CHAPTER THREE: STUDENTS

In the Fall of 1997 Brooklyn College had 15,007 students, 11,115 undergraduates and 3,892 graduate students. The full-time equivalent count is somewhat lower, indicating that many of our students are part-time: 8,779 undergraduate FTEs and 1,729 graduate FTEs; only 306 graduate students have full-time status. These numbers indicate a slight drop from a ten year norm of over 15,500 headcount and 11,000 FTEs.

A small but rising number of undergraduates and a large number of graduate students (chiefly in Education) take courses off campus.

About 60% of the undergraduates are women; about 70% of the graduate students are women.

In 1996-97, 1,543 baccalaureate degrees and 798 Masters degrees were awarded. Of the undergraduates, 40% had entered Brooklyn College as freshmen and achieved the baccalaureate degree within six years. In 1997-98, 1,536 baccalaureate degrees and 803 Masters degrees were awarded.

I. Undergraduates

Most undergraduates at Brooklyn College are traditional students in the sense that they have entered college directly after completing high school. Although about 70% of them are identified as full-time, most take more than four years to graduate. Compared to students throughout the country, an unusually large number come from families with relatively low income, have parents who did not go to college, and speak English as a second language.

Four hundred older students are enrolled in two Adult Degree programs: 100 in the Special Baccalaureate Degree Program for Adults, which requires for admission a high score on a special test of vocabulary and reading comprehension and provides a series of intensive seminars, and 300 in the Small College Program, which offers special freshman courses and a narrow but guaranteed range of majors in evening courses. Other older students have entered the Weekend College.

About 200 undergraduates with exceptionally strong academic records are enrolled in the various programs of the Honors Academy.

In the Fall 96 Cohort Study by the Office of Institutional Research, freshmen were categorized in four groups: mainstream (no remedial courses in first semester), 589; remedial (at least one remedial course in first semester), 321; ESL, 212; SEEK, 189. (SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) is a program of the City University of New York, separately funded by the state legislature, which provides special counseling, tutoring, and student stipends for economically and educationally disadvantaged students.)
The ethnic distribution of undergraduates in the Fall of 1996 and the Fall of 1997, taken from show-registration tapes, is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1996</th>
<th>1997</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
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Among freshman entering in the Fall of 1996, when an intensive cohort study was initiated, the distribution was as follows:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Of the seventy-five per cent of the freshmen who responded to a question on national origin, 40% said they were foreign born (390 students) and 35% U.S. born. Yet only 21% (240) of those responding to the questionnaire identified themselves as having English as a second language. Of this group the native languages were: Russian 30.5%, Chinese 21%, Spanish 13%, Haitian Creole 7%, and 26% others. These numbers correspond to the daily experience of life on the Brooklyn College campus as multicultural and polyglot.

Three-quarters of the entering freshmen came from Brooklyn public and private high schools; many attended six public high schools: FDR, Madison, Murrow, Fort Hamilton, Lincoln, and Dewey. Eight per cent did their secondary school work in foreign institutions.

The City University of New York has cosponsored with the New York City Board of Education a "College Preparatory Initiative" (CPI) for the secondary schools of New York City to assure that by 1999 applicants to CUNY will have completed at least 16 academic units in high school. The goal for Fall 96 was 13 units; about five-sixths of the entering class of 1996 met that requirement, and almost three-quarters had completed 16 or more academic units. However, only 35% of students identified as having English as a Second Language had completed at least one academic unit in English, while a recent survey of students currently enrolled in ESL classes indicated that very few had completed more than one such unit. Beginning with admissions for the Fall of 1998, Brooklyn College will require at least two academic units of English for admission. An adjustment has been made, however, to begin in 1999, which will allow ESL students to count two years of English study as one CPI unit.
Ninety-two per cent (92%) of the Fall 1996 entering class achieved high school "college admission averages" (counting academic units only) of 75 or better. About 80% of regularly admitted students (non-SEEK) achieved 80 or better.

This class achieved the following pass rates in the CUNY assessment tests: Math 80%, Reading 66%, Writing 54%. These tests have been used as placement tests to determine which students need remedial course work. Beginning in the Fall of 1999, applicants may have to pass all three tests to be admitted to Brooklyn College.

The Office of Institutional Research has tracked earlier entering classes, Fall 86 and Fall 92, and found a retention in the 8th semester of 50% for the former and 56% for the latter. Only 28% of the Fall '86 cohort graduated after six years, so the 40% who graduated in 96-97 represent a significant improvement.

It should be noted that the College Preparatory Initiative has had a significant impact in readying students for college level work. According to a March, 1998 CUNY press release, by the Fall of 1996, 88% of CUNY freshmen had completed one or more years of Regent's level sequential math as compared to 61% in 1991 before CPI began. In Fall 1997, compared to 1996, 14% more students who applied directly from high school were admitted to CUNY with academic averages above 85, and the cohort with averages of 80 to 85 increased by 9%. This suggests that as university and college admissions become more selective, the skills of students presenting themselves for admission are likewise improving. With more and more students showing such improvement, the demographic impact of the trend toward more selective admissions criteria may be minimal.

A. Recruitment

The college admitted 3281 applicants for 1997, 44% of whom (1428) enrolled. We participated in many recruitment events for both entering and transferring students; the Office of Enrollment Management and the staff of the Adult Degree programs also made eighteen presentations to local community groups, P.T.A. organizations, unions, G.E.D. sites, self-help groups, religious organizations, and ethnic centers; the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management and the Director of Adult Education programs have prepared a booklet, Resources for Adult Learners (Spring 1997), that lists employers that have tuition reimbursement or tuition assistance programs.

