

Building for the Future:

The Graduate Center Strategic Plan 2017–2022



**THE
GRADUATE
CENTER**

CITY UNIVERSITY
OF NEW YORK

Building for the Future:

The Graduate Center Strategic Plan 2017–2022

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From the President



Five years ago, we set high goals for ourselves and, in realizing them, we secured our standing among the nation's leading institutions of advanced scholarship and graduate education. We owe this progress in large measure to the design and attention that went into our 2012–2016 Strategic Plan.

It is with a confidence born of that progress and standing that I am pleased to present *Building for the Future: The Graduate Center Strategic Plan 2017–2022*. It, too, is the product of broad consultation and serious deliberation. And, like our earlier plan, it identifies ambitious but attainable goals. It is also aligned with the vision articulated in the CUNY Master Plan 2016–2020: a university enlivened by collaborations across campuses and a shared commitment to our students and faculty.

In organization—a freestanding, doctoral and master's degree institution that is deeply embedded within the nation's largest public urban university—we are exceptional. In the new Strategic Plan, we have a road map to a new Graduate Center which, underpinned by financial resourcefulness and resilience, and driven by a shared responsibility for the public good, is equally exceptional in academic excellence and broad impact.

When well designed and carried out, strategic planning facilitates clear and collaborative reflection across the entire community. I look forward to working with you as we realize our vision.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Chase F. Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chase F. Robinson

A Vision for the Graduate Center

Focused exclusively upon graduate education and advanced research, the Graduate Center is unique in the experience it can offer students and faculty, distinctive in its commitment to scholarship and learning for the public good, and distinguished—across the breadth of the arts and sciences—in quality and creativity.

By strengthening our communities of teaching and scholarship, we aspire to provide New York City with the public flagship of research and advanced learning that it deserves; to enrich public understanding; and to serve as a national leader in graduate education.

To effect this transformation, we have set four priorities, each advanced by a set of strategies.

1. Fostering and integrating communities of learning and research

The Graduate Center will facilitate interdisciplinary and innovative research by building, supporting, and integrating networks of diverse faculty and students within the Graduate Center, across the City University of New York (CUNY), in New York City, and around the world.

2. Building the theoretical and experimental sciences

The Graduate Center will strengthen its commitment to the sciences, building a scientific enterprise based on the talents of faculty and students whose work crosses disciplinary boundaries and whose energy sparks collaboration across campuses.

3. Advancing our public mission by increasing our impact

The Graduate Center will renew its public mission by expanding its range of degree and nondegree programs, improving pedagogical training and professionalization for students, and raising its institutional profile.

4. Diversifying our resources and building institutional resilience

The Graduate Center will more effectively engage a broader range of students, alumni, and donors, and increase its operational efficiency.

Introduction

Higher education delivers clear and quantifiable financial benefits for students, business, and society. For graduates, degrees increase income; for business and society, research generates thousands of patents, start-up companies, and licenses in any given year, contributing billions of dollars to the national economy and increasing competitiveness. Little wonder that higher education has become big business.

But because higher education is foundational for much of the human activity that constitutes our shared culture, it is far more than that. Higher education proves its value in non-economic terms, especially in the aesthetic, intellectual, and ethical problems and issues that faculty and students address. It cultivates skepticism, criticism and dissent, and so is crucial to the ongoing project of building just, equitable, and democratic societies.

Higher education is thus both a means and an end: while it equips us with knowledge and skills applicable for practical or instrumental purposes, it cultivates in us habits of mind responsive to questions that are perennial, even unanswerable. It benefits both the individual and society, making both healthier and wealthier in the broadest possible senses.

The promise of higher education now has added urgency given the socio-economic and technological changes we are experiencing.

Higher education is of great importance in addressing the daunting socio-economic and technological challenges society faces today.

In most countries of the industrialized West, inequality is deepening and stratification increasing; in the United States, wealth is now a far better predictor of educational achievement than talent.¹ Education militates against growing inequality by opening up opportunity and activating talent. As globalization redistributes workforces and redirects economic growth, regional and city economies—including those in New York City and New York State—increasingly rely upon the knowledge, fresh thinking, and technological skills that colleges and universities generate. And in a digital age when opinions are plentiful, and information and data increasingly proprietary, access to impartial research and information is a democratic imperative.

In this context of socio-economic and technological changes, public education has a crucial role to play. Four-year public colleges and universities educate close to 7 million students annually (about two-thirds of all those enrolled nationally), and so both represent and serve American socio-economic, racial, and ethnic diversity.² However, they now operate within a matrix of chronic financial constraint and ongoing cultural confusion. The very nature of college and university education is in question and flux, especially as the profile of the student body evolves and responds to economic pressures. Public debates about affirmative action and racial justice illustrate how political and social pressures



make educational institutions focal points of contestation, protest, and social experiment. And costs, driven by competition for talent, employee benefits, regulatory burdens, research aspirations, and aging infrastructure, are out of balance with affordability, leading some to argue that colleges and universities are ripe for ‘disruption.’³

Of all of the changes and pressures experienced by higher education, the one that has the sharpest effect upon public colleges and universities is the decline in state funding. Since the 2008 recession, state support per student has dropped by 18% nationally and 6.4% in New York.⁴ Public colleges and universities have compensated by raising tuition and fees and, where possible, increasing enrollment. In public research universities, the share of revenue provided by state appropriations between 2001 and 2012 dropped from 31% to 17%, and net tuition and fees have risen from 13% to 23%.⁵

Public higher education, by virtue of its diversity and accessibility, has a particularly crucial role to play but is facing intense financial and cultural challenges.

THE GRADUATE CENTER AND CUNY

The Graduate Center is at once an integral part of CUNY and one of America's leading institutions of higher education.

As one of CUNY's 25 colleges and units, the Graduate Center receives state support through an annual allocation from CUNY's central offices, which regulate—and, to a large extent, centralize—a wide variety of financial, personnel, and information technology (IT) functions. By virtue of the teaching consortium that underpins the doctoral program, as well as the teaching assignments across CUNY that students fulfill as part of their doctoral training, no CUNY campus is more integrated into the system of colleges than the Graduate Center.

In fact, the doctoral consortium, which offers a highly efficient system of advanced teaching and supervision that draws upon CUNY's scale and diversity, is arguably the single most powerful and successful academic feature of the 'connected university':⁶ it brings into focus at the Graduate Center the extraordinary range and depth of expertise possessed by campus-based faculty, who carry out about 70% of doctoral teaching and supervision.

For the campuses and their faculty, appointment to doctoral programs delivers opportunities to teach and supervise highly stimulating students, and so serves as a recruitment and retention tool for campus departments.

For the Graduate Center, perhaps no benefit of integration is greater than participating in the extraordinary project of combining access and excellence that is CUNY. Well over half of CUNY undergraduates qualify for state and federal financial aid; 42.2% of CUNY students are the first in their families to attend college and 44.5% come from families where the native language is other than English. In racial and ethnic terms, CUNY is a microcosm of America's city-driven diversity: 31.4% of CUNY students are Hispanic, 26.2% are Black, 20.3% are Asian, and 21.8% are White.⁷ Central to our mission, and a distinctive, attractive element of the graduate training we offer, is the opportunity given to our students to teach in CUNY classrooms filled with these diverse and ambitious undergraduates.

