronx seeking a college education would not have an opportunity to complete a four-year degree while at the same time contending with the family and financial responsibilities many face outside of the educational environment. Budget reductions, however, have reduced the number of teaching faculty and reduced essential support programs to a far lower level than is possible to justify. Policy makers have determined that less prepared students should begin college at two-year campuses and that four-year campuses need not offer the remedial work many students from disadvantaged backgrounds need. This is despite the fact that national research shows that for minority students any delay in attendance at four-year campuses following high school graduation greatly reduces the probability that they will complete a bachelor's degree. Public officials also have determined that students should pay for a larger share of their educational costs, a significant handicap for individuals and families already struggling to meet day-to-day living expenses. All of these trends have converged to call into question how long Lehman can continue to carry out its urban mission in a manner that can be considered relevant to the needs of the community it serves.

It is quite possible that in a few years Lehman may by default and without formal recognition be carrying out a different mission than it does at present. If this happens it will be due to external fiscal pressures and policy decisions rather than by preference of the campus or community it serves. The campus would no doubt perform this new mission as well as it carries out its current one. However, the population of the Bronx would have lost a major asset if this became reality. It is this trend that causes concern about Lehman's future. The concern is not about the institution itself but rather about the plight of the community it serves. Without a campus with the resources to meet the needs of disadvantaged individuals in its immediate surroundings, the very large population of the community that Lehman serves will be handicapped in attempting to enter the social and economic mainstream by means of higher education.

The Team recommends that the College Administration petition the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees for a substantial increase in funding to address the major deficiencies highlighted in the team report. These include the high percentage of adjunct faculty, the lack of adequate staffing, the uneven distribution of technology across the campus, and the lack of sufficient operating budgets in several key areas of the College.

Considering the Board of Regents' newly-adopted policy of eliminating remediation, it is recommended also that the College Administration and faculty continue to explore creative ways for continuing access for the special populations traditionally served by Lehman College.

Introduction

Lehman College is well managed and operated. It efficiently utilizes its facilities and maintains its buildings and grounds well. Its leadership is stable. Lehman understands its mission as the only public four-year institution serving the Bronx, the residents of which for the most part are minority, multi-lingual and multi-cultural, and disadvantaged. It is committed to serving this constituency and its programs are structured to address this mission.

The thrust of the College's self-study was the role of technology in the future growth and development of the campus. The team examined this at length. It appears that the campus has a viable strategy for ensuring the Lehman's students are competitive in the job market but, like so many other things on campus, funding is a formidable obstacle.

Funding has been essentially flat throughout most of the decade, and has had a far broader impact than on the technology area. Campus resource problems have resulted in significant faculty reductions and an increasing reliance on part-time adjunct faculty, too few middle managers and support staff, and elimination or reduction in such essential services as counseling and career guidance. These issues have faculty and students very concerned.

Lehman College offers students a fine education and has been making progress despite difficulties not of its own making. Its mission is an extremely important one in that it provides an opportunity for upward mobility for a community whose prospects for success in the contemporary economy are very limited without the college degree. The three major issues it faces are external to the campus but have a substantial impact on Lehman's operations.

- Funding is the single most important issue affecting the institution. Its operating budget is far from adequate and the faculty and staff merit commendation for maintaining the integrity of campus operations despite a resource base that has shrunk in real terms.
- Centralization of academic decision-making outside of the campus has the faculty concerned about its waning degree of influence in academic matters. Of particular concern is that the policy to reduce or eliminate remedial programs will severely affect the educationally disadvantaged students the campus serves.
- With no real growth in budget allocations from the State over the last nine years, the CUNY Board of Trustees has approved significant increases in tuition. This trend cannot have a positive outcome for educational access in a market in which family incomes are relatively low.

While the team finds Lehman College to be an impressive institution operating under adverse circumstances, it is of the opinion that the major issues it faces need to be addressed expeditiously if it is to effectively carry out its mission over the long term.

Mission, Goals and Objectives

The mission statement of Lehman College is a succinct and useful summary of institutional purpose that needs no further elaboration.