The College Board administered an Admitted Student Questionnaire to the 1997 applicants. Although the return was fairly meager, some results seemed to confirm expectations. Brooklyn College was rated low for its lack of on-campus housing and prominent athletic programs; it was rated high for its low cost, ease of getting home, and diverse student backgrounds. Interestingly, the applicants who enrolled were enthusiastic about on-campus visits and expressed a significantly higher appreciation of the college's intellectual and social life. In this instance, it seems, familiarity creates a more favorable image.
B. Transfers

If almost half our students leave the college by the end of two years, for reasons only now being studied in the tracking of the Fall 96 cohort, the numbers are made up by the arrival of approximately 1,000 transfer students every year. Somewhat over 500 transfer students are among the graduating seniors each year. A study of the 1992 cohort of transfer students by Dr. William Hussey, Director of Transfer Student Services, indicates the following feeder institutions:

Kingsborough Community College 30%
Other CUNY community colleges 17
Other community colleges 5
CUNY senior colleges 8
Other senior colleges 16
Former USSR colleges 13
Israeli colleges 6
Other foreign colleges 5

There is a markedly higher percentage (over 50%) of white, non-Hispanic students in this cohort than in the usual group of freshman "starters," probably because of the transfers from the former USSR nations and Israel. But it is clear that transfer students do not make the Brooklyn College undergraduate student body any less diverse.

Two unique features of Brooklyn College affect the absorption of transfer students into the college. One is the Core Curriculum. Although transfer students may receive Core credit for comparable courses taken at another college, and although Brooklyn College has articulation agreements with its principal feeder colleges, many transfers arrive without clear substitutes for many of the specially crafted Core courses. The other is the Transfer Students Writing Test, a placement test required of all transfer students regardless of writing courses taken elsewhere. In fairness to what may seem to be a presumptuous requirement, it should be noted that in the Fall of 1996 18% of transfer students were found to be in need of both English 1 and 2, and 58% in need of English 2. The college considers the test to be equivalent to its own English 1 Exit Test.

Nevertheless, the writing test is a case where the imposition of rigorous standards presents difficulties for transfer students. It is resented by transfer students who have already taken two semesters of composition and often do not hear about the required test until they are already at Brooklyn College. The English Department is therefore currently working toward an agreement with its CUNY community college counterparts to substitute a writing test at those feeder colleges for the one at Brooklyn College. If such an agreement is reached, the Transfer Students Writing Test may be abolished altogether. This effort may, in fact, be subsumed in the recent Board of Trustees’ decision to require a writing test of all students, including transfers, before they will be permitted to proceed beyond 60 credits.

The Core Curriculum requirements, so integral a part of the Brooklyn College mission, will continue to add to transfer student credits at graduation. According to Dr. Hussey, over two-thirds of transfer students who graduate have excess credits (i.e., over 128 credits under the old
requirements; over 120 credits under the new CUNY requirements) compared to less than half of the "starters." In addition to having to take Core courses, many of these students change majors; many of them major in Education, which accepts few transfer credits and requires 65–73 credits in its major programs. In their first semesters transfer students may not yet have full evaluation of transfer credits and may register relatively late, both conditions leading to enrollment in what may prove to be unnecessary courses.

In addition to these academic obstacles, transfer students have often found the process of transferring and completing the evaluation of transfer credits excessively cumbersome and confusing. In 1995, in response to these concerns, the Undergraduate Dean established an advisory committee on transfer students. The committee reviewed the entire transfer process and initiated or helped facilitate a number of steps to simplify and expedite that process. Notable among these measures was the establishment by the Registrar of an Office of Transfer Evaluations under an Assistant Registrar. At present the committee is looking at ways of centralizing and streamlining the evaluation of transfer credits by academic departments.

C. Dropouts and Retention

Of the 721 entering transfer students in the Fall 92 cohort studied by Dr. Hussey, 37% had graduated by the end of five years and another 13% were on track, with a Grade Point Average (GPA) above 2.0, to graduate. Three per cent were still at the college but with a GPA below 2.0. Twenty-six per cent had left the college with a GPA below 2.0; twenty-one per cent had left though their GPA was above 2.0.

The high dropout rate of both starting freshman and transfer students, though not much different from national norms of collegiate mobility, is a cause for concern. Brooklyn College is making serious attempts to address the problem, with some success beyond national norms, and its methods will be discussed below in the section on Retention. The causes of dropping out may appropriately be indicated here, however, as part of the profile of Brooklyn College students.

The college's first thorough analysis of early student departures is being undertaken as part of the tracking of the Fall 96 cohort of entering freshmen. However, according to the experience of many faculty and counselors, students stop attending for one or more of the following reasons (listed in no priority order):

1) Academic reasons for dropping out:
   • general academic difficulties including poor grades, low GPA, insufficient progress;
   • inappropriate courses (e.g., students register for courses too advanced for their skill level);
   • inadequate preparation for college-level work, with a resulting slow start in college career because of a need for remediation of basic skills or a general inability to cope with a college curriculum;
   • limited ability to communicate in English;
   • change in career goals;
   • large size of certain classes and resultant student anonymity;
2) Non-academic reasons for dropping out:

- weak motivation or lack of career goals;
- inadequate financial resources;
- increases in the cost of tuition, fees, books, etc.;
- necessity of taking a full-time job to support self/family;
- changes in the home or family situation such as new child, death of spouse or parent;
- frustrations variously described, such as those stemming from a negative experience with college bureaucracy, or difficulty in obtaining overtallies to register for needed classes, or perceptions of limited campus opportunities of a commuter college, unanswered voice mail and e-mail, perceptions of some staff and faculty apathy, or impatience with the pace of improvements in accessibility for the disabled;
- instances of miscalculation by transfer students of time required for studies at Brooklyn College.

