

Week of May 1

In last week's update, I mentioned the entrance conference for the Financial Aid Program Review by the US Department of Education. I neglected to share the outcome. The visiting team raved about the level of cooperation and professionalism shown them by every member of the university team with whom they interacted. They were highly impressed with our financial aid operation at all levels. Thank you and congratulations to Lauren Jackson and her entire team.

In Baton Rouge, work continues on the state budget. I continue to hear broad consensus on protecting TOPS; however, the lack of certainty is having an impact on existing and potential students. We are also struggling to appropriately plan for our future because of the rising level of partisanship in the legislature. The issue is really very simple: we cannot continue to maintain our current level of tax expenditures while funding the breadth of activities we currently support AND have viable systems of higher education and healthcare. It simply is not possible. This is not a political statement. It is statement of fact. I remain optimistic the powers that be in Baton Rouge will come to this realization sooner rather than later. In the meantime, we will continue to focus on enhancing our academic offerings while improving the student experience.

The Week

Sunday evening, we held a graduation ceremony for student athletes who would be competing out of town on May 6. Last year, one of our graduate assistants noticed that a number of baseball players would miss commencement while playing in Abilene. Tonia and I drove to Abilene on the Saturday after commencement, and were almost embarrassed at how grateful the graduates and their families were for such a simple act. The early commencement approach ensures that all of our athletes are able to celebrate this significant milestone. Special thanks to Kelee Roddy and Betsy Nohavitzka for coordinating the event.

Monday morning, we held our monthly Leadership Team meeting. In case you are interested, here are the unedited notes from Pam Cook:

*May 2, 2016 @ 8:30 a.m.
Leadership Team Meeting*

Absent: Steve Horton, Matthew Whitaker, Dana Clawson

- *Dr. Henderson:*

- *Discussed the recent security issues we've had on campus, and measures taken to improve safety. For example, partnering with city, parish, and state police agencies. Officers will be stationed at each facility with after-hours labs or events. There will be more of a presence with officers patrolling in vehicles. A long-term assessment is being made on ways to increase security, such as hiring additional officers to University Police, and upgraded cameras. When Purple Alerts are issued, they will be tailored for each incident, meaning they will go out only to those possibly affected by the incident.*

- *Student Concerns Facebook page: if you are not a part of the solution, don't weigh in.*

- *Attended very well-done graduation ceremony for our student athletes unable to attend commencement this Friday.*

- *Geico and Jostens will sponsor lighting and confetti cannons for this Friday's commencement. Jalan West will introduce each speaker. Julie Kane and John Williams will give closing remarks respectfully. Other events for this week include Fork'em Farewell Crawfish Boil for all graduating seniors; college honor ceremonies; will present an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters to Dr. Jim Knecht.*

- *Mentioned "Elevate Louisiana," a Board of Regents program that will review and possibly eliminate graduate programs in an attempt to streamline universities (with no clearly defined purpose or guiding principles).*

- *Jeannine Kahn formerly of the Board of Regents, has been selected as Vice President for Academic Affairs at University of Louisiana System office.*

- *There are 4 finalists for President of the University of Louisiana System.*

- *Steve Horton will be leaving the university at the end of June to become Executive Director of LSMSA.*

- *Chris Maggio:*

- *Continuing with recruiting efforts. Recruiters attending high school graduation honors ceremonies.*

➤ *Financial Aid had a federal audit visit, and has done a great job of preparing.*

➤ *Working with Ron Wright on admissions processes.*

➤ *In working on freshman retention, Orientation teachers have been making calls to touch base with students to be sure they are re-registering.*

➤ *Housing getting close to capacity. In order to stay in housing, students need to make the grades, can't owe a balance, and must be registered for the fall.*

• *Frances Conine:*

➤ *There have been many activities going on for end of semester in the Student Union. Credit to Alan Pasch for doing such a great job organizing the use of the Union, and for keeping it neat and clean.*

➤ *Gearing up for summer and for Freshman Connection.*

➤ *Summer camps are coming; need to be sure security is in place.*

➤ *Addressing disciplinary issues; working on policy with Roni Biscoe and Marcus Jones.*

