

PRESIDENT'S OCCASIONAL CAMPUS COMMUNIQUÉ

October 12, 2009

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – A BRIEF ESSAY

“We can do this, because our home is in Chicago.”

I used this refrain in my State of the University address on Gathering Day. And I invited you to join me in repeating this refrain each day of the academic year.

By “repeating the refrain” I mean putting it into action more than just thinking about it or speaking it aloud. I mean shaping our life together as an educational institution so it reflects the difference our place in Chicago can make. I mean focusing our work in such a way that we give back to the people of Chicago as much as we receive from them. I mean “preparing [our] students for lives of significance and service” for the environment they will live and work in rather than the environment we faced when we left college.

How will we do this? In these ways, and more:

- By identifying the many opportunities we’re already engaging to embrace Chicago as a place of learning.
- By dedicating a portion of each scheduled meeting of our respective department to consider our place in Chicago and its role in our work with students.
- By inviting a colleague, perhaps one from another department, to join you for coffee and conversation on this topic.
- By joining a faculty gathering in Hawkinson House as invited during the fall semester to reflect together, across our various academic disciplines, on the ways we reach into Chicago and the opportunities we can embrace to do this more effectively.
- By addressing this challenge in the annual planning sessions for each part of our academic program.

Each of us can be directly involved in at least one of these options; some of us ought to participate in every one of them.

At North Park University we must embrace Chicago,

. . . because doing so is consistent with our mission and identity;

. . . because doing so expands our resources for learning, at little expense, far beyond what North Park could otherwise provide;

. . . because doing so demonstrates that all of God's people have something to teach us – rich and poor, business person and pastor, immigrant and long-time resident; and

. . . because doing so sets us apart from other colleges and universities, it differentiates us in the marketplace, by showing that learning at North Park is especially deep, rich, and engaging because our home is in Chicago.

At North Park University we claim that Chicago is our classroom and all Chicagoans are our teachers. Together let's transform this statement from rhetoric to reality.

Student Conference

The Office of Diversity and Intercultural Programs has organized a Student Diversity Leadership Conference to be held on our campus on Friday, October 23. Over 200 participants from 20 colleges and universities across the Midwest region have registered to attend, alongside students, faculty, and staff from North Park. This promises to be a very good event, with the opening plenary session featuring Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil as speaker.

The full day's schedule is available online and is posted in various campus locations. Please invite students to attend as their class schedules allow, and encourage their attendance by participating with them in the plenary session or one or more of the workshops.

Fall Enrollment

A summary of enrollment numbers for the fall semester 2009 are included at the end of this communiqué in Appendix A. These are important data for all of us to review. Recruitment of new students has proven to be a challenge for us this year, with modest declines in enrollment apparent in many program areas. We have been able to accommodate this change in enrollment by means of careful budget planning during the spring of this year. Nonetheless, if enrollment of new students does not improve for the spring semester, and especially for the Fall 2010, we will face a considerable challenge with required budget adjustments.

As we have said repeatedly, recruitment and retention are central to North Park's continuing vitality. And these two are responsibilities for each of us. We each have an impact on whether students choose to study at North Park, and once they are enrolled

here we each have a significant impact on whether students complete their studies with us.

Open Office Days

As we have done in previous years, certain days during each semester are reserved on my calendar for visiting with students, faculty, and staff. Two such days are available during the next two weeks.

- For Faculty and Staff – Monday, October 12 – 8:30 to 3:30
- For Students – Monday, October 19 – 8:30 to 3:30

Please stop by to visit – individually or as a small group. And please encourage your colleagues and students to do the same.

Board of Trustees

The University's Board of Trustees meets for three regular sessions throughout the year. The first of these will be on Friday and Saturday, October 23 and 24. During each meeting we include a time when trustees host a reception for a select campus audience. In the fall semester the reception is for faculty. Please plan to attend this informal time with trustees, scheduled for Friday, October 23, from 3:15 to 4:00 in Olsson Lounge, Nyvall Hall. All faculty, full- and part-time, from every academic unit, are welcome.

Seminary Leadership

A few weeks ago I announced that Dr. Jay Phelan has chosen to conclude his work as Seminary President and Dean. Jay has worked in his present capacity for the past 14 years, during which the seminary has undergone substantial change, increased enrollment, and initiated several new programs.

We will soon begin the process of selecting new leadership for the seminary. This is a process which is particularly of interest to the seminary community, but also important for the wider university and for the Covenant church as well. To advise in the selection of new leadership I have appointed a search committee, in line with our usual practice. The following individuals will join me in this task:

- From North Park:
 - Two members of the seminary faculty
 - One seminary student
 - Mary SurrIDGE, vice president for development

- Scott Bolinder, chair of the Seminary Committee of the Board of Trustees
- From the Covenant Church
 - Gary Walter, president
 - One additional individual appointed by Gary Walter

I expect that the membership of this committee will be fully constituted by early November and will begin its work shortly thereafter. We expect that the transition in seminary leadership will take place during the summer 2010.

