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Dear Colleagues:

As deans of the five schools at Manhattan College – arts, business, education, engineering, and science – we wish to express our commonly held views regarding the possible unionization of adjunct faculty members at Manhattan College. Even though our schools differ in terms of academic programs and faculty, we all promote the mission of the College. We strongly oppose the entanglement of a government agency such as the National Labor Relations Board in defining the nature and mission of an independent Catholic institution of higher learning. We further believe that unionization of the adjunct faculty at Manhattan College is not in the best interest of our schools

The deans are the senior administrators closest to the schools' academic programs and, along with the faculty, are responsible for the operation and delivery of those programs. Therefore, we know departments must have faculty hiring options and the authority and flexibility to employ those options. Adjunct faculty members, for the most part, have developed positive relationships with the department chairs who select them and with the deans. These relationships have provided flexibility in meeting teaching needs by selecting the best adjuncts from a known pool. If unionization takes place, these relationships may be replaced by union officials acting as intermediaries seeking to supplant our current practices by dictating who, how and when we can hire a person. Union seniority rules is one example that runs counter to hiring flexibility. We also know that in many cases, such as with alumni, adjunct faculty teach here because they are committed to serving the College and are giving back to it. Loss of flexibility with this experienced, diverse, and dedicated group because of union favored rules could adversely affect the academic programs.

We recognize there are serious issues for adjunct faculty members, particularly for those who earn their living from part-time work. The new administration at Manhattan College, from the president through the provost to the deans, is talking with adjuncts about the real concerns of adjunct faculty members and is committed to working towards solutions to those concerns. We do not believe that bringing in an outside group, in this case NYSUT, is the best way to achieve solutions at the College.

Respectfully,

Richard Emmerson, Ph.D.
Dean of Arts

Salwa Ammar, Ph.D.
Dean of Business

William Merriman, Ph.D.
Dean of Education

Tim J. Ward, Ph.D., P.E., F. ASCE
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John Wasacz, Ph.D.
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