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TO:	Lehman Community
FROM:	Peter O. Nwosu, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success
SUBJECT:	**Guidelines for Preparing for Summer 2020 and AY 20-21**
DATE:	April 30, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Much of the world as we know it has changed. Less than six weeks ago, we moved very quickly to distance learning and work mode in order to address the disruptions and the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Across the institution, we have met regularly to conduct our work remotely, urgently balancing competing demands, and responding to the needs of our college and our community as best as we can. We have focused on ensuring that our students, faculty, and staff are safe. We have focused on ensuring that teaching and learning can continue for the rest of the semester through distance learning modality.

As we approach the final weeks of the spring semester, we have determined through consultations and conversations with Chairs and Deans, the Provost's and Deans' Council, the President's Cabinet and the COVID-19 Response Team, as well as other stakeholders, that instruction will also continue through distance learning modality for Summer 2020, and indeed will continue online in Fall 2020 *if* conditions do not change. School deans and the leadership of our various divisions and units are urged to work with their faculty and staff members respectively to review their experiences from spring 2020 and make appropriate preparation for virtual delivery of instruction and services in summer and fall 2020. The Office of Online Education and the division of Information Technology will continue to provide support programs and professional development opportunities to further enhance our faculty and students' preparation and readiness for virtual instruction and learning.

As we make these decisions, we will be informed by the guidance provided by CUNY on academic continuity and related matters. We are mindful that a response to the health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are unlikely to remit until a widespread vaccine is available. The health and safety of our faculty, staff, and students, as well as the community we serve remain paramount in our thinking and planning.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies
Making this decision now allows us time to focus on effective planning and preparation to ensure that both summer and fall 2020, as well as spring 2021, are successful. Our planning and preparation must be designed to meet three overarching goals:

- Maximize flexibility and minimize disruption for faculty, staff, and students,
- Maintain our commitment to Lehman's educational mission and strategic priorities, and,
- Protect students, faculty, staff and visitors while being responsive to the changing COVID-19 landscape.

To do this effectively and efficiently, the college seeks to achieve six objectives using the accompanying strategies listed under each objective. Think of the three goals, the six objectives and accompanying strategies as elements of a short-term strategic plan in response to the COVID-19 disruption. At all times, our plan will remain responsive and in alignment with accrediting bodies including NYSED, Middle States, NC-SARA, and those specific to programs.

Objective 1. Enhance the student experience in times of unprecedented disruption:
1) Design, develop and implement preparation for students learning online (i.e. student orientation to online learning, and introduction to the online environment).
2) Minimize registration and scheduling disruptions.
3) Maximize flexibility, using the varied modalities, nontraditional scheduling, etc.
4) Enhance digital dexterity and support student access to technology both on and off campus:
   a. Student access to laptops, Wi-Fi, etc.
   b. Student access to on-campus facilities (where possible)
5) Maintain low density when on campus:
   a. Identify and test streaming services
   b. Purchase and utilize PPE, as appropriate
   c. Continue a mix of online and in-person administrative and instructional support units (advising, bursar, help desk) for the entire year
6) Identify a single platform for advising across all units of the campus
7) Use the CUNY-selected LMS as the initial mode of communication among faculty and students. Encourage all faculty to activate their Blackboard (BB) shell.
8) Maximize across all members of the community the use of Lehman email and Office 365 as the primary form of communication and collaboration.
9) Support novel ways to offer hands-on opportunities outside of the normal schedule
10) Ensure that all technology support is compatible with the CUNY-selected LMS (currently BB).
11) Work with chairs and deans to create a plan for lab-based, clinical, and field-based experiences.
12) Enrollment Management Units (e.g. Director of Student Success and Strategic Persistence Initiatives) will continue to communicate and provide support to the deans and chairs and advisors.
13) Student Affairs and Enrollment Management will provide the necessary support services in a virtual format in a way that is easily accessible, engages students, and links them to the Lehman community.
14) Relax time constraints on course makeup, particularly for completing INC grades.

