

## **PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK NO. 22    Fall 2014**

Our fall term certainly has been exciting and productive, as it usually is. We are already starting to anticipate the seasonal end spurt that is pushed by final examinations and end-of-term business and pulled by the glow of upcoming holidays and, a little farther down the road, the sanguine promise of the new calendar year!

There is a lot of potentially thought-provoking information in this *Notebook*, and I hope you find some of it to be of interest and perhaps even useful.

### ***Entrepreneurship and Higher Education***

Higher education today is in crisis. It is at once challenged by a rapidly changing and skeptical student market and called to task by accreditors, government agencies, and the media. The cost of a college education continues to rise noticeably even as its value is being aggressively questioned. I find it ironic that the very entities that most pointedly object to the increasing expense of tuition and fees are the same ones whose ever-escalating regulations and demands are causing the costs of education to climb faster than they should have to.

Sustainability is more important than ever on college and university campuses. That assertion refers not just to environmental stewardship, which is itself of much importance, but also cultural fidelity and financial hardiness. Each school must be careful not to allow various pressures to push the campus culture away from its core mission. It is crucial for all innovations and evolutions on a campus to reflect and serve its essential philosophy and purposes. The alternative is to lose

meaning and faith – then credibility – and begin to drift aimlessly as an organization.

Financial sustainability is literally a do or die matter in the present space of time. According to available data and credible sources, both the traditional and the “adult and evening” student populations are diminishing each year, and that trend has only intensified competition among most higher education institutions – including those considered to be publicly funded. The colleges and universities that will survive until 2025 either are or will need to become **entrepreneurial**. That is, they have learned or will learn how to develop innovative programs and services that generate new capital.

Historically there has been an antithesis between higher education and entrepreneurship, but that antagonistic juxtaposition was never necessary and has been fading away in proportion to the speed at which fiscal reality is settling into the minds of university board members and administrators across the nation.

Lindenwood was one of the first universities to avowedly advocate an entrepreneurial approach to funding private higher education, beginning in the early 1990s<sup>[1]</sup>. Back then we were unique in that regard, but now we are merely a leading prototype, as most other institutions, including many public universities, have adopted expansion models of financial management. Almost everyone now seems to readily admit that it takes a lot of money to run a postsecondary school and that perennially hiking tuition is not sufficient for keeping up with the bills; nor are tuition increases well tolerated by the current student population. Additional business must also be propagated.

Mission-based entrepreneurship usually is a boon to higher education organizations. Lindenwood has been demonstrating that fact for (at least) the past 25 years. I can recall that it all started when the

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<sup>[1]</sup> Although one of Lindenwood’s greatest entrepreneurial successes, our accelerated degree program – a.k.a. LC4 or LCIE – was launched in the 1970s as the brainchild of President William C. Spencer.

University began to believe again in its great worth to students. We got back on track with our student-centered, values-based Mission; started a variety of new majors that were in accord with both our Mission and the modern student marketplace; instituted a very attractive and successful large-scale intercollegiate athletics program; started up several new regional centers; and combined modern business practices with good educational practices. The results of those initiatives are now well known and easy to see all around us. The lasting product is the financially sustainable system that we presently enjoy and continue to hone each year.

More recent examples of Lindenwood's entrepreneurial initiatives include, among many others, the startup of **our St. Louis City (Washington Avenue) Center**, the **Belleville Day College**, our **School of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences**, and our brand new **Collinsville, Ill., Center** (conceived and implemented by Dr. Jerry Bladdick and the Lindenwood University-Belleville team). All of these ventures are, or are in the process of becoming, as financially successful as they are educationally valuable.

Lindenwood and other universities that will thrive in the new, challenging higher education marketplace will continue to apply their postsecondary business savvy in adaptive ways. Although not all new ventures will succeed, most will if they remain mission-based and data-driven.

There are some landmines in entrepreneurial ventures that universities must consider and avert when possible:

1. *Overstaffing*: We do not need a full-time director, two full-time associate directors, and an administrative assistant for every center or office we start up.

2. *Overcapitalizing*: We must avoid letting the cost of new facilities and programs get too far ahead of the production of sufficient new revenues to pay for them.
3. *Hanging on in the face of a losing proposition*: If an innovative idea is not working, losses should be cut and new ventures created to replace it; good money must not be spent in an attempt to resuscitate a bad investment simply because “we already have so much invested in it.”
4. *Losing the balance between desirable and viable*: Too many loss leaders can cause a noble store to expire.
5. *Shirking the hard decisions and actions when times become challenging*: Postponement of pain can be very expensive.
6. *Failing to adjust to a changing environment*: It is vital to be in tune with one’s patrons and the industries that employ them.