In sum, the Graduate Center is organic to CUNY, and a crucial part of its enterprise to deliver access and excellence.

And the stronger CUNY is, both financially and academically, the stronger the Graduate Center.

Yet the Graduate Center also faces outward—beyond CUNY and New York City to a state, national, and international community of students, scholars, teachers, researchers, employers, and members of the public.

Most of the first students to attend the Graduate Center in 1961 came from New York City, but today they arrive from all over the world. Alumni now secure jobs and pursue careers on a global stage, and faculty and visiting academics are now global in origin and impact. By virtue of reputation, size, and research, the Graduate Center is an institution with national and worldwide influence, one of a select group of 'R-1' research universities (the highest of the Carnegie classifications) that shoulder the responsibility of educating the next generation of scholars and researchers, and carrying out fundamental and applied research of national significance.



A project by Ph.D. student **Sara Vogel** (Urban Education), whose research focuses on the intersection of bilingual and digital media education, was featured in a White House announcement about former President Barack Obama's Computer Science for All campaign.

RECENT BUDGETARY PRESSURE AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Reductions in state support to CUNY have had a painful impact upon the Graduate Center, which relies upon state appropriations for most of its operating budget, with the balance comprised of research grants, private giving and endowment returns, and auxiliary services. Over the last 18 months, the Graduate Center has absorbed what amounts to a more than 6% cut to its base allocation. These reductions, which do not include the shift to the Graduate Center of other financial liabilities, form but the most recent installments in a near decade-long series of reductions that amount to some \$16 million in total.

Other public colleges and institutions have responded to reductions by increasing tuition levels and/or enrollment. Because of a narrow tuition base, which consists almost entirely of modest master's enrollment, this has been impossible at the Graduate Center. Expenses have accordingly been reduced, in some cases very sharply.

Despite these challenges, the Graduate Center has made significant progress. Several initiatives have taken place, all advancing one or more of the three major goals that were set out in the 2012-2016 Strategic Plan. These include:

- Effecting dramatic improvement in selectivity. A trend that began in 2005 (when the doctoral admission rate was 40.9%) has accelerated since 2011 (when it was 29.3%). In fall 2016, offers of admission were made to 18.2% of those who applied. During the same time, yield has increased from 53.4% to 64.4%. It is especially noteworthy that while increased selectivity is frequently accompanied by decreased diversity, the Graduate Center has delivered a moderate *increase* in racial and ethnic diversity between 2005 and 2016.
- Advancing our commitment to diversity and inclusion through a range of investments and initiatives, including enhancing financial support for students, recruiting post-doctoral students from underrepresented groups, and creating a Presidential Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion chaired by a newly appointed Presidential Advisor on Diversity and Inclusion.
- Establishing the Advanced Research Collaborative which, in attracting 85 scholar-teachers to the Graduate Center, has invested in CUNY campus-based faculty, opened mentoring opportunities for students, and organized a wide variety of programs.
- Laying the foundation for a hub of student support services, including an Office for Career Planning and Professional Development and a Teaching and Learning Center, both of which are improving students' professional development.
- Launching, with considerable support from external sources, several teaching and research initiatives, such as the Humanities Alliance, the Futures Initiative, the Graduate Center Digital Initiatives (GCDI), and the Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality.
- Addressing longstanding deficiencies in the study of natural and quantitative sciences by securing funding for a Center for Digital Scholarship and Data Visualization, and executing the recommendations of the 2015 Robinson Report on the Bench Sciences.⁸
- Creating a network of partnerships with New York City cultural and academic institutions that provide student research opportunities, including the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the New York Public Library, the Morgan Library & Museum, the New-York Historical Society, the New York Botanical Garden, and the Vera Institute of Justice, among others.
- Purchasing a site in Long Island City to build a student and faculty residence, which will complement the Graduate Center Apartment Complex at 165 East 118th Street.

Like other institutions, the Graduate Center has experienced extraordinary financial pressures in recent years, yet we have successfully punched above our weight in research and graduate education.



American universities granted a record number of Ph.D.s in 2015—with the Graduate Center among the top 10 institutions awarding doctorates to members of underrepresented minority groups, according to federal data presented in *Inside Higher Ed*.

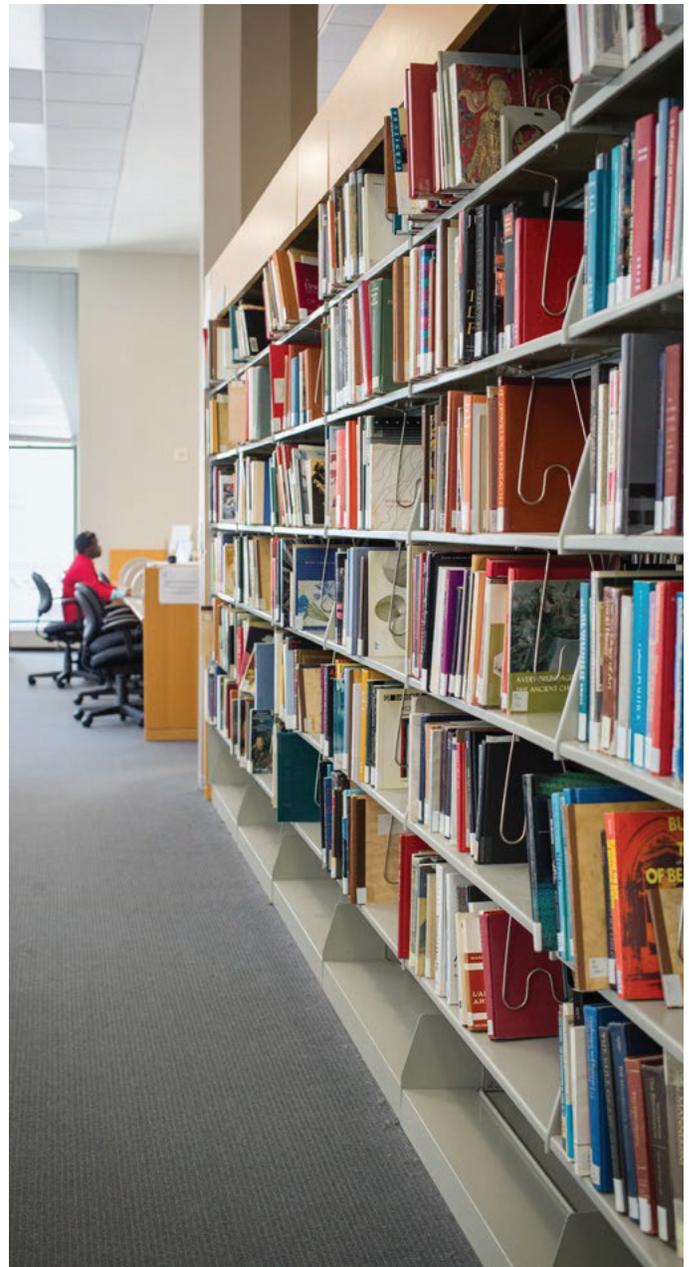
As judged by several measures—staffing levels, number of executive positions, size of incoming doctoral cohorts, and number of Graduate Center faculty—the Graduate Center is somewhat smaller than in years past, but it is an altogether stronger and more accomplished institution. This, too, can be measured in any number of ways: the ongoing recruitment of stellar faculty (including a Nobel Prize winner—the institution’s first); an array of student, faculty, and institutional awards (including a Pulitzer Prize, five Guggenheim Fellowships in the last five years, and another MacArthur Fellowship in 2016); our graduates’ job placements and careers; record-setting levels of foundation support; a doubling of master’s enrollment since 2011; and greater recognition and visibility in the larger academic and professional communities.

