Good Afternoon and Happy New Year.

Welcome to the first College Council meeting of the 2011-2012 academic year.

NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

I am pleased to note that the start of this new year has been an auspicious one as the College has already achieved a significant institutional milestone - the completion of our new Strategic Plan, *Many Voices, One Vision.* Copies of the new Strategic
Plan are being distributed to the campus community. While it is very important for members of the College community to have a hard copy of the plan, you can also read it on the Strategic Planning Website.

Capturing the true essence of shared governance at CSI, *Many Voices, One Vision* provides a collective road map for advancing the institution in three principal areas – student success, faculty and staff professional development, and the relationship between College and community.

I want to express my deep appreciation to the members of the Institutional Planning Committee,
the 90 members of the Strategic Direction Committees, and the many other faculty, staff, and students whose invaluable contributions made the completion of this plan possible.

**FISCAL PLANNING**

As I wrote to the College Community last June, CUNY and the College of Staten Island continue to endure significant budget reductions. In light of the continuing fiscal challenges faced by CUNY and CSI, we will need to engage in sound and effective planning of our resource allocation in order to implement the goals and recommendations of our Strategic Plan. Continuing with the inclusive and
transparent budget process followed last year, members of the senior staff recently met with the College Council Budget Committee, the College Wide Budget Committee, department chairs, and student leaders to review the fiscal year 2011 expenditure report, which has not been finalized by CUNY, and the fiscal year 2012 budget allocation. We also engaged campus constituents in recommendations for a proposed investment plan for fiscal year 2012. The plan provides for targeted investments in 20 new faculty positions, several critical non-instructional positions, and in OTPS areas including the Library, academic support
services, faculty and staff professional development activities, laboratory upgrades, buildings and grounds, technology, and communications. We will continue these discussions as we move forward to effectively manage our resources.

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS**

While *Many Voices, One Vision* charts ambitious yet obtainable goals to advance student success, professional development, and community relations, it is also important to reflect upon and celebrate the many achievements that we have already made in these critical areas.
This fall, we have attained record student enrollment for the 5th consecutive year, which follows a record number of undergraduate applications for admission. A 6% increase in the number of entering baccalaureate students translates to our largest number – ever. The College has increased its first-time baccalaureate freshmen by over 66% from 2007 to 2011. Moreover, the number of entering baccalaureate students who indicated that CSI was their first choice institution increased by 9%. Student Success is often defined by graduation rates, and our success is reflected in the number of baccalaureate degrees conferred. We
should all be very pleased that the number of baccalaureate degrees conferred has increased by 22% over the last four years.

CSI continues to attract outstanding students into our baccalaureate programs as reflected in their academic profiles, which increase each year. The College Admissions Average and mean SAT score of entering baccalaureate students have risen to 84.5 and 1013 respectively. I want to acknowledge the work of Mary Beth Reilly, Manny Esperance, and the enrollment management staff and, of course, Provost Fritz and his staff for their outstanding leadership in managing the College’s enrollment.
Our selective programs are thriving. The Macaulay Honors Program recorded the highest enrollment in its history with 46 new students who arrive with an increased College Admissions Average of 92 and a mean SAT score of 1301. From 2007-2011 total enrollment in the Macaulay Honors Program grew by over 60%. Similarly, the Verrazano School recorded its highest College Admissions Average and mean SAT score since its inception. The Teacher Education Honors Academy admitted 12 students who have been accepted into the National Science Foundation Noyce Scholarship Program, which provides support to high achieving
students preparing to teach secondary math and science.

It is incumbent upon us to meet the needs of this changing student population. In support of student academic excellence, we celebrate the arrival of an extraordinary group of new faculty and several new administrative staff. This accomplished and diverse cohort of faculty and staff represent some of the most promising talent in their respective fields, and we welcome them to the CSI family.

