

President's Report

December 2012

The fall semester has flown by. The last two weeks, and the next can only be described as “fast and furious!” All — students, faculty, strategic planning teams, our governance groups, special task forces, and others — are working at a frantic pace. Students and faculty are working toward a successful conclusion of the fall term; others are at the mid-year point of addressing annual goals and objectives. The energy is very high on campus these days!

There are a number of Presidential task forces hard at work. Several of them relate directly to the President's annual goals. A quick high level update is provided below.

- Shared Governance Review. This group has now worked together for a full year. In January, the task force will release a schematic that represents an alternative organizational design for our employee shared governance system. The Board will also preview this schematic at the January Committee of the Whole meeting. During the spring semester, the Steering Committee will continue to meet bi-weekly, and we have scheduled two full-day meetings as well. The goal is to present the College Assembly with a proposal in April or May. The College Assembly will then make a recommendation to me regarding adoption of the proposed changes.
- Harper Leadership Institute. This faculty/staff task force is making very nice progress with the development of this program. During the College's all-campus meeting in January, we will preview the program for faculty and staff. Scheduled to begin in fall of 2013, the year-long program will work with a cohort of 30 members of our faculty and staff. Cohort groups will be developed to assure wide representation of our employee community. The program will begin with a four-day residential experience, followed by monthly Friday meetings throughout the year. The format of the program will involve key thought leaders from higher education, state-wide leaders, and members of our own faculty and staff leading various segments. A group project will be embedded within the program — projects will be related to our current strategic plan.
- Diversity and Inclusion. Focusing on diversity and inclusion, this faculty/staff task force has had a very productive fall examining literature and best practices, and seeking consultative assistance that will inform College-wide exploration of diversity and inclusion. We are anticipating a very busy spring with meetings, focus groups, surveys and the like. Our task force co-chairs are committed to making recommendations to me by the end of spring term, with an implementation schedule beginning in the fall.

- Job Placement. This task force has been working very closely with several local business partners (Motorola Solutions, Acme Industries and others) to develop a more systematic approach to assisting our students with job placement following completion of certificates or degrees. The task force is specifically reviewing aligning the student's academic program of choice with job placement opportunities. In essence, the job placement feature of student success would begin as a new student arrives on campus. The approach the group is considering would advance the concept of internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training much earlier in a student's academic career. I am looking forward to receiving the recommendations in late spring.
- Community Relations. The joint goal to examine the College's approach to community relations and develop a "game plan" for our work going forward is moving along. A joint Board, Foundation Board, and executive leadership committee has met twice. During the winter we will be reaching out to various private and public groups to solicit feedback regarding how we can systematically involve them in College input and continuous communication. Developing an on-going two way exchange of information with key institutional partners is the goal of this effort. The Committee will be working with a consultant to assist with the community focus groups.

It is pleasing to see the progress being made on each of these goals. Faculty and staff, as well as Board members and external members involved with these initiatives giving the President's goals broad ownership across the College, which is ideal in my view.

Earlier this month, our Communications Council spent two days in an off-site workshop. The goal of the workshop was to find better ways to leverage the talent of that group. The Communications Council consisting of our Deans and members of the President's Cabinet has been meeting with me monthly. We did not feel that the talents of the group were being fully utilized in this venue. During the workshop it became apparent that each respective group (Deans' Council and President's Cabinet) would benefit from knowing more about the work of the other group. We are now examining a new charge for the Communications Council, one that would provide greater access to institutionally-related opportunities and challenges. We will share information as we continue our work in this regard.

We are keeping a very close eye on spring enrollment. As of this writing we are 1.5% behind last year's spring enrollment levels. Almost the entire decline is in our adult student market. The Executive Council will be meeting before the holiday break to assure contingencies are in place and the College's annual budget is met.

Last week, our Foundation Executive Committee met with Dr. Knight and me to brainstorm and think strategically about the work of the Foundation over the next five years. Led by Foundation Chair Tom Wischhusen, the Executive Committee sketched out a timeline of events that would coincide with the College's 50th anniversary in 2017. It was very exciting to hear some of the ideas expressed and the desire by the Executive Committee to do "big things" on behalf of our students and College. Special thanks to Tom for his outstanding leadership.

We were in Chicago last week for the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (Workforce Board) meeting. During that meeting, I was elected to serve as Secretary for the Board and as a member of the Executive Committee. I am thankful for the Board's trust in me.

Below is a summary of other initiatives and achievements.