The most recent effort of Brooklyn College to improve student retention is the Freshman Year College, a coordinated program of registration and advisement services, block programming, and faculty development that was inaugurated in 1995. This program, which is discussed fully in later sections of this self study, has already demonstrated a dramatic increase in student retention (75% after 3 semesters, as compared with 58% for non-participants). The study that compared the freshman cohorts of Fall 86 and Fall 92 found signs that persistence rates were already improving. There was an increase of 6% in student retention by the eighth semester of the 1992 cohort as compared to that of 1986. The retention of remedial and SEEK students increased approximately 8%.

One aid to increased retention is the Learning Center, established in 1993. During the two year period, September 1995 through June 1997, exclusive of summers, some 2,700 students made a total of 10,800 visits per year. Although there are no official data for Summer 1996, the estimate is 2,300 sessions by 230 students. In the 1997-98 academic year the Center carried out 14,000 sessions that involved 3,000 students. Workshops held in Fall 1997 and Spring 1998 for a period of fifteen days each to improve scores on the Writing Assessment Test had an attendance of about 350 students each term. Recent research has found that though Learning Center users were less well prepared for college than non-users, they persisted in school longer, completed their minimum proficiency requirements faster, attempted more credits, and had higher GPAs than non-users.

The Learning Center is housed in attractive space made possible by the award in 1990 of a Department of Education Title III grant of $600,000.
An important aspect of the Learning Center is the use of student tutors in a variety of fields, such as art, history, mathematics, philosophy, the sciences, and writing. Working side by side, the tutors sharpen their own skills while contributing to the college community and serving as role models. They often serve as ad hoc counselors, helping students to behave like successful, resourceful college students, to avoid pitfalls such as neglecting to turn in work or unofficially dropping courses.

Another significant factor in student retention has been the development of pre- and post-freshman basic skills summer programs and intersession immersion programs during the past 10 years. These programs are currently being expanded to provide still more intensive summer programs for prospective freshmen as Brooklyn College moves into the era of little or no remediation. The expectation is that these programs will greatly increase the number of "remedial" and ESL students who will pass all three assessment tests before the beginning of classes in Fall 1999.

D. Core Curriculum

Most students at Brooklyn College begin taking courses in the Core Curriculum before engaging fully with their majors. Before 1995 the Core had been divided into two tiers, Core 1 to 5 and 6 to 10, but Faculty Council, faced with practical difficulties in maintaining the division, abolished the tier system in 1995. A headcount of students by academic year, provided by the Office of Institutional Research, indicated that in Fall 96 Core 2.1, 2.2, 3, 4, and 5 had a majority of freshmen. Core 1, which used to be assigned to all freshmen, had 37% freshmen in 1996. Core 6, 9, and 10 had mostly sophomores and juniors. Two science Core courses, 7.2 and 8.1, had more than a third juniors and seniors. Given the number of ESL students and transfer students, it seems likely that a third of our seniors are still taking Core courses.

A study of grading patterns in Spring 1996 and Fall 1996 was prepared by Dr. Hussey for the Self-Study Committee on Students. The study examined the grading patterns for the 13 Core courses and 21 departmental "introductory" courses, courses that had no prerequisites and enrolled at least 100 students (e.g., Accounting 1, CIS 1.5, Education 34, Psychology 2, and TV/Radio 6.5).

The study revealed that the overall academic achievement of entering freshmen was high, an average GPA of 2.50, despite a low withdrawal rate and a relatively poor performance by freshmen who started out with remedial courses (which do not count in the GPA). The most successful members of the latter group, according to Dr. Hussey's analysis, were ESL students, who performed well as their English improved. In two courses taken by many students who are also taking remedial courses, Core 2.1 and TV/Radio 6.5, the GPA average of entering freshmen was significantly lower.

E. Grades

With regard to grades in general at Brooklyn College, a study was made of all courses in Fall 1996 and Spring 1997 where at least two-thirds of students in the course received an A or B. About 25% of offered courses fell into the group. Only classes with more than 20 students were
made part of the sample; seminars, research courses, or courses for which students had to audition, such as in Music and Theater, were also eliminated.

There were 7 departments where more than two-thirds of all grades awarded were A or B: Education, Speech, Art, Puerto Rican Studies, Physical Education and Exercise Science, Political Science, and Africana Studies. Yet comparison with other CUNY senior colleges and with national norms indicates no unusual grade inflation at Brooklyn College.

### Percentage of A and B grades in CUNY

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<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baruch</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>50</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All CUNY</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A national study of A and B grades from 1982 to 1992 showed an average of 55.6%. Although there has been some grade inflation over the past decade at CUNY, including Brooklyn College, it is evident that Brooklyn College does not suffer from severe grade inflation and continues below both the CUNY and the national average. If grades in Education courses are A or B for three quarters of their students, Economics and science courses redress the imbalance.