### ***Academic Quality: Lindenwood’s Fifty-Year Snapshot***

Across my 40+ years at Lindenwood, I have observed higher and lower periods of progress and prosperity. It seems to me that since the early 1990s, we have advanced tremendously in physical and fiscal respects. I also believe that, in a less dramatic fashion, we have continued to improve our overall quality of service in many ways that are not possible without adequate funding.

Upon my appointment to the presidency of the University, I made it a priority to significantly elevate Lindenwood's academic quality. Our board of directors, faculty, staff, and administration have supported that aspiration and worked cooperatively toward implementing it.

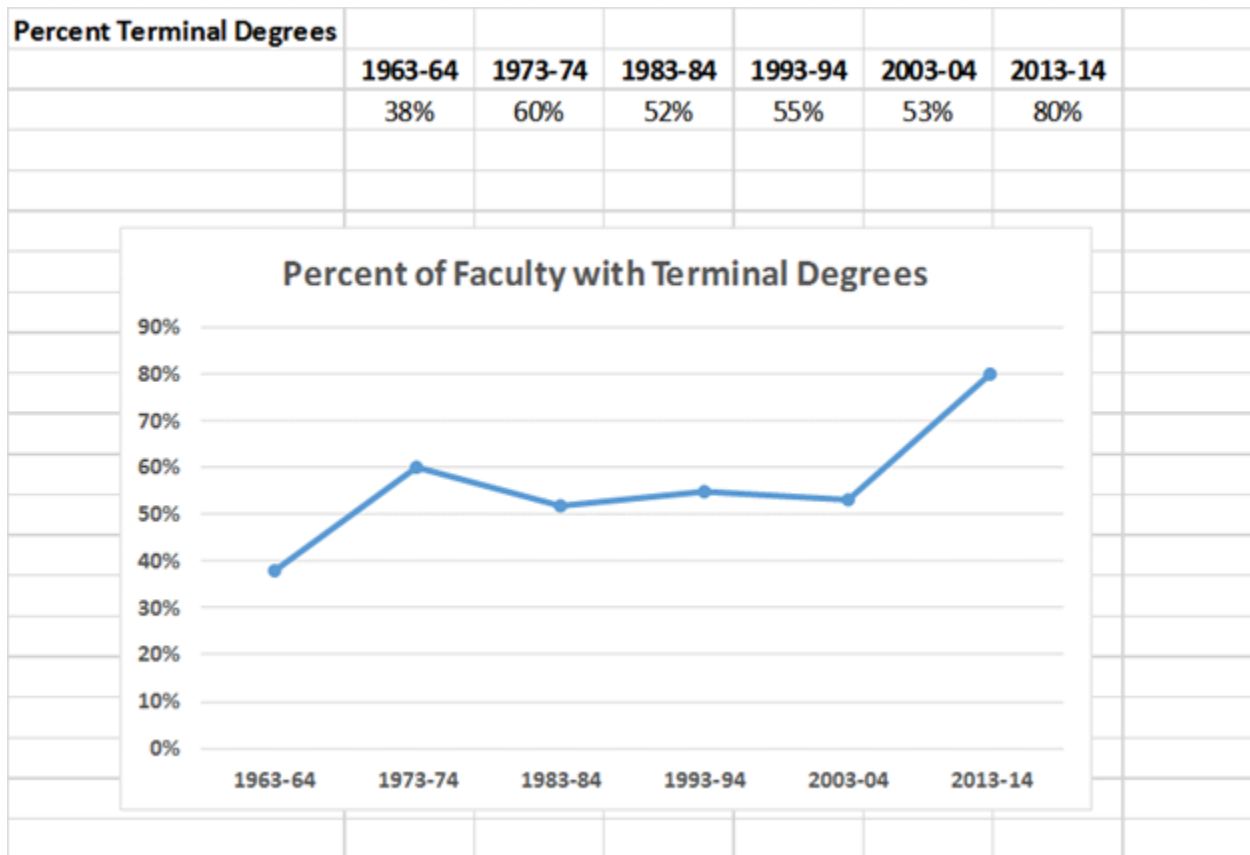
Although we frequently receive compliments to the effect that our programs and services have improved conspicuously, we owe it to ourselves and other Lindenwood stakeholders to periodically assess our feedback and casual impressions against verifiable facts and data. Of course, such checks carry a psychological risk. Nevertheless, I have occasionally thought, "What if the hypothetical skeptic is right and we are simply fooling ourselves about the University's continual advancement?"