STRENGTHS AND VULNERABILITIES

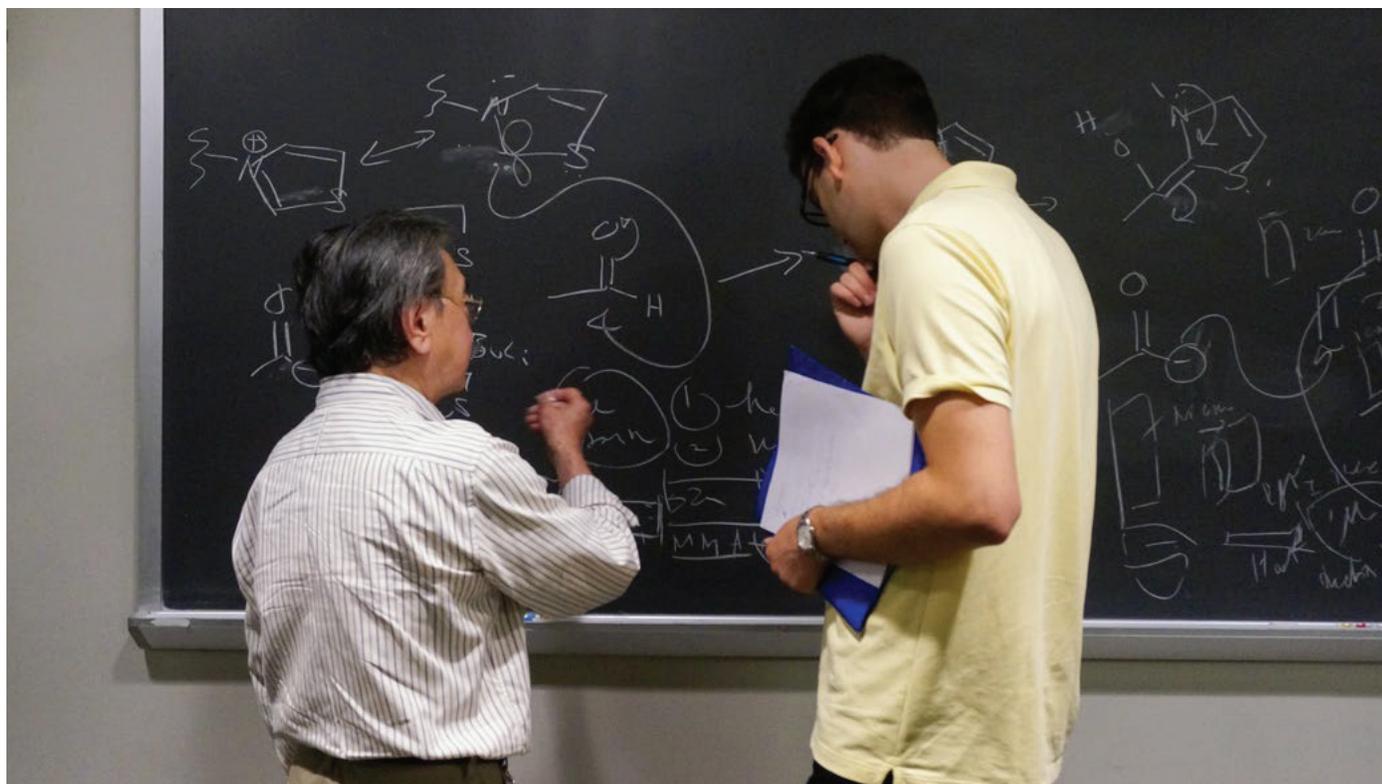
Now in its 53rd year, the Graduate Center can take deep pride in the academic excellence of its faculty and students, in a growing reputation for innovation in several disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas, and in its commitment to the public good. Other public universities can make similar claims, but we are unique in possessing three extraordinary advantages.

The first advantage is *location and orientation*. CUNY—and so the Graduate Center—is present in virtually every neighborhood in every borough of New York City. Understanding the challenges that face cities is crucially important to our nation’s well-being, and for the future of the globe. We have long-standing academic strengths in the study of cities, urbanism, the environment, immigration, education, globalization, and the linguistic and cultural challenges specific to city life. New York City, a hotbed of economic, political, and artistic activities, is our seminar room—and a powerful magnet for the best students and faculty.

The second advantage is CUNY’s *scale and diversity*. CUNY serves approximately 274,000 full-time students, who come from the most diverse socio-economic, racial, ethnic, religious, and national backgrounds imaginable. Approximately 75% of freshmen who enroll at CUNY are graduates of the New York City public school system.⁹



The Graduate Center is unusual and distinctive by virtue of being part of a connected CUNY.



In this remarkable sea of difference and pool of talent, the Graduate Center has unparalleled opportunities to innovate in pedagogy, to engage in research, and to impact through teaching.

The third advantage is the Graduate Center's *focus and mission*. Typical graduate schools are administrative and financial structures that connect the teaching, supervision, and learning carried out by professors and graduate students to the much larger enterprise of undergraduate and professional education that is the core business of a research university. As such, beyond admitting and funding students, they are modest in resources, reach, and authority, and rely largely upon departments organized according to the needs of undergraduate education.

The Graduate Center, in contrast, is a self-standing institution that is financed and administered entirely in the service of graduate and advanced research. As such, it has the considerable competitive advantage of focus and mission, which—once fully realized in the services and opportunities presented to students and faculty alike—can be transformed into an asset that sets the Graduate Center apart.

Alongside these advantages, the Graduate Center has vulnerabilities, and these jeopardize our excellence and impact. They include:

- Impediments to fostering academic community and innovation;
- Relative weakness in the natural sciences;
- Modest institutional recognition, especially outside of the academy;
- Ongoing financial insecurity; and
- Constraints of space, IT capacity, and deferred maintenance.

Here it should be emphasized that the Carnegie R-1 category of research universities almost entirely consists of institutions with enrollments and budgets that dwarf—by factors of five, 10, and even 20—those of the Graduate Center. That the Graduate Center punches so far above its weight, and so brings great credit to CUNY, is testimony to the excellence of our faculty and the cost-effectiveness of our operations.

CONCLUSION

The Graduate Center has made remarkable progress over the last five years. But in large part because of severe financial constraints, this progress has been academic in character and incremental in scale. Put another way, many of the Graduate Center’s strengths result directly from careful planning and effective execution, but too little strategizing and too few resources have been directed towards addressing institutional vulnerabilities that threaten the academic enterprise.

There is nothing like the Graduate Center—self-standing and yet thoroughly networked into the ‘connected university’ that is CUNY; a degree-granting institution

organized in the service of doctoral education; an assembly of academic centers, institutes and initiatives designed to foster scholarship and research; a loose community of scholar-teachers and student-teachers; and a stage and forum for outreach and public programming. The challenge we face is to combine our disparate parts into a compelling and coherent project.