Lehman College is the only public senior college in the Borough of the Bronx, which has a population of 1.2 million. Lehman offers residents of the Bronx and other boroughs of New York City, as well as the region, a liberal arts education and preparation for careers and advanced study. With a commitment to meeting the education needs of an urban, mostly minority and immigrant population, Lehman affirms the following objectives:

- *To provide access to a common body of knowledge and opportunities to develop a lifelong love of learning.*
- *To promote excellence in scholarship, teaching, research, and artistic endeavors.*
- *To develop the ability to think analytically and creatively.*
- *To advance the understanding and use of emerging technologies.*
- *To broaden education opportunities through joint programs with other institutions locally, nationally, and internationally.*
- *To promote an understanding of, and respect for, such differences as gender, age, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and physical ability.*
- *To serve as a center for the continuing educational and cultural needs for the region through access to the College's facilities and expertise in the academic disciplines, professional fields, and the fine and performing arts.*

Organization, Administration, and Governance

The administrative structure of Lehman College is typical of many moderate-size four-year institutions of higher education. There are four major administrative divisions: academic affairs, student affairs, administration and finance, and institutional advancement. These units are further divided into academic and/or administrative departments. The president serves as the chief executive officer with a provost/senior vice president for academic affairs, a vice president for administration and finance, a dean of students, and a vice president for institutional advancement. Under the provost are the deans of the four academic divisions and the associated departments, the Chief Librarian, the heads of related projects, and a few smaller units.

The overall organizational structure appears to serve the University well, although the lack of adequate numbers of middle managers and support staff is quite evident. The understaffing is most apparent in the area of student services, which, like academic affairs, has been most affected by periods of financial exigency. The President and his management team are well regarded by the college community. Several faculty, students, and staff credited the President in particular, for his vision and commitment to continued growth and development as well as for the stability of the institution. This positive view of the campus leadership extends to the management team as a whole, although the more recently-hired administrators are just establishing themselves.

Integral to the community view of the management team is the decentralized style of governance embraced by the President and Provost and the degree of involvement provided through the various constituency-specific and multi-constituency forums established on the campus. The College Senate, the main legislative body, serves to reinforce the philosophy of participatory governance through the involvement of faculty, students, administrators, and support staff in the decision-making processes. Current efforts to further define the role and responsibilities of individual committees, to provide faculty appropriate influence over academic matters and to increase student participation should continue. The team notes, however, that since the faculty currently controls the vote on all items of business through its majority status, the concern expressed to the team by faculty about the extent of their influence in academic matters may reflect more a frustration with external rather than internal governance matters. Increasingly, decisions once considered the province of faculty are being made by the City University of New York (CUNY) Board of Trustees and/or the System Chancellor. The decisions to eliminate remediation at public four-year campuses as well as earlier decisions on faculty retrenchment have caused great anxiety, low morale, and general uncertainty about the institution's ability to control its destiny. More important, there is great concern about the impact of these types of decisions on the capacity of the institution to perform its mission of serving minority and disadvantaged populations.

Movement toward more centralization in New York City and State agencies is not likely to change in the short term. Instead, college officials continue to explore creative strategies to reconcile the policies and mandates of the CUNY System with the reality of Lehman's responsibilities that result from being the only public four-year institution in the Bronx.

The Educational Program

Lehman's self-study reaffirmed the College's commitment to a liberal education grounded in the arts and sciences for all students, regardless of major. The wisdom of this philosophy grows out of the conviction that written and oral language skills, critical

thinking, and computational literacy are the foundations upon which today's students will be able to build successful careers and interesting lives in the future.

The foundation upon which education at Lehman is built is the general education program, an interesting combination of core courses and the distribution requirements most commonly found at schools Lehman's size. Now, with the Provost's encouragement, a group of faculty has begun to reexamine general education, and in a first test of new principles, they have designed a 12-credit, two-semester sequence of courses with the purpose of strengthening students' writing, research, and scholarship (WRS). As the title suggests, this is implemented through a team-teaching format. The development of the new WRS course, as well as other interdisciplinary programs in which team teaching might be employed, bodes well for the future and not just for students. Faculty as well will learn from their colleagues and serve as models for their students in demonstrating how master learners inquire, investigate, and finally comprehend new material.