Being a scientist and a slave to reality, I decided to check a few objective indices of academic progress at Lindenwood across the last 50 years. All of these measures are considered to be important quality indicators in higher education:

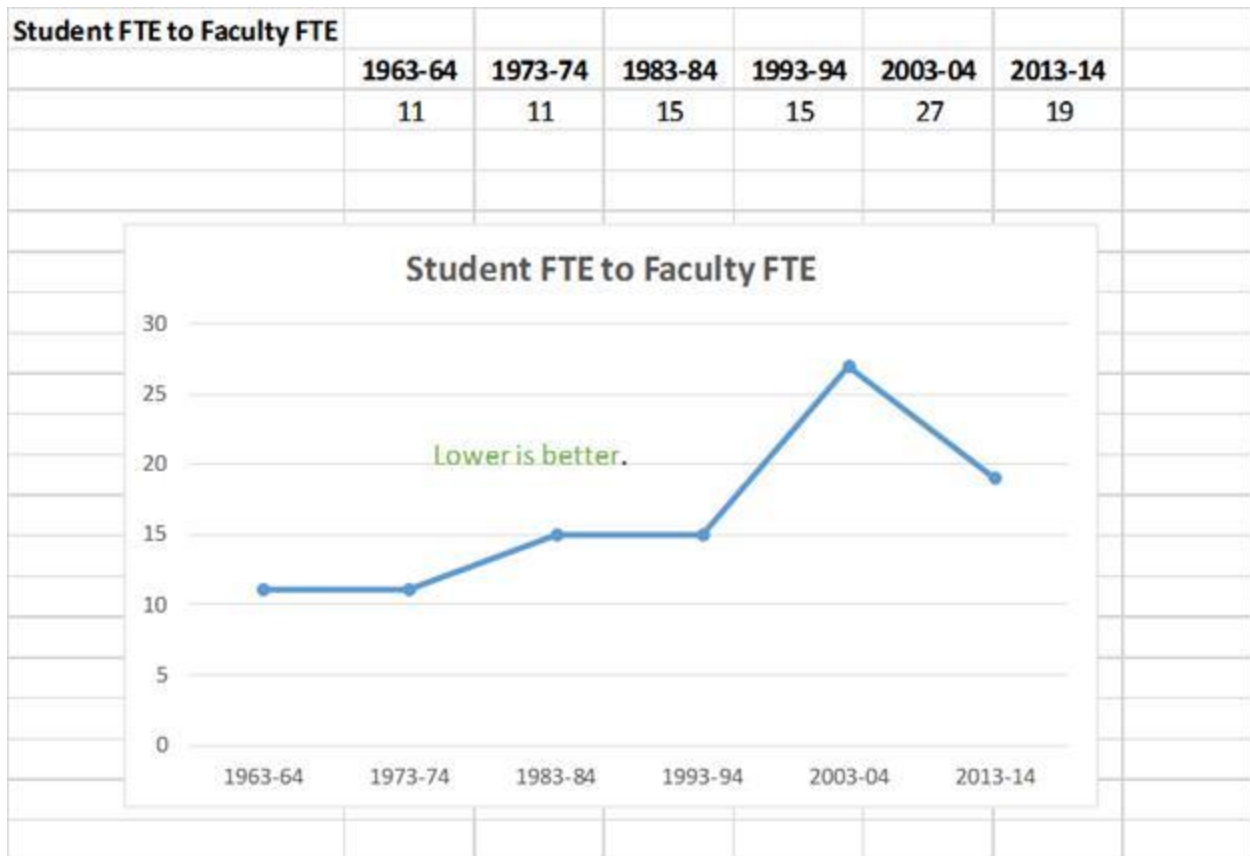
1. Percent of faculty members with terminal (the highest) degrees
2. Ratio of full-time student equivalencies (Student FTE) to full-time faculty equivalencies (Faculty FTE)
3. Average (mean) freshman composite ACT score
4. Six-year graduation rate
5. Number of accreditations
6. Number of national citations for quality or commitment

