STANDARD II: ETHICS AND INTEGRITY

Standard II – Ethics and Integrity

Ethics and integrity are central, indispensable, and defining hallmarks of effective higher education institutions. In all activities, whether internal or external, an institution must be faithful to its mission, honor its contracts and commitments, adhere to its policies, and represent itself truthfully.

Introduction

LaGuardia Community College upholds standards of ethics and integrity in our practices, guidelines and policies inside and outside the classroom to pursue its Mission to educate a diverse student population "to become critical thinkers and socially responsible citizens" and to foster an ethical, inclusive culture for students, faculty, and staff. We strive to achieve transparency and honesty in our policies, practices, and communications. The College complies with state, federal, and CUNY policies. The [LaGuardia Human Resource site](#) provides documentation for a large number of relevant policies that are mentioned in this chapter. [936]

This chapter demonstrates adherence to Middle States Standards of Affiliation on Ethics and Integrity as informed by its Core Values of Diversity, Opportunity, and Innovation, as well as to the Self-Study's Intended Outcomes to help build student access and success and an inclusive campus community. The College is dedicated to Diversity and Opportunity as evidenced by its fair and impartial hiring practices, by its promotion of Universal Design (UD), and by its financial accessibility. In addition, it fosters of a climate of respect among diverse constituents. LaGuardia's Core Value of Innovation is visible through commitment to academic freedom, cultivation of inclusive pedagogies, and creative solutions for communications and UD.

Criteria 8 for this chapter will be addressed in Requirement of Affiliation 5,6, and 14, which are part of the compliance report.

Evidence and Analysis

2.1 A commitment to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights

LaGuardia Community College demonstrates a commitment to academic and intellectual freedom, as well as freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights as evidenced in policies that provide broad protection for these freedoms on campus within legal limits.

Academic and intellectual freedom, freedom of expression

The preamble to the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) union contract clearly affirms CUNY's commitment to academic freedom: "CUNY and the PSC seek to maintain and encourage, in accordance with law, full freedom of inquiry, teaching, research and publication of results, the parties subscribe to Academic Freedom for faculty members" and "other members of the

Instructional Staff, to the extent that their duties include teaching, research and publication of results, the selection of library or other educational materials or the formation of academic policy." [PSCCUNY- AcademicFreedom 79] The PSC Academic Freedom Committee serves to educate members on the state of academic freedom, as well as to identify and provide guidance concerning any threats to these freedoms. [PSCCUNY-AcademicFreedom 79]

The University Faculty Senate (UFS) Statement on Academic Freedom notes that "many violations of academic freedom are also violations of the Collective Bargaining Agreement." In the case of apparent violations of this policy, employees are entitled to seek help using the official PSC guidelines in the Complaint, Grievance, and Arbitration Procedure. [PSC CUNY Article 20 Complaint GrievanceandArbitrationProcedure 81]

The UFS Statement on Academic Freedom explains that "academic freedom rests on shared governance -- on the principle that faculty, through their department, college, university, governance bodies, and professional disciplinary organizations have primary responsibilities for academic standards of admission, retention, grading and graduation requirements, curriculum, textbook selection, and pedagogies." [CUNYUniversityFacultySenate-AcademicFreedom 180] The UFS has created a subcommittee on Academic Freedom to receive and respond to faculty inquiries regarding issues of academic freedom. [CUNYUniversityFacultySenate-AcademicFreedom 180] The LaGuardia College Senate's Committee of Faculty has established a subcommittee on academic freedom to receive and respond to faculty inquiries regarding academic freedom and establish an information repository that will guide faculty in addressing academic freedom issues. [SII Interview Summary Criteria 1-4-9-LOI2 899].

Intellectual property rights

LaGuardia demonstrates respect for faculty, staff, and student intellectual property rights. It adheres to the CUNY Intellectual Property Policy, which defines ownership, distribution, and commercialization rights associated with intellectual property and the members of the University to whom they apply. [CUNYIntellectualPropertyPolicy 171] Faculty created Open Education Resources are often released under a Creative Commons License, allowing creators to maintain some control of their intellectual property while making it openly available. [899]

Academic Integrity is felt throughout our practices. The Academic Standing Committee provides details on academic integrity and academic appeals, alongside a sample syllabus where statement on Academic Integrity Policy is strongly recommended to be included. [256,1015] The student handbook provides definitions and examples of violations, and LaGuardia's policy is clearly stated. [125, 947]

2.2 A climate that fosters respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives

LaGuardia promotes a climate that fosters equity, inclusion, and respect among students, faculty, staff, and administration from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas, and perspectives. LaGuardia fosters this climate and addresses complaints and violations through well-established policies, procedures, and training.

The Chief Diversity Officer/Office of Compliance and Diversity utilizes a data driven decision-making process and is governed by federal, state, local, and internal laws and policies

preventing discrimination in hiring (Title VI and IX, NYS Anti-Discrimination Law, NYC Human Rights Law. [CUNYPolicy-EqualOpportunityandNon-DiscriminationProcedures 146, CUNY Rights on Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination 300] This office provides mandatory trainings, including Title IX and Workplace Violence , and ensures compliance with CUNY'S HR Policies and Procedures, which include Affirmative Action, Religious Accommodations, and Reasonable Accommodations and Academic Adjustments, as well as and the CUNY Sexual Misconduct Policy. [CUNY-LaGuardia-TitleIX 169, CUNY Sexual Misconduct Policy 140, Article V - CUNY General Policy 272, CUNYHRPoliciesandProcesures 194, CUNY Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy 157, CUNYHRRecruitment-Diversity-EqulOpportunityandCompliance 265] Statistical reports and workplace demographics can be accessed via the CUNY HR Office of Recruitment and Diversity. [CUNYHRRecruitment-Diversity 264]

