Shared Perspectives

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Welcome back! It has been a hot, long summer but it is so wonderful to see everyone back on campus and getting involved again with our students and classes.

Getting around campus is a challenge, but I hope the signs and walking maps are helpful to people. We’ll be dealing with this for some time so we need to get used to it. But I am always open to suggestions as to how to get the word out any better than we are currently doing. A bond update will be out shortly so that should be helpful to folks as well.

This year will be a busy one but at least we have a successful accreditation visit behind us, thanks to the hard work of many people. We will need to begin the process of preparing for a two-year progress report... and if we are to have progress, the issue is our dealing with our program review process using data more effectively. It will be up to the chairs and the divisions to work hard on this over the next year.

I urge everyone to keep our students’ success uppermost in your minds at all times. Anything you can do to make our students’ experience a good one will help keep our students here and in classes. Whether you are teaching and making that extra outreach to the struggling student to offer them extra help, or if you are the person helping them in the bookstore, or giving directions on campus, you are vital to that good experience. If you are the crew that keeps our classrooms clean, then you too know how important that job is to the teaching environment. Every single person’s job amounts to being here to serve our students. What you do is an important part of their experience. So often our first contact with our potential students is through another student, so hopefully our reputation as being a kinder, happier place than our local competition will continue to be so.

We are making some changes in the organization of administration. As you know, our Dean of Research/Planning and Special projects, Dr. Ann Tomlinson, was promoted after a through search process to the Vice President for Administrative Services position, leaving her Dean’s position open. After discussion amongst several folks, I have decided to change that position to an Associate Dean of Research/Planning, reporting to Vice President McNeel in Economic Development and Workforce Preparation, and move Dr.
Richards from his academic affairs Associate Dean position into this position. He has graciously offered to work in this area and we all know what strength he has in this arena. Bob is looking forward to a change in responsibilities and we are grateful to have him in this position. We will be opening a search for a full Dean position in academic affairs shortly. Mr. Rosas is working on the job posting, which will hopefully be up in the next few days.

I know parking leaves much to be desired, but hopefully I can look forward to a day when parking issues aren’t the first thing brought up to me each day. Many of you wouldn’t know this, but I start almost every day here with driving about, looking at the parking situation and assessing where we are in terms of meeting our students/staff needs. We have just opened up the grassy practice field for parking. We were hoping we wouldn’t have to take this field away from the teams but had held it as an alternative if needed. This past Wednesday it became clear it was needed... needed by 9 a.m., in fact. We have tried numerous options of leasing space from the city but have run into blank walls each time. I’m afraid the parking will likely be an issue for several years to come. And unless we decide to build a parking garage with some future bond we may be faced with it for some time. We will continue to work to come up with a solution we can live with as we go through the construction process.

Please remember that every Tuesday morning is Coffee Hi! in the conference room by my office from 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.. This is open to any staff member who wants to have a cup of java and talk with me or the vice presidents. As I began to do last year, at the request of some faculty, I will also offer a Coffee Hi! during the semester for those folks who teach in the evenings. More information on that will follow in several weeks.

Remember our college motto....

**Students Come First.**