This analysis spanned the years of 1963-64 to 2013-14 or 2014-15 (depending on the data available), and a snapshot was taken at 10-year intervals. Each statistic represents the status of an institutional trait in the year indicated. *These indices are exclusively for the St. Charles*

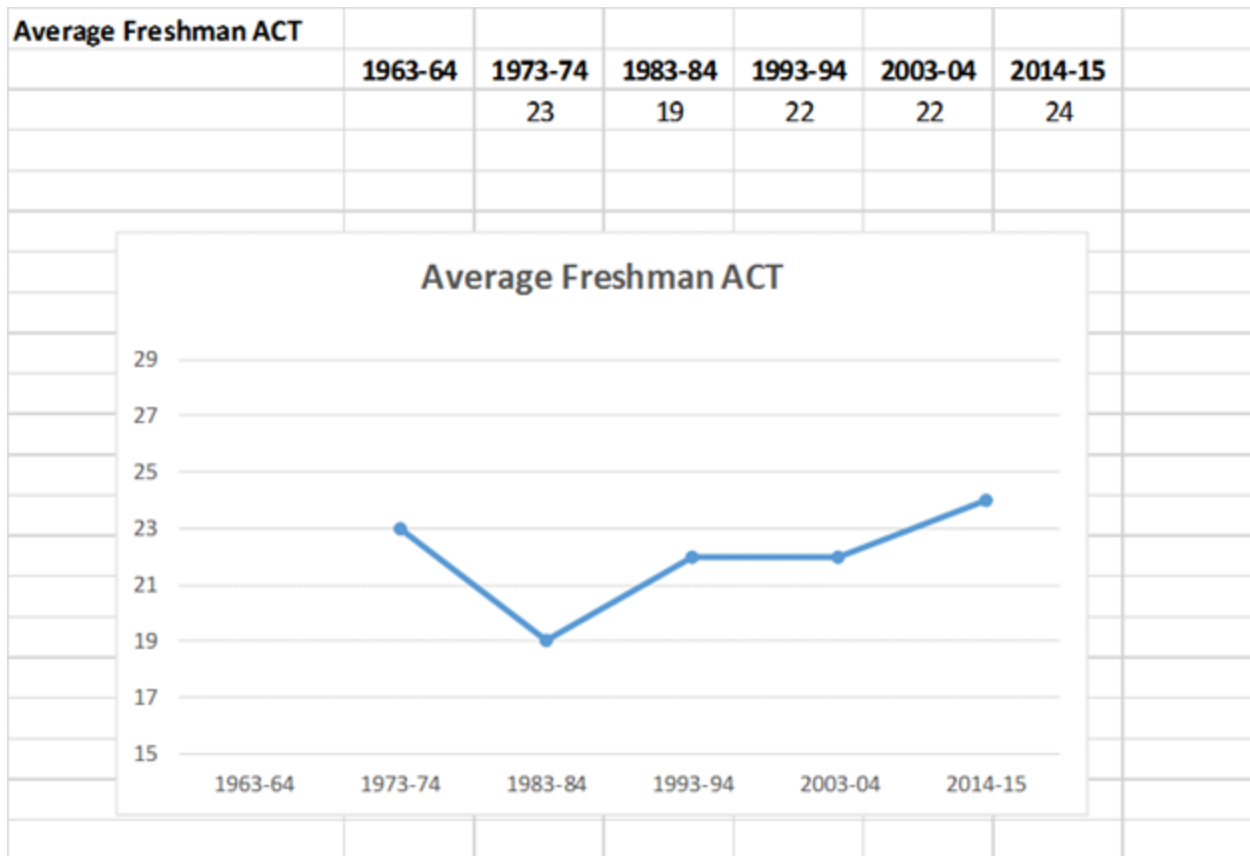
*campus*, since our Belleville campus did not exist until late 2003, and the day college there came into being just five years ago.



The percent of professors possessing the highest degrees in their fields is considered an important gauge of the overall academic qualifications of a university's faculty. The Lindenwood of today is far stronger in this regard than was the Lindenwood of yore.