Student Success

- The National Council of Instructional Administrators, an affiliate of the American Association of Community Colleges, selected Harper College for the NCIA 2012 Exemplary Initiatives Competition. Harper College's Partnership for Advanced Manufacturing won the top recognition for Innovations Meeting Community and Workforce Needs.
- Harper College was recognized with the Strategic Enrollment Management Award of Excellence. The SEM Award of Excellence is a peer-review award program that recognizes outstanding achievement and visionary leadership in strategic enrollment management. Harper College is the first community college in the country to receive such an award.
- Harper College has a team of students working on the development of a rocket and robot project as part of a competition with NASA's University Student Launch Initiative. Harper's team received its Design Review preliminary score sheet and feedback for their rocket from NASA which ranks them in the top 5 right now. The rocket is scheduled to launch April 21, 2013. Our congratulations and full support to our students as they continue their work in this exciting national competition.
- Harper College Student Senate was recognized and received the Ed Snyder Merit Book Award for the tenth consecutive year at the Illinois Community College Student Activities Association (ICCSAA) Student Conference on November 2, 2012.
- The Harper men's cross country team won the NJCAA DIII National Championship and two team members were recognized as All Americans: Troy Cunningham, 1st place (Elk Grove) and Colin Weber, 4th place (Wheeling). In women's cross country, Jordan Wagner, 5th Place (Schaumburg) was recognized as All-American. The volleyball team completed the season as N4C Co-Champions, and Erinn Hellweg (Wauconda) was recognized as All American. The women's soccer team finished as Region IV Champions and 5th in the Nation with Bree Nishibun (Fremd) as All-American.
- At the Harper Hawk's Fall Sports Banquet on November 28, 2012, the following student athletes were recognized for their success on the field/court and in the classroom:
 - MVP:
 - Volleyball – Kelly Sommers and Sarah House
 - Men's Cross Country – Troy Cunningham
 - Women's Cross Country – Jordan Wagner
 - Men's Soccer – Sean Cox
 - Women's Soccer – Monica Hinderer
 - Academic Awards: Competed for two years at Harper with a Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
 - Volleyball – Sarah House, Stephanie Igielski, Megan Kollmeyer, Clara Moravec, Kelly Sommers, and Samantha Wallenberg
 - Women's Soccer – Bree Nishibun
 - Men's Cross Country – Colin Weber
- October was another busy month in the Admissions Processing Office. High School Partnership applications processed in October 2012 totaled 647—a 274% increase over

October 2011. In addition, staff processed nearly 500 high school transcripts—a 23% increase over last October.

- In collaboration with AT&T Illinois, Harper held a “No Text and Drive Day” on Thursday, November 15. Speaking guests included Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon, Illinois General Assembly Representative Tom Morrison, Illinois Department of Transportation Representative Julie Vahling, and AT&T Vice President Bill McSorely.
- Harper College and Village Bank & Trust have partnered to create an informational seminar on veterans financing as well as small business loans. Discussion included the Patriot Express Loan for new or expanding businesses on Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at Meadow Club in Rolling Meadows.

Physical Plant

- In our ongoing quest to become a “greener” campus, we are pleased to report that two new electric vehicle charging stations have been installed in Parking Lot 14. The rate of \$2.00 per hour is consistent with the local market and is structured to cover routine operation and maintenance costs.
- Several major Campus Master Plan projects will enter into the construction phase in early 2013. Building H work is expected to begin first with Building D work starting shortly thereafter.
- The “One Stop and Campus/Student Center” project is underway. The Programming Phase is complete and the Schematic Design Phase is scheduled to begin in early 2013. We anticipate delivery of this exciting new addition to our campus in time for Harper College’s fiftieth anniversary.

Information Technology

- Completed the implementation of Ellucian’s FlexReg product, which provides CE students with more of a “shopping cart” experience in searching, registering and paying for classes.
- Completed the upgrade of Resource 25, the College’s room and resource scheduling system, to the latest release. A separate project was completed to upgrade the interface between R25 and the ERP systems to accommodate the new release. The completion of this project positions the College to deploy enhanced systems for the conference center.
- Completed the development and implementation of phase one of an application that enables a system-based approach for CE to manage their course offerings. The system centralizes the data needed for course offerings, simplifies maintenance of the data, and provides tools for approving changes to the data.
- Completed the update to Webtrends, the application that collects and reports on user activity of the web-based systems of the College, to the most current (and supported) version.

- With the Library, implemented a hosted solution from Serials Solutions called SUMMON Web-Scale Discovery Service. The service provides a one-stop site, using familiar web-searching tools, for students to explore electronic publications for information and content.
- Upgraded the Raiser's Edge software to the latest version to resolve various issues with the current system. Raiser's Edge is used by the Foundation for their core business processes.

Finance

- The HarperStore is moving forward with two new initiatives intended to position them for the future of digital textbooks:
 - Worked with Apple Inc. to become an Apple Education Affiliate Program member. This includes providing hyperlinks on the HarperStore website directing students and staff to the Online Apple Store for educational discounts on select products. This is the first step in the process to being invited to become a full Apple Store where their products can be sold on campus. We believe Apple will play a significant role with digital college textbook content in the future. The iPad is currently capable of accessing digital textbooks sold in the HarperStore.
 - In December, the HarperStore started carrying the Barnes and Noble line of eReaders. The full line of Nook readers are stocked, which includes the Nook Simple Touch, Nook Simple Touch w/Glow Lite, Nook HD, and Nook HD+. While the Nook is not yet compatible for college textbooks, the Nook HD is web capable and has the ability to access periodicals, reference materials, and general trade books which may be required for some courses.

