



# NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

**Date: July 31, 2013**

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

Over the course of the past few months, and again in a widely circulated letter the week before last, the Faculty Against the Sexton Plan (FASP) has made assertions that deny or ignore NYU's progress over the past decade.

I have been a faculty member at NYU for 19 years; to me, the academic improvement over that time - most notably the steadily improving quality of the faculty and the students we recruit - has been quite clear; I believe colleagues who have been here for similar or even longer tenures feel the same way. This academic momentum has continued, and even accelerated, over the past 10 years, accompanied by a marked rise in NYU's academic standing; and it is a testament to the hard work of NYU's faculty.

I respect the right of everyone in our community to debate the future of the University. However, to paraphrase Daniel Patrick Moynihan: everyone is entitled to his or her own opinions, but not to his or her own facts. Moreover, it is particularly troublesome when factual misrepresentations diminish our University's accomplishments, which not only devalues what our community is widely recognized as having accomplished but also jeopardizes our ability to continue our progress. And so, as Provost, I feel compelled to share with you just a sample of the data and facts that illustrate the positive direction of NYU's academic trajectory. I have chosen specifically data and facts that the FASP got wrong.

Sincerely,  
David McLaughlin  
Provost

***"The president's pursuit of endless growth has hurt NYU academically. As we told you on April 21, NYU's acceptance rate is now over 34%---six times higher than Harvard's (5.9%), five times higher than Columbia's (6.9%), and double that of Mississippi Valley State University (16.1%)."*** (FASP)

NYU's admit rate has remained stable over the last decade: NYU's admit rate was 32% in 2002 and 35% in 2012<sup>i</sup>; our estimates are that it will be 33% in 2013. Over the same period, our average SAT scores **rose**: from 1300 in 2002 to 1340 in 2012<sup>ii</sup>. The number of students who achieved 1,500 on their SATs nearly **doubled** over that same period<sup>iii</sup>. And there has been a 45% increase in undergraduate applications over the last decade<sup>iv</sup>; well over 40,000 students per year now apply for undergraduate admission.<sup>v</sup>

We have also significantly enhanced student diversity in several areas: 19% of the freshman entering in 2012 were underrepresented minorities, up from 11% in 2002<sup>vi</sup>; 23% of the freshmen entering in 2012 were Pell-eligible, vs. 19% in 2002<sup>vii</sup> (you may have seen the Pell chart in the NY Times this morning; this data, likewise drawn from the Dept. of Education, would place us very well compared to other institutions); and 15% of the freshmen entering 2012 were international students, vs. 4% in 2002<sup>viii</sup>.

This is a significant achievement given the increase in the size of the freshman class between 2002 and 2012, which grew by approximately 2.5% / year<sup>ix</sup> (less than half the rate of growth of the prior decade), reflecting the growth in undergraduate programs (26 new bachelor degree programs were approved by NYS during that period<sup>x</sup>; in the College of Arts and Science alone, majors increased from 35 to 47<sup>xi</sup>) and capacity (participation in our global programs nearly doubled during this period<sup>xii</sup>). Normally this would correspond with a significant decrease in selectivity, a significant increase in the admit rate, and a significant decline in the SAT score.

But, in fact, that did **not** happen. Our ability to hold our admit rate steady and see improvements in the academic qualifications of our students even as we grew is, in fact, part of NYU's remarkable success story.

And the preliminary admissions data from our campus in Abu Dhabi - where we are able to offer financial aid comparable to the most financially well-endowed universities in the world - though not included in the data above, are highly impressive: the projected acceptance rate for NYU students admitted there is 4.7%, and the average SAT score is 1500<sup>xiii</sup>. The yield on the offers of admission made this year was 88%, with many students turning down opportunities at the world's leading universities to attend.