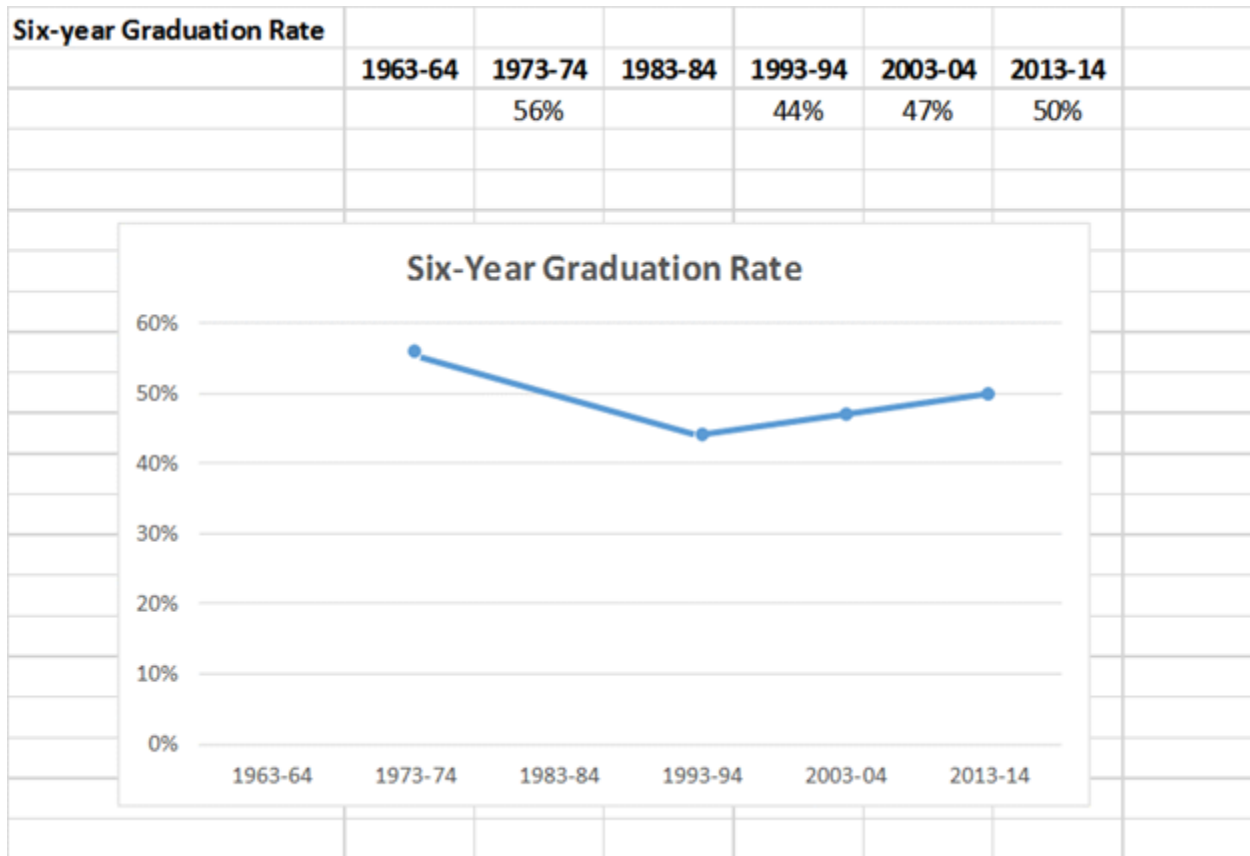


Academic quality is believed to be inversely related to the student-to-faculty ratio. The fewer students per faculty member at a school, the more individualized attention each student stands to receive, and it is presumed that factor directly boosts the excellence of the education received. This is an interesting example of an academic ideal being in conflict with economic reality. The 11 to 1 student-to-professor ratio present in 1964 and 1974 would spell bankruptcy today – and it nearly did in the 1970s. Nonetheless, by this traditional standard, the 1960s’ Lindenwood would be considered to have had an educational advantage over today’s Lindenwood. Today, 20 to 1 or lower is considered to be a healthy ratio; you can see we moved back into that range recently.