River Bank

After careful planning and cooperation with several government agencies, work to restore the river bank was initiated during the summer. This project is now nearly complete and provides an impressive improvement to the south river bank near the Magnuson Campus Center. The work includes restoration of the river bank as well as new lighting, fencing, landscaping and walkways.

Annual Academic Planning Sessions

Each fall semester we invite leaders of our various academic units to consider specific needs in their program areas. This review process provides Provost Joe Jones and me, along with our business office administrators, our marketing and recruitment professionals, our career development office, and others on campus, the opportunity to meet with academic leaders and select faculty and collaborate in the ongoing development of our academic program areas. Often this activity has been directed as a general review; this year we have been more specific in the guidelines provided. All academic units are considering a common question (regarding our continuing and growing involvement in Chicago) and each unit also addresses one or more selected topics of specific relevance to that unit.

The guidelines prepared for this year's planning review, along with the themes to be considered by the respective academic program units, are presented with this communiqué in Appendix B.

Appendix A

Enrollment Data – Fall 2009

New Student Enrollment Summary
 Fall Semester – Annual Census Data

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Undergraduate (traditional)</i>					
First-Year	359	374	373	415	364
Transfer	246	229	217	179	205
Visiting				12	7
TOTAL	607	603	595	606	576
<i>Undergraduate (non-traditional)</i>					
College Bridge	2	0	0	1	0
ESL	53	20	22	19	4
RN Completion	34	11	33	15	16
GOAL	66	41	61	45	33
Education Certification	12	26	48	19	8
TOTAL	167	98	137	99	61
<i>Graduate</i>					
SBNM	85	95	88	88	74
MS Nursing	40	32	30	39	29
Adult Nurse Practitioner	2	5	10	2	2
MA Education (all sites)	40	55	61	61	67
MA Community Development	10	7	10	0	0
Master of Music	7	7	5	4	3
TOTAL	184	201	204	194	175
<i>Seminary</i>					
Traditional	75	47	61	40	75
Cross Registered	0	3	3	0	5
TOTAL	75	50	64	40	80
GRAND TOTAL New Students	1,033	952	1,000	939	892
International Exchange (non-revenue)		18	10	21	9

Headcount Report (Total Enrollment)
 Fall Semester – Annual Census Data

	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Undergraduate (traditional)</i>				
Returning	1133	1255	1276	1266
First-Year	374	373	415	364
Transfer	229	217	179	205
Visiting		9	12	17
TOTAL	1736	1854	1882	1852
<i>Undergraduate (non-traditional)</i>				
College Bridge	0	0	1	0
ESL	31	29	24	6
RN Completion	47	83	81	83
GOAL	210	237	240	214
Education Certification	42	69	63	44
Special (students-at-large)	7	0	0	0
TOTAL	337	418	409	347
<i>Graduate</i>				
SBNM	344	329	353	337
MS Nursing	144	136	151	167
Adult Nurse Practitioner	15	21	20	21
MA Education (all sites)	141	162	169	188
MA Community Development	30	28	13	5
Master of Music	13	15	14	10
TOTAL	687	691	720	728
<i>Seminary</i>				
Traditional	287	284	269	269
Cross Registered	4	4	5	5
TOTAL	291	288	274	274
GRAND TOTAL Headcount	3069	3251	3285	3201
International Exchange (non-revenue)	0	9	23	9

Appendix B

**Guidelines for
Academic Planning Sessions**

Guidelines
Academic Program Planning Activity
Fall 2009

Overview

As has been our practice in recent years, during the fall semester each academic program unit will complete a review and planning process. In 2008 this process facilitated a broad general review for each program area. As defined for this year the process will feature two particular areas of focus. The first of these will be common to all academic program units and the second one will be particular to the respective program unit.

Participation will include each academic program unit of the University as well as the group responsible for leading the review of general education. Specifically, the following units are included:

- College of Arts and Sciences
- School of Adult Learning
- School of Business and Nonprofit Management
- School of Education
- School of Music
- School of Nursing
- Seminary
- Office of Distributive Learning
- General Education Review Task Force

Two-Step Process

The review for each academic program unit will follow a common two-step process.

First, each academic program unit will address the two identified foci. Leadership for this step is assigned to the respective dean/director, in consultation with the Provost or Seminary President and Dean. In addition, this will be undertaken in collaboration with the Admissions Office, Academic Services, Student Administrative Services, the Business Office, the Office of Career Development and Internships, and any other part(s) of the University community which the academic program unit deems appropriate. The specific topics to be addressed by each academic unit are identified below.

Second, the findings from the first step will be presented to and discussed with an administrative panel; through this deliberation the academic unit and the panel will agree on subsequent steps to be taken for selective initiatives. The administrative panel will be comprised of the senior administrative team, representatives from the Admissions Office, Academic Services, Student Administrative Services, Career

Development Office, and the Business Office, along with representatives from the respective academic unit selected by the Provost or Seminary President in consultation with the respective dean.

Schedule

Step 1 identified above will be completed during the Fall Semester 2009.

