

President's Report

August 2014

Wow! Summer is over. This has to be the fastest summer on record; most likely because last winter was so tough. The new fall semester seems like it has come upon us quickly. Let's hope for a long autumn.

Fall semester begins Monday, August 25. As of August 15, our overall student headcount is slightly higher than a year ago—at this same date. However, this group of students has registered for 1% fewer credits than last year. While this is not the best news, it seems to be better than what other Illinois community colleges are reporting, with many institutions reporting enrollment declines of 5% or more. We will look forward to seeing our tenth day numbers.

As I have reported, a Presidential Task Force has been formed to develop a strategic enrollment plan. This task force, co-chaired by Dr. Maria Coons and Maria Moten, is charged with developing concrete enrollment goals for the Young Adult and Adult markets, (our enrollment goals for the First Time in College or FTIC market remains the same). The task force has been given a very short timetable as we are asking for the plan by January 15, 2015 since we need to consider it as we build next year's College Plan. The task force is populated by staff from enrollment services, marketing and communications, as well as faculty and deans involved in scheduling and program planning. I am confident they will develop an action-oriented plan.

I'm pleased to report that we have received a recommendation from our governance system to become a smoke free college. I have accepted the recommendation and will forward a policy to the Board in September for a first reading. We will become smoke free January 1, 2015. A group of staff has been charged to develop a communications program to share this policy change with the College community. We will also provide smoking cessation assistance for those that request help. This policy is aligned with recent statutory legislation prohibiting smoking on or in any state-operated or assisted institution. That State law goes into effect July 1, 2015.

Over the last week, I have been making calls to our newly selected distinguished alumni. This year's group is very impressive representing the fields of engineering, higher education, secondary education, public administration, property management, and media. It is always a delight to make those calls and hear the excitement and pride of the alumni. Please plan on joining us on October 29 for the induction ceremony.

Last week, the Obama Administration hosted another convening of community college presidents and others at the White House to discuss strategies for eliminating the need for remedial education, and accelerating the time that it currently takes to remediate students. I was invited to attend because of the work we are doing to ensure more high school students are "college ready" in math when they graduate from high school. While I was unable to attend this

meeting, our data and programs were shared and our commitment was noted. This group will meet again on December 4 and I plan to attend.

All divisions have had a very active last couple of months as we wound down the summer session and geared up for the new fall semester. Below is news of note from across campus:

Student Success

- This summer has been busy for the Center for New Student Orientation. So far, more than 1,500 new students have been welcomed to campus and an additional 1,500 – 2,000 are expected before school begins August 25. Student evaluations of the program continue to be very positive – indicating that the new, extended format is being well-received.
- Student Trustee, Colin Weber, has accepted an offer to attend the University of New Haven where he will compete in cross-country and track and field. He will be replaced by Marisa Andreuccetti. We wish Colin the best of luck and welcome Marisa as our Student Trustee.
- After grades were submitted and FY14 classes had ended, Harper athletes' records were reviewed. Student athletes performed well in the classroom as well as on the field. Six student athletes were awarded NJCAA Academic Achievement Awards (3.6 GPA or higher), and one athlete received the NJCAA Pinnacle Award for Academic Excellence by having a cumulative GPA of 4.0 with a minimum of 45 semester hours. The women's cross country team won the NJCAA All-Academic Team award for having a combined fall and Spring GPA greater than 3.0.
- Two Fashion Design students were recognized in a world-wide competition. Myra Chung and Meta McKinney were chosen out of 1,200 applicants world-wide as finalists in an International Embroidery Competition. The competition is sponsored by one of only three existing Couture Embroidery Houses and was established in 1767. Myra and Meta are truly in elite company. The final results will be announced in November.
- May graduates of the Practical Nursing program began taking their Nursing Licensing Board Exams this summer, and to-date the graduates from the program have a 100% pass rate.
- The Office of Student Involvement organized a community-service opportunity in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity on Thursday, June 26. Harper students provided direct service with the "Brush with Kindness" program, in which they assisted two low-income home owners with various projects to help maintain the exteriors of their homes.
- Ashley Knight, Dean of Student Affairs, authored Chapter One of the Summer 2014 edition of *New Directions for Community Colleges* which focuses on supporting student affairs professionals in community colleges. Her chapter is entitled "Excellence in Community College Student Affairs."
- Laura Bennett, Student Conduct Officer, travelled to Washington D.C. in June where she met with staff members from Vice President Biden's Office, the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, and several U.S. Senators' Offices to discuss national best practices in student conduct administration as well as issues specific to community colleges.
- Marcie Sacks-Botto, Adjunct Counselor in Access & Disability Services, was invited to join a new statewide Deaf Literacy Program committee. The committee is a partnership between the Illinois Department of Human Services and Disabled Americans Want Work Now.

Facilities Management

- Building D - Phase I is complete and ready for occupancy. The project was delivered on time and under budget. An open house for faculty and staff will occur August 21 between 1:00 - 3:00 pm. IT will provide tutorials on new state-of-the-art lecture hall operations, Holabird & Root will provide a tour of the new regional chiller plant, and Power Construction will provide partial tours of the adjacent Building H Career and Technical Education Center. Phase II work will begin in January 2015.
- All work remains on schedule for the Career and Technical Education Center (Building H) for spring semester 2015 occupancy. This project also remains under budget.
- The first phase of the East Campus Parking Structure project has been completed on schedule and on budget, with the first two floors operational for fall semester 2014. The second phase, which includes the third and fourth floors, is on schedule and under budget for a mid-October 2014 completion. The adjacent regional generator plant is fully operational and provides critical system back-up for five surrounding buildings. The reconfiguration of the adjacent portion of Kris Howard Drive and Lot 6 is on schedule and on budget, and will be open for the start of fall semester 2014, as well.
- The Design Development phase of the Canning Center (Building A) is complete and has been approved by the College and the Capital Development Board. The Construction Document phase is underway.
- Phase 1 of the East Campus Landscape Project (surrounding Buildings D, H, and the Parking Structure) will start in late August and continue through fall semester as weather permits. Phase 1 includes installation of sod, additional hardscape features, and planting materials.
- Repair, re-sealing, and re-stripping of select parking lots and roadways, primarily on the north side of campus, has been completed.

Information Technology

- The Information Technology team, with significant support from Enrollment Services, Student Development, Business Office, and Continuing Education, completed the upgrade of Banner to version 8.6.3. This was a major upgrade of the Student Information System. The primary enhancement accommodates changes to the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, which now limits subsidized Stafford Loan borrowing to 150 percent of a published program's length. This project required hundreds of hours of everyone's time, was highly complex and was executed flawlessly.
- The roll-out of the Cisco WebEx web conferencing tool to replace GoToMeeting has been completed. Using WebEx, users will be able to schedule their own meetings without going through the switchboard. The WebEx "Call-Me" feature allows participants to receive a call at their location without having to dial in and enter a passcode to join meetings. Convenient WebEx plug-ins for Microsoft products makes hosting web meetings simple.

- The Information Technology team has begun an exciting multi-year roll out of new classroom technologies, eventually upgrading every learning space and meeting room on all Harper campuses. The first group of rooms was upgraded in July. This upgrade involved replacing the classroom lectern with a new, height-adjustable lectern that was designed by a team that included faculty, technical staff, and administrators. In addition, all technology, including computers, projectors, document cameras, and room control systems, are being replaced. This upgrade brings state of the art technology to our classrooms and prepares us to adapt to new technologies that are on the horizon.

Finance and Administrative Services

- Ron Ally attended the Institute for Educational Management program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education from July 13 – 25, 2014.

Institutional Advancement

- The Educational Foundation closed FY 2014 as of June 30 with a total of \$8,138,006 raised. Harper College's contribution of \$5 million for the Promise program is included. Overall, the Foundation exceeded its fundraising goal by 270%.
- The Foundation announced the addition of Laura Brown, as the new Chief Advancement Officer and Executive Director of the Foundation. Laura will provide overall leadership to advancement efforts and direct the Harper College Educational Foundation's fundraising efforts.
- The 7th Annual Distinguished Alumni honorees have been selected from a pool of more than 25 applicants. The selection committee chose eight Harper College alumni who will be honored on October 29 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Invitations will be mailed in September.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- Produced the annual *Institutional Accountability Report*, summarizing the accomplishments of the College related to three main areas: Institutional Effectiveness Measures (IEMs); Strategic Plan; and Operational Plan.
- Produced the annual *College Plan* that contains planned work within the Strategic Plan, the Operational Plan, the College Budget and Capital Budget.
- Conducted seven stakeholder mission statement theme input sessions including the Board of Trustees, local businesses, Educational Foundation, District high schools, higher education partners, alumni, and State higher education agencies.
- Coordinated the institutional response to ICCB recommendations on the College's self-study.
- Updated the IEM and Strategic Plan dashboards to provide internal and external constituents access to current data on college performance.
- Selected to host a meeting of the Northern Illinois Community College Researchers' Group on September 19. This meeting is well attended by IR professionals throughout the area, as well as staff from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). The agenda includes updates on State and federal reporting and will solicit input on State reporting requirements.