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***"[A faculty member in (History)] noted a perceptible decline in the scholastic aptitude of our undergraduates since 2007: "The students here are no better prepared than those at the University of Maryland," where she taught before she came to NYU (and whose acceptance rate is 45%)."*** (FASP)

As noted above, the avg. SAT scores of entering freshman has **increased** over the past 10 years, and the number of entering freshmen with SAT scores 1500 or great has nearly doubled. The percentage of entering freshman in the top 10% of their class rose from 62% to 64% between 2002 and 2012<sup>xiv</sup>, and the high school GPAs of entering freshman held steady - at 3.6<sup>xv</sup>.

Moreover, NYU has made impressive strides in 6-year graduation rate: for freshmen who entered NYU in 1996, the graduation rate was 78%; for those who entered in 2006 (the class for which we have the most recent data), the graduation rate had climbed to 85%<sup>xvi</sup>.

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***"Under Pres. Sexton, the number of NYU's untenured faculty has grown 216%, so that they now outnumber tenured faculty... With some 2,400 students paying full tuition every year, Liberal Studies makes well over \$100 million a year; and yet its 80 full-time faculty can barely live on what they're paid, although required to teach three courses per semester, do administrative work, and---somehow---publish."*** (FASP)

Here's a look at the faculty picture overall:

***Faculty Headcount Growth  
(excl. School of Medicine, NYU Abu Dhabi, NYU Shanghai)***

	2002	2012	% change
<b>T &amp; TT faculty</b>	1,271	1,421	+12%
<b>All FT faculty</b>	1,823	2,579	+41%*

At a time when many colleges and universities have come under fire for reductions in their tenured, tenure-track, and other full-time faculty, NYU has **increased** those ranks<sup>xvii</sup>.

Moreover, the mean salary for NYU full professors and assistant professors was for 2011-12 was in the top 1% nationally, and for NYU associate professors was in the top 3% nationally<sup>xviii</sup>.

We have, apart from these figures, already hired 49<sup>xix</sup> tenured and tenure-track faculty for NYU Abu Dhabi and NYU Shanghai (eight of whom are under tenure review and four of whom are joint appointments with NYU's New York campus), and in the coming years expect to hire hundreds of additional tenured and tenure-track faculty.

\* Growth in full-time non-tenure-track faculty is a result of school-based hiring, in large measure reflecting the hiring of Arts Professors at Tisch; Music Professors at Steinhardt; faculty to replace the graduate student teaching assistantships eliminated by Financial Aid Reform 4 (FAR4), faculty fellows, and Global Professors in FAS; an increase in clinical instructors in the College of Dentistry; and the decision by various schools to use full-time faculty in place of adjunct faculty.

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***"NYU's endless growth has also curbed the faculty as teachers and as scholars. Contrary to the official numbers, our average class size is comparable to large state universities; and 30% (editor's note: corrected from 70% as first published) of all that teaching is assigned to full-time contract faculty, with a further quotient handled by an army of over 5,000 adjuncts and 1,000 graduate instructors (part-timers comprising 40% of the faculty at large)."*** (FASP)

In fact, the student/faculty ratio has improved from 11:1 in 2002 to 10:1 in 2012<sup>xx</sup>. The percentage of undergraduate classes with less than 20 students has remained 63% over the last decade in spite of the increase in the student body, and the number of class sections with 50 or more students has declined over the last decade: from 10% of classes to 9%<sup>xxi</sup>.

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*"Thus NYU, by now, is not renowned as "a world-class residential research university," as you put it in your letter to the Times. For one thing, that accolade, while passable PR, is undeserved, at least by the rough standard of journalistic ratings: U.S. News & World Report ranks NYU 32nd (and Columbia 4th) among the top 200 US universities---which is precisely where NYU was in 2002.*

*Once the leading US graduate program in art history, the Institute of Fine Arts has dropped to #6, while Stern---ranked #10 (in the US) by U.S. News, and #19 (worldwide) by the Financial Times---has also variously slipped since 2002; and, strikingly, NYU Law has dropped from #4 to #6 in U.S. News, for all those dollars so embarrassingly lavished on its millionaires." (FASP)*

Below please find some information showing NYU's improvements in rankings, and other information related to its national and international standing.

