

President's Report

June 2015

Summer classes have begun in earnest at the College. Our 5- and 8-week sessions are already underway. We have closed the gap considerably with respect to enrollment losses experienced earlier in the summer term due to required payment commitments and are approximately 3.5% below our FTE numbers from last summer. We have managed class sections accordingly so that our teaching costs are aligned with the diminution of credits attempted by our students. We are also operationalizing many recommendations of the Enrollment Task Force in the new fiscal year. Developing better adult enrollment strategies and accountability measures will assist in stabilizing our ongoing enrollment shortfall.

The business of the College is continuing over the summer. Our strategic planning groups are working to finalize the language of the new Strategic Plan for the Board's review in September. Faculty and staff groups are also meeting weekly to discuss the book *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* and determining implications for Harper. Meanwhile, the administrative staff is completing the Operational Plan for next year and is engaged in year-end performance evaluations. The Physical Plant staff is working diligently to complete campus projects best accomplished during the summer. Harper is truly a 12-month operation running at least five days per week, and often times more. It is hard to imagine how educational institutions can close on Fridays during the summer and meet their productivity objectives. We certainly would be challenged to do so.

We were very pleased to join Lake, Oakton, McHenry, and Elgin Colleges in signing a very exciting dual degree program in Business with Northern Illinois University. This new pathway for a bachelor's degree allows students to complete an identical set of program requirements at the local community college then complete the final two years at NIU's Hoffman Estates campus. This is a great program for geographically challenged students, particularly adults. In an earlier ceremony that same day, Harper and NIU entered into an agreement that enables students to transfer credits earned at NIU to Harper to complete their Harper degree, irrespective of their program major. This is a wonderful benefit for our students who transfer to NIU without a Harper degree and the agreement will also help us with our "completion" agenda. Many thanks to NIU President Dr. Doug Baker who personally championed both of these agreements.

We were very disappointed to learn that Governor Rauner has postponed any further work on State supported capital projects until a balanced budget is in place. This will directly affect the Canning Center project and most likely delay the opening of the facility. There is no direct financial relationship between the problem the Governor is trying to solve and the project; however, it is an outcome of a political dilemma that the State finds itself in.

Without a doubt, these are unprecedented and unsettling times for the State, and thus for Harper College. The threat of a property tax freeze, diminished State resources for higher education, and the post-recession enrollment dip across all of higher education make financial security tenuous at best. The College will need to stay on top of these developments and provide a steady stream of communication to the Board as well as College employees. Given the State's poor financial condition and deep political divisions, business as usual for all public entities is unlikely.

Despite the environmental ambiguity, a lot is going on and has been accomplished across the campus. Below, please find a description of those activities:

Student Success

- Admissions Outreach, in collaboration with Continuing Education and Marketing Services, hosted the annual Inspire U event at Harper College. The event, which had over 350 attendees, is an experience expo inspiring adults to go forward in their personal and professional lives. The event featured a keynote presentation by WGN radio personality Patti Vasquez as well as numerous breakout sessions including: Career Workshops, Build Your Resume, How Adults Go Back to College, Veterans Resources, Organic Gardening, How to Manage Stress, and Tips to Avoid Identity Theft.
- The Office of International Studies and Programs will host Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Professor Jimrex Byamugisha of the School of Statistics and Planning at Makerere University (Uganda) for the 2015 fall semester. The Fulbright Scholar Program is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government and for over 60 years has increased mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. Professor Byamugisha has worked for a variety of government ministries, local and international NGOs, and International Organizations such as UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP). At Harper, Professor Byamugisha will make classroom presentations, run workshops on curriculum development, and share his expertise on a variety of subjects, including the history of East Africa and the cultures of Uganda, the educational systems of East Africa, and the impact of HIV/AIDS on Uganda and East Africa in general.
- The Rita and John Canning Women's Program hosted the third annual Community Information Exchange with record attendance. Thirty-eight community agencies were represented. This annual event is a highlight for many of our community partners because they are able to informally network and share information about resources and services in an informal, collegial setting.
- As the culmination of the one year Accelerating Opportunity Design Grant, a multi-disciplinary team of faculty and staff from Academic Enrichment and Engagement and the Career and Technical Program Divisions, presented to the Illinois Community College Board.
- Congratulations to Jeanne Leifheit, Nursing Faculty, for being selected the "Honorary Coach of the Year" for the One Million Degrees Program. Jeanne will be honored and recognized for her commitment and support as a coach at the Scholar Awards Ceremony and Reception June 17 in Chicago.
- Sarah Mikulski, ESL Call and Resource Coordinator, has been elected to the Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Language/Bilingual Education (ITBE) Board.

