



Shared Perspectives

By Linda M. Spink
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Spring break is almost upon us, so that must mean we are just about half way through the semester already. I know I keep saying this but where does the time go? If you are taking vacation I hope that you will have a good time off, both restful and energizing. I am actually taking a vacation and going to Europe. I'm looking forward to seeing new places and a new culture. And I know I'll be on time zone lag for way too long when I return but it's always worth it.

The construction projects continue to move forward. I hope everyone has taken a drive around the new loop road sometime this semester. It really is easier than driving through the parking lots to get off campus. And check out the progress of the new Facilities and Maintenance Building at the back end of campus. Hopefully we'll be seeing the marquee lit up again soon. We have purchased a generator to run it in the evenings. While I'd prefer to have it lit up all day my understanding is the utility costs would be too high for that possibility. Folks in the local community have commented that they wondered if we were still open with the sign down so we felt it was important to get it back in operation at least part of the time. The other projects continue on, thus far meeting deadlines, for the most part. I find it rather exciting to drive by the Northeast Academic Building and Student Services see more steel being put up daily. The Technology Building is moving along ahead of schedule at this point, so we should start seeing the foundations being completed soon. When the cranes are in the middle of campus we'll have an entirely different experience for sure.

The instructional side of the house will be looking to fill several faculty positions for next fall. At this point the positions that I have approved are Accounting, Chemistry, CAOT and Culinary Arts, pending final approvals of that program curriculum. If the college ends up not moving the student program along then we will have to go to vending machines for food service and then go out to contract for a company to provide food service. You may recall that the District eliminated all food server positions and moved these folks to other jobs on the campuses. We were the only college that was not losing a huge amount of money on the provision of food service. But as we are part of the District -- as the District goes, so we go. Hopefully there would not be any time loss but that is optimistic. It is my hope that we can finish the program deliberations and move the new program forward. Trade Tech's culinary program has many more students than they can handle so it seems that it would be a good program for us to fully develop.

The College Planning Council is moving forward with reviewing the college-wide priorities as our planning process requires. It takes a lot of time from the folks on the committee and I'd like to offer my

thanks for things moving along on the right track. It really is important for all of you to work on the unit plan for your areas as that is the only way any needs your department may have can make their way onto the college-wide priorities.

The District will be out to the campus again next Monday, March 26th, for a meeting of the Grant Allocation Committee. This has been the committee that has reviewed the budget with us as our deficit continues. The good news, if there is any, is that it appears we will make our growth targets for this year and therefore get the growth dollars added to this year's budget. As such, while we continue to have a deficit, it is reduced from over \$3 millions to slightly over \$1 million. The meeting is called for the College Planning Council at 11 am in the ASO senate room. Remember, the meeting is open to anyone, although I recognize space will likely be an issue. But feel free to come by if you can.

If you haven't noticed by now, the track is open during the day so that you can get some exercise over your lunch break if you are so inclined. I've been trying to get out at least two or three times each week walking a mile. I've been told once around the track is ¼ of a mile so you need to work up to at least four times around.... And do consider signing up for a fitness walk class with the PE department; you can 'force' yourself to really get out regularly and help the college along with our FTES targets at the same time. But the bottom line is the track is open during the day so get out and get some exercise.

I know you've all seen the emails from Claudette Youins telling folks of some of the meetings that the EAP, Employee Assistance Program, offers. There are many services from them that can be of use for you. We are going to set up some customer service classes during this spring semester just to help remind us all the importance of working with our students to help them accomplish their goals.

As summer comes closer if you wish to work out a 9/80 schedule with your supervisor that is once again acceptable. Just as a reminder however, we cannot close offices so folks will have to cooperate on getting the office schedule set up. Do remember however, this is not mandatory and it is up to you to work the schedule out with your supervisor.

The District has hired a team to re-design all of the colleges websites. We are hoping to have sites that are similar in layout so students can easily navigate any of the colleges. Each site will have the individual college's own colors, photos and information. VP Patterson and our graphic designer, Ray VanDinther, have been working with the District committee on the design. We are also expecting to set up a CMS (Content Management System) as well. This system will enable the average user, you and I, to develop our own web pages for the department or classes in a structured format. This will serve to standardize our web pages. You can expect to see this roll out over the next few months.

As always, if you have any questions, please remember there is Coffee Hi! on Tuesday mornings to catch your VP's or myself or seek out your supervisor, your VP or myself if you have any concerns, questions or suggestions for dealing with the budget. If you are one of the lucky folks having vacation coming up, do enjoy yourself.

Lula M. Jones