ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

December 2, 2025

Dear Academic Affairs Colleagues,

Each of us commits many small, individual efforts such as writing feedback on student work or inputting EHRAFs with the hope of some larger outcome — an individual student's intellectual growth or ensuring the human supports students need to thrive in college are in place to begin with.

In my role I focus far more on the macro than I ever used to. To be effective I investigate trends, figuring out what we can do, say, to increase our graduation rate by even 1%. If I don't care about such small increments, I'm letting 22 individuals who start with us as freshmen down. Would you fail half a class or allow a colleague to go unpaid? Of course not. Everything we do matters. That's why I was proud to share in testimony to City Council last week how John Jay has increased the numbers of students graduating significantly in the last ten years. It is also why I had to admit that with a 6-year graduation rate of 53% I am not satisfied. We have a lot more work to do to serve our students as well as we can. I know I'm not alone in caring and trying – that's what makes the John Jay community so inspiring.

Allison

Draft Strategic Plan to Be Released

This week President Mason will share a draft 2025-2030 Strategic Plan asking the college community to comment on and improve before we adopt a final version next May. Please read the plan, discuss it with others, and weigh in. This document will govern actions and resources for the next five years.

Shared governance requires each of us to shape our collective work together.

Provost Testifies on John Jay Graduation Rates to City Council

Last week the New York City Council Committee on Higher Education held an oversight meeting on graduation rates at CUNY campuses. I was asked to testify alongside Sarah Truelsch, CUNY Assistant Dean for Policy Research, and Christine Brongniart, University Director for CUNY ASAP/ACE.

John Jay was the featured college because we have a great story to tell. We have innovated and worked hard to increase the numbers of students completing their degrees (see attached testimony). But when Councilmember Dinowitz asked point blank if we were okay with our graduation rates, I had to tell the truth. As proud as I am of our incredible work to help more student achieve their dreams, it is still not okay that almost 1 out of every 2 students who starts with us does not complete their bachelor's degree.

I hope you'll join me in committing to supporting more students to complete their education in our next strategic plan.

CUNY IT Conference at John Jay Thursday- Friday

Information Technology has never been so central to how we conceive of education. This week's CUNY IT conference is full of presentations on AI and teaching by CUNY faculty and staff as well as keynotes by luminaries from the AAC&U and Microsoft. And it's on our campus. Really no excuse not to drop in on a session or two, is there?

To register and see entire agenda click here:
https://events.govtech.com/CUNY-IT-Conference

C. Edward Watson, Ph.D.
Vice President for Digital Innovation at the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)

Edward is also the founding director of AAC&U's Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and the Curriculum. Prior to joining AAC&U, Dr. Watson was the Director of the Center for Teaching
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Eusebio Formoso
Vice Chancellor for Information Technology and University Chief Information Officer

Eusebio (Seb) Formoso is the City University of New York vice chancellor for information technology and CIO. As CIO, he drives the effort to advance the University's IT priorities and
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Dr. Michael J. Jabbour in
AI Innovation Officer, Office of the CTO, Microsoft

Dr. Michael J. Jabbour serves as Microsoft's AI Innovation Officer in the Office of the CTO, where he focuses on human-centered organizational transformation in the age of artificial intelligence. With over two decades of experience across AI, agile development and healthcare sectors, he has led innovative digital initiatives that prioritize human needs