### F. Majors

*The Brooklyn College Data Book for 1996-97* provides data (p. 34) on the number of juniors and seniors with declared majors in the various departments. The most subscribed majors are:

- Department of Economics 910
  - Accounting 458
  - Business 390
  - Economics 62
- School of Education 712
  - Elementary Ed. 394
  - Early Childhood 198
  - Secondary ed. (major in subject dept.) 81
  - Elementary Bilingual Ed. 29
  - Education of Speech and Hearing Handicapped 10
- Department of Psychology 488
Department of Computer and Information Science 312

Department of Health and Nutrition Sciences 196

Department of English 151
  English 118
  Creative Writing 15
  Journalism 15
  Comp. Lit. 3

Department of Television/Radio 137

Department of Biology 133

Department of Sociology 122

Department of Speech 115
  Speech-Language Pathology etc. 88
  Speech 27

Department of History 105

Department of Political Science 104

There is, as one expects, a heavy interest in preparation for careers. A disappointment is that more students are not moving to teach in the sciences. The Secondary Education majors are Physical Education (42), English (36), Mathematics (21), Health Education (1), Italian (1). There is a job market in the sciences in the New York City public school system, where CUNY's College Preparatory Initiative courses are being mandated. Yet underprepared students are coming to Brooklyn College, unable to advance in science majors. Efforts are being made with funding assistance from the National Science Foundation and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Fund to attract more students into the field of teaching Math and Science in secondary schools. The departments of Biology and Physics have recently introduced new sequences in their majors to encourage students who do not intend to pursue graduate research programs to major in those fields. The department of Geology is seeking a professor to train prospective teachers in the earth sciences. The School of Education has established a Children’s Science Center, a lab in which Elementary Education majors work with children.

The numbers in the Data Book for 1997-98 indicate the same ranking of majors with a narrowing of the gap between Economics and Education and between Psychology and Computer and Information Science.
G. Counseling

Counseling on undergraduate college-wide requirements is handled by the Academic Advisement Center, visited by an average of 1200 students each month during the academic year. This office deals with Core requirements, course sequences, double majors, minors, and the assorted problems connected with grades and academic standing, including academic probation and dismissal for academic reasons. Freshman Year College provides mandatory counseling for first-year and transfer students. The Honors programs offer counseling by their directors; the Adult Degree Programs have designated counselors when funding allows for them; SEEK has its own staff of counselors to handle both academic and personal problems. All of these counseling agencies lack adequate personnel because of the steady reduction in the college's budget over the past twenty years; during that time several administrations have chosen to protect faculty and academic programs at the expense of support staff. That policy reached a critical point two or three years ago, and the college has begun to bolster administrative offices that interact with students (see the section of this self study on Institutional Organization and Operations).

The Academic Advisement Center is empowered to make decisions when there is a dispute about whether or not requirements have been met. Students may appeal such decisions to the Faculty Council Committee on Course and Standing.

Counseling for majors is done in departments, by chairpersons, deputies, and in some cases designated counselors. There is, in fact, no set pattern. Some programs with many majors have only one official counselor. Some departments ask all members to contribute to counseling demands, while some designate a few members to assist deputies. The amount of released time and the number of counseling hours differ from department to department without any consistent pattern.

The complex Education majors require the services of a full-time counselor (a Higher Education Officer) as part of its Student Advisement office; students must be advised and monitored to assure that they take courses in proper sequence, leading to permission to take the student teaching courses. One device used by the School of Education is to visit every section of Education 34, the beginning course in the major sequence, to explain the curriculum and distribute all pertinent information regarding requirements.

An innovative method has been devised by the deputy for counseling in the English Department. With three credits of released time per term for counseling some 200 students, she is assisted by five student interns whom she supervises; the interns receive three credits for the internship course, which entails counseling, working on a newsletter (editing, writing, soliciting articles, doing design and lay-out), and doing research about graduate schools and career opportunities.

In general, counseling has been improved by the availability of the computer system known as SIMS (Student Information Management System), which makes transcripts immediately available to counselors and, indeed, to students themselves at the information kiosks scattered around campus. Students do indicate a need for more careful guidance through the
sometimes complicated college and major requirements, more advice about scholarships, and more information about career and professional tracks related to the major.

H. Schedules

Some problems of movement through the curriculum toward a degree are due to Brooklyn College's being a strictly commuter school. Registration experience has made clear over many years the students' desire for compact programs, especially for the class patterns on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. There is considerable anecdotal evidence suggesting that students will make academically questionable choices of courses in order to avoid a large gap in their programs. Although some surveys indicate that almost 80% of our students do not consider themselves to be working full time, it is fairly obvious that many of them do work enough hours and with enough economic urgency to make work an important element in their college careers. One significant aspect of Brooklyn College students is that they are hard-working.

In recent years the college has increased its efforts to schedule a full range of evening courses. Counseling is available to evening students, and college offices have evening hours at least one night per week. In any case, despite difficulties, the evening session, still sometimes referred to as SGS (School of General Studies), maintains majors in Accounting, Business, Computer and Information Science, Economics, Education, English, Mathematics, Psychology, and Sociology. (The day session, incidentally, is still often referred to as CLAS (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences); administratively Brooklyn College is now considered to be on a single daylong session.)

The Weekend College, reinstated in Spring 1996, offers four majors — Business, Computer and Information Science, English, and Sociology -- and grew steadily from its first semester (40 courses with 1,100 registrants) to Fall 1997 (50 courses with 1,800 registrants). A survey of weekend students in Spring 1997 indicated that 17% come only on weekends, 50% evenings and weekends, 23% daytime and weekends. Seventy per cent said they would have taken fewer credits if weekend classes had not been available, and a remarkable 86% said they would prefer a quarterly term option for weekend classes; these seem to be working people (all indicated that they were working) who would like to speed up their movement toward a degree. Three-quarters of those surveyed said they would be interested in a liberal studies major integrating introductory courses and electives in a variety of departments, a rather surprising expression in view of the popularity of career-oriented majors in the student body at large. One possible interpretation is that these are students interested in the credential of a degree; if departments are not willing or able to offer enough majors in the evening or weekends, students may be willing to put together majors out of what is offered.