- Keith O'Neill, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, recently hosted the summer meetings of the leadership board and the fall conference planning committee for Region IV-East (Great Lakes region) of the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), one of the main international professional associations for student affairs administrators who work at colleges and universities throughout higher education.
- Harper's Child Learning Center has been reaccredited by NAEYC – National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC is the world's largest organization of early childhood professionals and uses 10 standards for early childhood programs that can help families make the right choice when they are looking for a child care center, preschool, or kindergarten. The standards and criteria are also the foundation of the NAEYC Accreditation system for early childhood programs. To earn accreditation, programs must meet all 10 standards. The Harper Child Learning Center received excellent scores in all 10 standards and received commendations for nine of the standards. The program is truly committed to quality improvement and excellence.

Facilities Management

- Construction has started on the Outdoor Amphitheater and Pedestrian Mall project. The priority is to complete the stage (adjacent to the lake) and work south toward Building D. It is critical that the lawn area in front of the stage is sodded this fall so that it will be ready for graduation next spring.
- The renovation of the Hospitality program area, and work on the parking lots at the Harper Professional Center and the Learning and Career Center remain on hold due to the Governor's temporary suspension of funding for state capital projects.
- Construction on Building D – Phase II is progressing well. The foundation for the new rotunda has been completed, and structural steel will follow shortly. Interior framing, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing have been progressing with minimal conflict with existing conditions thus far.
- Construction for the Phase I and II improvements at the Learning & Career Center in Prospect Heights will be completed by the end of June. New exterior signage at both the roadway and building will be installed over the next few weeks and will provide much better visibility than in the past.
- Capital Development Board construction document review for the Canning Center is nearing completion. Before the project can be bid, the Governor's Office of Management and Budget will need to approve it.
- Phase I of the West Campus Infrastructure project remains on schedule and on budget.
- Various other maintenance and repair projects are occurring over the summer months in order to avoid disruption to the College during the traditional academic year. These projects include work related to mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, exterior doors and windows, paving, sealcoating, and striping.

Information Technology

- The Information Technology team partnered with Enrollment Services and the Business Office to develop and implement a custom software solution that will simplify the payment process for students, inform students of the net amount owed at registration, and obtain financial

commitment at registration. The solution includes interfaces to several student and financial systems in order to obtain the most current information for students. It navigates students through searching, registering, and paying for classes and informs students of essential information during these processes.

- The Enterprise Systems team completed the development of an interface between Silkroad, Human Resource's system to support the new employee orientation and employee transition processes, and Oracle E-Business Suite, our ERP system. The interface enables seamless information sharing between the two systems.
- The Networks and Servers team provided the infrastructure for Harper graduation ceremonies to allow for real time video broadcast of the ceremony to the Performing Arts Center (PAC) and over the internet.
- Over the Memorial Day weekend, the Telecom team applied several software patches to the voice network servers. The patches were applied to protect the servers from software vulnerabilities and viruses. The team also added an additional Call Center server that will provide redundancy to the One Stop, Financial Aid, Business Office, Registration, CE Registration, Motorcycle Registration, Student Development, Health Services, Student Service Desk, and Employee Service Desk call centers.

Advancement

- The Educational Foundation held the 27th Annual Golf Open on June 8. This year's event hosted 131 golfers and 31 additional dinner guests. The dinner featured remarks from Zachary Mayo, Harper student and recipient of the Jake and Jordan Sadoff scholarship. This event raised more than \$22,000 in the live appeal in support of Promise Scholarship and more than \$173,000 (gross amount).
- On Monday, June 29 at 9:00 a.m., Harper will celebrate the start of the construction phase for the FMA Advanced Manufacturing Lab in Building H with a Groundbreaking / Hard Hat Ceremony.
 - The Fabricators & Manufacturers Association Intl. (FMA) partnered with Harper College with a \$500,000 sponsored gift to support Harper College's Advanced Manufacturing Technology program.
 - "In five years I expect us to be filling the FMA Advanced Manufacturing Lab with 600 students a year who will learn skills that the industry needs to work with current equipment," said Kurt Billsten, coordinator and instructor of the Advanced Manufacturing Technology program at Harper College.
 - His expectations are well on their way to realization because of innovative programming, industry involvement, the College's renewed dedication to manufacturing programs, and the grant from the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association Intl. (FMA)

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- The TAACCCT office hosted the annual INAM consortium meeting. The President's Advisory Committee met in conjunction with the INAM meeting, where progress in meeting grant

requirements was reviewed, as required in the grant. Dr. Michele Weise, noted Harvard researcher, provided a keynote address on disruptive innovation in higher education.

- Some InZone classes began last week—with a full scheduled beginning on June 15. The winter weather prompted most school districts to cancel classes thus the school year was extended. This caused InZone to adjust their schedule accordingly. Soon, more than 1,000 youngsters will be taking courses at Harper this summer!
- Motorcycle safety classes are in full swing. Harper manages all such classes for the Illinois Department of Transportation throughout Cook County.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Harper College was recognized as one of the 2015 NCORE Groups at the National Conference on Race & Ethnicity in Washington, DC which took place from May 26 – May 30. NCORE is a national conference designed to provide a space for critical discussions around issues of diversity and inclusion on college campuses. The conference was attended by a number of Harper employees and we were able to staff a Harper College information and recruitment table in the exhibit hall for three full days. The table provided Harper with an opportunity to make conference attendees more familiar with employment opportunities and our commitment to diversity and inclusion. Conference attendees that visited the table expressed a great deal of interest in our Faculty Fellows program.

