

# Boricua College

A TRADITION OF LEARNING

## SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION REPORT (SIR)



**SUBMITTED TO  
THE  
MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**FROM  
BORICUA COLLEGE**

**December 13, 2023**

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## **Introduction**

On November 6, 2023, the College received a communication from the MSCHE Office of Institutional Field Relations requesting a Supplemental Information Report (SIR) due December 13, 2023, because Boricua College’s annual Enrollment (FTE) “has fluctuated by more than 15% during the past two fiscal years, 2020-2021 and 2021-2022”. Specifically, the action letter requested that the SIR provide the following:

- (1) annual enrollment – FTE for the last two fiscal years (Standard VI) and (2) narrative analysis and evidence of the actions the institution has planned or has taken to address these concerns (Standard VI).

The following sections provide the response to this request.

### **A. Annual Enrollment – FTE for the last two fiscal years 2021 and 2022 (Standard VI)**

At Boricua College, the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) is calculated as the total Fall enrollment of all undergraduate and graduate students. There are no part-time students at Boricua College. Enrollment data for the last four years is provided in Table 1.

<b>Table 1 – Annual Enrollment FTE</b>				
	<b>Fall 2020-2021</b>	<b>Fall 2021-2022</b>	<b>Fall 2022-2023</b>	<b>Fall 2023-2024</b>
<b>Undergraduate</b>	510	377	391	401
<b>Graduate</b>	78	46	70	92
<b>Total FTE</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>493</b>

As the Table 1 indicates, enrollment at Boricua decreased by 28% between Fall 2020 (588 FTE) and Fall 2021 (423 FTE), primarily due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and other demographic changes around the College’s campus centers. However, in the succeeding two years the enrollment increased by 9% in Fall 2022 (461 FTE) and another 7% in Fall 2023 (493 FTE). It is also significant that the graduate program enrollments increased by 100% from 46 to 92 during a three-year period. This is evidence that an

Enrollment Management Plan developed by the College is beginning to work towards a necessary level of sustainability.

**B. Narrative analysis and evidence of the actions the institution has planned or has taken to address these concerns (Standard VI)**

To address the concerns about a decrease in enrollment, during Spring of 2023, the College developed an Enrollment Management Plan linked to a three-year financial plan. The Plan was designed to achieve an initial target of 600 FTE, aligned directly with a balanced-budget goal of 800 FTE, and a new institutional Strategic Plan for 2023 to 2026.

The basic principles of the Enrollment Management Plan are as follows: (1) A 600 FTE target will be achieved by Fall 2023; (2) Revenue from tuition will cover up to 95% of the annual operating budget; (3) Tuition will increase by \$500 annually, and maintained so that an economically full-need student is eligible for federal and state grants to cover all their tuition; (4) Annual tuition for undergraduates will be fixed at \$12,500, and \$18,000 for graduate students; (5) Any financial shortfalls encountered prior to the 800 FTE will be covered by:

- (a) use of a \$4.7 million reserve fund the College created from the sale of excess property, which was also used to eliminate all outstanding debt;
- (b) rental of underutilized space valued at \$1,534,000 annually; and
- (c) reductions in expenditures to the level needed.

It was important to consider in the planning process, that the College has three small Campus Centers in three boroughs of New York City, Manhattan, Bronx, and Brooklyn, each with its own demographic environment. Therefore, based on a historical analysis of past enrollments, and the current post COVID-19 environment, Table 2 shows how the 600 FTE enrollment is expected to be distributed among the three Campus Centers, and by academic program categories.

The Plan has been developed strategically to achieve a 600 FTE enrollment, that builds from a baseline level of 461 FTE in Fall 2022, by increasing the attraction of new students and increasing retention.

**Table 2 – Projected Fall Enrollments by Campus Center  
AY 2023-2024**

	Campus Center			Totals
	Manhattan	Bronx	Brooklyn	
<b>New Graduate Students Pursuing MS</b>	0	Headcount = 25	Headcount = 29	Headcount = 54
<b>Continuing Graduate Students Pursuing MS</b>	0	Headcount = 5	Headcount = 31	Headcount = 36
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	Headcount = 30	Headcount = 60	Headcount = 90
<b>New Undergraduate Students Pursuing BS</b>	12 FTE (18%)	19 FTE (29%)	35 FTE (53%)	66 FTE (10%)
<b>Continuing Undergraduate Students Pursuing BS</b>	32 FTE (19%)	49 FTE (29%)	87 FTE (52%)	168 FTE (26%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>44 FTE (20%)</b>	<b>68 FTE (33%)</b>	<b>122 FTE (47%)</b>	<b>234 FTE (36%)</b>
<b>New Undergraduate Students Pursuing AA</b>	29 FTE (21%)	55 FTE (40%)	54 FTE (39%)	138 FTE (22%)
<b>Continuing Undergraduate Students Pursuing AA</b>	29 FTE (21%)	57 FTE (41%)	52 FTE (38%)	138 FTE (22%)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>58 FTE (21%)</b>	<b>112 FTE (41%)</b>	<b>106 FTE (38%)</b>	<b>276 FTE (44%)</b>
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>Headcount = 102</b>	<b>Headcount = 210</b>	<b>Headcount = 288</b>	<b>Headcount = 600</b>

MS – Master of Science; BS – Bachelor of Science; AA – Associate in Arts

Five strategies in the Enrollment Management Plan are described in terms of five objectives: Retention, Admissions (new), Re-Admits, Staffing, and Marketing Outreach.

**Objective 1: Retention**

Retention is the primary responsibility of the departments of instruction, academic supports, and financial aid. In Table 2, the College projects that 342 students, over 57% of the target, will return from the prior year.

The strategy to improve retention will include the following: (1) a tutoring program of 20 hours per week available at each Campus Center during the 15 weeks of each semester; (2) an education opportunity program (HEOP)

funded for five years \$9,668 by New York State Education Department for 70 economically and educationally stressed students, which provides full tuition, stipend for food and transportation, and academic supports, for up to five years until graduation; (3) a tuition aid program for para-professionals working in the New York City Department of Education provides up to \$5,400 annually; (4) a College Prep program is provided for potential students who need a high school equivalency diploma, ESL instruction, or preparation for a federal “ability to benefit exam” that makes them eligible for public tuition aid; and (5) a stipend of over \$500/annually provided by the College to a full-need student, as net between their public tuition aid and the College’s tuition.

Other retention strategies are included in a USDOE Title III project awarded in October 2023 called Project RISE. Project RISE has a five-year investment \$1,768,087, through which the College will create a centralized retention office that utilizes predictive analytics and tracking technology to provide timely academic and non-academic student supports. The project also will fund the implementation of new academic support practices at each Campus Center that emphasize academic monitoring, tutoring, and individualized faculty instruction.

Retention efforts will also be designed to increase the availability of cultural opportunities for new students that enhance their sense of belonging to the institution and its multicultural philosophy. The project will also provide faculty training related to cultural and language needs of students that will seek to improve academic performance and student retention.

## **Objective 2: Admissions**

Outreach and processing of new students is the primary responsibility of the Admissions Department at each Campus Center, in coordination with the instructional departments and other non-academic departments. As Table 2 indicates, the College has targeted the enrollment of 258 students, new to the degree programs. The students will be distributed by Campus Centers, with 138 first-time new college students into the entry-level 2-year liberal arts and sciences (AA) program, 54 into the graduate programs, and 66 will enter as new into the bachelor degree program majors after completing the first two years.

Other enrollment actions include: (1) Improve admissions staffing; (2) Develop new academic specializations within the umbrella of the existing and successful human services, education, and business programs; (3) Rebuild the network of community support, increase technology-based public communication, introduce surveys across many constituencies, to determine and assess levels of functioning of non-academic departments; (4) Conduct fundraising for scholarships; (5) Organize alumni for community and financial support, (6) continue increasing the graduate enrollments.

### **Objective 3: Re-Admits**

Based on analysis of the College's data, and what is known of the varying episodic enrollment of adult students, it is expected that up to 50 of 230 previously enrolled students who did not return due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting unemployment, or other causes will return to complete their degree programs.

### **Objective 4: Staffing of Admissions Departments**

Between May and September 2023, the Admissions Departments of the three Campus Centers will have 20 weeks to achieve the assigned enrollment of 216 new undergraduate and graduate students. Each department will be expanded from seven to 10 full-time counselors (30 in total), with three levels of competency on training and prior experience as follows.

- Staff Level I: Capacity to enroll an average of 20 students at the rate of one student per week (35 hrs);
- Staff Level II: Capacity to enroll an average of 10 students at the rate of one student in two weeks (10 hrs); and
- Staff Level III: Capacity to enroll an average of 5 students at the rate of one student over two weeks (10 hrs) period.

Based on this staffing approach, the Admissions Departments will be better able to attract, process, and enroll the new students.

## **Objective 5: Marketing and Outreach**

The overall marketing strategy will be strengthened with a focus on increasing the College's enrollment in Fall 2023 by 30% (139 FTE) over the previous Fall 2022 (461 FTE).

In 2022, a new Institutional Development Department was created and charged with implementing a comprehensive marketing strategy and re-branding the public image of the College. The strategy takes into consideration the changing socio-economic and demographic environment of New York City, communities that surround the College, and dramatic influx of Hispanic-Latino and other immigrants.

Several of the College's characteristics are critical for the marketing strategy, such as: (1) an adult-oriented multicultural student environment, (2) individualized and small group instruction that is known as attractive to adult students, (3) employment-oriented academic internships, (4) elective courses available, online, (5) flexible schedule of classes, (6) strong undergraduate academic programs in childhood teacher training with early childhood and bilingual education certification, human services counseling, and business management, (7) a strong foundation in the liberal arts and sciences with emphasis on critical thinking and affective development skills, (8) special programs of academic and economic supports for students, (9) faculty that is 90% bilingual, and (10) highly valued and cost effective graduate degree programs, in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Human Services Counseling, both critical for the current New York City demographics; and (11) two recently approved programs in Medical Assistant and Para-Legal Studies.

Armed with these important characteristics of the College, the charge of the Institutional Development Department includes development of a support network of public and private organizations and agencies, community influential, and elected officials that surround the three Campus Centers. The new department is also charged with re-developing the College's website, social media platforms to attract new applicants, and an alumni network.

To date, the College's website ([www.boricuacollege.edu](http://www.boricuacollege.edu)) has been upgraded to provide public service announcement videos by prominent cultural icons of the community; faculty, student and alumni interviews;



program and course highlights; promotion of special events on a “Que Pasa” section of the website; and historical accomplishments of the College.

A social media paid advertising campaign has been initiated on Instagram, Facebook, and You Tube that received over 5,527 views and 221 follow-up clicks to the website. 500 were specific inquiries about the College that has resulted in 470 new applicants for admissions for this Fall 2023. Finally, a special link directed at Boricua’s graduates has grown to over 2,000 alumni, with a newsletter targeted to them.

Of significant long-term potential is the partnership being developed with the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). It began with two meetings held between the College’s President and Special Assistant for Institutional Development with the Education Chancellor, Dr. David Banks, and his deputies for adult education and teacher training, which are two of Boricua’s great academic strengths. Three follow up meetings have been held aimed at attracting para-professionals working in the public school system.

A pilot project is underway at both the Brooklyn and Bronx Campus Centers aimed at the para-professionals initiated by the local Superintendent of local school Districts that are being impacted by the rapid influx of immigrant children from Latin America. It is expected that up to 30 students will be enrolled from this pilot project in the Fall and Spring 2023-2024.

Graduate programs have increased the new enrollments by 71% over the previous year.

## **Conclusion**

The College is confident that the Enrollment Management Plan is working as evidenced by the Fall 2023 enrollment of 493 FTE by 7%, above the prior year. While the 600 target fell short by 18%, nevertheless, progress was made. It is also important that because the undergraduate tuition for the 401 undergraduates is \$12,500 and \$18,000 for the 92 graduates, the “financial FTE” is equal to 534, 41 more than 493 and 66 less than the 600 FTE target.

This factor is extremely important because the true financial impact of the enrollment is critical for Boricua's financial planning, and the real indicator of its long term sustainability. No doubt, Boricua's strategy to mitigate financial shortfalls resulting from enrollment will work: with the current rental from underutilized space at \$1.5 million almost double the fiscal impact of the 66 shortfall.