



July 13, 2023

Colleagues:

I hope the summer has been treating you well and that you are getting some much-deserved downtime away from campus. It is important that we recharge our batteries, as the start of another academic year is less than six weeks away! As for today, I write with updates as to recent activities that you may find of interest.

This week, members of the Cabinet and I engaged in a day-long retreat where we discussed plans related to enrollment (recruitment and retention), infrastructure and technology, community engagement, campus climate and culture, and strategic investments. We also discussed how our nascent Strategic Plan will scaffold with the University's recently completed and newly approved strategic roadmap (see announcement [here](#)) The coming year will be one of reflection (including analysis of our recently conducted HERI and COACHE surveys) and action, particularly as it relates to setting the course for the next iteration of our institutional Strategic Plan.

This past academic year, and working through the Institutional Planning Committee of the College Council, we engaged multiple stakeholders, both on-campus and off, to define the major themes for the coming years. We canvassed faculty, students, staff, alumni, community partners, and others to gauge what our priorities should be. The following themes are the ones that came across most strongly in the surveys and in our conversations. These are listed in no particular order.

1. **Enhancing the Student Experience**—emphasizing access to transformational educational opportunities and career opportunities while supporting robust and engaging campus activities.
2. **Centering Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging**—creating and sustaining a teaching, learning, and working environment that is welcoming to all.

3. **Being Responsible Stewards of—and Advocates for Increased—Resources—** exercising fiscal responsibility while working with CUNY and external partners to better fund the campus.
4. **Supporting Faculty and Staff Development—**enhancing professional development for all employees so that CSI is a campus where all want to work, and where pride of place is paramount.
5. **Committing to a Campus That Has Modern Facilities and Infrastructure—** building a sustainable campus that will serve as an anchor—educational, cultural, and in other ways—for the local community, allowing CSI to retain its role as borough steward and destination campus.

Over the past two weeks, I also had the opportunity to communicate with local, state, and national elected officials. Advocacy on behalf of CSI and CUNY in particular, and of public higher education in general, is perhaps more important now than at any other time. With looming budget crises and with Supreme Court decisions that threaten our institutions' core mission of access and affordability, we must continue to defend academic freedom, champion academic excellence, and serve the greater good of society by speaking out for our students and others. CUNY has a long history of defending these principles, and I know that you will support our efforts to best position the College of Staten Island, and the students whom we serve, moving forward.

Until next time,



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