The discussion about the future of Lehman's general education requirements has just begun. It is a testament to the faculty's intellectual vitality, their belief in the civility of their colleagues, and the collegiality of their administrators that there are several proposals representing different philosophies that already have surfaced. It is the hope of the team that these discussions will engage ever-larger circles of the faculty and result in a program that guarantees an effective liberal education to the next generation of Lehman students. The team welcomes the fact that ways are being sought to extend as much as possible the benefits of Lehman's general education to its large cohort of transfer students.

Whichever proposal is eventually adopted, the College will need to undertake efforts to ensure that all faculty understand the value, indeed the necessity, of a strong general education for their own programs. Without significant strengths in critical thinking, writing and speaking skills, and quantitative reasoning, as well as an understanding of civic responsibilities and the various strands of our cultural heritage, students will not prosper and advance in their professions, no matter what their major. It is, thus, in the College's interest to take steps to assure that all faculty as well as students understand and work to achieve the aims of general education.

At the forefront of this effort to educate the community in the value of a liberal education is the Office of Academic Standards and Evaluation. While the team endorses the College's plans to rebuild the ranks of full-time faculty through new hires, it sincerely believes that professional academic support staff, especially academic advisors, are essential to acclimate students to the academy. The team urges the College to find ways to augment the professional advising staff as soon as possible. It would also be worthwhile to explore ways of strengthening the connection between faculty involved in major advising and the professional advisors.

The vigor of Lehman's curriculum also is on display in a number of special programs. Programs deserving special commendation include: the Lehman Scholars

Program, which goes so far in its quest to cultivate scholarly excellence in highly prepared students as to comb the transcripts of non-participants for eligible candidates; and the Adult Degree Program, which facilitates the return of mature students to the campus, and whose success is demonstrated by the fact that although the program's participants make up only 15% of the student body, they account for nearly 30 % of Dean's List scholars. In both programs, provisions have been made to allow participants to ground their education in individually designed courses of study rather than in the college-wide general education requirements. The team hopes that the program's administrators and advisors will continue to be vigilant in ensuring that these foundations have an academic rigor and breadth that is at least the equal of the general education requirements.

A new challenge to Lehman's curriculum has arisen with the imposition of new, stricter standards on teacher candidates in the state of New York. Since education students major in their content area or areas, it is necessary that programs other than the education division undertake the curricular changes necessary to assure acceptable, even enviable passing rates on these standardized exams. The team is encouraged to see that the challenge has been taken enthusiastically by the liberal arts and science faculty as an opportunity to improve the academic preparation of the Lehman student, and the team wishes the College much success in its future outcomes.

New Master's programs in professional fields such as nursing and education imply vigor in the graduate program as well and will help the College take advantage of what is arguably the fastest growing segment of higher education today, the adult learner seeking to upgrade her or his professional, post-baccalaureate skills.

While the Team generally is confident in Lehman's ability to provide a stimulating, rigorous, and rewarding curriculum to its students, it does have several concerns. First, the College's increasing reliance on adjunct faculty has the potential to undermine the quality of the general education program in whatever shape it finally takes. The team is aware that many adjunct faculty are excellent and enthusiastic teachers with a demonstrable mastery of their field. However, without special orientation and development efforts, adjunct faculty may not fully understand the aims of general education, either in the core or in the distribution requirements, and the team encourages the College to explore ways to either return more of the teaching in the general education program to the full-time faculty or to find opportunities to more fully initiate adjunct faculty into the goals of general education.

Second, while the self-study contains numerous examples of the kinds of documentation that exists for the assessment of student learning, it believes that the College could present that evidence more effectively to its various constituencies. It also believes that faculty within the majors should be encouraged to examine these assessments on a regular basis to ascertain if there are improvements that can be made.

Finally, there is at least anecdotal evidence that the distance between the well-prepared and the ill-prepared Lehman student is diminishing. Because of improved

academic preparation in the high schools, the average scholastic abilities of the Lehman students may have risen since their decline in the mainstreaming that followed the dissolution of the Academic Skills program in the mid-nineties. Therefore, a significant segment of the student body may be eager for greater intellectual challenges in the classroom than they currently receive. With the likelihood of a continued improvement in academic performance in the incoming freshman classes over the next several years, Lehman faculty may need to reassess their expectations of their students upward in order to give them the best education they can.

