

Allison Pease

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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UPDATE

October 17, 2023

Dear Academic Affairs Colleagues,

Last Wednesday at Town Hall I, like many of us, listened to our students pour out their pain about the war between Israel and Hamas. As an educator, I wanted more than ever to find the words to help them find solace and meaning. I felt my failure. I had no words.

As this human disaster continues each of us will process our own feelings about it differently. For our students, however, our role is to help them grow. Students will try on political opinions, they will read and talk, and then they will discard their former identities and emerge with new ones. College is a unique time for an individual to learn what they value and what they think, and to reshape a self around that process. We hope as educators to move students from reactive to reflective, from righteous to considered. And at John Jay our mission is to help students to question their assumptions, to consider multiple perspectives, to think critically, and to develop the humility that comes with global understanding.

I wish you all well.



Distinguished Teaching Symposium Shares Best Ideas

Last Friday the [Teaching and Learning Center](#) gathered those who have been nominated for or won the Distinguished Teaching Prize since its inception in 2009 to learn how the prize has been selected, what students say when they nominate their professors, and to share ideas about great teaching. It was an inspiring morning with a committed group of faculty.

My takeaways from listening to our distinguished teachers talk about their work?

- **Challenge is Key** – students know when they are being pandered to and resent it. Distinguished teachers aim to “challenge without frustration” - that sweet spot where students feel stretched but have the pieces they need to meet the high bar.
- **Relevance** – explaining why something in our classes matters or how it relates to students lives encourages their investment.

- Make Students Experts – find roles for them in group work and class discussions that lean on what they know and their strengths. When students feel seen and valued they engage more deeply.

We have a rich pool of insights and inspiration in the [TLC Distinguished Teaching podcast series](#), featuring interviews with past winners. Check it out.



Academic Advisement Has Changed to a Case-Management Model

After years of knowing what's best but not being able to do it, we can finally assign every student who comes to John Jay to an Academic Advisor who will be their advisor through their entire academic journey. This case-management model will allow for students to develop relationships with their advisors, and for advisor to get to know their students better to address barriers and encourages pursuit of their interests.

Advisor assignments can be viewed on EAB under the "Your Support Team" column on a student's profile (typically found on the lower right hand side of the page). Advisor assignments are not viewable on CUNY First or Degree works.



President Obama Praises John Jay's MBK CONNECT Program

President Mason (and me, as her voice because she had laryngitis) presented our early successes with the MBK CONNECT success program for men of color to President Obama and the Obama Foundation Board. We were able to share that of the 67 recent high school graduates who signed up for summer courses, 66 completed (one had a medical emergency, but we are supporting him too), and all had grades of C or better for an average gpa of 3.43. Having developed academic efficacy and strong bonds with one another, those men are now enrolled in 15 credits this fall and meet weekly with mentors, biweekly to work on leadership strengths, and biweekly to talk and reflect in Guy Code through the UMI.

The Obama Foundation's MBK Alliance seeded money to John Jay to start this program as it fulfills Milestone 4 of the MBK Alliance's 6 milestones to ensure that all young Americans have the opportunities they need to reach their full potential. Karol's goal is to spread this to other CUNYs and SUNYs once we prove the success of the program.



2023 Fall Semester Faculty & Staff Meeting on Our Fiscal Future

October 25, 1:40-3:00 pm L.63 NB

Please join the Fall Faculty & Staff meeting to hear President Mason and Vice President Mark Flower present our budget situation and engage in discussion about how to chart a path to fiscal sustainability.

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