➤ *Need to work on process for retro design and suspensions.*

• *Roni Biscoe:*

➤ *Strategic Plan Team's work to be presented at fall semester 2016 Faculty/Staff Luncheon with a full plan available by December 2016.*

➤ *Working on SACSCOC editing; all faculty/staff handbooks need updating.*

➤ *Will be meeting regularly with Steve Horton during the month of May to discuss SACSCOC.*

➤ *SACSCOC Reaffirmation Timeline: Compliance Audit due September 12; 10 year visit March 14-16, 2017; Reaffirmation decided at Annual Meeting in December 2017.*

➤ *Revised QEP Plan sent for comments/feedback regarding personnel/salaries and assessment plan.*

➤ *End of semester and academic year surveys currently being administered. ~50% response from students; Evaluation of Administration process to begin this Wednesday (5/04/16).*

- *Vickie Gentry:*

- *Held a college-wide honors recognition ceremony; 21 student participated for academic excellence, service, and leadership. Also awarded student athletes in the college w/academic honors.*

- *On April 11, Elementary Lab had good accreditation visit by Advanced Education; waiting on the report.*

- *Mentioned State Department of Education changes in licensure.*

- *Type of accrediting agency changing to program from UK called Teacher Preparation Inspectorate. Not in favor of the change. Met with Tony Davis to express concerns.*

- *Will hold college-wide recruiting workshop for academic departments.*

- *Greg Burke:*

- *In the process of hiring a Women's Basketball Coach; interviewing 3 candidates this week out of 50-60 applicants. Going through the process of communicating with the applicants is creating good PR for Northwestern.*

- *Held graduation ceremony on Sunday, May 1st for student athletes unable to attend commencement this Friday due to games scheduled for the weekend.*

- *NCAA-AASP Year Two grant site visit was held last week.*

- *Vic's Choice Awards Banquet and Pancake Breakfast held.*

- *Working on updates to N-Club Hall of Fame.*

- *Southland Conference Spring Meeting in Frisco, TX coming up later in the month.*

- *Men's Track and Field athletes have great opportunity to win Southland Conference this year.*

- *Athletics has entered a bid to continue to host the LHSAA track meet.*

- *Adding New Orleans to the Victory Tour this year.*

- *Work on removing seats at Turpin Stadium as a part of the renovation project should commence in the next few weeks.*

- *Waiting on response from NCAA regarding an additional year for Jalan West.*

- *Marcia Hardy:*

- *In the Fall 2016 cycle, the Faculty Senate will consider creating an Ad hoc Committee to explore the creation of a policy related to salary structure for those faculty who move from the faculty position to administration and then return to a faculty position.*

- *Liz Knecht:*

- *No Report. (Whew!)*

- *Margaret Kilcoyne:*

- *Delivery of new furniture which has enhanced the learning environment at the School of Business and provided an area of networking for students.*

- *Promoting our degree programs in the Shreveport/Bossier area like high schools, BPCC, and the air show.*

- *International Festival of Cultures and Cuisines which highlighted our HMT programs.*

- *Retention for the College with the Spring Carnival – Advising and Registration Round UP which provided opportunities for networking among our students and faculty members. Provided opportunities for advisement and registration. Gave away four scholarships – ACCT, BUAD, CIS, and ET. Use our Wheel of Fortune to give away many items like t-shirts, gift certificate to local restaurants, and NSU items. Did the Human Hungry Hippo tournament.*

- *Held School of Business Student Advisory Board meeting to receive feedback about our programs. How can we improve? What did we do well?*

- *ET held its Department Advisory Board meeting to receive feedback from business and industry partners about its programs.*

- *Held our AITP-Epsilon Delta Pi induction.*

- *Upcoming –*

- *FACS – State Extension Meeting in the HMT building on Thursday, May 5, 2016.*

- *College Medallion ‘Come and Go’ Reception for our graduates and their guests-Friday, May 6, 2016, from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. in Russell Hall – Natchitoches Room.*

➤The CIS group will be traveling to meet with State Farm in Bloomington, IL.

➤May 27, 2016, Continuing Legal Education class 3 hours credit in Shreveport, Louisiana, at the Nursing School.