A recent period of contraction must now be followed by transformative growth across the institution—in academic excellence, impact, financial diversification and resourcefulness, and institutional resilience. ■



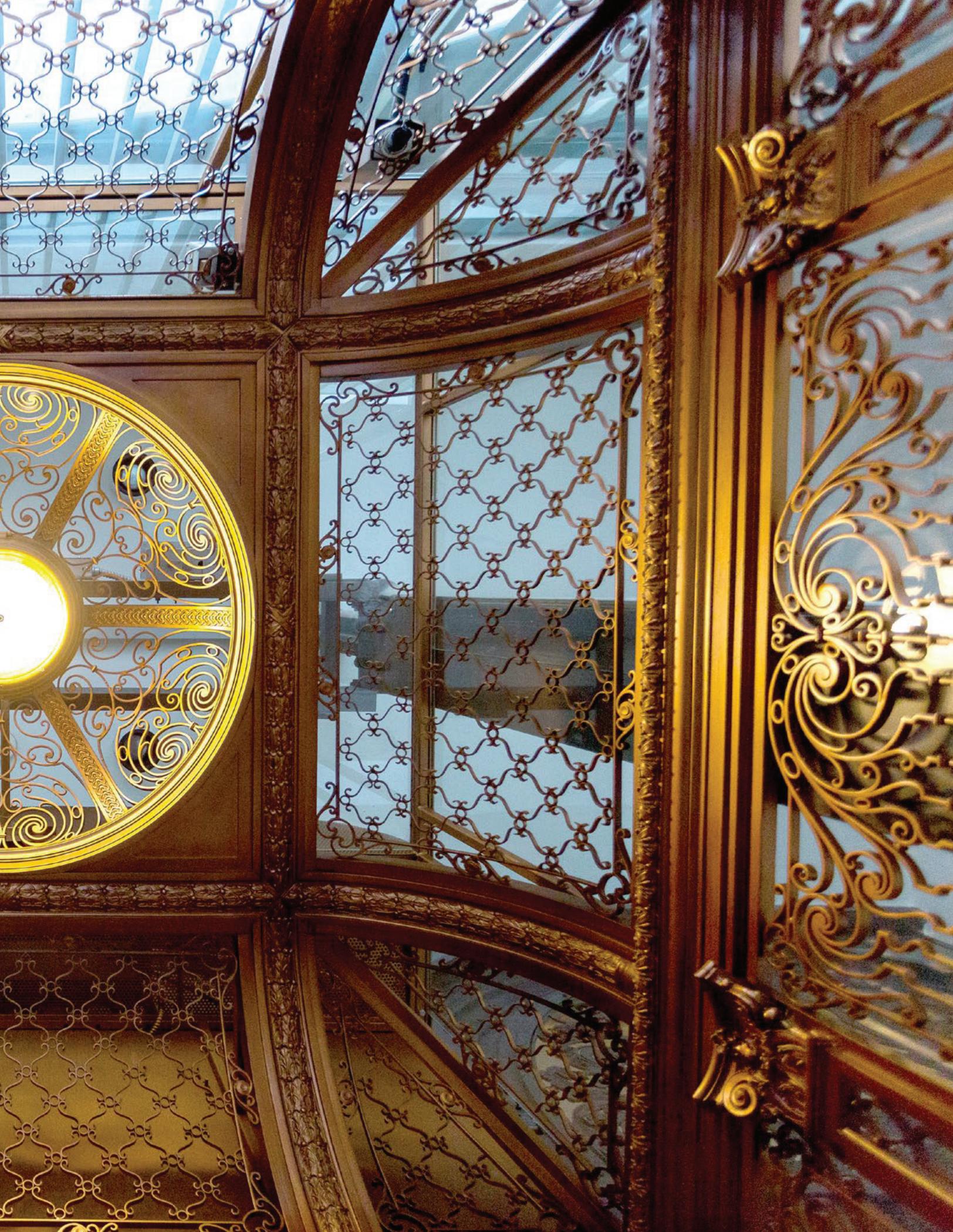


This strategic plan is designed to tackle our challenges and to transform the Graduate Center through interdisciplinary collaboration, building the sciences, increasing our public impact, and ensuring our financial resilience.

PRIORITY ONE

Fostering and integrating communities of learning and research

1





Ph.D. candidate **Jesse Merandy** (English) completed the Graduate Center's first entirely digital dissertation—a mobile game based on the poetry of Walt Whitman. Merandy is director of the Digital Media Lab at Bard Graduate Center.

As the hub of an integrated multicampus network, the Graduate Center advances CUNY-wide initiatives, which range from teaching collaborations with community colleges to research programs in the experimental sciences. At the same time, the Graduate Center is home to an academic community of its own—a 21st-century collegium, which aims to inspire students and faculty alike to carry out the most creative and innovative scholarship.

1.1 We will deepen and broaden our culture of interdisciplinary scholarship and research by transforming institutional practices and habits of thought, and by hiring outstanding and diverse faculty, especially those who promise to deliver institution-wide impact.

We must sustain and nourish our traditional strengths in the humanities and social sciences, address the desire on the part of faculty and students to work more collaboratively and creatively, and reinforce our commitment to emerging fields and to our public mission. We will advance this priority by:

- Promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration through faculty hiring that benefits multiple programs.
- Hiring to address program needs and fortify relations between the Graduate Center and the cultural, artistic, and scientific resources of New York City.
- Providing incentives to faculty and programs to design flexible and innovative curricula that feature interdisciplinary research seminars, team-taught courses, and workshops for independent student research, extending work by the Center for the Humanities; the Committees on Religion, Science Studies, and Globalization; the Early Research Initiative; and the Futures Initiative.
- Strengthening sites designated for interdisciplinary work, such as the Advanced Research Collaborative and the Center for Humanities, by expanding their themes and increasing the number of CUNY student and faculty fellows.
- Integrating the centers, institutes, committees, and initiatives, which bring intellectual strength and distinctiveness, and many of which advance our public mission, into the Graduate Center community through better communications and collective planning.



- Expanding the scope of digital projects under the auspices of the Center for Digital Scholarship and Data Visualization, the Digital Research Initiative, the New Media Lab, and other digital initiatives.

- Providing focused services to faculty and students seeking external support, and reviewing policies governing the distribution of overhead funds.

1.2 We will foster diversity and inclusion in our academic pursuits and the composition of our faculty, student, and staff communities.

Because a culture of diversity and inclusion promotes respect, engenders creativity, and encourages intellectual risk-taking, it is intrinsic to learning and research of the highest quality. Ensuring that our faculty and student body more clearly reflects the diversity of New York City is also key to our commitment to changing the shape of the professoriate. Although significant progress has been made in institutionalizing the values and outcomes of diversity and inclusion over the last few years, much remains to be done. To advance this priority we will:

- Assess current approaches to improving student, faculty, and staff diversity; develop a diversity and inclusion strategy; and require Executive Officers to create five-year recruitment plans with an emphasis on diversity.

- Support the work of outstanding scholars from underrepresented groups in the campuses through the Advanced Research Collaborative, the Initiative for the Theoretical Sciences, the Futures Initiative, and through workshops and public events.

- Promote awareness of and increase resources allocated to the CUNY Pipeline program, and expand the fields that the Pipeline program fosters.