- Leadership for and coordination of this step is the responsibility of the respective dean/director, in consultation with the Provost or Seminary President and Dean.
- An early part of the Step 1 review process should be a meeting between the dean, Mark Olson, Aaron Schoof, Elizabeth Snezek, Colette Hands, and Les Carlstrom to establish a plan for the review, identify necessary areas of collaboration between the various offices, and set a schedule for activities throughout the Fall Semester. This meeting will be initiated by the respective dean/director and should be scheduled during early October.
- All work associated with Step 1 should be completed by Friday, December 11 with prepared materials submitted electronically to the President's Office and Provost's Office.

Step 2 identified above will be completed early in the Spring Semester with a meeting schedule identified through the President's Office in January.

Common Focus Area – Urban Learning and Engagement

All academic program units will address this focus area as part of the annual review.

The academic program unit will:

- Identify the primary ways in which academic programs sponsored by this academic unit draw on the resources of Chicago to enhance student learning.
- Prepare a summary of these current initiatives/practices/activities for posting on the University's web site.
- Identify selective ways in which to expand the unit's present urban engagement and further enhance student learning through the academic unit's curricular programs.

In its report submitted on December 11, the academic program unit (in collaboration with others consulted in the review process) will (a) summarize its present practices and

(b) identify and recommend actions for enhancing student learning through the unit's engagement with Chicago.

Particular Focus Areas – Identified for Each Academic Program Unit

In the December 11 report, each academic program unit will also report on the item(s) identified below for each unit. The report should include recommended actions.

College of Arts and Sciences

Two items will be considered. (a) The current organizational structure (divisions and departments) will be assessed and reviewed. Attention should be given to the effectiveness and efficiency of the structure in promoting faculty collaboration, facilitating curriculum development and delivery, and satisfying administrative responsibilities. (b) The curriculum for each major will be reviewed to identify approaches students may take to complete a Chicago-based internship as appropriate for the respective area of study. The internship may be required or strongly encouraged within the major, but in each case it should be articulated as a high quality opportunity to link the student's formal course work with the world of work.

School of Adult Learning

Generally, our present approach provides for a high quality program. However, enrollment is limited and decreasing. This year's review should consider where the markets are for adult programs, what delivery structures would facilitate learning and enhance enrollment, the appropriate program mix offered by SAL, the competition price point for adult undergraduate programs, and how best to embrace online, face-to-face, and hybrid delivery of courses. Specific actions should be recommended to increase enrollment while assuring continued program quality.

School of Business and Nonprofit Management

Generally, our present approach provides for a high quality program. However, enrollment varies considerably between course sections at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The review should focus on ways to improve curriculum delivery to provide sustainable enrollment levels in each course section and include online, face-to-face, and hybrid delivery of courses as appropriate. Specific actions should be recommended to increase curriculum delivery efficiency while assuring continued program quality.

School of Education

Two items will be considered. (a) A new master's program in educational leadership has been approved for implementation in 2010-2011. Delivery of this program will be considered, with attention to multiple delivery options. A review of the target

populations for this program will be completed, followed by preparation of a marketing plan for initiating the program, both in collaboration with the Admissions Office. Specific actions should be recommended to assure successful implementation of, and adequate enrollment in, the new program. (b) The SOE will identify opportunities to grow graduate/adult enrollment at off-site locations. A recruitment strategy for these opportunities should be determined in collaboration with the Admissions Office, and the SOE should consider internal resource requirements to support the potential program initiatives.

School of Music

Two items will be considered. (a) The BME curriculum will be revised to assure the opportunity for students to complete this program in eight semesters of study. (b) The possibility for expanding the University Orchestra by inclusion of volunteer musicians from the Chicago community will be assessed. The resulting proposal should include methods of advertising this audition-based opportunity and recruiting potential musicians throughout Chicagoland.

School of Nursing

During 2008-2009 the School gave preliminary attention to analyzing how practically to increase enrollment at the undergraduate level. This preliminary analysis should be completed, with a plan proposed for implementation.

Seminary

Recruitment and enrollment of new students has been sporadic, with a higher year often followed by a lower year. Attention should be given to reviewing our current recruitment and enrollment practices with the goal of consistently building stronger seminary enrollment. This work will require careful collaboration between seminary leadership and the Admissions Office. Among other topics, this review should (a) develop a plan to achieve consistency in recruitment from year-to-year, (b) identify and implement steps to take full advantage of the Kerns Scholars program, including long-term accommodation of field education expectations, (c) review the structure of the Presidential Scholars program, (d) complete the already-initiated review of the seminary's financial aid program, (e) identify obstacles to and recommend solutions for increasing enrollment in online courses, (f) identify and implement steps to advance recruitment activities in Chicagoland, and (g) review and recommend changes to degree programs with attention to curricular requirements, structures, and expectations. Other topics should be addressed as deemed appropriate which address the goal of increased enrollment.

Office of Distributed Learning

A university-wide strategic plan will be developed for distance learning allowing for centralized planning and resource utilization. The plan should provide a means for this

office to transition from primarily a “support” function to a visionary and productive approach to program design and implementation. In collaboration with the Admissions Office a plan should be developed to market and recruit students for online programs.

General Education Review Task Force

A report will be prepared to summarize planning activities-to-date and propose program refinement, with attention to how the undergraduate curriculum can effectively address expected learning outcomes and University mission and identity.