Another possible scheduling change to alleviate the intense pressure on Tuesday and Thursday morning class patterns would be to duplicate those patterns on Monday and Wednesday to offer students the same possibility of compact two-day programs on those days. Such a change is not possible at present because of the traditional use of two Monday and Wednesday hours, Noon to 2 p.m., as Club Hours, with no classes scheduled during those hours; morning and early afternoon classes are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday fifty minute sessions instead of the two-day a week seventy-five minute sessions that are used on
Tuesday and Thursday. The very existence of Club Hours is, of course, a function of the commuter campus; the idea of moving them to later in the afternoon has so far not attracted wide interest, but it is an idea that makes enough sense to keep alive.

The possibility of including a residential presence at Brooklyn College was seriously considered in the late 1980s; plans were actually drawn up for the location of dormitories and access paths. However, the costs not just of building the dormitories but of maintaining a twenty-four hour campus were considered too great at a time when budgets were regularly shrinking.

I. Co-curricular and Extra-curricular Activities

Despite the apparent desire for compact programs, however, many students lead an active extra-curricular life at Brooklyn College. There are 93 registered and active clubs, 15 Greek Lettered Organizations, three student newspapers, a radio station, and three student governments (day, evening, and graduate). In Fall 1997 there were 45,580 daytime reservations for activities at the Student Center (SUBO) compared to 40,197 in Fall 1996 and 27,760 in Fall 1995. There has been an increase in student-sponsored activities (some co-sponsored with academic departments and service programs), such as the Health Fair, Earth Day, Chill Out Week, Country Fair, Italian Culture Month, Black Solidarity Day and Black History Month, Women's Herstory Month, and Kwanzaa and Thanksgiving dinners. Beyond the conventional activities of the club program are groups such as the Lay Advocate Program, which provides legal and research services, and the Forensics Club, which competes nationally as well as locally.

Qualified students, who need not be Music majors, participate in the college's music ensembles, mainly the Chorus and the Jazz Ensemble.

A full intramural and recreation program has always been an integral part of the education offered to students at Brooklyn College. Structured intramural programs are offered in up to ten sports each semester. Commercial sponsors have been recruited to support these efforts. In recent semesters intramural student participation has been between 400 and 600 students. Recreational facilities have been continuously upgraded over the years. Currently, in the Fitness Center the latest features include Nautilus, Life Cycle, and Quinton treadmill and Universal equipment. The college has a multipurpose AstroTurf football/soccer field, indoor swimming pool, racquetball/squash/handball courts, several gymnasia, and tennis courts.

In 1994, after a two year period in which Brooklyn College did not participate in intercollegiate athletics (as a result of an unhappy venture into NCAA Division I competition), the college sponsored three club teams: women's volleyball, men's basketball, and women's softball. The following year (1995), Brooklyn College was accepted as a provisional NCAA Division III member. Division III regulations allow no financial aid for athletes beyond that which is available to the general student body for financial need. While an intercollegiate athletic program provides, in effect, an honors program for the most advanced student athletes to reach their potentials, for the most part, in Division III, the emphasis is on process rather than product. There is less stress on winning than on developing those qualities that will enhance students' lives both during and after college.
In 1998 the college was admitted to Division III with 9 varsity sports and 4 club sports. The varsity teams are: men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross-country, men's and women's volleyball, men's and women's tennis, and women's softball. The club teams are men's and women's outdoor track and men's and women's soccer.

Brooklyn College has made a concerted effort to equalize athletic opportunities for men and women, adhering to the principle of "proportionality." During the 1996-97 academic year, the proportion of full-time male to female intercollegiate athletes (42% male, 58% female) mirrored the proportion of full-time male to female undergraduates. In addition, the operating budgets for male and female intercollegiate teams for 1996-97 were within $31 of each other.

The Student Development Division held a student leadership retreat in 1997 and 1998, with plans to make this an annual event. These retreats provide an opportunity for students to recognize and develop their strengths as they represent their constituents.

These activities are open to graduate students as well as undergraduates.

**J. Personal and Career Counseling**

The Personal Counseling and Career Services Center, which serves both undergraduate and graduate students, reports that over 4,000 personal counseling sessions were provided during 1996-98. These sessions included personal counseling, assessment and referral, crisis intervention, consultations with faculty and staff on psychological issues, alcohol and drug abuse counseling, and peer counseling. Over 1,000 disabled students were counseled during 1996-97, and there were more than 2,400 transactions for the more than 1,000 international students (both undergraduate and graduate).

Career Services counselors report over 7,700 sessions of individual career services during 1996-98. Services included career assessment and counseling, employment and internship search assistance, and pre-professional advisement. Group workshops, totaling 190 sessions, served over 3,100 students. The workshops dealt with employment search skills, early career orientation, and pre-professional and special career topics. Some workshops are designed to assist students with test anxiety, study skills, time management, and similar issues that are important to student success.

Over 1,400 students participated in campus interviews by representatives of 129 firms for career entry-level positions. There were also job fairs, which drew 211 employers and again over 1,400 students -- and alumni. In the same period over 750 students and 60 internship representatives attended annual Internship Fairs.

All in all, over 2,000 full and part-time internship and employment listings were made available on the college's computerized and telephone referral systems for the 2,786 students who registered for the service. Over 39,000 referrals were provided to students, additional referrals being provided through files, external services, and other means.
K. Student Services

The Office of Student Life encompasses a variety of functions – Ombudsperson, Student Discipline, College Ceremonies, CUNYCAP (Counseling Assistantship Program), and it supervises the following units: Student Development, Athletics and Recreation, the Brooklyn College Student Center, Veterans’ Affairs, Health Clinic, Health Programs, Emergency Medical Squad, and the Information Booth; it is a member of the Child Care Board of Directors. Student Life is also responsible for special projects such as Voter Registration and the Citizenship and Naturalization Campaigns.

The Brooklyn College Student Center (SUBO) is the community center of the campus. It provides an educational, cultural, social, and recreational program to students, faculty, administrators, and the surrounding community. In all of its processes it encourages self-directed activity, growth of individual social competency and group effectiveness.

CUNYCAP is the City University of New York Counseling Assistantship Program. It offers internships for graduates of CUNY schools in the offices of Student Life, Athletics and Recreation, Public Relations, Admissions, Student Activities, Programming Services, Central Depository, and the Department of Educational Services. At Brooklyn College there are currently eighteen sites for CUNYCAP students. A network of graduate students has been cultivated, reaching across student service areas.

Child Care is a day program for young children. It has an enrollment of approximately 110 children each semester. The center provides opportunities for our students working with these children to obtain supervised experience in diverse fields.

The Health Clinic is open to undergraduate and graduate students who need treatment for various physical disorders and well check-ups. It provides counseling for nutrition and smoking cessation, flu and hepatitis immunizations, and basic health promotion.

The Health Programs Office functions primarily to insure college compliance with Public Health Law 2165 related to mandatory measles, mumps, and rubella immunization for all students enrolled in post-secondary educational institutions. Health Programs also offers health education resources and referral; provides information on health insurance; and coordinates the Health Marshal program, which involves five students who organize and staff health education-related activities throughout the academic year (in coordination with CUNY, the New York City Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control).

The Office of Veterans’ Affairs provides assistance in certification, advisement, and advocacy related to educational and other entitlement benefits. It offers encouragement, referral, and counseling to students, and it sponsors workshops, trips, and events. The Veterans’ Student Organization, one of the most active veterans’ groups in CUNY, sponsors a wide range of activities, working with the entire campus community.

The Emergency Medical Squad (EMS) provides emergency care, first aid, and transportation to members of the campus community. It is staffed by 60 student volunteers in
consultation with two faculty members and the Office of Student Life. It also participates in health and wellness educational programs including hypertension screening.

The Ombudsperson (officer) seeks to ensure the responsiveness of the college to individuals’ concerns when difficulties arise within the college community. The ombuds officer helps individuals determine how best to proceed with a complaint or concern. When necessary, the officer investigates the facts in an effort to facilitate the equitable resolution of a problem. The ombuds officer also assists in establishing approaches aimed at institutional solutions to issues affecting a broad range of the college community.

The Information Booth operates seven days a week to answer general and directional inquiries from students, visitors, and telephone callers. It is operated primarily by students with supervision from student team leaders and a project coordinator.

The Voter Registration Drive is an effort on the part of Student Life and CUNY to register as many students as possible to vote in upcoming elections.

The Citizenship and Naturalization Campaigns are joint efforts by Student Life and CUNY to bring the naturalization process to eligible students who wish to become citizens.

Over the course of the past year, the Division of Student Life has engaged students in a process of dialogue on issues of diversity. It has developed a multi-dimensional community-building program including leadership retreats, ongoing intercultural programming, and a conflict resolution program. The process has included social events, informational sessions, facilitated dialogues, and brown bag discussions.

All of these services and activities are available to both undergraduate and graduate students.

L. Juniors and Seniors

In Spring 1998 Brooklyn College conducted a survey of Juniors and Seniors prepared by the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA; twenty additional questions were written at the college. The survey confirmed the accuracy of data already presented in this report, but added a few interesting variations. The anticipated extent of outside work that had not shown up in earlier surveys did appear in this one; 46% of the upper classmen indicate that they work over 20 hours per week, and another 16% work between 16 and 20 hours per week. Almost a third spend six or more hours per week on "household childcare duties." Over 70% spend three or more hours per week commuting. Nevertheless, these upper classmen do not spend notably less time on studies and homework than do their peers at the other colleges included in the survey (none of which appears to be a purely commuter college). The long-standing sense that Brooklyn College students are hard-working people is confirmed by the findings of this survey.

Other aspects of the commuter student body are the large number of part-time students (32.5%) and the number taking a relatively long time to achieve a degree; 54% of these Juniors
and Seniors entered college in 1993 or earlier. Many have had to take leaves during their college careers.

The tendency of students to come, take their classes, and leave does of course raise educational problems. While 70% of the students surveyed indicate that they study with other students, only 54.5% indicate that they "frequently" discuss courses with other students. Thirty-one per cent (31%) indicate no contact with faculty outside of class and another 43% less than one hour per week. Not surprisingly, then, relatively few students feel strong encouragement from the faculty. These are problems that the college is very much aware of; the hope is that initiatives such as Transformations, the Center for Teaching, and a new outcomes assessment plan, all discussed further along in this self study, will find new ways of solving the built-in problems of a commuter college.

There is already good evidence that the problems can be and are being solved. In 1997, for example, two graduates of the Classics program received fellowships in doctoral programs, one at Yale, the other at the University of California at Berkeley. The year before another Classics student received a fellowship at Harvard. Another student was named to the 1997 All-USA Academic Team by USA Today. In 1996 one senior was awarded the Poynter Institute Newsrwriting and Editing Fellowship; another received a National Science Foundation fellowship for graduate study. In recent years graduating seniors have been named to a number of distinguished scholarships: Rhodes, Marshall, Wexner, Beinecke. The satisfaction with their educational experience expressed by recent alumni (see below) should also be noted.

M. Alumni

In January of 1998 Brooklyn College sent a short questionnaire to 7000 alumni, all those who had graduated from June 1993 to June 1997 with a baccalaureate degree. Some of the items in this survey were intended to provide assessment information, particularly retrospective attitudes toward education at Brooklyn College, the usefulness of the major, and the Core Curriculum. There were 826 responses.

In comparisons with the 1996-97 Data Book produced by the Office of Institutional Research and with data from the June 1997 graduation tapes, the 826 respondents appear to be close to representative of the student body, but not quite. The largest discrepancy is in the number identifying themselves as "White non-Hispanic": 62% of the respondents thus identified themselves but only 52% of the June '97 graduates are so identified. The African-American cohort is underrepresented, 13% in contrast to 16%. Asians are slightly overrepresented (10% vs 9%) and Hispanics slightly underrepresented (5.7% vs 6.3%).

In the survey women are somewhat overrepresented (64% vs 60%).

With regard to major subjects, Accounting majors are overrepresented (13% vs 10%) as are Psychology majors (13% vs 11%), but these two majors along with Education (14% in both tallies) do represent the largest majors at the college; another large major, Business (10%), is seriously underrepresented in the survey (5%). It is possible that some Business majors identified themselves in the survey as Economics majors. In smaller majors there do seem to be more
slight discrepancies, English being somewhat overrepresented, for example, while Computer and Information Science seems a bit underrepresented.

All in all, the numbers are close enough to give some plausibility to generalizations drawn from the attitudinal responses.

The greatest positive result was in response to the question of whether college had improved the life of the respondent. Seventy-six percent (76%) said definitely and another 18% said probably, an affirmative rating of 94%. A smaller but still large percentage expressed overall satisfaction with Brooklyn College itself: 26% very satisfied and 54% satisfied. Of the other 20%, 14% were "neutral"; only 4% were dissatisfied, 2% very dissatisfied.

Of those responding to the survey, 46% have done some sort of post-graduate schooling; 34% report seeking a specific graduate degree.

The alumni seem to be doing reasonably well economically, especially considering that these are recent graduates. Although almost 15% did not respond to the question on salary, 59% of those who did answer reported a salary of over $30,000. Interestingly, two-thirds of the respondents also felt that their major had been very much related (49%) or moderately related (18%) to their occupation.

Somewhat less encouragingly, only 19% of the graduates felt that they had been extremely well prepared for their occupation. Thirty-nine percent (39%) said "well prepared" and 32% "adequately." Among the large majors, only 44% of the Psychology majors felt extremely well prepared or well prepared and only 56% of the Economics majors. The need for better preparation was, in fact, one of the frequent themes in the written comments (provided by about a quarter of the respondents). These comments called for more realistic, up-to-date, hands-on training, more internships, better counseling by the departments. They also called for more assistance from the Career Counseling office with regard not only to the search for jobs but also to the kinds of jobs actually out there, what employers will expect.

Nevertheless, almost all of the respondents do have jobs, in a wide variety of fields and with an even wider variety of titles. Except for the large group identifying themselves as teachers (150), no single job title stood out. A tabulation of the fields of employment indicates that at least 226 are in education, 217 in business, finance, or accounting, 79 in health care, and 35 in computer technology.

Another thought-provoking response was to the question about the value of the Core Curriculum. Although only 8% thought the Core without value, 47% found it either moderately valuable (31%) or slightly valuable (16%). That can be compared to the 43% who found it either extremely valuable (18%) or very valuable (25%). Among the written comments were many extolling the Core, but many asked for the possibility of choice by expansion of the number of courses. Several urged the inclusion of a Core business course; many expressed the sense that they had come out of the college with a good education only to discover the need for some knowledge of business once they began working.
Several responses not called for by the questionnaire appeared frequently among the written comments. Many alumni wanted to emphasize the value of their extra-curricular activities at Brooklyn College and the good social life they had enjoyed. Some expressed the desire to have an "alumni card" that would enable them to continue using the college facilities. On the negative side were the inadequate number of sections of needed courses at registration, administrative red tape and the disrespect of staff dealing with students, and the unevenness of faculty. Of course, students do not wait to become alumni before voicing displeasure; the college is very much aware of these shortcomings, and explanations for them and descriptions of improvements will be found in more than one place in this self-study.

The college maintains its own ongoing survey of alumni achievements. Most notable in recent years have been the following: Frank McCourt, M.A. '67, was awarded the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in nonfiction for his best-selling memoir, Angela's Ashes; in 1997 Lawrence Racioppo, '55, received a Guggenheim Fellowship; Robert Kaplan, '70, professor of biology at Reed College, was named 1996 Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; in 1996 Deborah T. Poritz, '58, was appointed Chief Justice of the New Jersey State Supreme Court; in 1993 and again in 1998 Barbara Levy Boxer, '62, was elected United States Senator from California; Gloria Naylor, '81, and Paule Marshall, '53, have achieved distinguished careers as novelists.

II. Graduate Students

Brooklyn College offers sixty-two Masters degrees and three graduate certificates. Enrollment has been steady, with minor fluctuations, counting approximately 3000 students on campus and 1000 off campus, the latter taking post-masters courses to satisfy requirements of the New York City Board of Education. About half of the students in on-campus programs are also enrolled in the School of Education.

The college recruits graduate students by participating in various recruitment fairs in the New York City area. Because of limited budget, a minimal amount of advertising is done. The School of Education has many grant-sponsored scholarship programs available to teachers, such as the Teacher Opportunity Corps and the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Pathways to Teaching Program.

The general rule for admission to graduate programs is a GPA of 2.75 in the undergraduate major, but there are many variations since departments make their own admission decisions. Most departments do not require the GRE. The standards are the same for local, national, and international students, but the TOEFL is required of foreign students whose native language is not English; the minimum score required is 500, but some departments, which rely on fluent writing by students, require 650.

Students come primarily from Brooklyn and the surrounding New York City areas. (We know that many of them attended Brooklyn College, but there is actually no data on feeder schools.) A small percentage come from other locations in New York State and another small percentage from other states; many of these non-local students are attracted by MFA programs in art, creative writing, television/radio, and theater, and Master of Music programs. Some 3.6%
are foreign students coming from twenty-six different countries (Fall 1996), the largest blocs from China and South Korea; many of these students enroll in programs in Computer and Information Science.

It should be noted that tuition for out-of-state students is considerably higher than for residents of New York State; after a year of residency in the state, however, students become eligible for the lower fee. But residence in the usual sense is a factor limiting the selection of Brooklyn College by non-local students; there are no dormitories at the college, and off-campus housing can be hard to find and expensive. Still, New York City and Brooklyn itself apparently appeal to many young applicants.

Students transferring from graduate programs at other colleges may transfer up to 12 graduate credits for courses in which a grade of A or B was obtained and which were not applied to a previous degree. Transfer credits must be approved by both the department and the Office of Advanced Standing.

As noted above, 70% of the graduate students are women, and 90% of the graduate students are part-time. Except for the off-campus group, most of the students are matriculated; there was a jump in the number of matriculated students (and a decrease in non-matriculated students) after 1996 as new regulations discouraging non-matriculated status went into effect.

Of the 80% of on-campus students for whom ethnic information is available on the Fall 96 registration show tape, ethnic percentages are as follows:

- White, non-Hispanic 42.6
- Black, non-Hispanic 21.6
- Puerto Rican 1.6
- Hispanic, other 4.6
- Asian, Pacific Islander 6.4
- American Indian 0.2
- Other 3.3

Most of the graduate students work, and to accommodate them graduate courses are offered after 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. The School of Education also offers courses on the weekend, and with the revival of the undergraduate Weekend College, it seems likely that other programs will begin to offer graduate courses on the weekend.

The School of Education is an important factor in the life of the schools of New York City. Graduate "major" numbers in the Spring 1998 indicate that 49% of Brooklyn College's matriculated graduate students are enrolled in the many programs of the School of Education; the percentage of non-matriculated education students in off-campus programs is much higher. In addition, another 5% of matriculated students are enrolled in departmental and interdepartmental subject programs specifically designed for secondary school teachers. In addition to course work, the School affects education in the city in its Center for Educational Change, Middle School Initiative, and DeWitt Wallace project; it is aligned with school districts, working with...
administrators, teachers, school psychologists, and guidance counselors. It holds conferences involving faculty and both graduate and undergraduate students.

There are nevertheless 21 other departments running a variety of Masters degree programs with some kind of success. Both the Departments of Computer and Information Science and Health and Nutrition Sciences have close to 200 graduate students, and several other departments have about 100. A small Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, for students who want an advanced degree without specializing in a particular discipline, is growing and potentially important. The highly selective MFA programs have international reputations and enrich the entire college with some spectacularly good students. The same is true of the programs in audiology, speech-language pathology, and education of the speech and hearing handicapped in the department of Speech Communication Arts and Sciences. Some science doctoral programs are also conducted on the Brooklyn College campus, but they are officially part of the Graduate School and University Center (GSUC), another branch of CUNY.

A recommendation of this self-study is to encourage the college to recruit graduate students much more aggressively. The many excellent programs should be better known locally; because of relatively low costs for high quality they are competitive with programs at Columbia and NYU as well as the many less famous private colleges in and around New York City. We have not done an adequate job of making known how very good we are. Of course, such an effort requires a parallel effort in making the campus more alive after five, an enduring problem that also needs more intense attention. In any case, the Office of Enrollment Services should make general information about the graduate program more readily available to prospective students.

It takes most students enrolled in a 30-credit program (a majority of Masters programs) three or four years to graduate. But when the time limit was four years, about 20% of the students would petition annually for an extension. The new graduate regulations enacted in 1996 extended the time limit to seven years, and requests for extension have diminished dramatically. Nevertheless, many graduate students take leaves, officially or unofficially, and then return after a semester or two; it happens that students will return after ten or even twenty years seeking to resume work toward the degree.

Academic counseling of graduate students is done by the deputy chairpersons for graduate study of the individual departments. Because graduate students are usually on campus only around the times that they take courses, they are not always able to come during the hours scheduled by a deputy; for deputys with a large number of students to oversee, it is difficult to schedule enough counseling hours or to command continuing knowledge of the status of students. The School of Education, of course, has additional counselors to assist the deputy and provides much general counseling as well as academic counseling.

The Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies provides general counseling for students with special needs, often in conjunction with department deputys. There is, however, no graduate equivalent of the undergraduate Academic Advisemement Center. The Coordinator of Graduate Studies (in the Dean's office) serves as liaison between the graduate deputys and both the
Registrar's Office and the Faculty Council Committee on Graduate Admissions and Standards and is often able to solve problems on her own.

The Coordinator and the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies are working out the mechanics of new regulations on early warning, probation, and dismissal of graduate students who fall below the required 3.0 GPA. For the past several semesters students have been sent letters indicating probationary status and the need to seek a remedy of the situation or face dismissal. At the same time graduate deputies receive a list of the students on probation with a copy of transcripts. The spirit of the new regulations is more early prevention than early dismissal, but students who do not raise their GPA do face dismissal.

The Personal Counseling and Career Services Center is available to graduate students as well as undergraduates. Most of our graduate students clearly think of Masters work in terms of advancing their careers. Those who work for the Board of Education need graduate courses and degrees for permanent licensing and for salary increments. But that is not to say that they are not genuinely interested in their academic work; more often than not, they are. Many have in the back of their minds the possibility of going on for a doctorate