- Build upon the Mellon-funded Humanities Alliance with LaGuardia Community College to enrich the pedagogical training of our teaching fellows at CUNY's four-year and community colleges.

- Review and, as appropriate, increase allocation of resources for accessibility and disability services.

PRIORITY TWO

Building the theoretical and experimental sciences

2





In past decades, investment in the sciences at CUNY has been spotty, and cross-campus collaboration the exception, rather than the rule. Recently, however, the situation has improved on both fronts. In 2008, for the first time, five-year funding packages were made available each year to entering students in the biology, biochemistry, chemistry, and physics programs. Although the doctoral faculty members in these four programs are almost exclusively located at other CUNY campuses, this initiative normalized funding across the programs, and increased faculty and student interaction and collaboration. What was a consortium in name only has become a true consortium in practice.

In 2014, CUNY launched its Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC), and in fall 2016, the ASRC joined the Graduate Center. The Graduate Center is now positioned to advance the CUNY-wide priority of enhancing scientific research across the campuses. The science faculty at CUNY campuses now have access to state-of-the-art ASRC facilities critical to their research and have helped recruit world-class faculty and promising post-doctoral scientists to laboratories housed in the ASRC's 200,000-square-foot building. Meanwhile, the Graduate Center has committed itself to growth in the sciences by founding the CUNY Neuroscience Collaborative, securing approval for its first Master of Science degree, launching the Initiative for the Theoretical Sciences, and founding a Center for Digital Scholarship and Data Visualization.

In 2014, the University launched its Advanced Science Research Center (ASRC), and in fall 2016, the ASRC joined the Graduate Center.

2.1 We will match the material and financial resources required to undertake outstanding scientific research with intellectual resources that are broad and deep.

From recruiting faculty to ensuring access to laboratory space and hosting seminars and chalk talks, we will support outstanding science and foster a rich culture of collaborative scientific research by:

- Recruiting leading scientists, with a view to advancing and complementing the research strengths of the CUNY campuses, the Initiative for the Theoretical Sciences, and the ASRC’s five research areas (neuroscience, nanoscience, environmental science, structural biology, and photonics).
- Convening meetings, workshops, seminars, and public programs to promote a ‘connected CUNY,’ thereby encouraging collaboration between campus-based faculty and ASRC faculty, and between theorists and experimentalists across New York City.
- Partnering with all CUNY scientists to develop innovative curricula to train graduate students in cutting-edge techniques, positioning them at the forefront of scientific discovery.
- Promoting our emerging profile in the sciences with a view to recruiting outstanding faculty and students from diverse backgrounds, keeping in mind that women remain severely underrepresented among the ranks in the sciences.¹⁰



Professor Eleanore T. Wurtzel (GC/Lehman, Biochemistry/Biology) has identified a new enzyme in plants that shows promise for ending vitamin A deficiency—a life-threatening health issue that affects 250 million children worldwide.



Scientific discovery increasingly requires advances in both the theoretical and experimental disciplines, with the most significant achievements often resulting from the integration of the two.



2.2 We will work to remove barriers among the sciences and between the sciences and the humanities, social sciences, and the arts.

The 21st century has ushered in a host of new directions in interdisciplinary scholarship, including research that breaks down the traditional barriers that separate the sciences from each other, as well as the sciences from the humanities, social sciences, and the arts. Scientific discovery increasingly requires advances in both the theoretical and experimental disciplines, with the most significant achievements often resulting from the integration of the two.

Medical humanities, science writing, bioethics, philosophy of science, and data visualization are a sampling of interdisciplinary work that has recently been invigorated by fresh thinking and funding on a national level. We will promote interdisciplinary work between the sciences and other fields by:

- Establishing student and CUNY faculty fellowships at the ASRC and in the Initiative for the Theoretical Sciences, on the model of the Advanced Research Collaborative, and building an integrated network of experimentalists and theoreticians.
- Developing new interdisciplinary master's programs in the sciences.
- Providing resources to faculty and students who wish to pursue interdisciplinary work in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and the experimental and theoretical sciences.



2.3 We will enhance pedagogy in the sciences and raise the visibility of the sciences at the Graduate Center, across New York City, nationally, and internationally.

Cutting-edge scientific research fascinates: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) educators seek inspiration; the curious wish to understand their changing environment, the workings of the world, and the cosmos; the ill hope for new treatments; and parents want to understand the developing brains of their young children. Above all, promising students must be encouraged to pursue science through engagement with world-class research. We will respond to these imperatives by:

- Creating innovative teaching practices that will enhance STEM education at the undergraduate and graduate levels, in partnership with the CUNY campuses where doctoral students work and teach.
- Increasing awareness of the research undertaken in our science programs in the local, national, and international arenas through promotion, communications, and public events in the complementary venues of 365 Fifth Avenue and the ASRC building at 85 St. Nicholas Terrace.

PRIORITY THREE

Advancing our public
mission by increasing
our impact

3



At the core of the Graduate Center’s history and identity lies our mission to disseminate learning and knowledge for the public good. During our first 50 years, we advanced this mission by building excellent Ph.D. programs, many of whose graduates teach in a wide variety of colleges and universities and work in cultural institutions, and by delivering educational and cultural programming to the public.

As needs change within higher education and society at large, our commitment to our public mission must also evolve. We must engage those seeking affordable master’s degrees, especially in interdisciplinary and emerging fields of study. We must align doctoral education with the expectations and needs of our students, who increasingly seek to complement their research expertise with state-of-the-art training in undergraduate pedagogy, and up-to-date skills for nonacademic careers. We must open the Graduate Center’s doors more widely to those whose interests lie outside of credit-based graduate education. We must also enhance our connections to the global academic world and to the broader public, using both traditional and digital means.

In addition to her role as Deputy Queens Borough President, **Melva Miller** (Social Welfare) is a Ph.D. student—a combination she says serves her well: ‘I’m applying everything I’ve learned from research and theory, and seeing how it plays it out in the community. The experience and education that I’ve received through all my years at CUNY have been phenomenal. It’s why I do the work that I do.’



3.1 We will expand master’s programs and integrate master’s students into the academic life of the Graduate Center.

From 2012 to 2015, the Graduate Center reduced new doctoral enrollment by approximately 25%, concentrating resources to provide more competitive recruitment packages. Although we have significantly increased master’s enrollment over the same period, this growth has taken place almost entirely in the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program, and the relative size of this enrollment remains small. Expanding our portfolio of master’s degrees and integrating master’s programs into the Graduate Center will enhance our intellectual life, extend opportunities for graduate education to a larger population of students, complement Ph.D. enrollment, and open up teaching opportunities for faculty.

To further this goal, we will:

- Increase the range and number of interdisciplinary and professional master’s programs.
- Establish a system of periodic assessment of master’s programs to ensure strong admissions performance, diversity, and curricular innovation.
- Ensure that the Office of Student Affairs has the necessary resources to address the needs of a growing master’s enrollment.
- Offer enhanced academic and professional development support for our master’s community.



Minn Hur (M.A. '16, Fashion Studies), cofounder and creative director of HVRMINN, showed his most recent men’s collection at New York Fashion Week.