Faculty and Teaching

Faculty Staffing

In general the team found that the faculty are dedicated to the institution and its mission. They are committed teachers, genuinely concerned with the education of their students. There seems to be a high degree of satisfaction on the part of the students as well with the faculty and the quality of the teaching-learning environment to which they are exposed. The faculty appears to be realistic in adjusting the academic programs of the College to the changing environment of the campus and of public higher education in New York. The work in progress related to the revisions of the general education requirements and the excellent initiatives of developing interdisciplinary and interdivisional collaborations as a response to the new certification standards for teaching education illustrate these particular characteristics of the faculty.

Without question, the major concern on campus is the high degree of reliance on adjunct faculty. As stated in the self study, the adjunct faculty outnumber the full time faculty in several departments and academic programs. Fully 50% of all the courses are taught by adjunct faculty. In general it was stated by chairs as well as by faculty during the evaluation visit that the screening and recruitment process of these adjunct faculty is done very carefully and that the use of adjuncts allows diversity in course offerings. Orientation, class observations once a semester, and coordination of courses are mechanisms used in an effort to ensure quality in classroom offerings. Nevertheless, the fact that contractual adjuncts only teach and are not required to keep office hours or participate in other important academic responsibilities such as student advisement and departmental and college-wide committees has resulted in a substantial overload for full-time faculty, particularly in departments with large numbers of majors. It is important to note that the faculty has adjusted to the changing environment in the College by developing diverse ways to handle some of the issues the College faces. For example although the typical faculty member teaches 21 hours in an academic year, most are very much involved in research and service as evidenced by the multiple grants, fellowships and research awards earned in recent years. This heavy workload, however, seems to be stretching the human resources of the institution too thinly.

Nevertheless, the faculty is deeply committed to fulfill the college's mission and recognizes the importance of the institution in the unique and special community it serves. This clearly indicates that Lehman has a most critical resource namely, a faculty ready and willing to explore and develop new initiatives. The planning process and program reviews at the department level have helped mobilize this energy with the result that positive ferment is found throughout the College.

There have been some positive developments recently. During the past two years, 56 new faculty members have been hired, which appears to have had a very positive impact on faculty expertise and morale. However, this only begins to reverse a twenty-year downward trend in faculty positions. This will have to be sustained for the College to be able to make a meaningful reduction in its reliance on adjuncts.

Teaching

Key elements of Lehman College's Mission Statement are its references to the promotion of excellence, to develop the ability to think analytically and creatively and to advance the understanding and use of emerging technologies. The site visit interviews of faculty and students corroborated the College's high regard for these objectives as they converge in the practice of teaching, both through the perception and commitments expressed and through the anecdotal examples discussed. We found no contradiction to the Task Force's relevant conclusions of the analysis of the responses of the questionnaire distributed to faculty, department chairs and students for assessment purposes, which indicated a general student satisfaction with teaching at Lehman and with access to professors. Students perceive "passion" in the dedication of professors to teaching and that professors were willing to set out time to work with them. It was apparent as well among faculty interviewed that teaching is a highly valued endeavor.

Continued attention and nurturing of such a commitment is always needed, but it is more so at present especially in the light of the challenges faced by the College. Among the challenges that call for new modes of attention to teaching, at least five were apparent to the team. First, the faculty is engaged in a promising reflection on the function and content of the general education component of the undergraduate degree. The results of such deliberations will surely call for new approaches to the teaching-learning enterprise not necessarily contemplated in the previous deliberations during the decade of the eighties. Second, the recently enacted regulations on admission criteria and the predicted growth in the transfer student population seem to announce further changes in the student profile that challenge the match of interests and background of faculty and students. Third, the new regulations for teacher certification present challenges to the curriculum for teacher preparation and to the deliberations undertaken by the committee of the faculty that deals with the relationship between the undergraduate liberal arts curriculum and the education curriculum. Fourth, new tools and strategies for assessment will surely be required by external agencies, the results of which will be available for analysis towards the improvement of the teaching-learning activity. Given the comparatively large numbers of adjunct professors, such an assessment has added

significance. Fifth, the focus on technology adopted by the College has the potential, as more computer and distance education technology is becoming available on campus, of affecting teaching and learning in ways that one cannot assume can always be foreseen. Indeed, the Task Force on Teaching indicates that no college-wide policy regarding the use of technology for teaching has been articulated and that instruction on the use of technology as a classroom instrument must be made readily available. Both of these indications have implicit recommendations that the team strongly supports. A particular test case in this regard, which must be addressed in the near future, is presented by the distance education activities recently initiated.