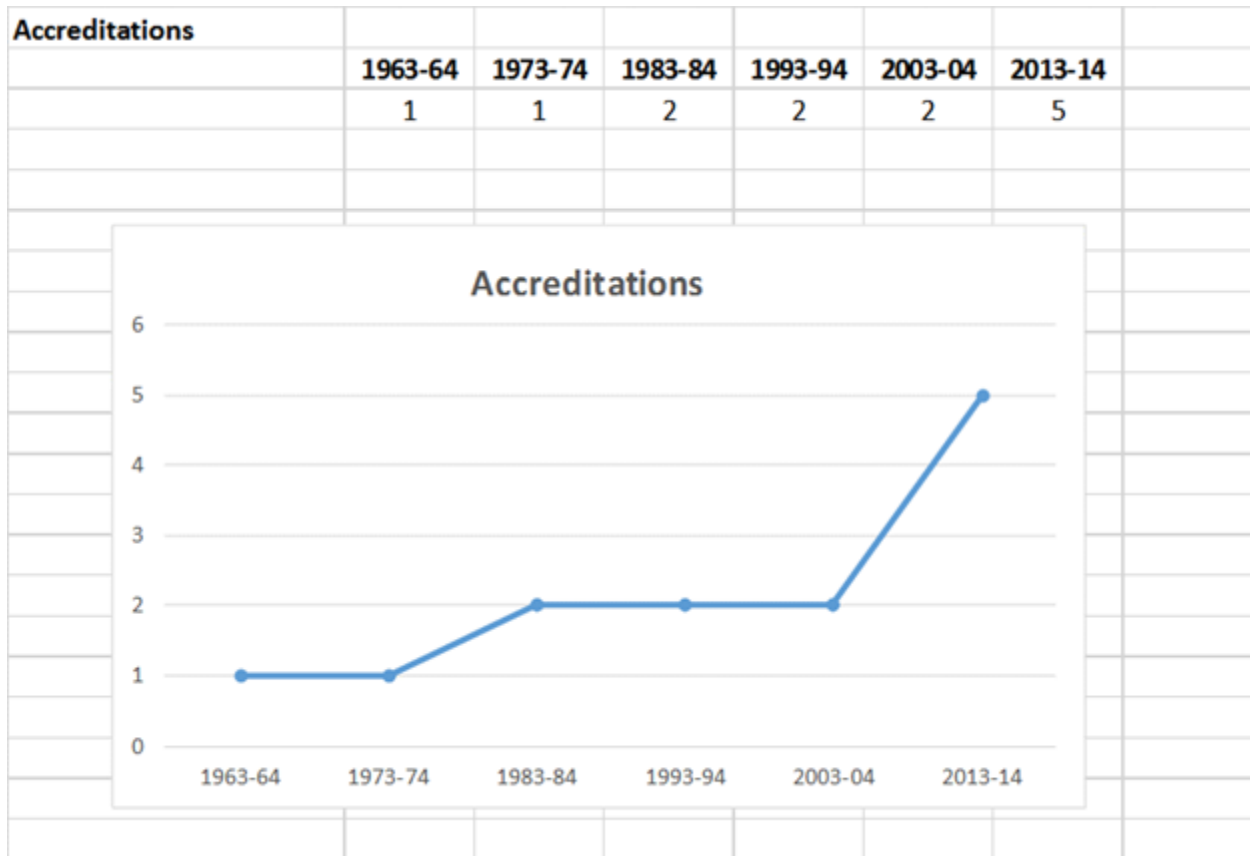


Composite ACT averages of first-year students are typically rounded to the nearest whole number and reported as integers. There is no ACT information for the 1963-64 cohort, but the 1973-74 LU freshmen had a respectable 22.5, or 23, ACT composite. In succeeding decades, the aptitude of our freshmen was considerably to slightly lower. However, over the past several years we have made a conscious effort to attract more of the higher bracket students. The result is that our most recent group of freshmen at the St. Charles campus has a 23.6, or 24, ACT composite, considerably better than student cohorts typifying the earlier decades' benchmark years.

