

President's Report

April 15, 2010

With a little over a month to go, the College pace is quickening as students and faculty focus on finishing projects and papers and preparing for final exams. This is the time on a college campus when the focus is on finishing up classes and celebrating success. We will enjoy a number of special occasions over the next month and a half, culminating in our Convocation which is scheduled for May 13 at 7:00 p.m. and our Graduation Ceremony May 23 at 2:00 p.m.

Enrollment has remained strong. We continue to enroll students in late-start and open-entry classes. Currently, enrollment is up 9.3% compared to last spring. As of this writing, we have exceeded our spring semester goal by 402 FTE. This is a significant increase, one that will generate substantial unanticipated revenue for the College. Given our loss of state revenue dollars, this is welcome relief for the budget, assuring we will meet our budget goals for the year. With this unanticipated revenue, we are developing a recommendation for the Board that, if authorized, will assure sufficient seed funding for our new Strategic Plan.

We are currently enrolling students for the summer term. Early indications are that summer enrollment will be strong.

The new health care bill passed by Congress last month included an education loan reform section that is designed to expand federal Pell Grants. The new maximum Pell Grant is now \$5,500 which is very helpful for our neediest students. The reform act also eliminates federally subsidized private loans. All federal student loan funding will now be done through direct lending. You may recall that Harper converted to direct lending last year, so we are ahead of the curve.

Last month we celebrated the success of our national championship wrestling team. This month we are pleased to share that Harper's Speech & Debate team won the National Championship in the Community College division. Traveling to Minneapolis, Minnesota to compete at the *Pi Kappa Delta National Speech and Debate Tournament*, Harper competed against 60 teams representing both universities and community colleges from across the country. The team finished in eighth place overall, with 15 of Harper's 27 speeches winning awards.

Harper student-athletes, completing 12 or more hours with a GPA of 3.0 or higher have been recognized with the fall 2009 N4C All-Conference Academic Award. All seventy-one (71) names are listed on the Harper Hawks Athletics Web page.

Student Activities produced two major events with more than 500 people in attendance:

- The documentary called “The Real Rain Man” on savant syndrome attracted 256 patrons, and a separate lecture by Dr. Treffert, who was featured in the documentary, was attended by 76 patrons.
- Beatles insider and author Barry Miles was a popular draw as a Cultural Arts lecture event with 169 patrons in attendance.

Our faculty and staff have been very busy this past month with presentations and hosting meetings.

- Dr. Sue Bajt of the CIS Department was a key presenter at the Innovations 2010 Conference, the 13th annual conference for the League for Innovation for the Community College held in Baltimore, MD on March 28-31. Her interactive presentation, “Preferred Distance Learning Modalities of the Millennial Community College Student,” utilized student response systems for audience participation.
- The Graphic Arts program hosted the Flexographic Technology Association (FTA) Great Lakes Area meeting on March 18. Orchestrated by GRA faculty Kelly Taylor, 80 attendees took student-guided tours of Harper’s Graphic Arts program facility and enjoyed several presentations by industry experts. The evening event included campus tours, refreshments, presentations, and networking time for education and industry to mingle within a graphic arts framework.

Similarly, many faculty and staff have been involved in institutional projects aimed at meeting the President/Board goals for the year. Please note the following updates:

- Our searches for the Executive Vice President and Provost are concluding. The searches were highly successful. My recommendation to hire Dr. Ronald Ally as Executive Vice President is included in this evening’s Board packet. Similarly, I plan to bring a recommendation to hire a Provost to the May Board meeting.
- Master planning is progressing nicely. The master planning firm is concluding the input phase of the project. Next, master plan options will be developed for feedback and discussion. You will hear more about master planning at this evening’s Board meeting.
- Strategic Planning is also moving to a year-end completion. The drafting team and the Institutional Planning Committee are responding to the feedback received from the conference attendees and a second draft will be forwarded to the College next week. We shall have the planning document to the Board in mid-May or June.

April is a very busy month for our Conference Center staff, and this year is no exception. Between internal and external clients, 27 events have been booked for the month filling most days, including Saturdays. External events include clients such as National Instruments, Motorola, Taco Bell, Garland Company, Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Midwest Bank, Alzheimer's Association and Illinois Teacher Testing.

The Business Office and Information Technology have been equally busy with daily operations and special assignments. In the Budget Office, extensive planning and preparation has been underway for several months and on Monday, April 12, each department began building their detailed budgets in the system for FY11. These detailed budgets, when aggregated, create the first proposed budget for the College. Following that development, an extensive review will be conducted by the Senior Staff and the President. The budget proposal will be recommended to the Board in June.

The Information Technology group has completed three significant projects:

- Harper Bandwidth - The switchover to Comcast as Harper's primary Internet Service Provider was completed on March 23. This change of provider not only doubled Harper's available bandwidth but allowed for the segregation of Harper's public network including wireless from the lab and administrative networks. Users should experience a marked improvement in Internet performance.
- Document Imaging for Financial Aid – The project to scan student-related financial aid documents and store them in Banner for quick and reliable access has been completed. This is a huge step in work flow modification and the green initiative. Students and administrators are responding positively.
- Harper's New Marquee – The installation of the new marquee on Algonquin Road was completed this month. This new sign includes enhanced color graphics. More importantly, the infrastructure for managing/controlling the display is now located in the climate controlled Building Y datacenter, versus out in the sign itself.

Finally, the Harper Foundation hosted a successful dedication of the Kimball Hill Family Deaf Institute which drew more than 50 people including five members of the Kimball Hill family. Staff in both the Foundation Office and the Student Disabilities Office did an outstanding job supporting the event.

The campus is alive with activity, social and cultural events, sporting matches and the like. Every day, something special is going on as we conclude the academic year. It is my hope that Board members, students, staff, faculty, community members, and even the College President will take the time to enjoy all that the campus has to offer during this special time of the year.

Regards,

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