*US News and World Report  
Best Colleges and Universities / National Universities*

2002	2013
35	32

*US News and World Report  
Graduate School Rankings / Professional Schools*

	2002	2013
<b>Business</b>	12	10
<b>Education</b>	20	17
<b>Engineering</b>	N/A	57
<b>Law</b>	5	6
<b>Medicine</b>	24	21
<b>Nursing</b>	21 (2011)	21
<b>Public Affairs (Wagner)</b>	19	6
<b>Social Work</b>	35	16 (2012)

*US News and World Report  
Graduate School Rankings / Ph.D. Programs / Humanities  
and Soc. Sciences*

	2002	2013
<b>Economics</b>	19	11
<b>English</b>	25	20
<b>History</b>	24	18
<b>Politics</b>	Not ranked in top 25	15
<b>Psychology</b>	30	30
<b>Sociology</b>	22	16

*US News and World Report  
Graduate School Rankings / Ph.D. Programs / The Sciences*

	2002	2013
<b>Biological Sciences</b>	Not ranked	56 (2010)
<b>Chemistry</b>	Not ranked	Not ranked (2010)
<b>Computer Science</b>	Not ranked	28 (2010)
<b>Earth Sciences</b>	No ranking	Not ranked
<b>Mathematics</b>	9 (tie)	10 (tie) (#1 in applied math)
<b>Physics</b>	Not ranked	40 (2010)

*Times Higher Ed (THE) World Reputation Rankings*

	2011	2012	2013
<b>World Ranking</b>	51-60	34	29
<b>US Ranking</b>	30-33	21	19

\* An article on the swiftness of NYU's rise can be found [here](#)

*Times Higher Ed (THE) World University Rankings*

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
<b>World Ranking</b>	60	44	41
<b>US Ranking</b>	35	29	25

*Center for World University Rankings (CWUR)*

	2012	2013
<b>NYU's ranking among CWUR's Top 100 World Universities</b>	23	19

*Shanghai Jiao Tong University Academic Ranking of World Universities*

2003	2012
55	27

*Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings\**

	2004	2012
<b>World Ranking</b>	79	43
<b>US Ranking</b>	30	19

\* The QS rankings were originally published in collaboration with The Times Higher Education from 2004 - 2009 as the Times Higher Education - QS World University Rankings. In 2010, the collaboration ended; QS continued to publish using the existing methodology, with THE created a new methodology (above) with Thompson Reuters

*The National Research Council (NRC)  
Data-Based Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs  
in the United States (2010)*

*NYU's Programs with Ranges within Top 15 (A total of 27 programs vs. a total of 7 programs in the 1995 NRC Assessment)*

**Program Name**

American Studies*	Mathematics**^
Anthropology^	Microbiology/Sackler*
Applied Mathematics	Molecular Oncology and Immunology/Sackler
Cellular & Molecular Biology/Sackler Inst	Molecular
Comparative Literature*	Pharmacology/Sackler^
Computer Science	Music
Developmental Genetics/Sackler*	Neural Science
Economics	Neuroscience and Physiology/Sackler^
Environmental Health Science	Nursing
French^	Performance Studies**
German*	Philosophy
History	Politics*
History of Art and Archeology/IFA^	Public Administration
Linguistics	Spanish and Portuguese

\* Programs ranges also within top 5 programs  
 \*\* Programs ranked #1  
 ^ Programs that also scored in the top 15 in 1995 NRC ranking (7 in 1995 vs. 27 in 2010)

*Number of Faculty Members Who Are Members of the National Academy of Science*

2002	2012
18	29 (incl. one emeritus)



Additional points:

- Philosophy Department: The Philosophical Gourmet ranking of philosophy departments ranked NYU's as first in the U.S.
- Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences: Courant was named #1 in the specialty of applied mathematics by US News and World Report in its most recent graduate rankings
- School of Law: The School of Law was named #1 in the specialties of International Law and Tax Law by US News and World Report in its most recent graduate rankings
- School of Medicine / NYU Langone Medical Center<sup>xxii</sup>: Between 2001 and 2012, the NYU Langone Medical Center
  - went from #36 nationally to #24 nationally (its highest ranking since 1990) among schools of medicine in terms of NIH awards, with a 73% increase in NIH funding. In fact, over the past three years, it had the largest increase in NIH funding of any of the top 40 medical schools
  - saw an increase in publications of 32%
  - Received the largest grant in its history - an \$84 million NIH grant related to heart disease
  - Launched the Curriculum for the 21st Century, the first significant change in US medical education in decades
  - Introduced a three-year pathway to a medical degree, making the NYU School of Medicine the first medical school in the country to allow accelerated entry into any specialty
  - Developed the Web Initiative for Surgical Education, now used by more than 100 medical schools
  - Has been named to the US News and World Report Honor Roll three times (incl. 2013); it had not previously been named to the Honor Roll since the mid-1990s
  - Twice received the Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission; received a "Magnet" designation for nursing quality; received an "A" for patient safety from the LeapFrog Group; and was awarded five stars for "overall performance" from the University HealthSystem Consortium, as well as being only one of 10 hospitals to receive the UHC Quality Leadership Award
  - Hired 70 new tenured and tenure-track faculty members, and created three new academic departments, increasing the number to 29
  - Was the first of the hospitals on Manhattan's east side damaged by Hurricane Sandy to re-open and resume operations
  - Opened the National Cancer Institute-designated Clinical Cancer Center; the Smilow Research Center; the Translational Research Building; and the Hassenfeld Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders and the Fink Children's Ambulatory Care Center.
- Technology Transfer<sup>xxiii</sup>: Between 2001 and 2012:
  - NYU's licensing revenue increased 12-fold, with NYU being named #1 among US universities in licensing revenue over the past six years
  - 475 patents were granted
- Dentistry / Nursing<sup>xxiv</sup>: In addition to the construction of a new building at 433 1st Avenue that will provide a new home for the College of Nursing, additional research

space for the College of Dentistry, and provide space for a new bio-engineering program...

- Nursing: Since its establishment as a college in the College of Dentistry in 2005, the College of Nursing has:
  - Seen its grant funding grow from \$3.3 million in 2006 to \$13.1 million in 2012
  - Seen it rank in NIH funding among nursing schools increase from #46 in 2006 to #5 in 2012
- Dentistry: The College of Dentistry has:
  - Seen its ranking of NIH funding among US dental schools rise from 16th in 2002 to 13th in 2012
  - Seen its research expenditures increase from \$4.5 million in 2002 to \$15.9 million in 2012
  - Seen the first-time pass rate on the National Board Dental Examination Part I increase from 80.7% in 2002 to 99.6% in 2012 (above the national average), and on Part II from 85.5% in 2002 to 99.4% in 2012 (above the national average)
  - Applications for admission increased 160% between 2002 and 2012, the average GPA of enrollees increased from 3.24 to 3.54, and the average DAT score increased from 18.5 to 20.9

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<sup>i</sup> IPEDS / Institutional Characteristics

<sup>ii</sup> Common Data Set (CDS)

<sup>iii</sup> NYU Office of Institutional Research (NYUOIR)

<sup>iv</sup> IPEDS / Institutional Characteristics

<sup>v</sup> Ibid

<sup>vi</sup> CDS

<sup>vii</sup> IPEDS / Student Financial Aid

<sup>viii</sup> CDS

<sup>ix</sup> Ibid

<sup>x</sup> NYU Office of Academic Program Review

<sup>xi</sup> Office of the Dean, CAS

<sup>xii</sup> NYUOIR

<sup>xiii</sup> NYUAD Admissions Office

<sup>xiv</sup> CDS

<sup>xv</sup> Ibid

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xvii</sup> IPEDS / Human Resources

<sup>xviii</sup> AAUP survey

<sup>xix</sup> Office of the Sr. Vice Provost for Planning / Sr. Vice Provost of NYU Abu Dhabi

<sup>xx</sup> CDS

<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxii</sup> NYU School of Medicine / NYU Langone Medical Center

<sup>xxiii</sup> NYU Office of Industrial Liaison

<sup>xxiv</sup> Office of the Dean of the College of Dentistry