- Drake Owens:

➤Have conducted 16 alumni events; still have 3 to go-Bloomington, IL, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, GA; 11 new chapter presidents elected and charged with hosting monthly events in each of the respective areas.

➤Quarterly Alumni/Foundation Board meetings were held last Friday. Enhanced outreach efforts were the focus of the Alumni meeting and initial plans for an unprecedented capital fundraising campaign were the focus of the Foundation meeting.

➤Planning for the fundraising campaign, including extensive market research, will take place over the next 3-6 months.

➤Fork'em Farewell Crawfish Boil for all graduating seniors will be held this Thursday at the Collin's Pavilion and at the Columns for future ceremonies. 325 graduating seniors have RSVP'd.

➤57 graduates attending the Golden Jubilee celebration returning to walk again for Friday's and receive their 50-year diploma at the commencement ceremony. The 50+ Graduate Luncheon will be held on Saturday.

➤Sponsoring Dragon Boat Racing event on May 28th downtown Natchitoches on the riverbank.

➤Initial research being conducted for 50th anniversary of Pi Kappa Phi, 20th anniversary of Sigma Nu, and 30th anniversary of Louisiana Scholars College.

➤Working on reengaging previous donors and finalizing recently proposed major gifts.

➤Working on initial plans for cooperative endeavor with city for the new park project.

➤Dr. Henderson, Tonia and Jill attending dinner with the Dows to discuss final phase of facility fencing projects.

- Jerry Pierce:

➤Dr. Henderson challenged the Foundation to a 9-figure fund raising goal of \$140 million.

➤Marketing and Branding planning for the upcoming academic year.

➤Have been contacting legislators regarding higher education legislation.

- Carl Jones:

➤Continue to run numbers for Baton Rouge.

➤Banner Consultant for Finance; working on year-end close.

➤Legislative Auditor has started their audit.

➤Banner conference was somewhat helpful; was introduced to XE; it helped to build confidence among the group.

- Marcus Jones:

➤ORM is now mandating employees must have drug screen after all accidents.

➤All after-accident drug screens are handled by EHS.

➤Accident reports have to be completed, so that the information can be entered into the online Worker's Compensation reporting system. This is so that even if there are not any injuries to the employee that Worker's Compensation will pay for the drug screen and the EHS does not have to.

➤Every employee must receive a Medical Authorization Form to have a drug screen, so that it will be billed to Worker's Compensation.

➤Group traveling to Cuba at the end of May—great opportunity for Northwestern.

- Ron Wright:

➤Experienced internet problems last week. Our team helped LONI with the issues. We will have 3rd party backup in the future.

➤Twenty projects planned for this summer.

➤Aaron Ford resigned; Matthew Foshee on extended medical leave.

- Darlene Williams:

➤NSU coordinated a statewide E-Learning Conference in cooperation with the Board of Regents in Baton Rouge.

➤Open Education Resources was a primary focus for the eLearning Conference and an initiative for the Board of Regents. Northwestern is poised to be a contributor to that effort given its longtime history in online education.

➤NSU will be expanding its offerings at the learning center in Alexandria to accommodate additional students.

➤NSU is exploring the concept of expanding its video conferencing reaching through the addition of a new site in the fall of 2016.

• *Wrap-up, Dr. Henderson:*

➤Asked academic officers to work with the appropriate parties to review the proctoring policy. Would like to consider taking a different approach. Numerous Tier 1 Institutions have developed best practice procedures that better accommodate student needs at significantly lower costs.

➤Textbook policy—Northwestern needs to set the standard on reducing textbook costs.

➤In final phases on the Student Union bridge.

➤Retention is even with last year; higher this year on new student enrollment.

Next meeting scheduled for Monday, June 6, 2016 at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday morning, Wesley Harrell from NSU Police stopped by to discuss security for graduation day.

Next, Jordan Dupuy, associate head coach at Southern Miss and a candidate for head coach of Lady Demons Basketball, met with Jerry Pierce and me.

Crystal Burch of Career Compass met with me to discuss the organization's efforts in north Louisiana.

Tonia and I then took off for Houston. We enjoyed a wonderful dinner conversation with NSU supporters Mr. and Mrs. Dow. Chris Maggio and Jill

Bankston joined us. The Dows are responsible for the beautiful entrance gates at NSU and numerous other enhancements to the campus.