Named a '2016 New Yorker of the Year' by *The New York Times*, **Lee Gabay** (Ph.D. '14, Urban Education) teaches English at Brooklyn Democracy Academy, a transfer school for under-credited students whose education had been interrupted. His motto: 'Students need to know how much you care before they care how much you know.'

3.2 We will provide our doctoral students with exceptional training in pedagogy, becoming national leaders in graduate education.

The Graduate Center enjoys the unparalleled benefit of participating in CUNY's mission of combining access and excellence. Doctoral students annually teach and train approximately 200,000 undergraduates, who constitute an exceptionally diverse community in the rich urban context that is New York City. Serving as models and mentors, doctoral students thus gain a distinctive education themselves. The stronger our graduate students' training as teachers, the stronger is all of CUNY.

Significant progress has been made, particularly with the founding of the Futures Initiative in 2014 and the Teaching and Learning Center in 2015. To further our progress, we will:

- Create incentives that partner doctoral programs with the Teaching and Learning Center.
- Establish undergraduate teaching awards for doctoral students who are outstanding teachers and mentors for CUNY undergraduates, and awards for faculty who do outstanding service in mentoring and teaching graduate students.



- Expand support for our work with LaGuardia Community College, currently funded by the Mellon Foundation, and seek resources to increase the scope of the program, including to other CUNY senior and community colleges.
- Work with CUNY colleges to review the Writing Across the Curriculum and Quantitative Reasoning programs to assess their effectiveness, and explore alternative programing for the fifth year of fellowship funding.

3.3 We will model innovative methods of Ph.D. professionalization, and encourage our faculty’s focus on training students for both academic and nonacademic careers.

Within academia, new ideas, disciplines, and imperatives call for rethinking both the curriculum and classroom experience, and the Graduate Center is responding to this change in landscape. Our doctoral programs prepare students for careers in and out of the academy. We welcome

Adam Kavalier (Ph.D.’11, Biology) launched *Undone Chocolate*, the first bean-to-bar maker of premium organic chocolate bars in the Washington, D.C., area. Founded in late 2014, the company now produces more than 3,000 gourmet chocolate bars a month.

the fact that a wide variety of skills and competencies acquired in the course of Ph.D. training—in research, qualitative and quantitative skills and techniques, and communication—are in high demand in the private and public sectors.

Much has been achieved over the last four years, especially through the work of the Office of Career Planning and Professional Development, the Teaching and Learning Center, GCDI, the Interactive Technology and Pedagogy Certificate Program, and the Futures Initiative, which are putting Graduate Center students on the frontier of

new ideas and skills. But these and other initiatives are incipient. To sustain its national reputation as a leader in interdisciplinary scholarship and new digital literacies, the Graduate Center must cultivate innovation and experimentation. To accelerate our progress, we will:

- Align academic milestones with broad professional development, such as replacing some exams with portfolios, repurposing first-year service hours, and facilitating curricular revisions to accommodate credit-bearing courses on pedagogy, classroom praxis, research, and proposal writing.
- Integrate and coordinate activities currently sponsored by the Futures Initiative, the Office of Career Planning and Professional Development, the Teaching and Learning Center, the Interactive Technology and Pedagogy Certificate Program, and GCDI.
- Establish a Writing Center to enhance the research and communication skills of our doctoral and master's students.
- Create a Statistics Center to provide faculty and students greater resources for quantitative and empirical research training.
- Make it an expectation that all doctoral students apply for at least one source of external funding by the end of their third year, and two by the end of their fifth, and ensure that their efforts are adequately supported by faculty and staff.
- Build an alumni community that will enrich students' intellectual development and employment opportunities.

3.4 We will increase our impact through communications, programming, and nondegree programs that respond to public interest and reflect our faculty's scholarly strengths and reputation.

Rarely has public and student interest been greater in inequality, globalization, urbanism, immigration, digital technologies, new art forms, social justice, brain science, and autobiography and memoir—all areas of study in which the Graduate Center stands out. Programs geared to those not seeking a degree—both inside and outside

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New York City—will improve our financial stability and contribute to the circulation of knowledge in the public sphere. To further these ends, we will:

- Enrich and advertise more effectively creative public programming at 365 Fifth Avenue, concentrating particularly on the arts (with a focus on the James Gallery), the study of cities, and the sciences.
- Design nondegree programs, such as short-term intensive seminars, summer institutes, and events that accompany scholarly conferences, with a focus on academic value and accessibility.
- Model low-residency programs that combine conventional teaching with new methods made possible by instructional technology.
- Build on existing efforts to share a greater amount of research with global publics through digital methods.
- Create a coordinated strategic communications plan across all channels (digital, social, video, and print).



‘Inequality in New York City and Beyond’—a conversation featuring **Professor Janet Gornick** (Political Science/Sociology), **Mayor Bill de Blasio**, and **Distinguished Professor Paul Krugman** (Economics)—drew a standing-room-only audience to the Graduate Center and thousands more online.

3.5 We will achieve greater recognition for our faculty and students by building stronger relationships with institutions in New York City and around the world.

No institution of higher education is self-contained: partnerships with other universities and research centers, businesses, think tanks, nonprofit organizations, and corporations are key to advancing faculty research and improving the support we offer our students. These partnerships also provide additional financial stability and position the Graduate Center as a locally and globally recognized source of thought and talent. We have already signed partnership agreements in Europe and Africa; we place students as fellows in institutions such as the New York Botanical Garden, the New York Public Library, the Morgan Library & Museum, and the American Museum of Natural History; and we are piloting a program in conjunction with Google that provides computer science education to students in the CUNY colleges, focusing on diverse populations. Building on these efforts, we will:

- Continue to raise our academic profile, creating partnerships with academic institutions on a local and global scale.
- Deepen our collaboration with nonacademic institutions locally and regionally, including digital industries and nongovernmental organizations.
- Capitalize on the ASRC’s existing partnerships with institutions locally, nationally, and internationally, and seek to develop new relationships.

PRIORITY FOUR

Diversifying our
resources and building
institutional resilience

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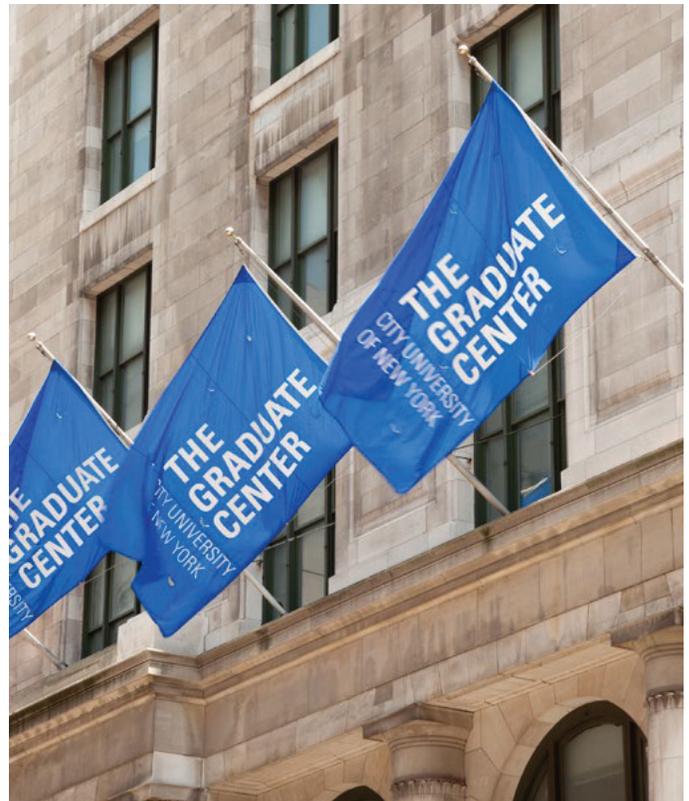
nd Tony James Gallery
Graduate Center

Doctoral education, which requires small classes, individual supervision, and state-of-the-art academic infrastructure, is by its very nature an expensive project. So, too, is research. Significant investments in financial aid have resulted in major increases in admissions competitiveness, but these have come largely from a diminishing pool of tax-levy resources. We must enhance fundraising and institutional resilience. Moreover, as the Graduate Center begins to implement the business process changes wrought by the implementation of CUNYfirst, it will identify opportunities to tailor processes to better serve the unique needs of the Graduate Center community.

