

Convocation 2008
State of the College Address
Chancellor Jones

This year marks the end of the 2005-2008 Strategic and Assessment Plan (SAP). As we cross the finish line, we have completed the collection of three years of assessment data that contribute to the distinctive features of our College. Thus, the theme of this year's convocation is "distinction." I have chosen the kaleidoscope to depict distinction portrayed by "differences to a degree," yet returning back to the concept of "oneness." "All differences in this world are of degree, and not of kind, because oneness is the secret of everything (Swami Vivekananda)."

I believe this theme describes the College as well. Each constituent is distinct and different to a degree yet contributes to the oneness represented by the College community. Today, I want to highlight some of the trends from the three year 2005-2008 plan and the future initiatives outlined in the new 2008-2011 plan.

Academics

Our mission is the education of the health professions' students. So we have moved our main priority to the top of the list as the first goal, "preparing well-educated students." Faculty have worked very hard to turn the downward trend in achievement test scores, attrition rates and licensure examination pass rates into upward trends. Curriculum maps and incorporation of achievement testing systems into the curriculum have contributed to the positive trends. For the future we want to maintain and improve all metrics with a focus on advising for the 2008-2009 academic year. We will be planning targets for new allied health program students.

Finances

This is the FIFTH year for the College to have a better than balanced budget with sustained increased enrollments, graduates and growth. We are still working to fund a capital plan for future budget cycles. We have built the Fiscal Year 09 and future ProFormas without reliance on Medicare funding. Although we still include Medicare funding at the end of the year. Fund raising efforts for the past three years have been guarded as we were without a Development Officer for a year. Yet, we have established two new scholarships, Kurtz Mesenbrink and Ruth Rehwaldt. Future plans involve the development of a comprehensive philanthropy program under the direction of Ms. Moira McGinley.

We have grown to 20 faculty and 27 staff totaling 47. Those figures include 5 new budgeted staff positions that we are in the process of filling. Please bear with us on the office situation as we continue to grow. And please note, that we have accomplished all of this with only modest tuition increases of 3% per year for the past three years.

We all know that one of the factors that helps a College become distinctive is resources. This past year we received two significant grants, one from federal appropriations and one from a private foundation, the Chicago Community Trust. We continue to receive the

Health Services Education Grants Act (HSEGA), Fiscal Year 2008 for \$86,000, annually. The College was awarded \$60,000 in earmarked funding via the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities (FIICU) proposal for the BSN Evening/Weekend program expansion. A grant from the Chicago Community Trust for \$144,500 will support the development of an Academic Excellence Center (ACE) with Coordinator position and new library and office furnishings for students, staff, and tutors. These accomplishments will help to pave the way for future initiatives and hopefully more grants.

Distinguished Identity

In our last plan we wanted to be the “college of choice” for all students, in the new plan we will focus on “distinguishing our identity.” Ongoing Action Projects continue as a part of the College’s regional accreditation through the Academic Quality Improvement Programs with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The Commission accepted the “New Programs” proposal. Although the regional accreditor could not approve new programs 10 years out, the College was successful in obtaining approval for our very first new allied health programs, the Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management and Health Informatics Management. A team of administrators from the College appeared before the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) Board of Nursing and hosted a visit by representatives from the state this past summer. The baccalaureate nursing program was approved to remain on the list of accredited programs. The College will reaffirm accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), a member of the North Central Association (NCA) in February of 2009 and continue to obtain approvals and accreditation for all new programs. The graduate nursing program (MSN) visit occurs the end of this September in 2008.

Enrollments continue to grow while maintaining the diversity and quality of our student body. Sixty-two percent (56/90) of the undergraduate baccalaureate students graduated with a 3.5 or higher cumulative grade point average. Next year we expect to enroll about 300 students on the campus and have created the ProForma to continue to grow to a total enrollment of 500 students. This past year we graduated 90 students. The undergraduate nursing (BSN) program continues to enroll a majority of full-time students comprising 77% of the student population. We will graduate the first graduate nursing program students in the Spring of 2009. The inaugural masters of science in nursing (MSN) program included 9 students attending part-time. The Fast Track bachelor of science in nursing program continues to sustain enrollments. Future initiatives will focus on developing the Academic Excellence Center thanks to the generosity of the Chicago Community trust and adding a personal and career counselor to the Enrollment Management staff. Several marketing efforts have contributed to the establishment of the College’s “distinguished identity.” The College was selected as a 2008 Best of Oak Park Award due to the marketing success of the organization in the local community and business category by the U.S. Local Business Association (USLBA). The USLBA "Best of Local Business" Award Program uses information gathered internally in conjunction with third-party data as a part of its selection process. The College has a web page on the University and College Accountability Network (UCAN). UCAN is a national web site

where students can compare Colleges on statistics including cost and extracurricular activities. Visit our page at www.ucan-network.org.