Collaboratively, LaGuardia's leadership, staff, faculty, and students continually work towards building and maintaining an inclusive environment. Diversity and inclusion programming is supported by resources and events hosted by the Library and Wagner Archives, the Wellness Center, Health and Wellness, the Women's Center, and various entities in Student and Academic Affairs. Its goals are in alignment with policies, procedures, and initiatives that shape the College's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts. Among these are the LaGuardia Strategic Plan, the Spring 2020 creation of the President's Advisory Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and web pages for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and LaGuardia Office of Compliance and Diversity. [Annual Strategic Initiatives of the 2019-2024 LaGuardia Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives 845,1004,101] Faculty and staff initiatives and affinity groups that support and foster diversity and inclusion include: The Faculty and Staff of Color Collective (FSOC), Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), the Senate Subcommittee on Diversity & Inclusion, LatinX Heritage, Asian Heritage, Lavender LaGuardia, and Project DIVE (Diversity, Inclusion and Valuing Equity). President Adams has obtained approval from CUNY Central to create and hire for the new Director of Diversity & Inclusion position. [LaGuardia Search-Confidential Executive Officer - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 975]

The results of Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) surveys from 2015 and 2019 highlighted faculty perceptions about campus climate and the College's commitment to DEI. [CUNYFacultyAffairs-COACHE 214] The results demonstrated differences between women/faculty of color and their male/white colleagues; women/faculty of color feel that they and/or their ideas are discounted because of race/ethnicity or gender. Given that the 2015 COACHE Survey indicated faculty of color expressed more dissatisfaction than their white counterparts, the 2018 Faculty and Staff of Color Collective Campus Climate Survey was implemented to get a deeper understanding from faculty of color about their experiences working at the college. [The Climate Survey – Executive Summary 903] The FSOC survey included the voices of staff, who were not previously surveyed. The results were shared with the LaGuardia community at two separate Fall 2019 events - the Professional Staff Meeting and *Breaking Bread*. It was used as a starting point to dialogue with the college community about issues of equity and inclusion. This presentation allowed campus leaders to better understand the challenges experienced by BIPOC faculty and staff and fueled the effort to create the President's Advisory Council (PAC) on DEI. Additionally, LaGuardia included five additional questions focusing on diversity and inclusion in the 2018 COACHE survey. [642]

Fall 2020 Opening Sessions, a campus-wide day of faculty/staff professional development, was framed to allow the college to engage in dialogue surrounding the five areas of the College's Strategic Plan in the context of celebrating LaGuardia's 50th anniversary and the dual

pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism. To promote open dialogue and sharing of ideas, the Opening Sessions Committee (comprised of and in collaboration with staff, faculty, and entities across campus) utilized the narrative/message-based platform Yammer. The dialogues will be used to facilitate inclusive work around campus. [Opening Sessions 2020 Yammer Transcripts 893]

Student-focused educational and experiential resources, programming, initiatives, and groups include: the Office for Students with Disabilities, CUNY LEADS (a CUNY-specific program that offers employment and career preparation for students with disabilities), the Program for Deaf Adults, the LGBTQIA Safe Zone Hub, LaGuardia Rising (which provides resources and support for DACA students), the Black Male Empowerment Cooperative, Crear Futuros (a Latino-focused student support program), the Fatherhood Academy, the Women's Center, Veterans Services, and a host of student-led clubs [LaGuardia Campus Life 494].

The division of Adult Continuing Education (ACE) serves a diverse group of students with different socio-economic backgrounds and needs, many of whom are seeking skill development and/or various certifications with a majority of enrollees from the borough of Queens (See the Institutional Profile). [681] The division encourages people with disabilities, minorities, veterans, and women to apply in accordance with CUNY guidelines. ACE faculty and staff participate in the same professional development opportunities as faculty and staff from Student and Academic Affairs, which helps to prepare them for working with the specific needs of their student population. The ACE division complies with city, state, and federal laws, as well as CUNY, LaGuardia, and Research Foundation policies and processes, to provide support services to its students with disabilities and to ensure diversity and equity in hiring and promotion, respectively. [Interviews SII C1-2 913]

The Department of Criminal Justice Studies has a relationship with the Queensboro Correctional Facility, located adjacent to campus, through which volunteer staff and faculty provide instructional offerings to soon-to-be-released inmates. There is no campus-generated support to prepare faculty and staff teaching this student population although some participate in programs offered by other CUNY entities. To assist with recruitment and retention, a liaison intern hosts weekly information sessions for inmates about LaGuardia and its academic offerings. This intern also assists formerly incarcerated students who are interested in and/or who enroll at LaGuardia with FAFSA and application processes. The Black Male Empowerment Cooperative (BMEC) and the Fatherhood Academy provide collaborative support; the now disbanded Advocacy Bridge to College (ABC) program previously provided technical support. [Interviews SII C1-2 913]

The Office of Students with Disabilities and Program for Deaf Adults provide support for students with disabilities and deaf and hard-of-hearing students. See 2.7.a below for more detail.
CUNY administers a sexual violence campus climate survey every other year surveying undergraduate students. [820] In 2018, over 90% of LaGuardia's respondents agreed that they are a respected member of the community and that they feel safe on campus.

2.3 A grievance policy that is documented and disseminated to address complaints or grievances raised by students, faculty, or staff. The institution's policies and procedures are fair and impartial, and assure that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately, and equitably

LaGuardia has fair, impartial policies addressing complaints/grievances raised by all members of its community and ensuring that grievances are addressed promptly, appropriately and equitably.