Wednesday morning, Tonia and I left Houston at the crack of dawn to get to Leesville for the change of command ceremony at Fort Polk. We learned a number of things during the journey. First, several bridges over the Sabine Rive south of Toledo Bend are closed. Second, Texas does not provide notification of a closed bridge until you arrive at said bridge. Third, Google has no qualms with directing you to drive miles down dirt roads in order to lead you back to the same closed bridge. By the way, we missed the ceremony and burned 90 minutes of precious daylight...

Back in Natchitoches, I met with Tony Kemper from Marshall University, another candidate to coach the Lady Demons.

Wednesday afternoon, Tonia and I attended a tourism rally featuring Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser at Fort St. Jean Baptiste.

Wednesday evening, the School of Allied Health held a recognition ceremony for graduates in Radiologic Science. I was honored to speak to them briefly about the value of all work, even behind-the-scenes work at Seaworld...

Thursday morning, Jerry Pierce and I met with the third and final candidate for the Lady Demons position, Beth Gilson from Texas Women's University. All three candidates did exceptionally well and each could fit nicely within our university community. I hope we hear an announcement in the very near future.

Afterwards, I headed to Alexandria for an Open House at our Small Business Development Center there.

Back in Natchitoches, at the invitation of Connie Jones, I visited briefly with attendees of the Family and Consumer Sciences in Extension State Meeting.

The Student Government Association Executive Team met me for lunch at Maglieaux's. We discussed priorities for the coming year and just got to know each other a little better. I could not be more impressed with this group of student leaders.

Thursday afternoon, Lt. Colonel Kat Carlson and Sid Hall hosted the ROTC Awards Ceremony at the BCM House.

Thursday evening, the first annual Fork 'Em Farewell Crawfish Boil took place at Collins Pavilion. The entire Alumni and Development Team did a marvelous job raising awareness of the event, as evidenced by the impressive turnout. Special thanks to Kim Gallow for coordinating what will be an annual highlight on campus.

Friday was commencement day. Judging by the social media posts, we gave our graduates a fitting farewell. The work involved with an event of this magnitude often goes unrecognized. The grounds were beautiful. The security operation was flawlessly executed (even with the added complication of welcoming the governor). The facility was set up beautifully. And, of course, the Registrar's Office was out in full force to coordinate the event. Thank you all for participating and making the day special for our graduates.

At the morning ceremony, I could not have been more honored or humbled to receive the kind commendation from Dr. Marcia Hardy and the Faculty Senate. We have many miles to go, but the recognition of our collaborative work is an indication we have moved in the right direction. I look forward to continuing that work with you.

Jalan West did a magnificent job at both ceremonies introducing our commencement speakers. This young man has a bright future regardless of what life throws in his way. I hope the NCAA does the right thing and grants him his last year of eligibility. If for some reason, they do not, Jalan will shift course and still make us proud.

Both speakers brought terrific messages to our graduates. I hope our governor impressed you with his candor and focus on Louisiana as he did me. Dr. Holly showed the importance of knowing one's audience when he talked about the value of nurse practitioners. I was afraid the nursing faculty would rush the stage in enthusiastic response to his message...

Julie Kane and John Williams absolutely wowed with their respective approaches to closing remarks. I hope you enjoy this commencement tradition as much as I do.

At lunch, the graduates from the Class of 1966 gathered for lunch in the Student Union. At the luncheon, our Senate President Pro Tempore Gerald Long pledged a donation of \$600,000 to the NSU Foundation. A portion of that donation will enable us to make immediate progress toward the completion of the Watson Library Center for Academic Success.

Friday night, Tonia joined me and the Alumni and Development team at a reception for the Golden Jubilee Graduates at Varnado Hall. The show of support from these alumni was greatly appreciated. On a side note, this was hopefully the last event held in that venue prior to its renovation.

Saturday, Alumni and Development closed out a magical weekend with a luncheon for the Golden Jubilee Graduates and any other graduates from preceding classes. We were honored to welcome a graduate from 1944! She assured me she will be back next year.

Please contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns.