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STATE COMPTROLLER



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STATE OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE STATE COMPTROLLER

August 15, 2002

Dr. Matthew Goldstein  
Chancellor  
City University of New York  
535 East 80th Street  
New York, New York 10021

Re: Report 2001-F-51

Dear Dr. Goldstein:

Pursuant to the State Comptroller's authority as set forth in Article V, Section 1 of the State Constitution and Article II, Section 8 of the State Finance Law, we have reviewed the actions taken by officials of the City University of New York (CUNY) as of July 30, 2002 to implement the recommendations contained in our audit report, *Measuring Faculty Teaching Workload: Data Reliability* (Report 99-S-6). Our report, which was issued on October 25, 2000, addressed CUNY's ability to measure and compare the faculty teaching workload for the 11 CUNY senior colleges.

**Background**

CUNY consists of 11 senior colleges, 6 community colleges, a graduate school, and a law school. More than 198,000 students are enrolled for degrees, and another approximately 205,000 students are enrolled in adult and continuing education courses. CUNY offers a broad array of educational opportunities to diverse populations throughout New York City's five boroughs. Academic degrees are awarded from the associate through the doctorate level, as well as certificate programs.

A 17-member Board of Trustees (Board) governs CUNY. CUNY's Central Administration (CUNY Central) is responsible for monitoring the academic development and activities of the colleges to ensure that the Board's goals are achieved. CUNY's individual colleges have considerable latitude and autonomy and govern their affairs through various bodies representing faculty, students, and administrators. However, the Board has a goal of developing policies and procedures to maintain an integrated university system.

According to CUNY's contract with its faculty, the teaching workload of faculty should not exceed 21, 22, or 27 student credit hours per academic year, depending on whether the faculty member is a professor, instructor or lecturer. The contract also specifies that a three-year averaging period can be used to determine whether faculty has achieved the required teaching workload. CUNY measures teaching workload according to credit hours taught by faculty. This information, as well as other personnel and faculty workload data is recorded in CUNY Central's computerized City University Personnel System (CUPS). Each campus is required to electronically submit data on faculty workload at the end of each semester and annually.

### **Summary Conclusions**

In our prior audit, we identified several deficiencies within the CUPS system. Certain limitations with CUPS data create the risk that teaching workload data for senior colleges is not sufficiently reliable. We found through our analysis of the CUPS database that neither CUNY Central nor the colleges were adequately identifying and following up on instances when CUPS showed no teaching workload for faculty members.

In our follow-up review, we found that CUNY officials have instructed the colleges to record actual teaching workloads in CUPS, followed-up on exceptions noted in the original report, implemented oversight and review procedures and documented the colleges' various formulas and guidelines for reporting faculty teaching workloads.

### **Summary of Status of Prior Audit Recommendations**

CUNY officials have implemented all four recommendations from the prior audit report.

### **Follow-up Observations**

#### **Recommendation 1**

*Instruct colleges to record in CUPS their actual teaching workloads instead of the maximum workloads stated in the contract.*

Status – Implemented

Agency Action – CUNY has issued guidelines for Teaching Load collection with due dates for the fall and spring semesters. Another memorandum was issued to the colleges' Workload Coordinators instructing them to report actual workload of full-time teaching instructional staff, including equivalencies. This is required even if the workload does not conform to the provisions of the labor contract between CUNY and the Professional Staff Congress City University of New York (PSC) that represents CUNY instructional staff. Each school is required to submit a list of those full-time teaching instructional staff members whose workload is being adjusted over a three-year period to conform to the workload provisions of the CUNY-PSC contract.

### **Recommendation 2**

*Follow-up and resolve the instances cited in this report where CUPS listed faculty without any teaching workload.*

Status – Implemented

Agency Action – After a review and determination, for each academic year CUNY sends each college an exception list known as Inconsistency Listing for Academic Year to be reconciled by the school. These exceptions must be explained and are followed up by CUNY Central. A congratulatory memorandum is sent to those schools that have no inconsistencies.

### **Recommendation 3**

*Implement CUPS oversight and review procedures which provide reasonable assurance of the detection and correction of incomplete or inaccurate teaching workload data as well as data that is not in conformance with college guidelines and formulas and the criteria of CUNY.*

Status – Implemented

Agency Action – CUNY has issued numerous memos to address the issue of inaccurate teaching workload data. It has also sent Workload Guidelines to the colleges' Workload Coordinators to assure consistencies among all CUNY colleges.

### **Recommendation 4**

*Document the Colleges' required submission to CUNY Central of all the formulas and guidelines underlying the reporting of faculty teaching workload for CUPS.*

Status – Implemented

Agency Action – CUNY now ensures that each school submits its course equivalency formulas for each school year. CUNY Central then charts and reviews the workload formulas and guidelines of each of the colleges. We visited three of the colleges and verified the accuracy of these determinations.

Major contributors to this report were Joan Williams and Tom Trypuc. We thank the management and staff of CUNY for the courtesies and cooperation extended to our auditors during this review.

Very truly yours,

Jerry Barber  
Audit Director

cc: Lou Chiacchere