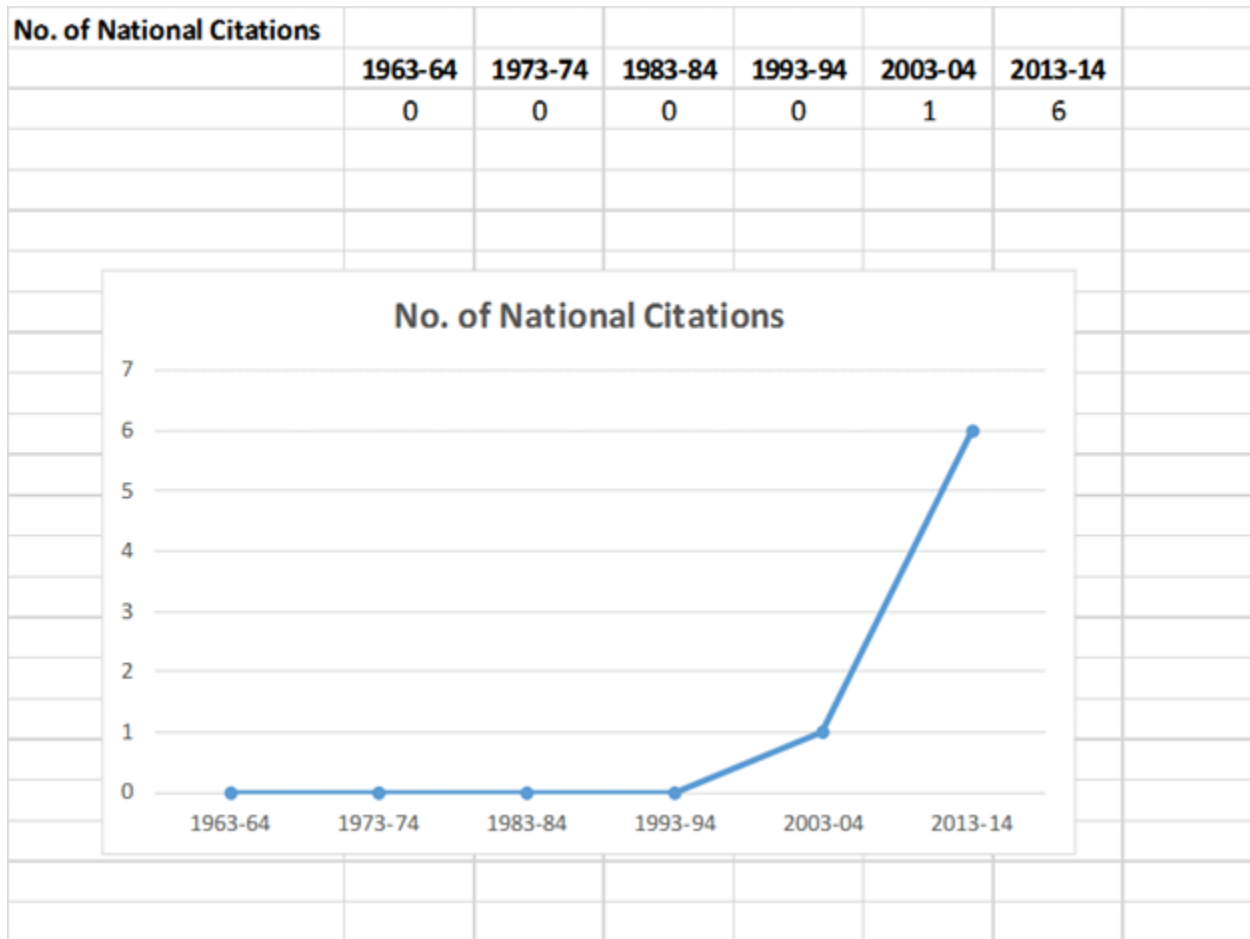




Although the 6-year graduation rate percentages are not available for a couple of the decades, clearly the 1970s group had the best mark at 56 percent. With a smaller population of around 1,000 students and an 11 to 1 student-to-professor ratio, the faculty members of the 70s were able to induce more loyalty and persistence among the students. The latter observation is precisely why lower student-to-faculty ratios are considered superior in higher education. Today, a 50 percent graduation rate is considered respectable, and, after several years of focus on improving student retention, we did achieve that mark for the first time in at least 20 – and probably 30 – years! We are improving!



In 1963-64 and 1973-74 Lindenwood had only one accreditation – that conferred by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, which is now known as the Higher Learning Commission. We picked up the American Society of Appraisers accreditation in the 1980s, dropped that special credential around 2000, and picked up CAATE accreditation in athletic training before 2003. Today we have five accreditations, including two from ACBSP (business) and CSWE accreditation in social work.



A “National Citation” refers to making the cut in an academic-quality ranking system that is applied to at least several hundred accredited universities and colleges in the United States. In 2013-14, we were actually in a ranked category in six national quality-assessment systems:

- (1) US News – Online Undergrad BA program;
- (2) US News – Online Graduate Education;
- (3) US News – Online Graduate Business;
- (4) Arts School – Online College Database (ranked our Arts program 4th in country);
- (5) MFA on Word Focus' Top Ten List of Online Creative Writing Programs;
- (6) Society for Human Resource Management – the only Missouri university to meet SHRM standards.