The Task Force on Teaching seems to have focused on its charge in principally the fact-finding or field-assessment approach so pertinent to the Self-Study. The results of its deliberations as reported in the Self Study document may be of continued usefulness and become a starting point for a more structured longer term reflection on the practice of teaching as a scholarly activity, a continuous process which may assist the College in sustaining the preeminence of this major mission component. Strategies such as "classroom research" may be explored and found to be recognizable as a scholarly activity, and participation encouraged further in seeking grants directed to the continuous improvement of student learning. Both tenured, recently hired and adjunct faculty may benefit from such initiatives, which may also be linked to a faculty development program and to a formal assessment plan.

The strengthening of institutional research can be of assistance to departments, as part of their own self-studies, in striving to find an optimum match between faculty and students as members of a teaching-learning community both in the general education and the major or specialty spheres of activity.

Library and Learning Resources

The Library of Lehman College is a modern four-story facility strategically placed on the campus. The building is bright, functional and well-suited to its mission. The space encompassed within the structure is adequate but limited to 75% of the ideal recommended by ACRL (Association of College and Research Libraries). The next phase of the College Master plan includes an expansion which will, when completed, fully comply with ACRL guidelines.

The Library staff understands the mission of the College and has shaped its program to conform to this mission.

The Library is technology rich. It enjoys access by 50 terminals to the CUNY Notis Union catalog of book holdings. It additionally houses a locally built and run CD-ROM Local Area Network which is connected via T-1 access to the internet. The Library

fully utilizes this capability with an impressive array of resources accessed via this network. Students and faculty in the Self Study survey react with enthusiasm to the provision of these resources giving the Library high marks in this realm.

The traditional book collection has historically been an important strength of the Library, exceeding optimal ACRL guidelines substantially.

The Library enjoys strong and progressive leadership. The Chief Librarian has earned the recognition of his peers in CUNY. He has been elected to the leadership of the Council of CUNY Head Librarians, which is responsible for the selection and of the next generation of technology for CUNY libraries.

The librarians all have ALA accredited M.L.S. degrees and second subject master degrees. This excellent academic preparation enables them to fully function as peers of the faculty with whom they interact in programmatic activities. The staffing level in the Library reflects the campus-wide situation at Lehman College in that it is well under recommended standards by the ACRL. This is most particularly seen in the support staff unit, which is woefully beneath recommended levels.

CUNY should be recognized for its progressive policies concerning academic rank for Librarians. As faculty, the librarians are empowered to interact with teaching faculty fully. The academic program has benefited greatly with the students reporting in their survey that fully one half of their courses contain Library research components.

The Library should be commended for the emphasis and success the Bibliographic Instruction Program has enjoyed on the Lehman campus. The determination of the staff is also demonstrated in their success in maintaining hours of operation for the Library. The administration is commended for making this possible.

Library statistical measures portray a vibrant and growing program. Circulation, Research Methods Classes and interlibrary loans all have increased steadily in the last several years.

The change in the technological platform on which the new Library system will be based requires closer coordination between the Computer Center and the Library than is necessary for the current technology. Study of the impact of the new platforms on the technological landscape at Lehman should be undertaken prior to the point at which CUNY implements the new system in order to help ensure that current reporting relationships will adequately serve the needs of the institution in the future.

The adaptation of new General Education requirements will likely involve planning on the part of library staff to accommodate the research component that is an integral part of the General Education approach. The library should be included as early in this planning process as possible to ensure that it can support the General Education demands.

The strength of the Library collection reflects the noble tradition of CUNY. Dramatic cuts in the acquisitions budget threaten to undermine the integrity of this asset by making it impossible to keep materials current. This investment must be recognized for the asset that it brings to the College in the budget process.

Middle States has published guidelines concerning Library support for off campus course offerings. The Library should systematically study these guidelines to begin to apply these policies to the program at Lehman.

Finance and Facilities

Lehman College expenditures are monitored using an annual budget prepared based on the annual appropriation assignment made by the City University of New York (CUNY) System. Revenues are administered centrally by the system and, therefore, the college has no direct control over the manner these are allocated back to the institution. The level of funding has remained relatively constant over the last eight years, not even keeping pace with inflation.

