

## The Self-Study Introduction

LaGuardia offers more than 60 associate degrees (A.A., A.S., A.A.S) and certificate programs, including many continuing education programs, educating students from more than 140 countries who speak close to 80 different languages. Almost 60% are women and nearly one-third over 25 years old, and most are low-income and first-generation. According to IPEDS 2019-2020 data, 87% of first-time, full-time students receive grant or scholarship aid, and the recent Institutional Profile data shows that the majority of students have household income of less than \$25,000 per year. We employ approximately 2,700 full- and part-time staff, including more than 900 faculty, approximately 400 of whom are full-time. Most faculty and staff are employees of the College, although some are employed by the Research Foundation of CUNY (RFCUNY), which administers the majority of grant-funded activities at CUNY campuses.

LaGuardia has vibrant non-credit programs, and LaGuardia's Adult & Continuing Education division (ACE) is the largest such program in CUNY. ACE works to align non-credit workforce development courses to the College's credit-based programs, utilizing labor market tools to align education and training with workforce needs. ACE serves a diverse group of students with different socio-economic backgrounds and needs, and currently offers over 140 active course offerings. Our Self-Study has advanced how the College plans to build more bridges and connections to ACE, so that we grow closer to becoming "One College," where students seamlessly move between non-credit and credit programs.

We are steadfast in our commitment to leverage the expertise and dedication of our faculty and staff to provide an accessible path to graduation and transfer for all LaGuardia students. With these aspirations guiding our inquiry and intentions, each of the Standard Chapters in our Self-Study focuses renewed attention on our Mission: to educate and graduate one of the most diverse student populations in the country to become critical thinkers and socially responsible citizens who help to shape a rapidly evolving society. We decided to adopt a Standards-Based approach to the Self-Study. The Standards-Based Self-Study enabled the Steering Committee and Working Groups to seamlessly map the Standards to the Mission of the College and Strategic Priorities to better address the lines of inquiry. We also believed that this approach would facilitate the integration of Institutional Effectiveness measures to demonstrate the degree to which LaGuardia is achieving its Mission.

With this Mission guiding us, our Self-Study integrated the College's Strategic Priorities into our Intended Outcomes to renew and transform our way forward.

**LaGuardia’s Strategic Plan Priorities and Self-Study Intended Outcomes:**

Strategic Priorities		Intended Outcomes
1.	Build student access and success	1. Demonstrate how the institution currently meets the Commission’s Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation;
2.	Strengthen learning for students- and for faculty & staff at the College	2. Focus on continuous improvement in the attainment of the institution’s mission and its institutional priorities;
3.	Enrich the student experience	3. Demonstrate the strength of academic and co-curricular programs, as well as our Adult and Continuing Education divisions (ACE), through evidence-based practices that yield achievable recommendations;
4.	Build inclusive community	4. Integrate and improve the planning processes at the College to advance Institutional Effectiveness and student success;
5.	Advance career & workforce development	5. Engage the College’s internal and external constituents to strengthen community building and advance collegewide communication, and learn how to expand opportunity, access, and equity;
		6. Engage the institutional community in an inclusive and transparent self-appraisal process that actively and deliberately seeks to involve members from all areas of the institutional community.

***The Self-Study Team: Collaboration & Leadership through Transitions***

The Self-Study was led by the Core Group: Professor and Co-Chair Reem Jaafar, Professor and Co-Chair Justin Rogers-Cooper, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness Dr. Nava Lerer, and Senior Advisor to President Kenneth Adams, Robert Jaffe. This Core Group has led the Self-Study in an inclusive, transparent, and meaningful process that reflects LaGuardia’s Mission and Core Values.

In Fall 2019, the Self-Study process began with the Core Group under the leadership of Interim President Paul Arcario. In Spring 2020, the Self-Study transformed into a virtual process as the nation suffered the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Steering Committee members were selected for their established leadership, and they later helped to recruit exceptional Working Group teams; throughout everything, they have acted as advisors, consultants, and collaborators. With the Steering Committee in place, we built a strong Self-Study Design, one whose Intended Outcomes aligned with both the Middle States Standards and the College’s Strategic Plan Priorities. We also created a dedicated SharePoint Site for working groups to store their work and find out pertinent information was created. The Core Group and the Evidence Inventory Team were in charge of

creating and updating a document inventory folder, containing pertinent documents and data, while the standards working groups gathered additional information. The documents in the Self-Study Report are linked to the SharePoint site and the community can access them through the LaGuardia portal.

With the Working Groups selected and organized at the end of Spring 2020 and the acceptance of the Self-Study Design, the full Self-Study process began in Fall 2020 Study under the leadership of our new President Kenneth Adams. During the second year, approximately 120 members of the Working Groups conducted their inquiries to address their Standard Criteria and Requirements of Affiliation. They led their inquiries with focus, curiosity, and care, while turning to online platforms of all kinds to support their efforts. They formed teams to conduct research related to the Criteria, and frequently supplemented that research with interviews with faculty and staff across the College. Through conversation and collaboration, they composed sections of the chapters that would become part of this Self-Study. They submitted first drafts to the Steering Committee in January 2021. The Steering Committee and Working Groups then collectively engaged faculty, staff, and students in synchronous and asynchronous Town Halls between Spring 2021 and Fall 2021, totaling more than 45 hours of engagement. Hundreds of students, faculty, and staff attended Zooms, and sent emails to share feedback and suggestions. The Working Groups prioritized their feedback to the Self-Study Co-Chairs, allowing for revisions over the summer.

The feedback process was informative. We found LaGuardia's Mission and Strategic Plan Priorities are well defined and fully endorsed across the campus. Faculty and staff work together to support student growth and development, to address shared Student Learning Outcomes, and to deepen practices through assessment evidence. We are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and we support activities to promote those values among students, staff, and faculty. We offer numerous programs and opportunities to promote affordability and financial access, and our communications include a strong digital presence. As a leader in designing and scaling innovative pedagogical practices, LaGuardia has pioneered effective support services and co-curricular offerings. The College provides students with experiences that expand their knowledge, challenge their assumptions, and prepare them for transfer. LaGuardia also demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive planning, budgeting, and decision-making.

The self-study process has offered a valuable opportunity for collective introspection. As the executive summary and the following chapters demonstrate, the evidence gathered, reviewed and presented and the College wide discussions and feedback allowed the community to collectively reflect upon College's accomplishment and challenges while identifying specific ways for improvement and for advancing the College's Mission and priorities. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, LaGuardia used online technology to create an inclusive experience for our Steering Committee and Working Groups, including a variety of feedback methods. We have remained steadfast in our commitment to shared governance, student success, and inclusive planning, and are proud to set new directions for our common future. The pandemic has accelerated demographic changes affecting our enrollment, and that has presented new obstacles for our long-standing retention and graduation goals. We remain confident, however, that we will continue to innovate, including with course modalities and support services, to find stability and spur new growth for 50 more years to come.

### ***LaGuardia Self-Study Steering Committee***

The Core Group would like to extend their gratitude to the Steering Committee, members of the Working Groups, the LaGuardia Community, and the President's Cabinet for their resolute commitment to the Self-Study during the large transitions of the past two years. The Self-Study also thanks our dedicated Communication Team. Juan Genao and Ann Matsuuchi led our Evidence Inventory Team, worked tirelessly to manage the 1000-plus artifacts of evidence we collected, and to upload it to the Middle States portal. The Student Communication Team and Peer Advisors, with key assists from Tonya Hendrix and Charles Elias, also helped us reach numerous students on social media, including Instagram, to tell them why accreditation matters. Furthermore, staff at the Office of Institutional and Research and Assessment played a pivotal role throughout the process, including Emad Nassar. Jeffrey Weintraub and Jenny Zhu were special advisors to the Core Group, supporting the inquiry of the entire membership with analysis and data. The Compliance Team prepared the institution's federal compliance report and matched the Requirement of Affiliations that need to be addressed in the compliance report. Our deepest thanks to all involved.

For a list of team members, see the [Self-Study](#).