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MEMORANDUM

TO: John Jay College Community
FROM: Jeremy Travis, President 
DATE: June 2, 2017
SUBJECT: Space Utilization Task Force: Findings and Recommendations

One of the issues that arose with great frequency during my listening sessions last spring was the need for better coordination and more transparency on the utilization of college space for college purposes. The lack of clarity, coupled with the increased demand for use of campus space, created an environment in which staff found it difficult to plan events and coordinate activities. To address these issues, I appointed an ad hoc Task Force on September 1, 2016, to look into the space use process, engage in broad consultation with campus stakeholders, and provide me with the resulting analysis and recommendations. I am writing today to share with you the final report of the Task Force and to inform the John Jay College community that I have adopted the recommendations of the Task Force.

Specifically, I asked the Task Force to make recommendations that would:

- Develop processes for improved coordination for space utilization
- Improve efficiency in determining the time of regular annual events
- Develop strategies to enhance events planning
- Develop procedures for reserving space
- Clarify the decision making process relating to space reservation

In completing this assignment, the Task Force engaged in an extensive outreach effort – consisting of 18 meetings and consultation with almost every constituency on campus. The Task Force documented the extensive growth of campus clubs and events, the number of annual and pre-booked events reserved in the calendar before the start of each semester, and the impact of the loss of North Hall. The Task Force also explored the ramifications of a shift in philosophy at John Jay regarding shared space, specifically the use of conference rooms.

At the end of its work, the Task Force presented preliminary recommendations to the various constituent bodies that had direct interest in the issue of space utilization. Those meetings resulted in several modifications to the preliminary recommendations. I am pleased to note that the final version of the Task Force recommendations have been endorsed by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee, the Council of Chairs, and the Student Government Council. I have, in turn, also endorsed and adopted their recommendations.

To better coordinate the use of space, the following strategies will be adopted effective July 1, 2017.

1) Expand classroom use during Community Hour.

A select number of classrooms would be available during community hour for use by clubs, organizations, and faculty members. Food would be permitted and clean-up prior to reuse as a classroom would be coordinated through the facilities department. This would free up additional event space for all-day conferences, and faculty events.

2) Promote use of shared conference rooms

In the future, information regarding the use of administrative conference rooms will be managed through the Virtual Event Management System (VEMS). In this way, campus organizations seeking to use those rooms will know how to access them. Information related to conference rooms that are located in academic department or student activities facilities will be published in the Events Handbook. The information will include location, capacity, contact information (email & phone) of the Department Chair and/or coordinator. This will facilitate one-on-one outreach in the event an academic or student conference room is needed.

3) Increase transparency through creation of Event Review Committee

In order to enhance transparency, an Events Review Committee will be established. This committee would consist of one representative from each division of the College, two student representatives (selected by the Student Council), and two faculty representatives (selected by the Strategic Planning Committee). These representatives will be nominated by the appropriate entity for approval by the President. The Committee will meet twice annually to review the utilization of space using metrics developed by the Events Planning staff. The day-to-day operation of space reservations would continue to be managed by staff.

4) Enhance awareness of protocols through publication of an Events Handbook

The College will create a handbook of Event and Space Use Guidelines. This will streamline the process for request and use of space, and promote effective communication in the planning and evaluation of events taking place at the College. The handbook will assist in familiarizing members of the College Community with the procedures for space reservation and use.

5) Increase awareness through publication of FAQ(s)

To maintain consistency in responding to queries, FAQ(s) will be published and made available to the College Community.

I encourage you to review the attached full presentation of the Task Force. This document provides an objective and detailed examination of the processes used by the College to coordinate the use of our facilities. I would also like to thank everyone who attended and/or provided valuable feedback during the multiple listening engagements last spring and the multiple presentations provided by the Task Force. This feedback significantly enhanced the final recommendations of the Task Force and represents an important consensus regarding the best strategies moving forward.

Finally, I would like to commend the members of the Task Force for their diligent work on this project. Their report and recommendations will allow the College to enhance the utilization of our space, promote understanding of the policies and procedures regarding space use, and thereby allow the John Jay community to strengthen our sense of community,