Any staff or faculty member whose action is not recommended by the Personnel and Budget (P&B) or Personnel Review (PRC) Committees has the right to appeal before the president of the college. If the appeal is not granted, the employee has the right to request reason(s) of denial and to file a grievance within thirty days of notification as per Article 20 of PSC-CUNY agreement. [PSCCUNY-GrievanceProcess 73] The College follows CUNY policy for complaints of workplace violence and sexual harassment, including mandated training to educate faculty/staff on these issues. [CUNYCampus-WorkplaceViolencePreventionPolicy 226, CUNYPolicyonSexualMisconduct 140]

The policies pertaining to grievances and complaints for CUNY Research Foundation (RF CUNY) employees are stated on the RF CUNY website under Project Employee Complaints. [RFCUNYPolicyNo.510ProjectEmployeeComplaints 68] If a complaint involves a LaGuardia employee, the Foundation's Director of Human Resources and the Director of Human Resources at LaGuardia conduct a joint investigation.

Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that students are able to address their academic and non-academic complaints/grievances. Students are made aware of their rights and responsibilities via the LaGuardia Student Handbook and College Catalog. [LaGuardia2020StudentHandbook 125, LaGuardiaCollegeCatalog 28]

Students are able to appeal their grade(s) via the Academic Appeals process. This process is made available in LaGuardia's Student Handbook, College Catalog, and on the LaGuardia Student Complaint Resolution Page of the College website. [125, 28, 915]

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities/Advocacy (OSRR/A) provides students with information concerning "academic, behavioral and personal matters" as well as advocacy services. Many issues raised by students are addressed through dispute resolution and mediation services, which are provided by the Ombuds officer. [LaGuardia Student Complaint Resolution Page 915] The Ombuds officer serves as an advocate for students who have complaints/inquiries and facilitates communication between student and faculty/staff. Most student complaints are resolved informally at the Ombuds's level. Depending on the nature of complaint, faculty, department chairs, or other entities may be involved, including Public Safety and the Chief Diversity Officer/Title IX Coordinator. [Interview with Ombuds Officer 1005]

There are no formal written policies or procedures for complaints/grievances by Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) students. Complaints made by ACE students are addressed on a case-by-case basis. Cases are first reviewed at the program level and, if necessary, forwarded to the dean and/or vice president of the ACE division for final review and decision. ACE faculty/staff follow the same grievance policies as other divisions of the college.

2.4 The avoidance of conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict in all activities and among all constituents

LaGuardia is committed to avoiding any conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts in all its activities. LaGuardia adheres to all federal, state, local, and CUNY policies and regulations governing conflict of interest or the appearance thereof. If there are any disparities among policies, LaGuardia follows the most stringent. [SII Interview Summary Criteria 1-4-9-LOI2 899] LaGuardia's Office of Legal Affairs & Labor Relations is responsible for enforcing compliance with university, city, state, and federal laws and policies. In litigation matters, this office serves as liaison to the NYC Law Department and to CUNY's General Counsel's Office, Office of Human Resource Management, and Office of Labor Relations. Policies and procedures related to these matters are available on the LaGuardia Legal Affairs website. [914]

The college complies with requirements of the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE), which requires that all state employees avoid "any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity or incur any obligation of any nature, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his (or her) duties in the public interest." [public-officers-law-74 895] In particular, LaGuardia employees meeting certain conditions must file an annual financial disclosure statement and participate in JCOPE ethics training. [PoL Sec 73-a 935, NYSJCOPE-ComprehensiveEthicsTrainingCourse 90] The College legal counsel/labor designee sends periodic emails to faculty and staff with updated JCOPE guidelines and a reminder to fill out applicable forms.

The college follows the CUNY Conflict of Interest policy, which provides clear guidelines regarding ethics and integrity as pertains to conflict of interest. [CUNYArticleVIPolicy6.01ConflictofInterest 242] Additionally, the college adheres to the CUNY Responsible Conduct of Research policy and to the CUNY Research Foundation's Conflict of Interest policy. [CUNYResponsibleConductofResearch(RCR) 139, RFCUNYPolicyNo.522CConflictofInterest 70]

In order to avoid conflicts or the appearance thereof, the college uses the Statement of Policy on Multiple Positions, which notes that all faculty "have a responsibility to observe professional standards of behavior in becoming involved in activities supplemental" to their full-time College appointment and requires disclosure and approval from the department Personnel and Budget Committee prior to commencing "outside employment, consultative, or other work." [CUNYArticleVPolicy5.14MultiplePosition 235]

Policies related to conduct is maintained throughout the system. The CUNY Board of trustees code of conduct is spelled out in Article II, policy 2.05 and details the standards of conduct to uphold ethics and integrity, and procedures for investigating violations. [251]

2.5 Fair and impartial practices in the hiring, evaluation, promotion, discipline, and separation of employees

Processes for hiring, promotion, and evaluation of employees, as well as handbooks for all job titles, are available on LaGuardia's Human Resources (HR) Website. [LaGuardiaHumanResources 107] Policies comply with agreements negotiated between the college and the relevant labor class. [CUNYLaborRelations-LaborContracts 167]

LaGuardia's Strategic Plan Priorities emphasizes building an inclusive community. [42] Search and hiring procedures involve multiple entities at the college (e.g. the respective department, the Office of the Provost, the Office of HR, and the Affirmative Action Office) who collaborate to recruit the best applicants for vacancies and to ensure that the College's workforce is ethnically representative of the available labor pool and in full compliance with its affirmative action policy Instructional Staff HandBook. [LaGuardiaInstructionalStaffHandbook 102] LaGuardia implements CUNY's guidelines for search processes and procedures as detailed in the CUNY search committee guide and LaGuardia's procedures [CUNYSearchCommitteeGuide 136, LaGuardiaImplementationofCUNYSearchProcedure 104] The Chief diversity officer charges every search committee before the process begins.

