

PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK

February 2007

This epistle for the Lindenwood Community will come to you five times per calendar year. Its purpose is to provide you with the latest plans and ideas emerging from the president's office and the executive management of the University. As well, it will bring you up to date on developments and issues that will affect our planning and operations as a higher-education community.

Appreciation and a Clear Path

First and foremost, I want to express my sincerest gratitude and appreciation for the support and encouragement received from all of you during the transition period in which I served as acting president. It is daunting (and sometimes really lonely) to step to the helm of a prominent and successful organization after the departure of its longtime leader. It is not an exaggeration to say that no one could be effective in such a situation without the faith, help, and encouragement of those who work for him or her. The social reality and relationships among the people of an organization, much more so than the behavior and competence of particular individuals, determine the efficacy of the organization's leadership. My executive managers and I have done well so far because of your confidence, support, and productivity. We will work with integrity and mission-consciousness to earn the goodwill you have advanced us. For now, thank you.

There are so many exciting prospects before us that it is difficult to know where to start and when to end in this first edition of the *President's Notebook*. One idea that should serve as a premise for us all is that the future of Lindenwood is ours to make. The Spellmann era – and the effort of the whole University Community working under Dennis Spellmann's direction – brought us to an auspicious point in the history of this frontier college. We have the physical and financial foundation upon which to build the best Lindenwood ever and, quite realistically, become the most desirable higher-education environment in the Midwest. That vision will be fulfilled only if we all step up to the responsibility of being conscientious stewards of what we have and determined producers of what we can be. It is our opportunity to realize or forsake. I will count on all of you to help develop and implement the numerous projects and initiatives that will make Lindenwood an even better school.

The path ahead is clear and inviting. Now it is up to us to embark on that path as a team, with enthusiasm and pride.

Strategic Planning

Speaking of projects and concepts in our sights, the time to rewrite our strategic plan is upon us. This activity will take place from the ground up. That is, each area of our operation will be constructing a new plan for Fiscal 2008 and beyond, not simply updating its current planning document. Judy Shanahan presently is scheduling plan-formulation meetings of yours truly with the academic divisions and administrative offices, the purpose being to review, evaluate, and discuss the first draft of each group's plan. We will hold these meetings between March 1 and March 20. The product of these

sessions will be a preliminary rendition of the omnibus University plan, which will be prepared for the Board of Directors' Strategic Planning Committee in time for its March 23 meeting.

By now, your group should have received a summary of the strategic directions that the University will focus on for Fiscal 2008. High on the priority list are improvements in internal and external communications, student-development initiatives, University-wide strengthening of student services, community outreach and new partnerships, enhanced alumni relations, more vigorous fundraising strategies, consideration of additional doctoral programs, and establishment of new extension programs.

A significant change in the planning process this year is that each area will submit only new objectives and project proposals, omitting the superfluous descriptions of routine activities and services that are ongoing. The omnibus planning document should drop at least 50 percent of its heft.

Enrollment Picture Remains Bright

A crucial part of our planning must concern healthy continuation of our very successful recruiting efforts. Because we are tuition-driven, we are self-sufficient and independent, both enviable characteristics for a present-day university to possess. The keys to this status are student-centeredness (a natural implication of our mission), high-quality programs, market awareness and adaptability (but not compromise), and persistent recruiting efforts on everyone's part. I think you will concur that financial health and independence of mission are worth the considerable personal and professional exertions required of all of us. This is a concept we must not forget.

I am extremely pleased to report the fruits of our collective recruiting and retention commitment. Relative to the same winter/spring terms in 2006, this winter's student populations increased by the following amounts:

Residential students: 10 percent

Winter Quarter students: 6 percent

Spring Trimester enrollments: 12 percent

As good as these increases are, there is additional enrollment news that, in a sense, is even more impressive: Our charter class of Ed.D. students has an unduplicated head count of 122! This figure contrasts pleasantly with our prediction that the initial group would consist of about 50 aspirants.

You can help ensure that these bullish trends continue by sending your qualified referrals to Joe Parisi for Day Programs (jparisi@lindenwood.edu) and Brett Barger for Evening Programs (bbarger@lindenwood.edu). All that our Admissions Office needs is a name, telephone number, and a word or two about the student's interest, although a home address is also helpful.

President's Council Formed

We have assembled a president's council consisting of the following University officers: Provost and V-P for Academic Affairs (Weitzel), V-P for Human Resources and Dean of Faculty (Boyle), V-P for Operations and Finance and Chief Operating Officer (Julie Mueller), V-P for Student Development (Oldani), V-P for Institutional Advancement (Morros), Director of Community Development (Floyd), Dean of Academic Services (Gordon), Director of Communications (Queen), Dean of Day Admissions (Parisi), Dean of Evening Admissions and Extension Campuses (Barger), Business Office Manager (Kapeller), Comptroller (Kandel), Dean of Enrollment Management (John Guffey), and a representative from the Faculty Planning and Development Committee (Carla Mueller). The purpose of the council, which meets with me monthly, is to improve communication and teamwork among the University's administrators as well as coordination of executive planning and development. If you have any suggestions or questions for the council, please convey them to the appropriate members.

Please note that this new council does not replace our very effective deans' council. The latter will continue to evaluate and facilitate our academic projects and operations, as it has for a decade and one-half. The president's council is intended to bring the same level of productive communication and teamwork to other areas of our management that our deans' council has achieved in the administration of our academic programs. As has been the case for several years, our faculty committees and divisions will continue to coordinate with the deans' council in the creation and assessment of proposals and the delivery and improvement of academic and developmental services.

