

It's Still All About the Students – Past, Present, and Future

This edition of the *Notebook* is in arrears. It should have been issued at least a month ago but continued to be pushed down a seemingly ever-growing list of pending obligations this fall. I apologize for being dilatory and hope that no one sank into a depressive state as a result of the wait.

What a wonderfully busy fall season we all have had! We started the term(s) with a very productive series of opening faculty workshops, which included a guest speaker who provided helpful information and strategies aimed at better engaging and retaining our students.

That same week we launched our exceptionally well planned and comprehensive First Year Experience program, which appears to have been instrumental in getting our freshman students off to a stable and fairly successful start of their college years. Feedback from students and their parents has been overwhelmingly positive. As a result of this investment, we expect to see a noticeable increment in first-year-student retention next fall.

By the way, Dr. Shane Williamson continues to make herself available to help the first-year students solve problems and overcome minor setbacks. Her office phone number is (636) 949-4728, and her e-mail address is swilliamson@lindenwood.edu.

Although we undertook too many fall-term initiatives to list in a single newsletter, a few of the notable projects include the development of plans for many new academic programs and emphases, adoption of *Criterion* (a Web-based instrument) to assess our undergraduates' technical writing proficiency, revision of our faculty and staff handbooks, presentation of an especially exciting fall sports season, Homecoming, Lindenwood's first ever Sports Hall of Fame recognition banquet, and, of course, the first presidential investiture in more than four decades. Whew! What's more, this list contains just a few of the more obvious tasks and events.

Of particular interest is the recent enhancement of our Student Performance Monitoring program. This network of LU officers, venues, and systems is designed for early detection and correction of personal and academic challenges that some of our students periodically face. The principals in this endeavor include the following:

- Dr. Jann Weitzel, V-P for Academic Affairs and Provost, is responsible for supervising the whole performance monitoring network.
- Dr. John Oldani, V-P for Student Development, works with students whose personal and social habits are maladaptive relative to either academic performance or interpersonal effectiveness.
- Dr. Shane Williamson, Director of First Year Programs, oversees the progress and adaptation of the freshmen.

- Mr. Rick Gorzynski, Academic Coordinator for Intercollegiate Athletics, works with student-athletes who are missing class or exhibiting academic deficiencies.
- Mr. John Guffey, Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Ombudsman, personally intervenes to help any student who is having problems of a serious magnitude as a result of academic, personal, or financial challenges.
- Ms. Cathy Hart, Director of Student Success, oversees and works with sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have had academic performance problems in prior terms.

This reorganized and strengthened support network has been working with the students diligently and consistently, and we should observe improved student achievement, retention, and graduation ratios across the next several years, as a result.

Homecoming this year featured a record turnout of about 200 alums, a sneak preview tour of our Center for the Fine and Performing Arts (which drew more than 100 people), and another resounding victory for 2007's "greatest show on turf," the Lindenwood Lions football team. As well, the Alumni Reception on Homecoming Friday was well attended and memorable, with alums and Lindenwood professors sharing their recent experiences and distant memories with one another and an unusually large group of Lindenwood's Professors Emeritus. It was heartwarming and impressive to see Lindenwood Past and Lindenwood Present together in a nostalgic, yet celebratory and forward-looking, reunion.

Belleville Dean Appointed

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Boyd Morros to his new position as Interim Dean of the Belleville Campus. He will oversee and direct all campus operations – academic programs, faculty and staff personnel, communications, recruitment, admissions and financial aid, student advising and enrollment, and physical plant operations – and will report to Brett Barger, Dean of Evening Admissions and Extension Campuses. Boyd earned his Ph.D. at Washington University in St. Louis and is a former college president. He was on the Lindenwood Education faculty during the late 1960s and 1970s. In 1975, he chaired the committee that planned and formulated Lindenwood College 4 (now known as LCIE).

Congratulations

The September campus visit by an officer of the Council on Social Work Education resulted in a very positive evaluation of Lindenwood's Social Work program. Based on the draft report we have received, we are hopeful that regular CSWE accreditation will be in place at the University within the next year. Our Social Work faculty and students should be commended on the stellar job they have been doing during this period of CSWE candidacy.