LaGuardia encourages members of racial/ethnic minority groups, women, people with disabilities to apply for available positions. [LaGuardia2017-2018AffirmativeActionPlan-Minorities-Women 128]

The Office of HR is responsible for on-boarding new employees and off-boarding separated employees in compliance with relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). This office also keeps records of employee re-appointment, tenure, reclassification, promotion, termination, and leave, and oversees employee files containing evaluations, promotion documents, updated CVs, and student evaluations of faculty. [LaGuardiaHumanResources 107]

LaGuardia may revise or update policies and/or procedures to make practices fair and impartial. The Provost recently provided clarification concerning leadership criteria for promotion to Associate and to Full Professor. The College is developing a new survey instrument for student evaluations of faculty to replace the existing Student Instructional Reports (SIR)s. [Important P-B Updates_ SIRs and Promotions2020-2021 894]

The PSC-CUNY contract outlines the rights, responsibilities and processes for evaluation, reappointment, and workload of specific titles. [77] Certain titles are employed through the research foundation of CUNY, and their contracts are covered under the field units contracts [Complete Rfcuny Job Descriptions For Project Employees 897, Research_Found_LaGuardia_Agreement_2018 939]. Other employees are covered under District Council 37 contract. All labor contracts are listed on the CUNY website. [167]

2.6 Honesty and truthfulness in public relations announcements, advertisements, recruiting and admissions materials and practices, as well as in internal communications

LaGuardia communications address internal and external constituents of varying needs and priorities, including current students, prospective students, alumni, staff, faculty, and community stakeholders. The College has developed robust communications, including an extensive website, Mobile App, student email system, and social media accounts with major providers as well as a journal of research-based articles. Documents and materials published in the College's name are created or vetted by the Marketing & Communications department, which advances college-wide communication to strengthen community building in support of the College's Mission "to educate and graduate one of the most diverse student populations in the country."

Responding to the College's need for a unified identity to boost enrollment and fundraising, Marketing & Communications partnered with an outside agency to develop a messaging plan. In

2013, after three years of research that included comprehensive interviews with members of the college community, the College's executive leadership approved the "Dare to Do More" motto and a new emblem whose visual elements are an expression of the commitment to learning at the core of the College's Mission. [Interviews SII C6 918] As noted in the 2020 Brand Book the LAGCC logo communicates "the notion of a community college being a catalyst where individuals come together to learn, grow and shine" as symbolized by nine arrows coming together at the center to evoke introspection and which form an emanating star to represent infinite growth. [LAGCC Brand Book updated2020 917]   Since being launched in 2014, this new branding has become the most visible aspect of the College's identity, particularly for prospective students and other external constituents. It also provides guidelines for social media to support the brand. A remote version of the "Dare to Do More" branding boot camp is currently in development. [Interviews SII C6 918]

More recently, Marketing & Communications, in collaboration with Information Technology (IT), Student Affairs, and Academic Affairs, led the 2018 relaunch of the College website to better meet the challenges of effectively providing information to many types of users. The redesign added a dedicated Faculty-Staff portal and restructured pages to reflect how users navigate the website. Leveraging the website's role as a recruitment tool, the redesign also used visual material to reinforce branding and promote the College as a safe place for learning. Website images showcase the College's diverse population of students, staff, and faculty. Images come from Marketing & Communications photographers as well as students (the "Street Team") and feature current members of the College community; no stock imagery is used. In 2019, a LiveChat feature created by the College's IT platform developers was added to the College website. This widget advances communication and interaction, linking students with representatives in offices throughout the College and providing them with support that enables them to be active agents of their education. [Interviews SII C6 918]

The College's mobile app, available on iTunes and Google Play, features eTools, Social Media, Events, the Course Catalog, and more. [LaGuardia Mobile App 919]

To further enrich communications with students, Marketing & Communications uses SharePoint to provide a Student Communications Style Guide to help faculty and staff improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their written communications. Since opening its Facebook account in 2011, LaGuardia's social media presence has evolved and expanded. As of 2021, the college maintains accounts on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Flickr. The overall effort includes students, departments, programs, and offices generating content that is reviewed by Marketing & Communications before being published. The social media team leverages platforms to reach the College's many audiences, directing campus events and "campus life" posts to platforms that favor internal users and student stories to those where they can be appreciated by an external audience. [Interviews SII C6 918]

Although a publication of a particular office within the College, the LaGuardia Center for Teaching and Learning's journal *In Transit* deserves special mention. [In Transit_The LaGuardia Journal on Teaching and Learning 920] Committed to the scholarship of teaching and learning across the disciplines, it receives financial backing from the Division of Academic Affairs and maintains significant support from executive leadership. Described as "a collective product of the teaching faculty and staff," *In Transit*, which has been published both online and in hard copy since 2005, began as a collection of classroom reflections for an audience of educators. During the past decade, content has evolved toward researched-based articles that bring rigor

to the discourse on teaching and learning, reflecting a College-wide cultural shift and making visible the pedagogical commitment that is at the core of the College's Mission Statement. Due to the pandemic, the journal is currently on hiatus; however, plans are underway for future issues. [Interviews SII C6 918]

In the spirit of promoting transparency, the College has several pages with relevant publication to important practices, including the Institutional Effectiveness website, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment and Student consumer information and the Institutional Profile, which is published annually. [940, 35, 116, 681]

2.7a. As appropriate to its mission, services or programs in place to promote affordability and accessibility

LaGuardia demonstrates commitment to accessibility through careful adherence to federal, state, city, and university regulations and standards in accessibility services as well as through a culture of creative collaboration among various stakeholders to create a welcoming, supportive, and confidential learning environment for all students. This effort is guided by the concept of Universal Design (UD) which CUNY defines as an educational standard benefiting all students through multiple means of representation of information, student action and expression, and student engagement. [CUNYStudentPoliciesandProcedures 185, [CUNYStudentAffairsReasonableAccommodations 191] LaGuardia further commits all stakeholders to contribute to "development of a society in which each individual can achieve her or his maximum potential." [LaGuardiaCollegeCatalog 28] LaGuardia's commitment to accessibility can be summarized in four principal areas: 1) Student Services, 2) Information Technology, 3) Physical Spaces/Environmental Adaptation, and 4) Instruction.