Human Resources

- On Monday, November 12, Harper College held its annual Employee Day. The morning began with a Veterans' Day observance where 29 Harper veterans were honored for their military service. Dr. Judith Marwick provided opening remarks and Darryl Knight, Major, USMC (Retired) and Director of the Physical Plant, served as the guest speaker. After lunch, over 300 employees attended a team building event facilitated by Windy City Fieldhouse. Employees moved through three different event stations and one culminating activity designed to enhance teamwork and communication, build relationships, improve group problem solving skills, and develop strategic planning capabilities. This event was very well received.

Workforce and Strategic Alliances

- The Continuing Education area, in collaboration with the Provost's area and Risk Management unit, engaged the services of a consultant to determine if the College has appropriate policies in place regarding minors on campus.
- The Career Stimulus program hosted a holiday-themed meeting for 180 dislocated workers. Job engagement strategies were provided to attendees.

- The Fast Track area hosted a mid-year completion celebration at the Harper Professional Center for students completing certificates and degrees. Fifty-seven students completed mid-term credentials. Certificate earners are continuing their studies toward various Associate Degrees at Harper.
- Implementation of the Earn and Learn Program (via the recently awarded Department of Labor grant) continues. Harper is leading this effort which includes 21 Illinois community colleges that are increasing capacity for advanced manufacturing programming. A grant compliance manual has been developed and a state-wide meeting is planned for early January.

Advancement

- A corporate grant was recently awarded to the College by Grainger. The funds are to be used to support educational programming in the HVAC area.
- NICOR has awarded a grant to the College to support workforce initiatives.

Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

- Each year, the College completes a major institutional research project. This year a comprehensive community survey will be conducted with key district residents and businesses from high growth industries. Key attributes will be compared to the previous survey to determine if preferences and opinions of the College have changed. The business survey will also focus on job openings and partnering opportunities with our key industry segments.
- A Strategic Planning Goal Leaders meeting was held and focused on analyzing data regarding student success initiatives. The group identified which goals are beginning to show progress and which need continued attention.
- The Outcomes Assessment Office held its 4th annual Recognition Brunch on November 30, 2012. Faculty, coordinators and chairs leading the program-level outcomes assessment process were recognized for their efforts. Dr. Marwick, members of the Institutional Outcomes Assessment Committee and members of academic leadership attended the event to support the faculty who work diligently to ensure student achievement of learning outcomes. This annual event acknowledges the commitment to student learning that is essential to the success of Harper College.

Legislative and Communications

- A new pension proposal was introduced last month during the veto session of the state legislature. The plan was put forward by State Representative Elaine Nekritz (D-Northbrook), who represents the eastern part of Harper's district (portions of Des Plaines, Mount Prospect, Prospect Heights, Buffalo Grove) and Representative Daniel Bliss (D-Evanston). House Bill 6258 calls for increasing employee contributions by 2

percent, increasing the retirement age for younger employees and limiting cost-of-living raises. The bill would also slowly shift the cost of pensions from the State to local schools, including community colleges.

It's unclear what the cost savings of the proposal would be. An actuarial study is being conducted. There are also questions about whether the bill would conflict with rights guaranteed by the Illinois Constitution which contains a clause stating that public pension benefits "cannot be diminished or impaired."

Pension reform is likely to come up during the upcoming "lame duck" session of the General Assembly which runs from January 3 - 8.

- Newly elected State Representative Marty Moylan (D-Des Plaines) visited Dr. Ender and the Harper campus earlier this month. Moylan represents the southeastern portion of Harper's district (parts of Des Plaines, Elk Grove, Mount Prospect and Arlington Heights). Marty is the current mayor of Des Plaines, but will resign prior to taking his seat in January. Marty has always been a strong supporter of community colleges and will advocate on behalf of Harper and Oakton community colleges in the legislature.
- With the November elections over, a new election season has begun. Election Day for municipal offices takes place on Tuesday, April 9. Candidates have already begun filing their nominating petitions for local positions such as mayor or village president and seats on village, park, library, school and fire district boards. In Arlington Heights, at least three people are running to replace Mayor Arlene Mulder, who is retiring. Mayoral races are also taking place in Des Plaines and Barrington. Petition filing closes at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, December 26.

Finally, let me extend a very happy holiday to you all! Cathy and I will leave for a trip down south on Christmas Day and look forward to spending the New Year with family and close friends. Personally, this holiday is dimmed by the tragic events that unfolded in Newtown, Connecticut this past week. I know that those children, teachers and the parents will be in my mind as I hold my family close and give thanks for blessings I have received during this holiday season. Let us all hope for a more peaceful and less violent 2013.

Thank you for your support and best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday.

Ken