Day College Initiatives

Consistent with our student-retention interest and strategic directions, we are developing several new programs to give Lindenwood students a better college experience. John Guffey, who is Dean of Enrollment Management, and Cathy Hart, who is Director of Student Success Programs, are setting up a Student Success Office in Room 4085 of the Spellmann Campus Center. Students in their sophomore year or higher will be able to obtain assistance with the challenges of university life, including academic-achievement snags, by calling or visiting the Center. (To minimize confusion, we have renamed the former Success Center as the Center for Enhanced Educational Services. That office provides special teaching services for improvement of math and reading skills.)

We have hired a Director of Freshman Programs, Dr. Shane Williamson, who will provide similar attention and assistance to our first-year students. Her office is in the Campus Life suite on the fourth floor of the Spellmann Campus Center. Dr. Williamson, who will start her position on March 1, will work in concert with many of our administrative and staff officers to develop a number of additional services and opportunities for our new freshman. Among those are (1) a semester-long Community Living course with more personally useful content and more semester hours of credit (two vs. one) and (2) a three- or four-day Freshman Orientation experience immediately prior to the start of the fall semester. We will have more news on these developments later this spring.

Most of you already have heard about our Student Counseling and Resource Center located in the LUCC building. Students with doubts or anxiety about college or personal problems can receive help with those situations at no cost. Students who wish to avail themselves of this service should contact Dr. Marsha Andreoff at (636) 949-4528 or Ms. Elizabeth Baker at (636) 949-4527.

Evening College Initiatives

The most noteworthy imminent development in our Evening operations is the transformation of our little-used Weldon Spring Campus to the Lindenwood University Information Technology Management Center. In 2004, the U.S. Department of Energy leased to us the main office and monitoring building of its WSSRAP site, located off Highway 94, less than a mile south of Francis Howell South High School. The 10,000 square-foot structure contains dozens of rooms suitable to become classrooms, seminar rooms, labs, and offices. We are in the process of refurbishing and upgrading half a dozen classrooms, a computer network simulation area, a faculty-and-student lounge, and a reception foyer. We will hold a grand opening event this summer and offer LCIE classes in Information Technology and Business Management beginning in the fall quarter. Two of the rooms will be computer laboratories, and the remaining learning spaces will be high-tech classrooms. Students who enter Lindenwood programs at the Weldon Spring Campus will be able to pursue a certificate in Information Technology, a bachelor of science degree in Information Technology, or a master of science degree in Information Technology Management; or, if they prefer, a general BA or MBA degree in Business Management. The primary market for these higher-education experiences are the numerous businesses and organizations located or emerging along the “High-Tech Corridor” – also known as Highway 40/Interstate 64.

Centers for Excellence

I am challenging our Deans’ Council, Faculty Planning and Development Committee, and President’s Council to develop proposals for the startup of several Centers for Excellence at Lindenwood. Each Center will begin with an ambitious concept and culminate in a highly functioning system that contributes to the teaching, learning, and developmental effectiveness of the University’s programs. Each such center will be consist of a core of people, a dynamic written plan, supporting facilities, and a set of regular operations designed to yield truly exceptional results. Some possible venues for such initiatives include, but are by no means limited to, the following:

- The first-year experience
- Student success assurance
- Leadership development for students
- Assessment and evaluation for improvement
- Media and learning resources
- Faculty and staff professional development
- Community partnerships

Additionally, there is no reason that academic divisions and programs cannot achieve Center for Excellence status. Some criteria defining “Excellence” in such a designation would include demonstrated effectiveness of teaching and learning (including stellar

results from surveys of alumni and their employers); substantial improvement in students' standardized test scores from the freshman to the senior year; evidence of state, regional, and perhaps national recognition of program merit; innovative majors, projects, and/or delivery formats that meet both community and University needs; internal consensus regarding the high academic standards and overall distinctiveness of the division or program.

I believe we have some programs and divisions that already approximate the above desiderata, and I would be interested in receiving suggestions regarding how we might properly identify and recognize these centers in a consensual way.

Kudos to Communications Division

As one contemplates excellence at this University, several of our academic programs come to mind immediately. KCLC Radio – 89.1 “The Wood” – has been ahead of the pack since its inception in the 1940s. It has produced literally hundreds of eminent professionals in the broadcast industry over the many decades of its existence, received countless national and regional awards for excellence in that same period, and transmitted hundreds of thousands of hours of music, news, sports, and college life to generations of listeners. The student-operated enterprise actually does (as we claim) provide unique learning experiences for our students and conveys an amazingly professional presence over the airwaves, day after day. Lindenwood’s Communications students benefit from having both the latest high-tech equipment and some of the most competent and dedicated teachers in the field of mass communication.

What a pleasure it was to see the two well-deserved feature articles on KCLC Radio in the February 17 edition of the *St. Charles Journal* (<http://stcharlesjournal.stltoday.com>). The first piece was a very complimentary overview of daily life at the station and the unique learning experiences described above. The second article told of how one recent graduate of our Communications Division, Kevin Jennings, was able to seamlessly enter a professional position with KMOX radio (St. Louis) based on the superior learning opportunities he received as a former broadcaster for KCLC.

Congratulations to Dean Mike Wall and his extraordinary professors and students.

A Final Thought

Lindenwood University has an essential spirit that transcends particular persons and times. That spirit is all about how we treat people – our students and one another.