Student services

The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) works with the Program for Deaf Adults (PDA) and the Wellness Center to coordinate reasonable accommodations and support services for students with disabilities. The OSD will merge with the PDA in Fall 2021 under the new name, Office for Accessibility.

Following Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the OSD, working with PDA and Wellness Center, is responsible for advocating for student rights, monitoring and creating services, and ensuring adherence to disability-related regulations pertaining to the learning experience of students, who must self-identify and provide documentation to receive services. This information is communicated to students through advising and in the 2020 Student Handbook and College Catalogue. [LaGuardia2020StudentHandbook, 125, 28]

The OSD addresses student needs, such as physical and learning disabilities, chronic health issues, temporary injuries, and difficult pregnancies. Services can include note-taking assistance, testing accommodations, physical accommodation, and assistive technology. [280] Both the PDA and the Wellness Center strive to eliminate physical and mental health obstacles to student learning; the PDA provides expert classroom and event ASL interpreters while the Wellness Center offers individual counseling and short-term group therapy.

OSD conducts a Periodic Program Review every two years and provides a 2-part, anonymous complaint process for students. Such assessment recently led to the development of a neurodiversity program to assist students on the Autism Spectrum with managing schedules. OSD also addresses issues related to "tolerance for error"; if a student error results in adverse consequences, the OSD intervenes and offers solutions on a case-by-case basis. Creative solutions, however, can sometimes be blocked by efforts in other departments, societal attitudes, or unexpected circumstances. [SII Interview Summary Criteria 7-LOI3 898]

The 2018 CUNY student experience survey showed that 80% of students are either satisfied or very satisfied with disability services, 87% with health services, and 79% with counseling. [797] In response to the Covid-19 crisis, CUNY administered two surveys. One survey focused on the distance learning experiences and the other on support services and students' needs. [875, 880]

Information technology

The Office for Information Technology (IT) supports students with diverse needs through a range of software innovations, such as an accessibility widget on the College website, voice recognition software, morph keyboards, screen readers, assistive listening devices, and Zoom text screen magnification. IT has collaborated with the library in developing Open Educational Resources (OER) and in making sure new advising portals, such as C2C and SEMs, can be used by students who depend on assistive technology software. In accordance with ADA regulations, IT also coordinates hardware/software solutions for students, faculty, and staff, including those with diverse needs. IT identifies accessibility concerns through technology assistance requests (tickets), post-ticket satisfaction surveys, and notifications from individual departments and responds in concert with the OSD and the Center for Teaching and Learning. IT services have expanded due to the shift to emergency remote learning, requiring the college to supply students in need with laptops, Wifi solutions, and assistive technology. [Interview Summary 898]

Physical spaces/environmental adaptation

LaGuardia's Office of Campus Facilities Management and Planning ensures the college is in compliance with ADA and DoB requirements and provides custom accommodations on a case-by-case basis that improve the learning setting for all. The Departments of Public Safety, Environmental Health and Safety, Building Operations, and Campus Facilities report to the Executive Director of Facilities Management and Planning; the Director works in creative collaboration with constituents of the college community, including students, the Wellness Center, and OSD to find solutions that address documented and undocumented needs and promote independence and security. All new construction and renovations comply with the latest ADA standards and CUNY guidelines. The challenge of providing physical plant solutions remains complex as the needs of LaGuardia students and faculty/staff with disabilities may conflict with concerns of city and state agencies. [Interview Summary 898] More details on adequacy of institutional resources, including space, can be found in Standard VI.

Instruction

The College's commitment to accessibility also translates to instructional accommodation, awareness training, and pedagogical innovation, especially visible in professional development opportunities provided by the CTL and the development of accessible OER.

Faculty receive notification of OSD registered students and are instructed to provide specific accommodations if students request them. Additional learning barriers have been removed through a shift to accelerated learning courses in math and English, which allow students to simultaneously satisfy developmental requirements and earn college credit toward graduation. [College Catalogue 28]

The CTL promotes awareness of multiple needs and abilities and trains faculty in inclusive pedagogies. The CTL's Associate Director for Instructional Design has led accessibility initiatives at the College, including a seminar on Ableism and *Designing for All (D4A)*, a 2017-2018 CUNY Strategic Technology Initiative Project that surveyed 564 students on their challenges and obstacles in accessing education at LaGuardia. [LaGuardia UDL Final Report, 585, LaGuardia UDL Student Survey 579]. These efforts seek to remove barriers to learning for all students, including those with invisible disabilities and those who are not affiliated with the OSD. Other CTL seminars aim to encourage productive faculty-student exchanges, help faculty understand the needs and strengths of bi- and multilingual students, and make OER accessible**.** [Interview Summary 898]

Affordability

As the 5th ranked U.S. community college in economic mobility [LaGuardia Profile Fast facts 916] LaGuardia prioritizes creating academic opportunities for students through a variety of programs and services that address students' financial needs. According to the LaGuardia 2020 Institutional Profile the majority of LaGuardia students earn less than $25,000 per year. According to IPEDS 2019-2020 data, 49% of LaGuardia students and 80% of first-time, full-time students receive grant or scholarship aid from a variety of sources, including local/state/federal government and the College. [681, LaGuardia-IntegratedPostsecondaryEducationDataSystem(IPEDS)-StudentFinancialAidData 103]

The Student Financial Services website details options for financial assistance, including important dates, documents/forms, and contact information. [LaGuardiaFinancialAidPayingforCollege 112] This site foregrounds payment options that avoid or minimize student debt (e.g. grants, College Foundation Scholarships, Faculty Council Scholarships, and Federal Work-Study). [LaGuardiaFinancialAidPayingforCollege-TypesofAid 110] Debt-incurring options, such as Tuition Payment Plans and Loans, are explicitly labeled as such. The LaGuardia Community College Foundation has raised over $28 million over the last ten years and awards over $1 million in Foundation Scholarships each year. [LaGuardiaFoundationScholarship 105]