Kudos is also due the following members of the Lindenwood Community:

- Lindenwood Psychology students Amanda Reed, Rachel Rogers, Abby Ramon, and Kathryn Borsheim presented award-winning research papers at the Third Annual Missouri Undergraduate Psychology Conference, which was held at

- NMSU in Maryville Missouri. These students honed their professional-level skills under the adept tutelage of Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair.
- The History Department recently held its First History Bowl competition, which was taped for rebroadcast by our LUTV staff. The contest, which featured history whizzes from Francis Howell High School and Metro Academic High School, will likely bring Lindenwood some excellent new students next fall. Just as important is that the event represents an ideal means through which an institution of higher education should be transacting with local school districts to promote excellence in American education.
 - Our relatively young Journalism program is progressing at a healthy pace toward maturity within its pale. Not only has the *Legacy* been an ever-increasing boon to our campus culture, the publication is now available in an online edition, complete with an editorial page. The Communications faculty continues to evince superior mentorship and professional effectiveness in its work with Lindenwood's students.
 - One can hardly mention the Communications Division these days without commenting favorably on our Video and TV-broadcasting initiatives. LUTV faculty members and students now appear to be omnipresent, not only to record most of the exciting developments on our campuses but also to transmit live audio and video from selected sites and events. We were able to televise live the presidential investiture and some of our home football games. I am told that the real-time broadcasts are made possible by transmitting the signals to the Lindenwood TV studio (and thence to Channel 26) via the Internet. This academic area, too, continues to impress as it continues to mature.

I would also like to publicly congratulate the following Lindenwood sports teams:

- LU Football, for winning the Heart of America Conference Championship – as well as providing the most exciting display of football prowess in the region.
- LU Men's Water Polo, for being the 2007 Division III National Collegiate Club Champions.
- Women's Volleyball, for being conference and Region V champions, thereby qualifying to play in the NAIA National Tournament this week (November 26).
- LU Skeet Team, for winning the World Championship in San Antonio Texas last month.
- LU Men's Cross-Country, for being conference and Region V champions and placing third nationally.
- LU Men's Soccer, for qualifying for the Region V playoffs.
- LU Men's Doubles Tennis, for winning the ITA national championship.

If I may quote Randy Karraker again, "Lindenwood University has [truly] become an intercollegiate athletics powerhouse." This University owes a great deal to our troupe of dedicated, caring coaches, who not only recruit at least one-third of our full-time day students but also monitor, mentor, and develop these youth into fine men and women, of whom we can be proud.

It is also a genuine pleasure to announce that, again this year, the NAIA has designated Lindenwood's intercollegiate athletics program a Champions of Character program. According to the NAIA's central office, "The NAIA Champions of Character program will create an environment in which every NAIA student-athlete, coach, official, and spectator is committed to the true spirit of competition through the five tenets: respect, integrity, responsibility, servant leadership, and sportsmanship." Professor Rick Gorzynski is the Director of Lindenwood's Champions of Character initiatives, and he receives great support and cooperation from our coaches. Great work, ladies and gentlemen!

Faculty Committees Are Active

Lindenwood has several standing faculty committees that participate in Lindenwood's shared-management model by providing the administration with consultation, input, and recommendations on policies that affect our academic personnel and programs. Two of the most important committees are the Faculty Planning and Development Committee (FPDC) and the Educational Policies Committee (EPC).

The FPDC has been extremely busy over the past several months. Among other activities, its members have helped evaluate new faculty candidates, nominees for promotion in faculty rank, and nominees for faculty performance awards. The committee also made suggestions for improving the Faculty Handbook and the Employee Guidebook. Presently, it is exploring possible featured speakers for next year's Faculty Workshops. The FPDC makes recommendations to the Deans' Council, which evaluates the recommendations and sends its own recommendations to the President for approval.

The EPC recently recommended an explicit policy and procedure for evaluating transfer credits – something the US Department of Education soon will require all universities to formulate and publish. The committee presently is working on a reconsideration of academic freedom, its meaning, significance, and parameters at Lindenwood, as well as how it applies to students' intellectual prerogatives. The FPDC will also weigh in on seminal questions and issues regarding academic freedom.

When 70% Is a Winner

A number of you have been around here long enough to remember how some of our students would wait in line for two hours or more to submit their enrollment forms for the next semester – at least during the initial morning rush to register. As a result of excellent planning and execution by Dr. Weitzel and Academic Services, this month's pre-dawn registrants have been through the line and processed in far less than an hour, with subsequent registrants completing the process in a matter of minutes. The major change in procedure this year was an increase in the number of computer workstations from about 10 to 17 – a 70% boost in capacity that essentially cut the students' waiting time in half. What great planning and preparation Weitzel, Finnegan, and Company carried out for this crucial operation! The effective leadership is appreciated.

Acknowledgment is also due all of the faculty advisors who worked on-site to resolve course-closure and course-conflict problems, as well as Student Development for

providing snacks, order, and spatial-temporal guidance to the students entering the Connection area. A special thank-you goes to Dr. John Oldani for supervising the latter arrangements. We appreciate the support these other offices provide for Academic Services on these class-enrollment days.

In the foreseeable future, online course selection will be available to our students, which should further reduce the amount of time it takes to register for the next semester.

