

Resolution to Declare Borough of Manhattan Community College of the City University of New York a “Sanctuary Campus” for Immigrants and Members of Vulnerable and Directly Impacted Communities

PREAMBLE: Since the election results were announced, the climate of fear and uncertainty about the new administration’s impact on our communities has increased the anxiety that many of our students are experiencing. There have also been increasing reports of bias incidents and attacks, including on college campuses, targeting African Americans, Latinos, immigrants, the LGBT community, Muslims, and people of Middle Eastern and South Asian descent, including at least one such incident on our own campus. As a college, we must make clear that we stand against all forms of discrimination and maintain an atmosphere where our students can learn in an environment free from harassment, threats and violence. Declaring the Borough of Manhattan Community College a sanctuary campus will magnify our existing commitment to a vibrant, pluralistic learning community, which is the heart of our mission and goal as a college.

WHEREAS: Chancellor Milliken has affirmed that “[a]t CUNY, we have an unwavering commitment to providing opportunity to low income and underrepresented students and immigrants, a point of honor and strength that makes our mission so vital. [...] CUNY is the undisputed leader among universities in this country in the support and services we provide to immigrants on our campuses and throughout the city. That will remain the case.”ⁱ

WHEREAS: the President of the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), Antonio Pérez has affirmed that “[w]e celebrate our diversity and the vital role that BMCC plays in expanding educational opportunity, particularly for immigrants and underrepresented populations.”ⁱⁱ

WHEREAS: BMCC’s mission states that the “Borough of Manhattan Community College is a vibrant, pluralistic learning community committed to the intellectual and personal growth of students. Working closely with organizations across New York City and beyond, we prepare students from around the globe for degree completion, successful transfer, career achievement, lifelong learning, and civic participation.”ⁱⁱⁱ

WHEREAS: As faculty members in the BMCC community, we are all deeply committed to the work we do to serve our students, many of whom make every effort to pursue their education despite economic struggles, discrimination, and other barriers.

WHEREAS: The recent shifts in the political landscape have produced a general climate of fear among marginalized communities who have heightened concerns about harassment, physical abuse, sexual assault, racial profiling, police brutality, deportation, mandatory registration and other forms of violence. Immigrants, especially undocumented ones, and Muslims have been most directly targeted, though people of color, women, transgender people, members of LGBTQ communities, refugees, Jews, disabled people and others are also affected by recent statements and actions.

WHEREAS: BMCC is a minority-serving institution that provides educational and other resources to potentially impacted marginalized populations. Over 85% of our students are

racial/ethnic minorities. There are over 161 foreign birth countries represented in, and over 108 foreign languages spoken by, our student body.

WHEREAS: Our students are expressing heightened fear and worry for themselves, and their friends, families, and communities. That we are entering a period of chance and uncertainty in which the specific details of the impacts on our communities is not yet clear only adds to the anxiety that our students are experiencing.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: BMCC will not, for the purposes of immigration enforcement only, cooperate with the arrest, interview, search and/or surveillance of any member of the BMCC community, except insofar as required by the law, and even then, will explore any and all legal avenues to protect the safety of its students. BMCC will not allow immigration officials on campus without a warrant. BMCC will not share information about any member of the BMCC community without their permission, especially regarding immigration status, unless required by a court order or subpoena.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: BMCC will support undocumented students in their pursuit of their education. This commitment includes continued in-state tuition rate and support in locating additional forms of financial resources for educational expenses.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: BMCC will stand against all forms of discrimination. We commit to protecting the rights of all students, staff, and faculty “without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, partnership status, disability, genetic information, alienage, citizenship, military or veteran status, pregnancy, or status as a victim of domestic violence/stalking/ sex offenses, or any other legally prohibited basis in accordance with federal, state and city laws.”^{iv} We also stand against all forms of sexual harassment, gender harassment and sexual violence, as well as forms of sex or gender discrimination.^v

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Academic Senate of the Borough of Manhattan Community College of the City University of New York supports designating the Borough of Manhattan Community College a “Sanctuary Campus.” The Senate supports asking BMCC’s administration to agree to exercise available power to implement this Resolution in order to protect our students, staff, faculty, and others on campus from protected surveillance, intimidation, investigation, deportation or other status-based attacks or discrimination while on campus.

ⁱ Chancellor Milliken’s Statement on Immigrants (November 18, 2016) <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/news-chancellor/2016/11/chancellor-millikens-statement-on-immigrants/>

ⁱⁱ Message from the President (November 11, 2016) <http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/news/news.jsp?id=13344>

ⁱⁱⁱ BMCC’s Mission Statement and Goals

^{iv} BMCC Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy

<http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/hr/page.jsp?pid=1021&n=Equal%20Opportunity/Affirmative%20Action%20Policy>

^v BMCC Non-discrimination policy <http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/aac/upload/non-discrimination.pdf>