- The Data Standards Committee has been meeting monthly since January and is making good progress towards developing a Data Dictionary, which will provide definitions for the data elements stored in the Student Information System and Data Warehouse. As a result, a better cross-campus understanding will be developed about the meaning of information and what data are needed for evidence-informed decision making.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- Continuing Education hosted an annual launch event for the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI). More than 185 people attended and were able to “sample” some of the programs available through the LLI.
- The Job Placement Resource Center has placed 22 students into jobs and issued the first “job ready badge” to a student who successfully completed interviewing and resumé preparation training.
- More than 100 students and 14 campus offices participated in the Student Employment Expo which places students in on-campus work experiences.
- The Fast Track office hosted a special graduation celebration at the Harper Professional Center, where the program is held; 76 students graduated with 90 credentials.
- Fast Track will support the start of four new cohorts in the fall. Demand for the AAS degree in Business Administration has been extremely strong.
- The Harper Professional Center hosted Northrop Grumman’s summer enrichment program which recruits promising high school STEM students. The five-week program allows the high school students to interact with engineers and other professionals at Northrop Grumman and culminates in a major project that the students present to Northrop management.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Harper’s Leadership Team worked together and identified competencies to be included in the College’s new 360 feedback process. This initiative is designed to provide College leadership with an opportunity to increase communication through a transparent and open feedback loop. The 360 feedback process will allow for input from colleagues, direct reports, and supervisors, coupled with an opportunity for self-reflection and awareness of potential blind spots and bright spots. The College President will participate in the process early this fall and a broader launch, including additional members of the administrative team, is planned for the spring semester.

Communications and Legislative Relations

- U.S. Representative Peter Roskam’s office held a job fair at the Wojcik Conference in July. Over 100 employers participated, including Harper. The event drew hundreds of job seekers from throughout the northwest suburbs and Chicago. Congressman Roskam was also at Harper in late June welcoming attendees to an Export Forum for Businesses organized by his office.

- Last week, Governor Quinn signed into law two important pieces of legislation related to community colleges. The Governor approved the Smoke Free Campus Act which prohibits smoking on all Illinois public college campuses beginning on July 1, 2015. He also signed a bill which sets aside a special pool of MAP grant money for displaced workers.
- After more than a year of design work, testing and employee review, Harper has launched a new internal Web site. The new Harper Information Portal (HIP) page features pictures, calendars and other dynamic content and easier navigation tabs to quickly access the growing number of internal Web pages. The HIP page also features a more robust search function and options to personalize content on the page to an individual user.
- Some of the news stories about Harper that appeared in the media include:
 - A front-page centerpiece story in the *Daily Herald* about Marissa Lesperance, who dropped out of Palatine High School in her junior year. Marissa eventually found Harper's GED program, passed the exam and this fall will begin classes in business administration. The *Daily Herald* followed up on the story with an editorial about the importance of ensuring that everyone has the chance to earn a GED.
 - The *Barrington Courier-Review* and *Buffalo Grove Countryside* ran articles about a new Jim Croce album that features 10 live tracks from his 1973 concert at Harper, just months before he died in a plane crash.
 - A moving story and adorable photo about the Comfort Dog conference at Harper ran on the front page of the *Daily Herald*. The article focused on the Lutheran Church Charities program, but also highlighted Harper and its certificate program for handlers.
 - The *Elgin Courier-News* ran an article previewing the August 21 open house at the new Education and Work Center in Hanover Park.
 - The *Barrington Courier Review*, *Buffalo Grove Countryside* and the *Daily Herald* published articles about Trustee Bill Kelley's new role as ICCTA president.
 - The *Chicago Tribune* wrote an article on the passing of Harper College Educational Foundation Emeritus Director Al Shapiro, who died July 17 after a battle with cancer.
 - *Quintessential Barrington* ran an article about the Adelanté Academy, a partnership between Harper and Barrington District 220 that launched last summer. Adelanté is a free, four-week program for Hispanic students at Barrington High School to help them get a head-start on college classes.
 - Associate Professor Sam Giordano's innovative teaching tool – a 3D architectural model that allows students to learn approaches to construction methods – was featured in *Fire Rescue Magazine*.

In closing, I wish to note the significance of the year ahead. At the close of this fiscal year we will have developed a new mission statement and new strategic plan. We will be parking in the new parking structure, teaching in the new Career and Technical Education Center (Building H), and will have occupied the new addition to D Building. Our major gifts campaign will be launched, as well as business recruitment, high school outreach, and marketing and communication activities for the Promise Program. Concrete goals and strategies for enrolling adult and young adult students will have been identified. Finally, we will have transitioned to a smoke free campus. In Harper tradition, we make no small plans.....and continue to achieve great things!

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