In addition to financial aid services, LaGuardia offers programs that combine financial assistance with support for college success. Dedicated to serving students who lack economic resources and academic support, the College Discovery (CD) program provides a range of support services, including student advocacy and enhanced financial aid. [311] The mission of CUNY EDGE (Educate, Develop, Graduate, and Empower) is to empower students receiving government aid to succeed academically, graduate on time, and obtain career opportunities. [326] CUNY EDGE offers exclusive work-study opportunities to support students financially

while enhancing their professional experience; it also collaborates with other programs, such as CD and Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), to help provide comprehensive financial and academic support for EDGE students. ASAP provides students with financial and academic support to enhance graduation and retention rates. ASAP financial support encompasses tuition waivers, textbook assistance, and NYC Transit MetroCards. [CUNYASAPbenefits 231] At LaGuardia, ASAP enrollment of first-time, full-time freshmen grew by 60% from Fall 2016 to Fall 2018; one-year retention rates for ASAP freshmen are consistently higher (~12 % points) than for non-ASAP freshmen. [LaGuardiaMomentumCampaignReport 588]

In alignment with CUNY's mission to empower STEM students, LaGuardia offers various programs to academically and financially support STEM students and ranks 2nd in STEM enrollment among CUNY Community Colleges. [CUNY 10-year Stem Trends 2020 936] The LaGuardia Community College Bridges to Baccalaureate Program (Bridges), funded by the National Institute of Health, annually supports 14 economically- disadvantaged, full-time STEM students from minority backgrounds. [LaGuardia Bridges to Baccalaureate Program NIH 928] Bridges covers tuition/fees for two years and provides each student with a $5,000 yearly stipend toward living expenses. [NS Chair Interview NIH Bridge program 925] LaGuardia's Elsevier Foundation Program for Women in STEM, funded by the Elsevier Foundation, enrolls and supports ten qualified women yearly, offering renewable research internships ($1500), incentive to graduate scholarships ($500), and childcare assistance scholarships ($800). Thus far, 100% of enrolled women complete the program successfully and graduate on time within a three-year period. [Women in STEM Elsevier Interview 926]

According to IPEDS 2019-2020 data, the approximate cost for LaGuardia students for commercial textbooks, online learning platforms, and other supplies is $1,500 per year. [103] LaGuardia has participated in CUNY's Open Educational Resources (OER) initiative since it began in fiscal year 2018. [CUNYOER 155] Funded by New York State, several academic departments at the College have received grants to adopt OER and convert courses to Zero Textbook Cost. The Math, Engineering, and Computer Science Department has used OER in high-enrollment courses for several years, saving approximately 24,000 students over $1.6 million in textbook costs. [MEC Chair Interview Summary 924] The Natural Science Department's OER adoption has resulted in over $45,000 in savings for nearly 300 students in FY 2020. [LaGuardia OER NS-MEC Data 923] In addition, the Library Department has hosted professional development workshops on OER textbooks and co-led OER adoption and creation seminars that have resulted in dozens of faculty members teaching with OER.

LaGuardia offers services to alleviate students' financial burden beyond tuition/fees and books. LaGuardia CARES (College Access for Retention and Economic Success connects students with college and community resources to assist with food access, living expenses, healthcare, and childcare. [LaGuardiaCares121] LaGuardia also offers on-campus affordable licensed childcare for student-parents through the LaGuardia Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC). [929]. ECLC has recently been awarded $1.5 million from the U.S Department of Education to expand support for student-parents.

LaGuardia's financial support extends to non-matriculated students. The College is home to the largest Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) program in CUNY. [LaGuardiaACE 488] ACE students are not eligible for federal financial aid but have many options to make continuing education at LaGuardia more affordable. The Intern and Earn Program places students aged

16-24 in paid internships (earning up to $3,900 over twelve weeks) and provides job counseling and readiness training. [367] ACE Financial Support Services provide scholarships and grants for ACE students, especially for those seeking careers in healthcare and other in-demand fields. [930] Additionally, veterans, labor union members, licensed childcare providers, and many others are eligible for financial assistance.

While there are significant resources available for financial support, students may have difficulty locating all the opportunities available to them.

2.7.b. To enable students to understand funding sources and options, value received for cost, and methods to make informed decisions about incurring debt

The College offers many programs and services that educate students about their funding options. The College Catalogprovides a clear and comprehensive description of cost with overall estimates. [LaGuardiaCollegeCatalog 28] The Office of Student Financial Services holds an annual Financial Aid Awareness event where students meet with Financial Aid representatives to explore their options; the event received a student satisfaction rate above 90% in 2019 and 2020. [LaGuardiaSFSFinancialAidAwarenessDay2020Summary 100] Student Financial Services also has a dedicated webpage that allows students to explore and understand tuition costs, living expenses, and tuition policies. [LaGuardiaBursar 493]

The College provides an online knowledge management system, Ask LaGuardia, that enables students to type questions and receive automated responses, directing them to College resources. The service is heavily used and the question "how do I contact the Financial Aid office?" is among the top ten questions asked. [Ask LaGuardia Report 2019 921, Ask LaGuardia Report 2020 922] LaGuardia's Money Boss financial awareness initiative offers regular workshops, including "Financing College;" the Money Boss website presents a range of financial literacy information, including a Credit and Debt section with additional information on student loans. [LaGuardia MoneyBoss LibGuides 931]

2.8. compliance with all applicable federal, state, and Commission reporting policies, regulations, and requirements to include reporting regarding a. the full disclosure of information on institution-wide assessments, graduation, retention, certification and licensure or licensing board pass rates; b. the institution's compliance with the Commission's Requirements of Affiliation; c. substantive changes affecting institutional mission, goals, programs, operations, sites, and other material issues which must be disclosed in a timely and accurate fashion; d. the institution's compliance with the Commission's policies

LaGuardia Community College is compliant with all federal, state, and Commission regulations. The Institutional Federal Compliance Report provides evidence that demonstrates the policies and procedures of current practices, including FERPA compliance. In addition, the Compliance Team has prepared evidence showing:

1) Independent audit of basic financial statements of expenditures of federal awards at CUNY (form A 133)
2) An inventory of registered programs
3) The U.S. Department of Education Program Review Determination

4) Sample Approved course proposals.