4.1 We will cultivate the Graduate Center Foundation Board and a support base beyond our alumni.

In any nonprofit organization, the Board is the bellwether of all giving. Currently, few regular donors come from outside the Graduate Center’s internal constituencies. Our potential for growth is essentially unbounded, given the range and excellence of Graduate Center research, faculty, and students. To enhance our fundraising prospects, we will:

- Increase the number of trustees on the Foundation Board to a full complement and involve them more effectively in fundraising.
- Broaden our appeal to large private foundations and non-private funding agencies interested in funding research in public higher education by partnering with CUNY colleges, utilizing our consortial relationships, and bringing together interdisciplinary projects that involve a strategic mix of centers, departments, and initiatives.
- Encourage faculty and student participation in fundraising efforts designed to reach a broad public, such as support for early research and dissertation fellowships, student travel to conferences, public programs, and collaboration between the humanities and the sciences.
- Develop a comprehensive public affairs strategy.



More than 90% of Americans with HIV have taken a life-saving drug invented by **Dennis Liotta** (Ph.D. '74, Chemistry), a faculty member at Emory University. In 2016, he received the President’s Distinguished Alumni Medal Award from the Graduate Center.



4.2 We will strengthen connections with alumni to support fundraising and enrich our students’ educational experiences and career development.

Building upon the success of our outreach to alumni in the past five years, the Graduate Center will redouble its efforts by:

- Supporting faculty and programs in alumni outreach, with the intention of increasing rates of participation and giving.
- Reconstituting an Alumni Association that gives alumni scope for ownership and engagement, and that offers partnership opportunities for the Graduate Center and its Foundation.
- Constituting an Outreach and Engagement Committee of the Alumni Association to help cultivate alumni for annual giving and planned gifts.
- Creating a career development and mentorship program that will enhance graduates’ professional prospects for careers outside the academy by connecting students with alumni, and by extension, to corporations, state and city agencies, nongovernmental organizations, museums, libraries, archives, and philanthropies, especially in New York City.

Maggie Nelson (Ph.D. '04, English), an award-winning writer known for nonfiction works such as 2015's *The Argonauts*, was named a 2016 MacArthur Fellow by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

4.3 We will launch the residence project in Long Island City.

Given the national and international market for permanent and visiting faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and students, we must make available more housing that is both affordable and desirable. Currently, the Graduate Center Apartment Complex at 165 East 118th Street is at capacity, and cannot address our growing needs. Plans underway to build an additional residence on land purchased in July 2015 in Long Island City, a short commute to the Graduate Center and a highly attractive neighborhood, must be realized.

To ensure the success of this project, we will:

- Embark on a development plan to address the funding shortfall for the Long Island City residence project.
- Advance strategies to maximize the use of the Long Island City residence project by utilizing the space for both educational and community events.

Plans underway to build an additional residence on land purchased in July 2015 in Long Island City, a short commute to the Graduate Center and a highly attractive neighborhood, must be realized.





4.4 We will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of space allocation, utilization, and infrastructure.

In the challenge of allocating the precious resource that is space, the Graduate Center is no different from its sister campuses throughout CUNY or publicly funded institutions more generally. However, the Graduate Center has a unique profile as the hub of research and scholarship activity spanning the CUNY system. For that reason alone, many demands are placed on the very limited resources of classroom and seminar rooms; accommodations for faculty and other researchers, both individually and as a community; spaces for library and student services; venues for public programming; and quarters for vital support services.

Addressing space needs responsibly requires continually reassessing this dynamic and responding accordingly. To that end, we will:

- Review current accommodations to ensure that the allocation of spaces for faculty and other researchers promotes both discipline-specific and cross-disciplinary activities and collaborations between programs and centers/institutes.
- Work to address the distinct space requirements of master's degree students, of participants in nondegree programs and of students engaging in career services, teaching and learning workshops, accessibility services, and library activities.
- Assess event venues, computer labs, and conference facilities to determine the adequacy of IT and audio-visual resources and infrastructure to support effectively the broad needs of the Graduate Center and, where required, to increase transparency and identify remediation strategies.
- Use secured CUNY 2020 funding to provide a comfortable, welcoming space on the concourse level for students to pursue work and collaborate in the new Center for Digital Scholarship and Data Visualization.
- Examine the current usage of rental space.





Implementing the Strategic Plan

To ensure that the Graduate Center community understands our priorities, the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan will be discussed in upcoming meetings with Executive Officers and Assistant Program Officers, the Graduate Council, the Doctoral Student Council, the Graduate Center Foundation Board, and the President's quarterly open meetings with the Graduate Center community. The plan will also be available online and in print.

To facilitate implementation, the President and Provost, in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, will establish a Strategic Planning Implementation Committee, chaired by the Provost, to translate this plan into a detailed set of action plans. The Strategic

Planning Implementation Committee will also assign responsibility to the offices and units of the Graduate Center that are appropriate to carry out each strategic action and will be responsible for general oversight of the plan's execution, including assessment of the results.

The Strategic Planning Implementation Committee will make annual reports to the President, including recommendations for administrative action that flow from the assessments. The President will review these recommendations and determine if modifications are needed in strategic actions and associated resource allocations. The President will make periodic reports to the community describing progress toward achieving the goals of the plan and outlining modifications.

Linking Planning and Assessment

To ensure the success of the 2017–2022 Strategic Plan, the Graduate Center will implement an assessment process to measure progress toward achieving its major goals. The process will evaluate educational and institutional effectiveness and relay conclusions to relevant decision makers. It will be linked to ongoing reviews, such as the 10-year doctoral and master's program review cycle, Middle States Commission on Higher Education review cycle, annual CUNY Performance Management Process, and seven-year doctoral learning assessment.

