

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY  
MIDDLE STATES SELF-STUDY REPORT (2012-2013)  
MISSION STATEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

January 28, 2011

Brooklyn Campus – Dance Studio, Pratt Building

Present

Antonia Alafri '98, Robert Altholz, George Baroudi, Sylvia Blake Francis Bonsignore, Margaret Boorstein Jennifer Browne, Kimberly Volpe-Casalino, Claude Cheek, Liz Ciabocchi, Jared Ciborowski, James Clarke, David Cohen, Margaret Cuonzo, Joan Digby, John Ehrenberg, Gabrielle Eskin, Paul Forestell, Heather Gibbs, Cris Gleicher, Richard Gorman, Sheila Gunther, William Gustafson, Gale Haynes, Lori Knapp, Mary M. Lai '42, John Lonie, John Lutz, Kathy Hill-Miller, Kathy Morley, Theresa Mullarkey, Lynette Phillips, Daniel Rodas, Jaclyn Russo, Ed Shorin, David Steinberg, David Taft, Diana Thompson, Joram Warmund, Lauren Williams, Philip Wong

Unable to attend

Samantha Bishal, Bob Jahelka '85, Jeffrey Kane, Carol Kennedy, Eric Krasnoff, Leon Lachman, Denise Larkin, Arwa Mohamed, Alister Murray '96, Joel Press, Joshua Ritts, Gladys Schrynemakers, Kathryn Skelly '10, Ron Sylvestri, Ed Travaglianti

Discussion

University President David Steinberg welcomed all attendees to the second meeting of the University Mission Statement Committee. He explained that the process of examining and evaluating the University's existing mission statement would be "messy," collaborative, engaging and worthwhile. As part of its reaccreditation initiative, the committee must take a critical look at the relevancy of the mission statement, and must determine the extent to which the University has been successful in delivering on the mission. There will be no easy answers and there will be many perspectives and dimensions to consider. The goal is to arrive at a consensus and a statement that reflects the reality of Long Island University.

Drafting & Oversight Committee Co-Chairs Lori Knapp and Heather Gibbs provided an overview of the organizational structure of the self-study effort. Four Working Groups, aligned with the priorities of the University's Strategic Agenda, will be charged with addressing the Research Questions that will serve as the focus of the self-review. The 14 standards defined in the Middle States "Characteristics of Excellence" publication must be addressed in the final Self-Study Report, for which the Drafting & Oversight Committee will have primary oversight. Central to the work of the Drafting & Oversight Committee, as well as the Working Groups, must be the University's mission statement, as this defines the institution, articulates its values and serves as a roadmap for moving the University forward. Given the University's commitment to student-centeredness, it is not surprising that a large portion of the Self-Study Report will be devoted to addressing those areas that deal most directly with student success, both in and out of the classroom.

President Steinberg reminded the committee that the purpose of its early work is not to rewrite the University's mission statement. Any re-statement of the mission statement must be informed by the findings of the Working Groups after they have conducted a comprehensive review and assessment of the University. The charge to the Mission Statement Committee initially is to engage in thoughtful dialogue with all stakeholders, to ask questions about the validity and relevancy of the existing mission statement, and to ensure that the Working Groups reflect on their work through the lens of the University's mission.

The committee acknowledged the difficulty of trying to define the essential meaning of the catchphrase "Access and Excellence," which often serves as a short-hand substitute for the University's mission statement. Faculty, students and administrators agreed that the phrase conveys a sense of opportunity for students and a high-quality institution, but suggested that there are many nuanced interpretations of how it is realized in individual student experiences. Several committee members noted that, given the unique campus cultures, the mission statement may have very different meanings to people who work or study at those locations. Some committee members noted that the rising costs of private higher education make access to the University difficult, if not impossible, without a greater institutional commitment to providing financial assistance.

Committee members generally agreed that a mission statement should be clear, direct and inspirational. It should be grounded in reality so that it does not promise an experience the University cannot deliver. A well-written mission statement can differentiate the University from other institutions. Should the self-study and assessment process reveal a need to revise the University's mission statement, committee members offered many suggestions for thoughts or concepts that might be incorporated in the new language, including:

- Empowerment
- Opportunity / Equal opportunity / Extended opportunity
- Technology-enhanced (access)
- *Social* access
- *Meaningful* access / Opening the door to... / Gateway
- *Sustained* access
- Portal
- Openness / Barrier-free
- International / Global
- Service / Research / Scholarship / Knowledge
- Transformation(al)
- Career / Professional Goals
- Value-added
- Tools / Catalyst / Goals
- Journey
- Overcoming obstacles
- Challenging
- Personal pride / Satisfaction
- Traditional and non-traditional (including graduate and non-matriculated) students
- Passion
- Community / Home / Family
- Support (Nurturing / Humane / Caring)
- Support (Financial / Academic / Remediation)
- Investment (in students)
- Energy / Interactivity / Engagement

- Who our students are (first-generation students, family values)
- Who we are (historic tradition / institutional pride)
- Unified institution / Integrated University
- Unique structure / Different campuses / Different cultures / Different programs
- Liberal arts education

The Mission Statement Committee will meet next when the initial results of the Working Groups' research have yielded findings for review or discussion. Until that time, committee members were encouraged to share any additional thoughts about the University's mission to President Steinberg, Dr. Knapp or Ms. Gibbs.