

April 1, 2022

Colleagues:

I write to provide an update and share good news: after nearly two years of planning and preparation, the College of Staten Island has been preliminarily reaccredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)! This is a landmark accomplishment, and one in which we should all take pride. To be in compliance with all standards of accreditation and criteria of affiliation—*without any requirements*—speaks to the level at which the campus operates in a holistic fashion to provide access to transformational educational opportunities to our students. Additionally, there were several commendations that recognized the work we are doing extraordinarily well, and we should continue to celebrate our successes in these areas. Although this was a true “team effort,” I want to particularly recognize the efforts of the Steering Committee—who made themselves available for myriad meetings with our team visitors (including on a Sunday evening!)--and especially the indefatigable contributions of co-chairs Tara Mastroilli, Christopher Miller, and Dante Tawfeeq for their leadership on this important initiative. I also want to thank all who attended the open forums, who shared their perspectives in a candid and frank manner, and who made clear to our guests the importance of CSI’s mission, vision, and values. I am grateful and appreciative for all your individual and collective contributions to making this visit a success.

The team did have several pieces of collegial advice and recommendations for ways in which we can improve our practices here at CSI. Most revolve around creating and maintaining an institutional “culture of assessment” and demonstrating that we collect, interpret, and utilize data to improve our business practices. There were calls for greater professional development opportunities, and to maintain clear lines of communication and responsibility for various activities. These are fair and valid points and we will work to better align our student learning (and other) outcomes with the strategic priorities of our campus and system, and to maintain the transparency and accountability that I strive to foreground in my daily operations. Other recommendations include improving campus climate for all constituencies--but especially for our students and colleagues from marginalized communities--and working to assure that human and financial resources are sufficient to meet our educational and institutional mission. Rest assured that we will commit to making CSI a welcoming and caring environment for all, and that I will continue to advocate for increased support, as evidenced by my ongoing lobbying and advocacy efforts.

To that point, I met with my fellow senior college presidents this week, and have been in deep conversations with our community college partners to develop pipelines to our baccalaureate programs. I also networked this week with both the Hecksher Foundation and the Carol and Milton Petrie Foundation to explore ways in which they can support our workforce development and career engagement efforts. I also participated in a three-hour (not a typo!) conversation with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities as part of our ongoing “Transformation Accelerator Cohort” initiative to advance student success while closing equity gaps. To close my workweek, I had a lovely dinner with the “Friends of CSI” a longstanding community organization that supports the College through philanthropic efforts benefitting our

campus and the students whom we serve. I am confident that by building on existing relationships and leveraging new ones, we will be able to advance on many of the metrics that were identified by Middle States as areas in which we can improve.

In closing, I want to acknowledge the approach of Ramadan and wish all those who celebrate “Ramadan Mubarak,” a happy and peaceful holiday.

Until next time, and with pride and appreciation,

TGL

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy G. Lynch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and 'L'.

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