College Update

...The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find,
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds, and other seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

(Andrew Marvell, “The Garden”)

The summer is sliding away, though I hope that some are able to find solace in a garden, park, or somewhere pleasant. Those faculty or staff members who have been involved in summer session instruction or the whirlwind new student orientations are welcoming a respite for two weeks before Convocation and the beginning of another semester in August. A lot of high drama in Raleigh at the General Assembly is coming to a close, but we are providing a strong effort to maximize our fall enrollment in the final weeks before the term begins.

At this point, we are 2% below our enrollment level at this point last year (-6% FTE), though we did not lose as many registered in the purge for non-payment on July 22, and the New Student Orientations in June and July served more students than ever. We are extending registration to August 8 to accommodate students in the coming week and doing all that we can to contact students who have not returned yet from Spring 2014. Thanks for your help in assisting.

The Board of Trustees met in Executive Committee on July 17 for several important reasons. First, they made their final review of the proposed 2014-17 Strategic Plan for PCC, including a revised mission statement. This will provide a focus and centering piece for broad campus efforts over the next several years to improve as a comprehensive community college. There are certainly many activities and initiatives which may not fit under the goals and objectives included, and that is to be expected with our complex institution. But with the challenges of a reduced overall enrollment (not nearly as much as many other colleges in NC and nationally), the Strategic Plan provides directions which will carry us forward on the improvement continuum. We have many new employees, both at senior levels and across the college, and the Plan will offer continuity and an organic approach to change, when needed. I will speak more on this at Convocation, and you will see the Strategic Plan soon.

The Board of Trustees also confirmed officers for the coming year – the new chair is Mr. Charles Long, last year’s Vice Chair, who has served on the Board since 2007. New trustee Randy Walter, a Governor’s appointee, was welcomed and will be sworn in at the full Board meeting on August 25 along with new SGA President Austen Cheeks. Other officers elected were Vice Chair Tyree Walker and Secretary Don Mills. Past Chair Kelly Barnhill, Jr. went off the Board, and I thank him for his excellent service.
to Pitt Community College, especially during the crucial County Bond Referendum last fall.

I mentioned the Convocation on Wednesday, August 13, and I request that everyone attend. In addition to meeting the new employees and our new Student Government leader, you will hear remarks from Board Chair Charles Long, outgoing Faculty Senate president Katherine Clyde, as well as my State of the College Address. The morning program will also include a briefing on the Completion by Design. Only two other states, Ohio and Florida, were chosen to implement this comprehensive approach which relies heavily on documented research and study of innovations across the county to promote student success.

In addition to the morning program, I ask you to participate as much as possible in the afternoon’s workshops. Many thanks to the presenters (Lori Preast, Arwen Parris, Valarie Kite, Angela Davis, Brian Miller, Michael Clendenen, Ken Peel, Rick Owens, Joanne Ceres, Dana Parker, Shaneeka Cannon, Andrew Walker, and Catherine Tinglestad) who are sharing, many in interactive sessions, how CAP, Completion by Design, data from Economic Modeling Specialists (EMSI) and other initiatives will help us get off to a great start with our Strategic Plan goals. Please note the change in venue for the session offered by Parris and Cannon to the Simon Building.

The State Budget is not final, but generally the funding is fairly good for community colleges. We picked up about $15M in funding for “Closing the Skills Gap,” and full-time employees will receive salary increases of $1000 (plus benefits). There is a small student tuition increase of $0.50/credit hour.

Recognitions and Appreciations

- **Tabitha Miller** (English) received her Ph.D. in Rhetoric, Writing, and Professional Communication from East Carolina University.

- **Nicholas Vick** (Tutoring and Academic Success Center) announces that there are two new part-time English coordinators, Carrie Murray and Jessica Cory, to serve the writing needs of students in English, Communications and other courses. Instructors who would like for them to make a classroom visit, send email to pccwritingcenter@my.pittcc.edu.

I am looking forward to the start of another great year for Pitt Community College!

G. Dennis Massey, President