

Lehman College COACHE Task Force
Recommendations to the Lehman College President and Provost

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Task Force Members:

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Overview:

Based on analysis of results of the 2019 COACHE Survey, the Task Force initially articulated four starting recommendations to address areas of challenge and capitalize on strengths. These were presented at the Lehman College General Faculty Meeting on November 20, 2019 and updates were shared at the February 26, 2020 Lehman College General Faculty Meeting. Additional recommendations followed as the Task Force continued to analyze the results and meet with various constituents, including with the Lehman College Senate Governance Committee and with Associate Provost Victor Brown. The recommendations that follow reflect the outcome of this year-long process and the new reality and limitations caused by the current COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Mentoring: Institutionalizing a pipeline to faculty success

Mentoring scores across all categories, including Associate Professors, Faculty of Color, and Women Faculty, have not only dropped since the previous implementation of the COACHE SURVEY in 2015, but also have fallen into the lowest 30% category, in relation to comparable institutions. Because mentoring is intimately linked to faculty satisfaction and success, institutionalizing a pipeline promoting faculty satisfaction and success at all levels is a top priority.

As a result, we recommend re-instituting a staff position dedicated to faculty development, including new faculty success. This could include recreating this position, which existed at Lehman College until approximately five years ago. Alternatively, it could include identifying a current staff member to take on the role of coordinating faculty development and mentorship. We also recommend that Deans and Associate Deans investigate the faculty mentoring opportunities in place at the various schools and expand or create mentoring opportunities as needed. For instance, this could include pairing more senior faculty volunteers with junior faculty mentees.

As a final recommendation, we suggest the development of a leadership pipeline for faculty who wish to transition to administrative roles. We recommend that the President and Provost explore the possibility of funding an MBA program for such faculty in order to build knowledge and skills necessary to transition from the classroom and research to leadership and administration.

2. Facilities and Work Resources: Systematizing support to achieve pedagogical excellence

Scores on the 2019 COACHE Survey indicate that faculty satisfaction with Facilities and Work Resources, specifically in the areas of Classrooms, Equipment and Clerical and Administrative support, have dropped significantly. Excellence in pedagogical practice requires that facilities and work resources meet basic needs such as relevance and usability. Classrooms need to be safe, well lit, and climate-controlled, and outfitted with up-to-date and functioning equipment. Departments need clerical and administrative support to manage these basic needs.

We recommend that once class and faculty work resume on campus that the Lehman College Senate Campus Life and Facilities Committee develop a plan to reassess adequacy of and satisfaction with facilities and work resources. At that time, surveys or focus groups might be used to collect additional data.

3. Tenure Expectations and Tenure Policies: Promoting trust and success

Trusting that promotion and tenure processes and policies promote faculty satisfaction and success across disciplines is a key component of faculty satisfaction. COACHE Survey 2019 scores in the Tenure Expectations and Tenure Policies categories indicate that Lehman faculty at all levels are less satisfied with existing tenure and promotion processes than they were in 2015, when these areas were first highlighted as needing improvement. While some steps have been taken, more needs to be done.

As a result, the COACHE Task Force recommends that the F P & B continue to build on efforts already underway to minimize confusion in tenure and promotion processes and policies across disciplines. This includes continued focus on departmental tenure statements. The recommendations we make under point 1 would also support this area, as mentoring and more targeted faculty development support are directly related to the tenure and promotion process.

4. Campus Climate Survey: Moving beyond the limitations of COACHE

Significantly, the 2019 COACHE Survey only addressed job satisfaction among full-time faculty, excluding part-time faculty, and administrative and clerical staff from the process, despite their comprising the greatest number of Lehman College employees and providing essential contributions to the college. Because the college is committed to inclusivity at all levels and believes that it is a key component of satisfaction and success, the concerns and voices of all members of our community need to be heard and taken into account.

As a result, the COACHE Task Force originally recommended that members of the Lehman College Strategic Planning Committee form a 45-Day Task Force drawing from its Faculty and Staff Success and Diversity and Inclusion sub-committees to implement a Campus Climate Survey in order to assess job satisfaction among part-time, administrative and clerical staff, and articulate recommendations to address areas of concern. This recommendation echoed one made in the recent MSCHE self-study document.

However, since making this initial recommendation, the President appointed a Campus Climate Task Force. That Task Force has recommended a campus climate survey and offered more specific recommendations in this area to the President.