

Good afternoon.

I am delighted to have this opportunity to address the general faculty in the middle of this busy spring semester of my first year. When we met in October, I reported on all of the positive things I had discovered upon my arrival here, and I outlined some plans for moving the institution forward. I would like to take a few minutes today to report to you on the progress we've made, and on what the next steps are.

As you know, last semester I, along with my cabinet, proposed the establishment of five standing committees to advise and assist in the management of the non-academic affairs of the college. These committees are co-chaired by senior administrators and faculty, and each has a number of faculty representatives participating. I am happy to report that each of those committees -- Student Affairs, Finance, Productivity, Facilities, and Human Resources -- is meeting regularly and will begin making preliminary reports to the cabinet as early as next month.

Just last week you should have received, via email, a letter from me to the College community outlining a strategic planning process that will result in a written plan for 2005- 2010. The strategic plan is guided by our expectation that Baruch College will achieve national prominence as an institution of business and professional education while dedicated to the City University of New York's goals of excellence and access. Baruch College will continue to be one of the most diverse educational institutions in the country with a commitment to global understanding. Over the next five years, we will build a unique model for professional higher education that insures a transformation in the lives of our students and contributes to the well-being of our city, our community, and the world.

We have identified five overarching goals that will guide our planning and decision-making. They are:

- Baruch College will become a nationally ranked urban public college.
- Baruch College will offer outstanding academic programs taught by a distinguished faculty with selected programs nationally recognized for excellence.
- Baruch College will enhance the quality of the college experience for all its students.

- Baruch College will increase its visibility and recognition in New York City and beyond.
- Baruch College will increase its endowment, resources, and alumni support.

Many of you have already been asked to play significant roles in this planning process by serving on one of the seven task forces that have been established. They include:

- a task force on Defining Excellence, which will work to lead Baruch toward identifying the measures we will use to achieve becoming a nationally ranked urban public college
- a task force on Academic Programs, comprised of the members of the Joint Committee on Research and the Joint Committee on Curriculum and Articulation, to suggest how we will develop outstanding academic programs and how we will support faculty. The task force is charged with identifying selected programs in our College for achieving excellence.
- a task force on Student Affairs, working to develop strategies for improving services to students, including international students, evening students and for improving support services to all students.

- a task force on Visibility, to increase the College's visibility and recognition in New York City and beyond, including a new college wide advertising campaign, a marketing strategy for some programs, and an alumni outreach program.
- a task force, constituted of the membership of the advisory committees on Finance and Productivity, charged with devising strategies for the College to increase its endowment, resources, and alumni support. This task force recognizes that the College remains dependent on tax levy funding but as public support for higher education waivers, we must take more control of our own destiny and seek alternative funding sources to move the College forward.
- a task force on Facilities, to develop an ongoing Master Facilities Plan that ensures that the long-term physical development of the campus, a renovation of 17 Lexington Avenue building, and the possible acquisition of new facilities to support our large student population.
- and, finally, a task force on Human Resources, to develop recommendations for increasing and improving college-wide personnel development, succession planning efforts, performance evaluation processes, and employee recognition.

All of the task forces have now been constituted and many of them have already begun meeting. Faculties are well-represented among these bodies. The Strategic Planning Council, which will provide overall structure and guidance to the process, also includes faculty and student representatives, and will meet formally for the first time next week.

I hope that all of you will read the document that has been distributed, and that you will feel free to provide feedback on it, follow along as we report on progress, and take part in the open discussions we have planned for the fall once a first draft of the plan is distributed to the community. It is very important to me, and, I believe, to the institution as a whole, that our faculty be active creators of our future.

To facilitate the sharing of information on planning and the work of the various planning groups, we are establishing a Blackboard community that you will all be invited to join. Details regarding this online forum will be sent to you shortly. For those of you more comfortable with more traditional media, please know that a “snail-mail” note is always welcome, and that we will have ample opportunity for in-person discussion in the fall through meetings of this body, and the faculty senate.

This college-wide planning effort takes place in the context of many other planning and self-study activities, and I'd like just to mention a few. As most of you probably know, the Zicklin School of Business was up for reaccreditation from the AACSB this year. A rigorous self-study was prepared last year, and the accrediting site team visited in February.

Although the results have yet to be formalized, we received very positive feedback in an exit interview with the site visit team. The Provost will provide more detail about that report. In addition, we will submit a periodic review report to the Middle States Association on the College as a whole at the end of this semester. I know many of you have contributed to these activities and I thank you.

I am looking forward to a planning process that is inclusive, participatory, and widely discussed by all members of the College community, so that the strategic plan, when finalized, will be embraced by faculty, students, staff and alumni. The Strategic Plan document must encompass our mission, our vision for the future, and be a realistic document that will align the resources of the College to the goals we wish to accomplish.

Before I conclude my report this afternoon, there are a few people I wish to acknowledge. After fourteen years of service as Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Development, Sam Johnson has decided to step down this summer and return to the faculty. I want to take this opportunity to recognize Sam for his tireless advocacy on behalf of students, his mentoring of generations of student leaders, and his valuable counsel to me and his other colleagues on matters related to student affairs. I hope that you will join me in thanking him and in wishing him well in this next stage of his career.

Dean Stan Altman has also announced his intention to step down from his position to return to the faculty of the School of Public Affairs at the end of this academic year. In his six years as dean, Stan has led the School into innovative and valuable partnerships with a number of government agencies and non-profit organizations, increased significantly both the numbers of students enrolled and the quality of the student body, and nurtured the research efforts of his faculty through encouraging creative collaborations and supporting the establishment of centers. I am deeply grateful to him for his accomplishments on behalf of the college and his continued service as a valued colleague.

Finally, Rob Ducoffe, associate dean in the Zicklin School of Business, leaves us later this month to assume the deanship of the business school of Indiana University at South Bend. Rob has been a driving force behind the Zicklin School's successful reaccreditation bid, as well as being a founding father of our full-time honors MBA program. Please join me in congratulating him on his exciting new position.

In addition, several new people joined the College this spring, including Sharon Chambliss-Alvarez, the new director of human resources; Donna Haggarty, executive director of strategic partnerships; David Shanton, executive director of development; Christian Keck, Director of Student Services for the BCTC and Boo Yun Choi, Budget Analyst for the Baruch College Fund. I hope you will make them feel welcome.

Thank you.

Kathleen Waldron

President