Active Learning Environment on This Campus

It is pleasantly obvious that this campus has evolved into something close to an ideally productive academic and student-developmental environment. On any particular weekend, and often during the “work week,” one will encounter several collegiate events that should be taking place on all successful university campuses. A few representative examples come to mind readily:

Lois and I immensely enjoyed this fall’s International Festival, which was conducted in the Spellmann Campus Center on Friday, November 16. There were hundreds of international and domestic LU students participating in the fete, with several dozen of them providing informative and entertaining performances that conveyed their unique, proud cultures. Also many delectable cuisines from around the globe were available for sampling in the Anheuser-Busch Leadership Center. Dozens of our professors and staff members were involved in the evening – too many to list here. I would like to thank Ray Scupin, in particular, for being the Intercultural Club sponsor this year; as well, Chris Burnett and Ryan Guffey deserve recognition for helping to put together and maintain the support system for Lindenwood students who hail from foreign lands. In more than one sense, those students are essential to making this school a world-class university.

While at the International Festival, I noticed a sign on one of the pillars at the Spellmann Campus Center. It read “History Trivia Night in the Connection Center.” That observation made me wonder just how many other student-oriented campus activities were taking place on that particular evening.

On Saturday, November 17, Lindenwood’s Circle K Club held its annual banquet, at which I was privileged to meet a number of exceptional Lindenwood students who find time in their busy schedules to engage in service, leadership, and fellowship in the interests the surrounding community, particularly children. The evening at the LU Club was delightful and filled with interesting speeches and commentary from several of our civic-minded students. This University’s values have much in common with the aims of the Kiwanians. We should be very proud of the newly reactivated (and quite active) Circle K chapter on this campus.

Our Coffee Conversations series has been a sacrosanct garden of intellectual stimulation and challenge for many years. The most recent instance of that forum (November 20) featured Dr. Richard Gorsuch from Fuller Theological Seminary. Dr. Gorsuch addressed the provocative question, “Science and the Humanities: Can either address truth?” More than 80 members of the Lindenwood Community participated. Recently I authorized our

Lectures and Concerts Committee to explore the engagement of additional notable scholars and speakers.

One fact is very clear: Lindenwood's co-curriculum is alive, well, and growing in most gratifying ways.

Recruitment for the Winter/Spring Terms

I wish to thank you for sending the names of prospective students to our Admissions Office. With your help, we are well on our way to matriculating a substantial group of new students in January. Nonetheless, we still need a few dozen additional leads to meet our Spring Term enrollment objective – especially among the ranks of residential students. If you meet or learn of any qualified student within the next several weeks, please send the student's name, telephone number, and area of interest to Joe Parisi, Dean of Day Admissions (jparisi@lindenwood.edu ; 636.949.4812). Please send evening and graduate student referrals to Brett Barger, Dean of Evening Admissions and Extension Campuses (bbarger@lindenwood.edu; 636.949.4366).

New undergraduate transfer students and new first-time freshmen who join our student body in January will receive free J -Term room, board, and enrollment (up to 3 hours) if they complete the spring semester at Lindenwood as full-time undergraduate day students.

The only way we can continue to be financially strong is for every one of us to participate actively in the recruitment process on a regular basis. *If we, as a community, ever stop attending to this critical part of our commitment, Lindenwood's financial situation will change dramatically.* Many other schools do not have this team-based system of renewing financial resources, and many of them lack our vitality and viability, as a result.

Each of you is a key figure in Lindenwood's future, and I personally appreciate what you do to help ensure the health and strength of the University.

Only English Puns From Now On

I promise to attempt only English-language puns in this newsletter from this point forward. Feedback regarding the play on Latin words that appeared in the August *President's Notebook* has not been encouraging. By most accounts, few readers noticed the unconventional combination of Latin terms, and those who did generally did not get the pun. I'll restrict all future verbal "wit" to English language expressions.

A Thank-You to All

There are no words in the English language to adequately describe the unique blend of splendor, majesty, and campus spirit engendered by the November 9 Investiture Ceremony. That day was a memorable moment in Lindenwood's distinguished history, and it was well deserved by this learning community. It provided us a seldom available opportunity to reach out to the region in a formal, welcoming way; also, to showcase our incomparable school and campus. I was personally honored by the ceremony and

especially pleased by the fact that nearly all of you joined us for the faculty and staff reception that evening.

Every one of you played a significant role in making the investiture a tremendous success. I cannot imagine being able to assemble a more pleasant and effective group of employees than we have here. Thank you very much.

Looking Forward to the Holiday Season

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to wish all of you (as well as your loved ones) a warm, learning-filled holiday season. All of us can be especially thankful and hopeful in the coming New Year because we have the privilege of being at Lindenwood University at this time in history, working with one another, and having an opportunity to propel and guide this school to new heights in the coming years.