Communications and Legislative Relations

- Over the course of six days, Community Relations hosted more than 1,800 students from 15 Ambassador Schools representing School Districts 15, 21 and 25. These district students, who come from schools where more than 50% of the student population qualify for free or reduced lunch, visited and participated in activities lead by faculty and staff from Nursing, Manufacturing, HVAC, Fashion, Physics, Chemistry, Music, Athletics, Marketing, Library Services, Student Communications, Linguistics, Business, Admissions, Facilities, the Educational Foundation, Student Involvement, Career Development, Theatre, the Police Department, and the Mobile Unit. More than 70 students, faculty and staff members volunteered their time to help make the visits a success.
 - We have received very positive feedback from both the students and the teachers. Students loved the experience of being on campus and being able to ask our Harper student tour guides questions. The students from Euclid Elementary were so excited by Carl Dittburner's Google Sketch Up activity that the teacher will be downloading the program to use in class.
- Community Relations and Alumni Relations hosted an information table at Amita Health's Family Block Party on Saturday, June 6. The event took place at Alexian Brothers Women and Children's Hospital in Hoffman Estates. An estimated 575 families were in attendance.
- On June 9, Community Relations hosted an activity table at Jane Addams Elementary Spring/Summer Literacy night to promote college readiness and campus services open to the community.
- The Illinois General Assembly concluded a disappointing spring session without a budget for FY 16 amid deep political divisions between Governor Rauner and the Democratic leaders who

control the Illinois House and Senate. The legislature is currently meeting once a week in “extended session” in the hopes of working out a budget compromise by the end of the fiscal year. If an agreement is not reached, it is likely some parts of state government will shut down and payments to vendors will be further delayed. The Governor’s Office has already announced planned program cuts and suspensions effective July 1 in the event that a budget deal is not reached. Cuts that would affect Harper include:

- Suspension of capital projects, including construction at state facilities, schools and colleges.
 - Suspension of all capital grants for legislators’ earmarks and non-bonded or “pay as you go” capital projects.
 - Reducing funding for state-funded job training programs and suspension of funding to legislative earmarks for job training.
- Community colleges were the target of 36 bills related to ongoing issues at the College of DuPage. The bills included limits on cash reserves, the frequency of audits, new transparency requirements and limits on when community colleges are able to send out promotional material. Most of the COD-related legislation did not advance past House and Senate committees thanks to intense lobbying by community colleges who told lawmakers the bills, though well-intentioned, diminish control of community colleges by locally elected Boards. One bill that is currently on hold would limit contracts for all community college employees to four years and prohibits college boards from giving departing presidents more than one year’s salary and benefits.
 - The legislature did pass legislation that sets a 20% “aspirational” goal for hiring minority vendors by community colleges for six professional services (accounting, insurance, legal, information technology, architectural/engineering and banking/investments.) The bill was softened to ease reporting requirements, but minority hiring by community colleges would be monitored by a state Board.
 - On a positive note, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 806 which will ease transfer and grant junior status for community college graduates who attend state universities. Harper Provost Judy Marwick and her fellow community college Chief Academic Officers have been working on the bill for several years. The bill was sponsored by Harper legislative representatives, Representative Fred Crespo in the House and Senator Dan Kotowski in the Senate.
 - Harper stories in the local media included:
 - A *Daily Herald* story about Harper’s partnership with NIU to offer a dual business degree and a reverse transfer agreement.
<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20150612/news/150619494/>
 - A *Daily Herald* story about a student expelled for inappropriate text messages filing a federal lawsuit against the College.
<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20150611/news/150619691/>
 - A *Daily Herald* editorial urging lawmakers to reject COD-related bills and allow locally elected Boards to control community colleges.
<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20150528/discuss/150528723/>
 - A *Daily Herald* story about the search to fill a vacant seat on the Board of Trustees.
<http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20150528/news/150528784/>
 - A feature story in the leading insurance trade publication *PropertyCasualty360* about Harper’s new apprenticeship program with Zurich Insurance Group in Schaumburg.

<http://www.propertycasualty360.com/2015/06/11/one-way-to-find-new-insurance-professionals-grow-y>

- A *Chicago Tribune* story about the Illinois Senate passing a COD-related bill limiting payouts to departing college presidents and limiting community college employee contracts to four years. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/watchdog/cod/ct-college-of-dupage-community-college-legislation-20150530-story.html>

The next formal meeting of the Board will be in August, as we stay with the tradition of foregoing a formal meeting so the Board can engage in professional development. When we meet next we will be a week away from the beginning of the fall semester. Our operating milieu will hopefully be much clearer. The debate in Springfield between then and now should be very interesting. Over the summer we will keep folks informed of developments as we know them.

Enjoy the warmth of July and August.

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