At the same time, the college has been asked to take on a greater financial burden by assuming responsibility over programs initiated at the campus level by the previous chancellor, such as CUNY's security initiative and the Academic Program Allocation. The college also has assumed the financial responsibility of funding contractual salary increases mandated by union contract negotiations. The preliminary 1999-2000 State Executive Budget seems to indicate that city budget initiatives will result in a further net reduction of resources to the institution, be it by reducing Tuition Aid Program (TAP) financial aid eligibility to students or by spreading more thinly the funds for other activities.

The college has been more successful in securing capital funds for construction, facility repairs and equipment by means of general obligation bonds floated by the State of New York and the states Dormitory Authority. This is evidenced by the construction of the new athletic facility (APEX) and the Information Technology Center (ITC).

The college presently is developing mechanisms to enhance its financial situation by improving internal controls, more closely monitoring its operating budget, seeking funding from grants, partnerships with other organizations, and developing of alumni and corporate giving. Although these alternatives will make additional funds available in the short term to run programs, they cannot be relied upon to support these expenditures in the long term.

Despite the overall funding difficulties faced by the College, discussions with faculty, staff and administrators made it apparent that the budget process at Lehman

College is quite decentralized, allowing for the various division-level groups to participate in the discussion process and influence allocations at the department and division levels.

It is evident that Lehman College would benefit from having greater control over its finances. At the same time, the present atmosphere is not conducive to obtaining funding at the levels that are necessary for providing consistent support for some of the programs, especially those relating to the development of programs related to new information technologies. The team is concerned that the outlook for the immediate future indicates that the College will not be able to provide the same level of quality education to which it is accustomed.

As previously mentioned, the College has been successful in obtaining the necessary funds for capital improvements, as evidenced by the general condition of the buildings, the new construction of the athletic facility and the Information Technology Center.

The College has several major and minor projects in process that will continue to improve and maintain the excellent facilities and equipment made available to the students. The students have expressed their satisfaction with the general sense of community that results from having a campus as well maintained as Lehman. The college is commended for its efforts to provide a physical environment conducive to the well being of the students.

Student Services

The administrators, staff, and faculty of the college are to be commended for articulating a clear understanding and agreement with the mission of the college. There was an overwhelming belief in the capabilities of students who come to Lehman and the college's responsibilities toward meeting their needs. Students spoke glowingly of the help that faculty and staff members give them on a regular basis. They felt that these individuals clearly go out of their way to help them, work with them, and truly have a willingness and desire to help them succeed.

Within the Student Affairs Division the staff spoke very highly of the Dean of Students and of the support he gives them and their programs. They feel that he gives them the freedom to try new things and to do what they think is best for their departments. They state that despite the lack of funds available to them his support made it easier for them to do their jobs.

However, the retrenchments of the mid-90's have had a profound impact on the Division's ability to meet the needs of students and achieve the college's goals. Until this year, the overall funding of the division has been woefully inadequate (\$30,000 total

OTPS). While this allocation improved during this current budget cycle, fiscal and human resources remain a major concern for the student life area.

The APEX is a wonderful facility of which students and staff spoke highly. The Student Life Building, although small, is well utilized and seems to serve as a gathering spot and comfortable place for students. The list of planned student activities for the semester is extensive and appears to serve a variety of students and their needs.

Steps have been taken to rebuild the student activities program. Experienced and committed staff have been hired to work with student groups. These individuals have good rapport with the students and already have made important efforts toward assessing needs and providing essential services. The staff has developed plans to help students participate in campus government, increase the publication of newspapers, improve the frequency and variety of evening programs, and increase the overall participation in activities.

It is clear that there is a great deal of commitment on the part of the Student Affairs staff to the students at Lehman College. They are very concerned about the success of their students and that they persist through graduation. The staff understands that their roles comprise more than what their titles might suggest, and they seem willing to meet the tasks set out before them.

The College has begun to re-establish essential student service personnel and functions that were eliminated by the retrenchments of a few years ago. The Career Services Office is an example of this restoration. While still small, the office staff are enthusiastic, energetic, and eager to help students achieve career goals. This office is an important part of the overall mission of the college and this renewed commitment will help in the fulfillment of that mission.