To link planning and assessment, the Office of the Provost, in partnership with the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, will:

- Identify planning objectives and empirical measures of success (measurable performance outcomes or MPO) for each of the four priority areas to facilitate progress on achieving the goals.
- Specify strategic actions that relate to each MPO and translate these strategic actions into performance plans for the relevant Graduate Center offices.
- Create an assessment timeline that relates each strategic action to both short- and long-term planning objectives, and use this assessment process to refine the strategic actions, while staying responsive to evolving budgetary conditions.
- Integrate existing assessments, such as doctoral and master's program reviews; doctoral program learning assessments; research center and institute reviews; administrative office reviews; Middle States reviews; and applicant, student, and alumni surveys, with the strategic planning/assessment process and timeline.
- Reevaluate the selection of peer institutions and aspirational peer institutions for benchmarking.
- Close the planning/assessment loop by using assessment tools to review the Strategic Plan every 18 months to make modifications in institutional policies and resource allocations that flow from this assessment, and use results to inform the next Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic Plan is a result of a collaborative effort. Some 50 faculty, students, and staff participated in six task forces to make recommendations to strengthen the Graduate Center’s intellectual and academic life, its diversity, and its financial capacity, taking into account the financial, academic, and administrative resources necessary to achieve these recommendations.

Convened by President Robinson in March 2015, the Strategic Planning Committee was charged with overseeing the process of developing the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee held its first meeting on May 19, 2015. Thereafter, the five task forces met periodically to address their respective areas of focus. The task forces were: Faculty, Students and Programs; Student Experience; Research; Communications and External Outreach; and Finances. The sixth task force, Assessment, was also convened and is assisting in determining the measurable performance outcomes

for each of the goals. The chairs/co-chairs of the task forces also served on the Strategic Planning Committee.

Each task force produced a report identifying recommendations to address its area of focus. The task force reports were then submitted to the Strategic Planning Committee for review. A summary of the reports was posted so that the Graduate Center community could review options discussed in the task forces. A draft 2017–2022 Strategic Plan, crafted from these task force reports, was posted on the Strategic Planning website in November 2016 and presented for comment to the Graduate Center community. The Provost held an open meeting to receive public comment on the draft 2017–2022 Strategic Plan on December 6, 2016. The draft Strategic Plan was then revised to take into account the various comments from the outreach process, and the final plan, upon approval by President Robinson, will be presented to the Graduate Council in March 2017.



The Strategic Planning Committee and Its Task Forces

The Strategic Planning Committee

Joy Connolly, *Provost and Senior Vice President, Chair*

*Louise Lennihan (*Interim Provost and Senior Vice President, Chair, March 2015–July 2016*)

Gregory Donovan, *Alumnus, Environmental Psychology (2013)*

Duncan Faherty, *Associate Professor, English; Director, Early Research Initiative*

Jennifer Furlong, *Director, Office for Career Planning and Professional Development*

Jay Golan, *Vice President for Institutional Advancement*

John Greenwood, *Professor, Philosophy and Psychology*

Jennifer Kobrin, *Director, Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness*

Gita Martohardjono, *Professor and Executive Officer, Linguistics*

Uday Mehta, *Distinguished Professor, Political Science*

Joanna Migdal, *Graduate Center Foundation Board Member*

David Olan, *Professor, Music; Associate Provost and Dean for Academic Affairs*

Sebastian Persico, *Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration*

Donald Robotham, *Professor, Anthropology; Director, Advanced Research Collaborative*

Charlotte Thurston, *Doctoral Student, English*

Stacie Tionson, *Executive Director of Academic Affairs*

Stephanie Vella, *Doctoral Student, Theatre*

Gary Wilder, *Associate Professor, Anthropology and History*

The Strategic Planning Task Forces

FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND PROGRAMS

Uday Mehta and David Olan, *Co-Chairs*

Amy Adamczyk, *Professor, Sociology and Criminal Justice*

Joshua Brumberg, *Professor, Psychology and Biology; Dean for the Sciences*

Matthew Gold, *Associate Professor, English; Executive Officer, Master of Arts in Liberal Studies*

Igor Kuskovsky, *Professor and Executive Officer, Physics*

Stephen Neale, *Distinguished Professor, Philosophy and Linguistics*

Rebecca Salois, *Doctoral Student, Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages*

Phyllis Schulz, *Executive Director of Fellowships and Financial Aid*

Stacie Tionson, *Executive Director of Academic Affairs*

Stephanie Vella, *Doctoral Student, Theatre*

David Waldstreicher, *Distinguished Professor, History*

Gary Wilder, *Associate Professor, Anthropology and History*

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Duncan Faherty and Jennifer Furlong, *Co-Chairs*

Ashna Ali, *Doctoral Student, Comparative Literature*

Herman Bennett, *Professor, History; Executive Officer, Office of Educational Opportunity and Diversity*

Harold Connolly, *Professor, Earth and Environmental Sciences*

Vincent Deluca, *Director of Student Services and Senior Registrar*

Matthew Gold, *Associate Professor, English; Executive Officer, Master of Arts in Liberal Studies*

Jacqueline Martelle, *Assistant Program Officer, Music*

Amy Martin, *Doctoral Student, French*

Daniel Moy, *Assistant Program Officer, Physics*

Matthew Schoengood, *Vice President for Student Affairs*

Polly Thistlethwaite, *Chief Librarian*

Luke Waltzer, *Director, Teaching and Learning Center*

RESEARCH

Gita Martohardjono and Donald Robotham, *Co-Chairs*

Joshua Brumberg, *Professor, Psychology and Biology; Dean for the Sciences*

Collette Daiute, *Professor, Psychology, Urban Education, Educational Psychology*

José del Valle, *Professor and Executive Officer, Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages*

Edith Gonzalez, *Executive Director of Research and Sponsored Programs*

Giancarlo Lombardi, *Professor and Executive Officer, Comparative Literature*

Branco Milanovic, *Visiting Presidential Professor, Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality*

Ian Phillips, *Doctoral Student, Linguistics*

Cecelia Salvi, *Doctoral Student, Anthropology*

Richard Schwartz, *Presidential Professor, Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences*

Charlotte Thurston, *Doctoral Student, English*

COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL OUTREACH

Jay Golan, *Chair*

Peter Beinart, *Associate Professor, Political Science*

David Bloomfield, *Professor, Urban Education*

Miriam Capua, *Director of Major Gifts*

Morris Dickstein, *Distinguished Professor Emeritus, English*

Tanya Domi, *Director, Media Relations*

Nancy Foner, *Distinguished Professor, Sociology*

Emilia Gambardella, *Doctoral Student, Comparative Literature*

Jean Graham-Jones, *Professor and Executive Officer, Theatre*

Katherine Manthorne, *Professor, Art History*

Hamad Sindhi, *Doctoral Student, Sociology*

David Waldstreicher, *Distinguished Professor, History*

FINANCES

Sebastian Persico, *Chair*

Carlos Camacho, *Doctoral Student, Sociology*

Robert Campbell, *Vice President of Information Technology*

Jay Golan, *Vice President for Institutional Advancement*

Les Gribben, *Director of Admissions*

Jennifer Prince, *Doctoral Student, Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages*

Stuart Shor, *Assistant Vice President for Finance*

Joseph Weintrop, *Professor and Executive Officer, Business*

ASSESSMENT

John Greenwood and Jennifer Kobrin, *Co-Chairs*

Jennifer Furlong, *Director, Office for Career Planning and Professional Development*

Jay Golan, *Vice President for Institutional Advancement*

Gita Martohardjono, *Professor and Executive Officer, Linguistics*

David Olan, *Professor, Music; Associate Provost and Dean for Academic Affairs*

Sebastian Persico, *Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration*

Gwendolyn Shaw, *Doctoral Student, Art History*

Stacie Tiongson, *Executive Director of Academic Affairs*

Endnotes

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