Partnerships

Our partnerships involve our health care system and are expanding to include the world. This past summer four students participated in a medical mission to Honduras as a summer elective. We have a three year track record of hiring 50% of the adjunct faculty from the Resurrection pool of potential talent and returning 50% of the graduating class to work within the RHC hospitals. A large part of these successes are due to maintaining clinical rotations and externships in Resurrection facilities. Future initiatives will involve a full service learning schedule of courses for students to continue course work and provide service in Honduras, Montana and the Chicago area. We will be developing a complete communication plan with all constituents of the College and new metrics to track graduate placements and Resurrection Health Care (RHC) employees taking courses.

Faculty

Two faculty received intramural grants this past year. Grants are awarded on an annual basis. Scholarship products involving publications and presentations have been sustained over a three year period ranging from 14%-20% this past year. An employee recognition system has been developed and employees awarded on an annual basis. Market equity studies continue every two to three years helping to keep salaries competitive. We have introduced new metrics in the 2008-2011 SAP to track new and vacant positions by employee category. We will continue with semester team building and quality culture programs to improve and enhance communication. We currently have 20 full-time faculty members. Last year we had 17 and we have an ongoing process to fill vacant faculty positions. In the upcoming year, we will continue to work on business practices to support increased growth. Faculty teaching in the graduate programs will develop ongoing programs of research to support future doctoral programs.

Growth

In our last plan we focused on “expansion,” now we will turn our attention to “planning for growth.” A new Strategic and Assessment Plan has been created with the involvement of College and RHC constituents. Infrastructure needs continue to be addressed by plans to locate a new home and facility. Several grant proposals have been written in support of a new facility. The search for space and funding continues. A Proforma was completed demonstrating that the College could be self sufficient with increased enrollments totaling 500 students. We have implemented a number of spruce-up projects involving painting and improvements to existing facilities to allow for doubling up of faculty and staff offices. Thanks to a generous grant from the Chicago Community Trust, a Center for Academic Excellence is being created with Tutor Faculty and programs housed within the library. The wireless environment has been upgraded to support laptops for all students for the 2008-2009 academic year. I have already mentioned the addition of two new allied health bachelor's programs in health care and health informatics management. A meeting has been planned to explore integration of all educational programs for Resurrection Health Care (RHC) into one entity. Members

from the College and Resurrection will serve on the committee. I have been appointed to serve on the steering committee charged with the development of the Resurrection 2009-2012 strategic plan and as the Chair for the development of a new educational imperative for the RHC Strategic Plan. The newly formed Executive Committee of the College Board has assumed accountability for several objectives in the new College 2008-2011 SAP involving the improvement of communication and reporting channels and governance structures for the College.

Technology

Campus Net and Campus Portal have been implemented. The student information system is now accessible by faculty, employers, and students off campus. The Course Applicability System is still in progress. We are prepared to implement a laptop requirement for all students. The Instructional Technology department has been expanded to support the growth of the college so that continued excellent service can be provided. Future work will involve sustaining all systems with training and support and working on the joint technology plan with the RHC information services department to further enhance College operations.

In summary, the financial standing for the College has remained strong and will continue to do so to support the growth of enrollments and new programs. Licensure examination pass rates are on the rise. We have improved certain technology infrastructures and will continue to do so with Resurrection's support. A new 2008-2011 SAP has been developed to guide the way for developing growth and trending data. We will undergo accreditation visits for the graduate nursing program and to reaffirm our accreditation with the regional accreditor HLC, NCA.

Future initiatives include:

- Developing a formal, funded plan for capital;
- Re-establishing a formal expanded philanthropy program;
- Continuing to explore an opportunity for a new site and facility to accommodate growth;
- Integrating support services and future educational programs with the development of a Resurrection Educational Imperative for the RHC 2009-2012 strategic plan; and
- Implementing a structure with communication channels that fit an independent College to address the governance accreditation issue from the May 2006 System Portfolio Review Report by the Higher Learning Commission.

“Sometimes a breakdown can be the beginning of a kind of breakthrough. that prepares you for a future of radical transformation (Cherrie Moraga).” You may have seen the footnote on several of our new publications and the lack of the use of the acronym WSCN. We are definitely on the road to transformation to become a Health Professions University. We may have had a few "breakdowns" along the way. But thanks to each of you we have returned stronger and better. I look forward to working with each of you throughout the upcoming year as we continue to plan for growth and become a distinguished health professions university.