The Institutional profile includes relevant information about students' demographics, enrollment, graduation, retention and transfer-out rates, as well as Licensing exam pass rates in health science majors. [681] The document is accessible on the OIRA website. [35]

Consumer information is transparent and has been described in criteria 6 and 7. Due to the recent shift to distance learning, the College submitted several substantive changes to the Commission.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are values that drive our mission and strategic plan priorities. Co-curricular events aim to educate and engage the college community. They are described earlier in criteria 2a and in Standards III and IV. The college releases an annual affirmative action plan. [128]

Other evidence that shows compliance include: the sexual violence campus climate survey, CUNY Legal Affairs/JCOPE, the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) plan, and Employee Sexual and Interpersonal Violence Prevention and Response Course ESPARC) (see office of compliance and diversity/office of the title ix coordinator executive summary in the AES executive summaries. [820, 158, 5486, 874]

2.9 Periodic assessment of ethics and integrity as evidenced in institutional policies, processes, practices, and the manner in which these are implemented.

Regular assessment of policies and practices at LaGuardia Community College is closely tied to the Standard of Ethics and Integrity, allowing LaGuardia to strengthen its faithfulness to its Mission. The Office of Human Resources (HR), the Office of Compliance and Diversity, and the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) are the primary offices responsible for assessment of ethics and integrity in college policies and practices by providing relevant data and reports.

Annual Affirmative Action Reports (Affirmative Action Plan) collect and provide data that is used to assess the effectiveness of the College's Affirmative Action Initiatives and to measure their progress. [LaGuardia2017-2018AffirmativeActionPlan-Minorities-Women 128] Similarly, Quarterly Reports on Faculty and Staff Diversity, conducted by HR, assess the progress of existing policies, such as the Recruitment and Search Procedures as well as the more recent President's Reaffirmation of Diversity/Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action in their efforts to strengthen recruitment and improve the campus climate. [904, Summaries of the AES 2019-20 Assessment Plans_October2020 810]

The annual Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Assessment conducted by OIRA covers many offices and units across the college and is part of LaGuardia's Institutional Effectiveness Plan. Established in 2018, the systemic assessment process of the AES conducts annual assessments examining how effectively units are achieving goals/objectives. It determines whether goals are being met by each office, provides feedback, and helps identify areas in need of improvement. Each (AES) unit defines its mission and establishes goals/objectives and assessment plans and conducts annual assessments to determine whether they met the needs and expectations of students, parents, employers, faculty, and

other stakeholders. These assessments are designed to align with the College Mission and the resulting information is used to make improvements to enhance student success. The AES Units also undergo Periodic Unit Reviews (PURs), which examine the capacity, processes, and outcomes of a unit over a period of 4-6 years. While they are built on the AES annual assessments, PURs are more comprehensive and systematic and "provide evidence of actual or attempted improvement of their processes or outcomes based on analysis of the results." [810, AssessmentGuideofAESUnits 1]

As noted in 2.2, dialogue COACHE and FSOC Campus Climate Surveys led to creation of the PAC on DEI, and the College has recently received approval and budget to create a new position to lead College Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. [LaGuardia Search-Confidential Executive Officer - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 975] To assess the campus climate for staff, an employee engagement survey was administered. Its results were recently disseminated, and follow-up steps will be discussed at some point in the near future. [Employee Engagement Survey Instrument 2019 878, Employee Engagement Survey Report 1006]

In Fall 2020, CUNY administered a Student Experience survey pandemic impact on support services and student needs to gauge the impact of the pandemic on student needs and support services. LaGuardia's student response rate was 10% which is comparable to the overall CUNY response rate. [880]

Conclusion

Strengths

LaGuardia complies with federal, state, city, CUNY, and college policies aimed at ensuring diversity and non-discrimination, including those pertaining to hiring. LaGuardia supports activities to promote diversity and inclusion among students, staff, and faculty; the President has announced a clear commitment to advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Efforts include creation of the President's Advisory Council on DEI and a supplementary DEI website, creation of the Director of Diversity & Inclusion position, and ongoing educational efforts in collaboration with the Queensboro Correctional Facility.

The College follows an existing body of regulations and guidelines to ensure accessibility. The 2019-2024 Strategic Plan builds on these accessibility efforts, directing the college community to strengthen student access and build an inclusive community through improving student advisement, investing in digital learning environments and tools, creating more flexible and adaptable facilities, and developing college wide programs and activities that promote an asset-based pedagogical approach. [LaGuardia2019-2024StrategicPlandGoals-Objectives 19] There is an emergent understanding of Universal Design (UD) as designing spaces, programs, and services "for everyone," especially visible in individual or small group "creative collaborations." The college offers a number of programs and opportunities to promote affordability and financial access.

The College's robust communications include a strong social media presence, an extensively redesigned website, and an interactive mobile app that address internal and external constituents of varying needs and priorities.

Challenges

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: While there are a number of initiatives that address diversity, equity, and inclusion at LaGuardia, these efforts are not centrally coordinated. It lacks clear definitions for "Diversity," "Equity," and "Inclusion" and has no detailed protocols to ensure diversity and inclusion in opportunities for college service. Personnel and Budget (P&B) processes related to hiring, promotion, and re-appointment lack transparency and promotion criteria may be inconsistently applied. Evidence is being collected to better understand and address this issue. The College has not collected qualitative data from students concerning their experiences and understanding of DEI. Efforts by the Criminal Justice Department on behalf of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated students lack institutional support.

