

OCCASIONAL CAMPUS COMMUNIQUE

May 24, 2013

The President's Perspective – A Brief Reflection

The need for a break from the routine seems to be on my mind this semester! In the communique I wrote in March I talked about our traditional week of spring break, and now as summer approaches I'm thinking about what we might call summer break. This may be foremost in my attention today because on Monday Linda and I will leave on a personal trip overseas which certainly will provide a break for the two of us from our daily routine here in Chicago and at North Park.

A "summer break" certainly does not mean for any of us that we will have no work-related responsibilities for the next three months. No, some of us will be on campus for most of the summer, perhaps with a week or two of vacation dropped in, along with a few days around the Memorial Day weekend, and a nice four-day 4th-of-July weekend this year. Others of us will be away from campus for longer periods, but these extended absences often include times dedicated to research and writing projects along with class preparation. In every way we'll be preparing for the great school year that follows at summer's end.

For all of us, in our individual ways, summer provides a "break" from our normal routine. Whether this involves absence from the campus, or just a more quiet workday with fewer people here at any one time, it always provides a healthy change from the pace and activity of the two-semester academic year.

In thinking about this I was intrigued by a brief blog post I read recently in which the author, a K-12 school superintendent, commented on the academic "summer break." He noted that while this break is important, there are some things we should NOT take a break from. In his words:

Let's not take a break from learning because there is strength in that.

Let's not take a break from serving because there's power in that.

Let's not take a break from being grateful because there's joy in that.

These are good words. Let's take them with us whenever we do take a break this summer.

Special Recognition

The end of the school year brings special recognition for certain people—and our graduates are central to this. We had a wonderful baccalaureate service this year at Fourth Presbyterian Church on Michigan Avenue, followed by three great commencement convocations the next day. In each convocation we applauded our students, and of course in applauding our students we applaud each person on this campus who makes possible the fulfillment of our mission—to prepare students for lives of significant and service.

It's appropriate, also, at year's end to recognize two select groups of campus employees. First, are those who are completing their years of service at North Park. We took special note of this group recently at Gathering Day 3.0 and commented on the service each has offered to North Park. This is an impressive group—eight individuals who have contributed collectively over 140 years of service to the North Park learning community.

I name them here again, both because they deserve another mention, but also to prompt us to thank them again, perhaps through a personal note, for their service among us.

- Phil Anderson, professor of church history
- Sally Anderson, director of Brandel Library
- John Bonie, associate professor of management education
- Di Dang, custodian
- Robert Hirsch, professor of management
- Mary Lynch, assistant professor of nursing
- Cherie Meacham, professor of Spanish
- Thom Nelson, chief engineer

A second group of special note is faculty who have completed a performance and professional development review process and as a result have been awarded promotion in faculty rank and/or granted a tenured appointment at North Park. This is a significant accomplishment for these individuals, one which reflects their service to the University along with their significant professional advancement.

We extend special congratulations to each of the following:

- Angelyn Bartolomei, promoted to professor
- Karl Clifton-Soderstrom, promoted to associate professor
- James Dekker, granted tenure and promoted to professor
- Gianfranco Farruggia, promoted to professor
- Ann Hicks, promoted to professor
- Timothy Johnson, promoted to professor
- Al Kamienski, granted tenure and promoted to professor
- Catherine Marsh, granted tenure and promoted to professor

- Kelly Potteiger, granted tenure and promoted to associate professor
- Rachel Schmale, promoted to associate professor
- Theodoros Zervas, promoted to associate professor

Summer Blessing

May God grant each of us a wonderful summer. Times for leisure and special moments with family, most certainly. Times for reflection, always necessary. Times for personal and professional renewal, which make us better people. Times for service to the University, in which we live out our vocation. Times for drawing near to God, who grants light in each day.