The Dean of Students is very concerned about the issue of assessment and is working toward making that a more focused part of the work of the division. Currently, the Child Care, Student Health, and Student Activities Centers are all involved in assessment efforts. The Office of Institutional Research will assist in the administration of CUNY wide surveys and will help the division with their efforts to measure outcomes.

The changes in the high school graduation requirements present a significant recruitment concern. The department is very much understaffed for recruiting an incoming class that will sustain enrollment. In addition, today's competitive admissions market requires advertising. The current advertising budget of \$60,000 is inadequate and will need to be increased if effective advertising is to occur. While the undergraduate recruitment plan supports the philosophy that recruitment is the responsibility of the entire college community, additional full time admissions personnel are needed to attend all of the high school, community college, and outreach activities essential to the recruitment effort. The college is strongly encouraged to add new personnel in this area.

A concern often expressed by students, staff and faculty is the lack of an on-

campus counseling center. Staff in the Admissions, Financial Aid, Career Services, Student Activities, and Academic Advising Offices all spoke of the need for counseling services. Students present themselves in these areas with concerns other than those specifically addressed in their office functions, and the staff try to work with these students as best they can. However, the college should be concerned not only about the need to help students, but also possible liability concerns. While a Title III grant is proposed to help correct this problem, the College is encouraged to make provisions to establish a Counseling Center with or without this outside assistance.

It is difficult to separate the issues of registration and academic advising, as students see them as one and the same. However, for the purpose of this discussion, there are concerns presented by both areas. As the College knows, the registration process is antiquated. The proposed voice registration system will help update this process, however, it is noted that the issues of block credit for transfer evaluation and the failure of the current system to enforce a prerequisite check will continue to frustrate students and faculty unless changes are also made in this area.

The college is strongly encouraged to add additional human resources to the area of Advising and Standards. The staff is doing its best to meet the needs of the student body, but the sheer numbers and the diverse duties of the staff make this an overwhelming and impossible task for them to manage.

A frustration shared by students and staff was the lack of a pre-registration process, and the difficulty that registering just prior to the semester causes them. While faculty and staff are mindful of the outside needs of the students (i.e., family and children), students feel that the current system is a disincentive to degree completion. They feel that not having an academic schedule far in advance does not allow them to plan for the future in ways that will help them juggle academic and personal needs. A thorough review of course offerings and the academic planning process may be extremely useful to the entire campus and help meet the needs of both students and faculty.

The College is encouraged to revise the New Student Orientation process and expand the program. Students spoke of the need to have more of an introduction to the campus and help learning how to navigate its systems.

The above concerns are all issues of enrollment management and are critical to the College's efforts to improve student retention. It is recommended that the college explore the possibility of hiring a consultant in this area in order to assist it in addressing these issues in a concerted and comprehensive way.

Technology

In many respects Lehman College has plotted a solid course of where it wants to go in the direction of technology, but it currently has limited control over its ability to get there. Its base operating budget has a notable absence of any funding that could be used for the purchase or support of new technologies. It appears that the college has been placed in a situation where current and anticipated needs for new technologies must be supported mainly by one-time funding sources. Although it has begun to address alternative and more stable funding sources, its ability to obtain such funds is unknown at this time.

Part of the Information Technology Plan addresses “Issues, Challenges and Recommendations.” It is noteworthy that the following items are included in that report.

- Continuous upgrading to state-of-the-art equipment, to give students access to the most current technology and software.
- Faculty development and support has become and will remain one of the biggest challenges to face.
- Staffing of labs. The ability for satellite labs to remain open more hours.

It is without question that each of the above issues will need to be addressed. In fact, the last two are current issues. However, at this point it is impossible to formulate a well-defined plan as to how these issues will be resolved. And, it is possible that without an increased and stable funding source, they might not be able to be resolved successfully.

In spite of pending challenges, Lehman College has demonstrated an amazing talent for taking maximum advantage of existing human and fiscal resources. Lehman has done a remarkable job of providing students with an education that makes excellent use of technology in spite of externally imposed obstacles related to the budget.

Lehman College has assumed an ambitious agenda for providing students, faculty and academic support services with excellent technological resources to support all aspects of the college mission. And, it has demonstrated the ability to cover part of that agenda through exceptional effort and imaginative direction.