Access: While the College is committed to implementing UD, these efforts are individual or programmatic and lack central coordination. Efforts to promote access and UD can be limited by existing infrastructure, bureaucratic inflexibility, funding deficits, and the challenges of coordination across departments. Students seeking services and accommodations through the OSD must submit testing reports, which can be expensive and time-consuming to obtain. Navigation training for the blind, where students are taken to their classrooms prior to the start of term, is ineffective when room assignments are changed with little notice. The Program for Deaf Adults (PDA) lacks funding and coordination with the College to adequately maintain recruitment, support, and services. The College lacks policies and training/professional development to guide faculty/staff in working with deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Other Challenges: Information regarding resources for financial access and empowerment (e.g. support for women in stem and minority students) is decentralized and fragmented. The Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) program does not have a clearly defined process for addressing student grievances.

Recommendations

Primary recommendation

We recommend that LaGuardia create a Social Equity Plan for establishing a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community in line with our strategic plan priorities. Development and implementation of the plan should involve cross-campus input, collaboration, and active support; the plan should address vision, mission, objectives, strategy, action plan, and evaluation/assessment.

Specific actions that the plan might encompass include the following:

- Strengthening and understanding LaGuardia's commitment to DEI
  - Define terms/concepts used to frame the College's DEI work, such as Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, LGBTQ+, Gender Expansive, and Queer Identified
  - Implement mandatory DEI training/education for administrators, faculty, staff, and students

- o Gather information from students on their understanding of and experiences related to DEI, including qualitative data
  - o Promote a campus culture that frames "diverse needs" through a paradigm of UD and asset-based pedagogy
  - o Revise Mission Statement to include faculty and staff
- Prioritize resource allocation and support for a diverse campus community.
  - o Actively support the CUNY-wide effort to create a Psychological and Educational Testing Center, which will enable more LaGuardia students to access appropriate services
  - o Increase sustained resource allocation to support PDA services and the formerly incarcerated
  - o Provide a wayfinding system: a cell phone-based app to help navigate pathways through campus
  - o Establish an articulation agreement with the Queensboro Correctional Facility
  - o Create a formal grievance process for ACE students similar to the policy and procedures we have for credit-enrolled students
- Intentional recruitment and retention efforts for diverse populations, both student and faculty/staff, including the addition of a Diversity Advocate to the College-wide P&B

Secondary recommendations

We further recommend that LaGuardia centralize communication and efforts regarding initiatives, opportunities, and services in key areas to mitigate siloing and make information easily available.

Specific actions by the College might include the following:

- Name a UD Coordinator to organize collaboration, including more consistent communication between the Office of Accessibility, Information Technology, and instructional faculty; college wide adoption of OER resources for instruction and curriculum design; and training for faculty and staff in the theory and application of UD.
- Name an Assistive Technology Specialist to acquire programs, provide training, and communicate the availability and application of assisted learning software.
- Centralize information regarding resources for financial access and empowerment.

Glossary/Keywords

1. Academic Freedom: "Academic freedom is a professional right of the faculty. It is grounded in the faculty member's qualifications for the position as reviewed by his/her peers. It consists in the freedom to teach, research, write, and to speak in our capacity as citizens without restraint by the administration. This right differs from the Constitutional right to freedom of speech and assembly guaranteed by the First Amendment in the sense that it is the necessary condition for a faculty member to fulfill his/her professional obligations and responsibilities as a teacher, researcher, and writer. It is also meant to protect faculty members from reprisal for exercising their free speech rights." [PSCCUNY-AcademicFreedom 79]

2. Conflict of Interest: "An actual or potential conflict between the personal interests of a Covered Individual or an Investigator and the interests of the University; or (b) the reasonable appearance of such a conflict." [CUNYArticleVIPolicy6.01ConflictofInterest 242]

3. Intellectual Property: "All forms of intellectual property, including but not limited to Inventions, Copyrightable Works, Trade Secrets and Know-How, and Tangible Research Property, but excluding Trademarks." [CUNYIntellectualPropertyPolicy 171]

4. Open Education Resources (Hewlett Foundation Definition): Open Educational Resources are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions [SII Interview Summary Criteria 1-4-9-LOI2 899].

5. Reclassification: the move to a higher title in the HEO series

Acronyms Appendix

ABC – Advocacy Bridge to College
ACE – Adult and Continuing Education
ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act
AES – Administrative and Educational Support
ASAP – Accelerated Study in Associate Programs
BIPOC – Black, Indigenous, People of Color
BMEC – Black Male Empowerment Cooperative
Bridges – LaGuardia Community College Bridges to Baccalaureate Program
DoB – Department of Buildings
DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
CD – College Discovery
COACHE – Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education
CTL – Center for Teaching & Learning
CUNY EDGE – CUNY Educate, Develop, Graduate, and Empower
DEI – Diversity Equity and Inclusion
ECLC – Early Childhood Learning Center
FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid
HEO – Higher Education Officer
FSOC – Faculty and Staff of Color Collective
HR – Human Resources
IPEDS – Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
IT – Informational Technology
JCOPE – New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics
OER – Open Educational Resources
OSD – Office for Students with Disabilities
OSRR/A – Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities/Advocacy
OIRA – Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
PAC – President's Advisory Council
PURs – Periodic Unit Reviews
P & B – Personnel and Budget Committee
PDA – Program for Deaf Adults
PRC – Personnel Review Committee
POC – People of Color
PSC – Professional Staff Congress
RF CUNY -CUNY Research Foundation
SIRs – Student Instructional Reports
SURJ – Showing Up for Racial Justice
UD – Universal Design
UFS – University Faculty Senate