This month I learned of a seventh national citation conferred within the last year. *Educate to Career* ranked Lindenwood in the top quintile (top 20% bracket) among 1224 schools for “return on investment,” or ROI, for its students. That determination is made on the basis of several factors, including the following (quoted directly from the Educate to Career Website):

- “Percentage of graduates employed in occupations which utilize their field of study
- Average salary earned by recent graduates, by school for each major category (adjusted for region, occupation and other variables)
- Percentage of persons employed within one year of graduation (weighted on an occupational trend basis)
- Major, weighted against national norms
- Number of years to graduate
- Tuition – net cost
- Loan default rates
- A basket of input variables which norm students to a common standard for each major”

### ***MUPC on the LU Campus***

The tenth annual meeting of the **Missouri Undergraduate Psychology Conference (MUPC)** took place in Lindenwood’s Spellmann Center on November 14-15, and I had the honor of presenting a general welcome

address on Saturday morning. Lindenwood also hosted the MUPC event five years ago and will host it again next year.

This scholarly conference, which features presentations on students' research and practicums in psychology, is a "big deal" because the participants numbered well over 150 (perhaps closer to 200) and represented 28 colleges and universities from five Midwestern states. Lindenwood students accounted for more than 40 of the presentations.

Endless accolades are due **Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair**, Lindenwood Professor of Psychology, and her colleagues and students for devoting months of preparation to this major student convention. In reviewing the history of MUPC, I noticed that attendance at the conference nearly doubles on average when it is hosted by Lindenwood. Some of that response is a result of the geographical location, I am sure, but the remaining portion of the attendance boost should likely be attributed to excellent planning, promotion, and organization by the Lindenwood Psychology Department.

### ***Congratulations Corner***

In addition to the very successful MUPC occasion, Lindenwood has enjoyed several other notable achievements recently. Here are a just few that caught my eye:

- Professor **Pyra Intihar** is to be highly commended for the outstanding growth of membership in Lindenwood's **Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society for First Year College Students**, for which she serves as the faculty sponsor. This fall we received news from the national council that the Lindenwood chapter

received a **Delta Award at the Silver level**. The award honors chapters whose membership has increased dramatically in the past year. Alpha Lambda Delta, which provides many services to the University community, is a society for students exhibiting extraordinary academic ability.

- Thanks to the diligent, masterful work of Lindenwood's Human Resource Management program and the excellent curricular standards maintained by our School of Business and Entrepreneurship, the University has been awarded with a renewal of the **Alignment Honor** conferred by the **Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)**, which is the preeminent international organization for HR programs and firms. The alignment status pertains to our Bachelor of Arts in Human Resource Management (SB&E) and the Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Management (LCIE). The SHRM HR Curriculum Guidebook and Templates "were developed by SHRM to define the minimum HR content areas that should be studied by HR students at the undergraduate and graduate levels." Lindenwood is the only university in Missouri to receive this endorsement, which runs through 2018. **Dr. Evelyn Hendrix** communicated this great news.
- **Angie Royal**, Lindenwood's Director of Student Life and Leadership, has reported that our **Campus Activities Board**

(CAB) brought home an award from the National Association for Campus Activities (NACA) conference this fall. Our CAB received the **2014 Mid America Late Night/Alternative Program Award** for the Evans Commons Unlocked event held last May. This award is presented to a program from a member institution that took place during late night (after 9 p.m.) on a Friday or Saturday with the purpose of offering students an alternative to drinking on or off campus.

- Two of our Communications students were among just 50 recognized nationally by the **American Advertising Federation**. The students, **Seannell Chambers** and **Andrea Ruano**, received the “Most Promising Multicultural Students” award. Recipients of this citation are noted for outstanding achievement in internships, leadership activities, community service, innovation, and creativity. Almost all of the winners are from large private and public universities across the country. The mentor behind the success of these students is our new Communications professor, **Dr. Krista Tucciarone**.

In Closing

I wish you and yours the happiest and most memorable of all holiday seasons. For all that you do for this grand University and her students, you deserve nothing less.

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James D. Evans, Ph.D.  
President  
*Lindenwood University*  
209 S. Kingshighway  
Saint Charles, MO 63301  
**Office: (636) 949-4900**  
**Fax: (636) 949-4992**