Objective 2. Enhance faculty and staff professional development and support:
1) Ensure appropriate preparation and support for faculty teaching online, including the use of institutionally supported educational technologies to best practices for teaching online, i.e. CUNY 2-Week Online Workshop and Just in Time Teaching Online Training (Lehman's expedited training for those teaching online because of COVID19).
2) Provide ongoing support to faculty teaching online by means of a faculty mentoring program, instructional design consultations, workshops, and other support while continuing to assess faculty needs.
3) Continue drop-in hours for all supported tools (Blackboard, MS Office 365, Teams) for the year.
4) Have regularly scheduled workshops for pedagogical best practices in online and hybrid modes including institutionally supported educational technologies.
5) Invest in faculty creation of tools and best practices in online and hybrid modalities.
6) Ensure faculty are prepared to accommodate students with disabilities.
7) Develop communication protocols that enable faculty to share best practices across departments, schools, and the college.
8) Offer a robust summer development program to generate videos, other technology and pedagogical materials, including using the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) and the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD) programs.
9) Offer professional development workshops in creating Open Educational Resources (OER), online privacy, and posting scholarship to CUNY's institutional repository, Academic Works.

Objective 3. Improve student learning outcomes and maintain academic quality/integrity across all modalities:
1) Conduct student evaluations of teaching and learning (SETL) on a semester basis.

2) Conduct teaching observations consistent with PSC CUNY guidelines in all modalities. The Office of Online Education will provide support for these observations.
3) Implement (through increased training workshops) the college's uniform 6-step process for assessment of student learning and support programs for academic and AES units.
4) Invest in innovation in online and hybrid modalities
5) Implement tools to verify student identities to ensure academic integrity for online examination procedures e.g. proctoring.
6) Support high-quality online courses consistent with accreditation requirements by developing, piloting, and implementing quality assurance protocols.

Objective 4. Strengthen technology support, minimize hurdles, and create a safe environment:
1) Reconfigure CUNYfirst to permit flexible shifts to either online or in-person modality (CUNYfirst already has the flexibility to indicate synchronous or asynchronous schedule by adding dates and times to the Fully Online modality, please consult the Registrar).
2) Enable chairs to increase caps in response to enrollments without Dean approval.
3) Support laptops for all college staff members to support a low-density workforce.
4) Purchase and use PPE as appropriate, distribute hand sanitizer, and implement aggressive cleaning schedules.
5) Invest in appropriate software that enhances instruction and remote digital activities.
6) Continue the work of the Bronx Transfer Affinity Group (BTAG) and ensure seamless transfer of community college students to Lehman.

Objective 5. Support continued scholarship, creative works, research and discovery:
1) Continue support for faculty writing and publication.
2) Use "travel" funds to continue attendance at virtual conferences.
3) Support grant writing in general but also exploring new funds for COVID-19 scientific and learning research.
4) Enhance support of SoTL – particularly researching on teaching and learning in varied modalities.
5) Support the use of technology and skills we are developing now to form research networks, community outreach, public scholarship.

Objective 6. Create a deeply caring and kind environment that prioritizes physical and emotional safety for all members (students, staff, faculty, community):
1) Ensure the well-being of all members of the community, particularly students, by maintaining the food pantry and ensure access to free online, campus and community-based resources. In this instance, identify faculty, staff, and students to provide peer-based counseling and support; provide opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to receive training/PD in mental health first aid/self-care; and normalize and streamline the use of campus and community-based in person, online and phone-based support resources.
2) Encourage sensitivity and flexibility when addressing student financial and academic challenges (i.e., late payments; poor grades) that may be exacerbated by the pandemic.
3) Consider options for partnering with local organizations consistent with Lehman's role as an anchor institution; enhance workforce development opportunities for people of the region.

Conclusion
Finally, I would like to extend deep appreciation to the members of the Task Force I established two weeks ago to review the *Guidelines* and to provide cost estimates for the strategies outlined above. The Task Force chaired by Interim Dean Pam Mills of the School of Natural and Social Sciences and co-chaired by Research and Sponsored Programs Director, Brandon Begarly, submitted a draft report last Friday. Other members of the group include division of Information Technology Vice President, Ronald Bergmann; Budget and Planning Director, Bethania Ortega; Online Education Director, Olena Zhadko; and, Director of Strategic Persistence Initiatives, Ronald Banks. Their work will greatly inform the next phase of our preparation and planning, which will be focused on first, ensuring a robust

and successful summer 2020, and second, a similar outcome for fall 2020. We will keep the college community apprised of the progress we make on our objectives and strategies.

Please continue to remain safe and well as we navigate this global pandemic. Together, we will overcome this challenge.