



The Society for the Study of Social Problems
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December 11, 2012

Dr. Benno Schmidt, Jr., Chair, Board of Trustees of the City University of New York
Dr. Matthew Goldstein, CUNY Chancellor
535 E. 80th Street
New York, NY 10075

Dear Dr. Schmidt and Chancellor Goldstein:

I am the Executive Officer of the Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP), and I am writing on behalf of our Board to express concern about CUNY's plan to implement a new system of general education requirements and transfer guidelines (*Pathways*) in the fall of 2013. We are not writing to express an opinion on the initiative itself, but rather to express concern about the manner in which the initiative was developed and the opposition that it is receiving, principally from your faculty and staff.

It is our understanding that CUNY's faculty senates, the elected bodies of the faculty, were bypassed in the process of developing this *curricular* initiative. Consequently, numerous faculty senates have refused to endorse *Pathways* and faculty members who served on the committee are now in opposition to the initiative or portions of it on pedagogical grounds. As a professional organization, composed principally of faculty and graduate students preparing to enter the professorial ranks, we are concerned with the diminution of faculty power on college campuses, especially on academic issues such as this one. While we believe that bypassing the faculty's elected bodies is not a wise decision pedagogically, we also do not understand, as a practical matter, why you do not want to do everything possible to obtain strong support from the members of your community responsible for teaching these classes -- even if it means delaying the implementation of *Pathways*, or other initiatives.

By slowing down the process, as the faculty's elected bodies have requested, you have very little to lose and potentially much to gain. Yours is a highly-respected institution of higher *education*, and to not tap fully the wisdom and experience of a distinguished faculty such as yours simply does not make sense to us. We urge you to support the time-honored tradition of shared governance with your faculty by consulting with them through their elected bodies on an initiative to reform your general education program and transfer guidelines. Ultimately, students, many of them from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups, will be the primary beneficiaries if you do.

Sincerely,

Héctor L. Delgado, Ph.D.
Executive Officer