Many academic departments in several divisions of the college have already incorporated technology into their programs in such a way as to provide opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to Lehman College students, and area high schools. Some noteworthy examples are:

- Art and Mathematics/Computer Science offer a collaborative program in computer modeling, animation, and design that both serves the college’s student population well and effectively incorporates technology into it.

- Other departments such as Anthropology are effectively using technology to improve instruction. For example, they are using computers to allow access (by large audiences) to the department's one-of-a-kind fossil cast collection, which was formerly available to a single student at a time.

(Other examples are listed on page 100 of the self-study.)

The newly-opened Information Technology Center (ITC) provides Lehman College with a facility of the highest quality that offers exceptional academic enrichment opportunities for the entire college community through the effective use of technology in all forms. This facility will allow it to improve on the very important role that the College plays in servicing the needs of everyone living in the Bronx.

The currently available, and proposed expansion of the Lehman College fiber optic network backbone offers the opportunity for successful completion of the "total connectivity" project noted in the colleges Informational Technology Plan.

Lehman College's rather massive commitment to provide the highest quality of community service and distance learning through the effective use of technology is commendable. The list of examples is extensive. Some examples are:

- The Bronx Information Network links K-12 schools and community service organizations to Lehman College for the purpose of distance learning as part the Urban Systemic Initiative and the Bronx Educational Alliance.
- Hispanic Educational Telecommunications System connects a consortium of universities in the United States and Puerto Rico for the purpose of dissemination and sharing of instructional materials.
- Bronxnet provides locally produced community service features to 200,000+ cable subscribers in the Bronx.

(A complete list of examples is found between pages 6-11 of the Information Technology Plan and pages 103-104 of the Self-Study.)

The staffing levels within Information Technology and academic departments and divisions appears to be insufficient to provide current and anticipated support functions related to Lehman College's commitment to the use of technology in support of its academic mission.

Progress into the age of technology varies greatly across different sectors of the institution, and current funding sources limit the college's ability to address this situation.

Given the uncertain nature of the sources of funding that are currently being used to purchase specialized hardware and network upgrades, it is questionable whether Lehman College will be able to provide a timely and necessary technological

infrastructure that will be needed to take advantage of new generations in information technology.

As advanced as the applications of information technology are at Lehman College in direct support of the academic mission, it appears that a different situation exists in areas such as the student course registration and providing students with their grades in courses. Lehman College is just beginning to move in directions such as a phone registration.

Lehman College has begun to address issues such as what role the Department of Information Technology should play in college-wide purchases and support of items such as computer hardware and software; and what role it should play in the design of satellite instructional and open computer laboratories. It also has begun to reorganize responsibility for the distribution of various technological services, taking into consideration factors such as cost effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of delivery. The Information Technology Plan addresses the current state of affairs, along with directions for the next five years. The degree to which control over information technology should be centralized is open for debate. At the very least, most agree that central control should be used to eliminate inefficiencies, guarantee cost effectiveness and optimize delivery. It appears that the current direction taken by Lehman College in this regard has taken into consideration these factors; and it has also allowed individual academic departments to have control over those aspects of technology which they do best. The whole notion of long range planning in the area of information technology is relatively new at the college. Also, much of what has been happening in this regard is relatively new to a significant portion of the campus. Therefore, special care needs to be taken to guarantee that "what is not broken won't be fixed", and "what needs repair gets attention." From all indications, this currently appears to be the case. However, long term success in this matter requires continuation of the already demonstrated spirit of cooperation that exists between academic departments and the Department of Information Technology.

In summary, Lehman College has made enormous strides with respect to the use of technology in support of achieving its mission. In some cases what it is doing is exceptional and it puts it at the head of the pack. Lehman has a tradition of using technology very effectively in various showcase academic applications; and its use of technology for community service and distance learning is outstanding.

In some areas the College now has facilities such as the new Information Technology Center that will afford it the opportunity to make up for identified shortcoming. Finally, in some areas Lehman has its challenges. In particular, it needs to address the disparities in technological literacy that exist across the institution. It also needs to figure out some way of maintaining what it has, and adding what is needed, while being faced with the dilemma that their current level and sources of funding may not allow these things to happen.