In support of student preparation and success, this summer CSI implemented a completely revised and expanded New Student Orientation program
involving the contributions of virtually every department on campus. All incoming freshman were required to attend a two-day orientation during which they received essential information relating to their first-year experience highlighted by academic advisement services and the registration of classes. I want to take a moment to thank the many faculty and staff who participated in this new initiative to fundamentally change the way we prepare and orient new students to CSI. I would like to specifically single out the Division of Student Affairs, the Enrollment Management staff, Academic Department Chairs, the Office of the Provost, and
the College Student Orientation Leaders for their contributions to this successful endeavor.

I am very pleased to report that on September 7th, the Board of Trustees Committee on Facilities Planning and Management passed a resolution to provide a “CUNY guarantee” to assist the College in securing the financing to construct student resident facilities at CSI. The impact of this resolution, which is expected to be approved by the full Board of Trustees later this month, will also fundamentally change the student experience at CSI.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The College’s commitment to faculty and staff professional development is strongly reflected in *Many Voices, One Vision*. On September 14th, CSI officially opened its new Faculty Center for Professional Development. The Center, which is located on the second floor of the Library, offers a dedicated space for professional development workshops and enhanced opportunities for interactions and collaborations among all faculty through a broad spectrum of leadership, pedagogical innovation, and scholarship support activities. A full calendar of professional development opportunities
taking place this fall has already been developed, and I encourage all faculty to visit and participate in the Center’s offerings.

_Many Voices, One Vision_ also recommends identification of “existing and new professional development opportunities for Higher Education Officers and other non-instructional staff.” Reflecting the importance of furthering the professional development of HEOs and other staff, I have made it a priority to immediately address the recommendation.
COMMUNITY

This past Saturday, members of the senior administration, student affairs staff, and students participated in the Staten Island Black Heritage Family Day, which included marching with a CSI Banner in the signature parade event. Our significant presence at this celebration is illustrative of the tremendous efforts we have made over the past several years to strengthen the bonds between CSI and the Staten Island Community.

We continue to develop new and exciting ways to engage our community partners. On October 1st, Homecoming will be held at the College for alumni,
the Staten Island community, and the rest of our CSI family. A full day of activities, which will “kick-off” with the annual Breast Cancer Walkathon, is planned for alumni who will be coming home to CSI. I encourage everyone to join us in reconnecting with friends, colleagues and former students.

The Walkathon serves as a reminder that CSI continues to be a leader in health and wellness on Staten Island. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the College’s leadership in implementing CUNY’s new tobacco-free policy. This summer, the College initiated its “Change is in the Air” campaign which
restricts tobacco use to 12 designated areas throughout the campus as an initial step leading to the eventual ban on tobacco use effective July 1, 2012. I remind everyone that it is up to all of us to respectfully promote compliance among our colleagues and students to advance the health and wellness of the campus community. I want to thank the members of the CSI Tobacco-Free Environmental Task Force, chaired by Professor Richard Gid Powers and Linda Conte, for their great leadership and guidance in this effort.
MIDDLE STATES

Our institutional milestones continue this academic year with our Middle States reaccreditation process. I am pleased to announce that the initial draft of our Self-Study report will be disseminated to the Middle States Steering Committee, the Working Group members, and eventually to the entire campus community for feedback and suggestions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Moving forward, September and October at the College offer a multitude of activities and events which include celebration of Latina/Latino Heritage
and Italian Heritage months. Please join us in celebrating the inauguration of the Latin American, Caribbean, and Latina/o Studies program on October 6th from 1:30-3:30 pm in the Green Dolphin Lounge. I am pleased to announce that October has also been designated “Recognition Month” and will feature numerous celebrations of the accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students.

CONCLUSION

Guided by our new Strategic Plan, I look forward to working together with faculty, staff, and students this academic year and beyond to fulfill the promise of the College’s new Mission, Vision, and
Values as we usher in a new era of innovation, creativity, and collaboration.

Thank you.