

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

October 11, 2022

Dear Academic Affairs Colleagues,

Dean Angela Crossman's October 6 message to faculty about using **growth mindset** in our teaching is a useful reminder for all of us. Understanding that making errors is part of, indeed necessary to, learning and growing reminds us that we are more capable, and more adaptable, than we sometimes believe. Our individual capacities are not fixed. We may fail at first, but that's not a sign of what we are capable of, just where we are in that moment. I like to remind myself of this as I learn "to provost."

Like our students, we – faculty and staff – are growing too. We are coming out of a time of radical uncertainty and trying to navigate a changing higher education environment. This can be distressing, but it can also be an exciting time to experiment and try new things. We are each of us capable of changing and getting better at certain skills, and we do this best when we work together in a supportive environment that points out what's wrong, while providing the encouragement and belief that we can improve.

For this reason, I was particularly excited last week to see a letter from a group of students calling themselves the Organization for Racial Equity, asking one of our academic departments to (a) improve support for math instructions within the undergraduate and graduate programs, (b) ensure a required course on marginalized communities, and (c) provide more opportunities for minority students in their programs to develop career preparation and networking opportunities.

When our students advocate for themselves we know they believe in themselves and trust our ability to improve. This letter confirms we are succeeding in our mission to educate fierce advocates for justice, and that our [strategic plan](#) to enhance our STEM curriculum and supports, embed the [7 Principles for a Culturally Responsive,](#)

[Inclusive and Anti-Racist Curriculum](#) throughout all academic programs, and increase the internship and career opportunities for our students is spot on.

We are living in a time of uncertainty, but our plans — and our students — are pointing us in the right direction. We will never be a perfect college, but we are a great college, working to become even better.

I am thrilled to share two recent developments along those lines:

- On behalf of **Student Professional Advancement, Deans Charles Davidson and Anthony Carpi received a \$1 million grant from CUNY Inclusive Economy** to embed Technology, Health and Criminal Justice industry specialists and internship coordinators in our majors to improve numbers of students getting jobs after graduation, types of jobs, and their salaries.
- On behalf of **Student Academic Engagement and Retention, Dean Janice Johnson Dias received \$60,000 to help transfer students** transition smoothly to John Jay through texting nudges that send enrollment information as well as scientifically tested cognitive-behavioral supports.

It's not all about the money – the work we do with students and the research we produce matter most. But money helps us do that.

I look forward to sharing faculty success stories in the near future.

Best,

Allison

Allison Pease

Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs