

Robert Farrell, Lehman College
Associate Professor, Library
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My name is Robert Farrell and I'm an Associate Professor in the Library Department at Lehman College. I'm here to speak about the budget.

First though, I'd like to commend CUNY for making a first step toward pay equity for adjunct faculty. The new PSC contract doesn't go far enough, and faculty and staff rightly expected more, particularly given Vice Chancellor Cruz's endorsement of a \$10,000 per course minimum while President at Lehman. But it's a start. We're now a little more than half way to the \$10K mark and it would be great to see that articulated as a goal by the central university administration.

The budget proposal before us looks a lot like last year's proposal and that of the year before. The request for a 7.5% increase is in line the 7.7% and the 7.6% increases requested in the FY 2020 and 2019 requests. You asked for \$277 million dollars more last year and are asking \$277 million again this year. The University actually got an \$82 million dollar increase from last year to this, or about 2.26%. Insanity has been defined by some as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. You're not crazy, so I'm guessing you're expecting the same weak results.

But if not craziness, many of us were hoping for a creative new call from this administration for a reimagined approach to public investment in CUNY. Maybe a New Deal for CUNY. This budget doesn't even call for fully eliminating the TAP Gap.

Rather it will exacerbate the TAP Gap by asking students to pay another a tuition increase, which will also increase the out of pocket costs for many students, when you do get what you expect. It will also further incentivize the exploitation of international students who are already seen by many administrators as primarily a revenue source.

Moreover, to ask students to pay a \$120 fee to hire mental health professionals is just obscene, particularly given that most mental health issues faced by our students are caused by an economic precarity we can attribute to decades of wealth transfer from public coffers to the pockets of the very rich. Our students should now have their pockets picked again, this time by CUNY, in order to get help dealing with problems caused by those who've stolen their safety net?

I'm leaving a copy of New York City Public Advocate Jumanee Williams' recent report on CUNY, NYPIRG's report on student tuition and two recent reports on homelessness

and hunger among CUNY students with my testimony. I know you're familiar with them, but I hope these will be entered into the record for history's sake.

The PSC, students and the public want to support you, but this proposal isn't enough. You have a choice and an opportunity in this your first full term as a Chancellor. Please use it.