

**Testimony of Joyce Solomon Moorman, Associate Professor
Before the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York
Concerning the University Budget Request for FY 2015-2016 as it
Relates to the PSC-CUNY Collective Bargaining Agreement
(Calendar Item 3.F.)**

24 November, 2014

Chancellor Milliken, members of the CUNY Board of Trustees, my name is Joyce Solomon Moorman and I am an Associate Professor in the Music and Art Department at Borough of Manhattan Community College. When I was hired at BMCC in 2003, faculty only complained that they were unable to afford housing in lower Manhattan near where BMCC is located. I, myself, have lived in Park Slope in Brooklyn since 1992. At that time I was an adjunct married to a musician who also worked as an adjunct. We were able to buy an apartment with family help. Since I moved into Park Slope rents have quintupled. I have to thank my family for helping us buy our apartment when we did, because I could not now afford to live in Park Slope, if I had to rent or buy an apartment today. The last apartment that sold in the building in which I live, a four-floor walkup, sold for over a million dollars.

By subway I can get to work in 30 minutes, but I have colleagues in my department who live in Poughkeepsie. These are men with families who wanted to have a house with adequate space for young children and some land for the children to play outside. I unfortunately don't have any children. I heard one complain last week that it took him that morning three hours to get to BMCC. Normally I think it takes him 90 minutes. In other words CUNY faculty not only can no longer afford to live in lower Manhattan near BMCC, they cannot afford to live within the radius of a 30-minute or one-hour subway ride. Faculty live on Long Island, in New Jersey, further and further away from their places of employment at CUNY, not because they don't like city living, but because they can't afford city rents and apartment prices. How does their long commute

affect their teaching, time available for college service and meeting with students, and time for research?

The starting salary for a CUNY Assistant Professor who already has a doctorate, according to the contract presently in force, 2007 to 2010, is only \$42,873. With that salary your monthly income is approximately \$3, 573 per month. How can you afford, if you are married or have a partner with children, to pay rent for a two-bedroom apartment at \$5,000 per month? I remember when I started working being told that rent should not be more than 25% of your monthly salary. 25% of \$3,573 is \$895.23. Where in New York City can you find a two-bedroom apartment for \$900.00 a month that has working lights, running water, heat and a kitchen?

Then there is the workload for CUNY community colleges, 27 teaching hours per year, which can be divided into 12 or 15 hours per semesters. That translates into 4 or 5 three-credit classes per semester. You may ask how can you complain about 12 or 15 hours of work per week? The workload is expressed in hours spent in the classroom. This does not include time spent advising students, office hours, and time spent on department committees, college committees, and university committees. This also does not include time spent preparing for classes.

As a member of the Music and Art Department at Borough of Manhattan Community College, I am contracted to teach 9 to 12 hours per week per semester. In addition to hours spent in the classroom I am contracted to hold office hours three hours per week when I have to be in my office available to students. I have to advise students during my office hours as well as meet with students from my classes who need help understanding course material. Often, though, students are busy with other classes during the posted office hours and request appointments at times outside the specified office hours. Then there is preparation time for classes, and time spent grading papers. And as part of my department service I am the department representative to the Academic Senate where I also have to serve on a college committee. I am in college meetings at least 2 hours per week. CUNY faculty are required to do research for tenure and promotion. Research for me, a pianist and composer, involves performing and performances of my compositions. There are Music and Art Department recitals that as a member of the department you are obligated to participate in. Preparation for recitals may include practicing 2 hours a day.

Writing compositions takes time. After you write the composition you have to prepare a score and parts for a performance. This all may take an additional 2 hours per day. So what is thought of as 9 to 12 hours a week in the classroom has now exploded to a work week of a minimum of 52 hours per week. And I haven't included the directed study that can involve tutoring 1 to 3 students per week that I have done as a service to the college practically every semester since I began working at BMCC.

CUNY faculty work hard and earn every penny they are paid. We deserve to be able to live within a 30-minute commute to our jobs in communities with adequate housing and services. One question that you should be considering is what impact do these problems have on the students who observe their professors' lifestyle? Why should students desire to also to become teachers, if they don't think that after years of study and hard work they will be able to achieve their goal and be able to have a comfortable lifestyle? I do think we have reached the point where you have to ask: why would students want to come after us and provide the services to the community that we provide? Why would students want to become faculty when 70% of college classes are taught by underpaid adjuncts, some who have to go on food stamps because of their low pay? How can you in all good conscience deny us a raise?