Institutional Planning Council

Minutes

August 25, 2006


Kim Myrick presented a report on the progress of the enrollment strategic objective. The enrollment numbers—returning and new—make clear that the College is on a path to another record enrollment, where, in the entering class at least, the male enrollment will equal or exceed the female enrollment. Still unclear is whether enrollment will be sufficient to meet the budget goal of 1,115 students. Kim outlined the numerous enhancements to the admissions and recruitment operation, as well as the opportunities for the year ahead.

A major contributor to the growth in entering student enrollment this year is the beginning of Division III football. Linda gave a status report on football that suggests that all of the positive benefits we anticipated from adding the sport have, thus far, been met or exceeded. We will have a roster of well over 100 students. Already 400 season tickets have been sold, and the athletic portion of the web site is receiving in excess of 1,200 hits per day, when 200-300 hits is normal.

David Rowe, introduced David Beard, our webmaster, to discuss enhancements to the web site, especially the new home page. Appreciation was expressed to David for all he has done to make the look and feel of the web more user friendly and in keeping with the College’s visual identity.

Jay Simmons reported about the progress in enhancing the academic program—our second strategic objective. He noted improvements in the number of students engaging in undergraduate research, as well as encouraging improvements in National Survey for Student Engagement data. While we have a ways still to go with the NSSE data, we should take pride in the strides we have made.

David Rowe reported on the progress of the Defining Moment: LaGrange College Campaign for Distinction. This year the College raised a near record $9.3 million. We are well on our way to the goal of securing the necessary funding for the construction of a new library. David shared the detail of our fund-raising efforts to date, and the plan for the year ahead.
Stuart gave a report on the status of the 175th anniversary convocation challenges in the areas of civility, diversity, service, and excellence. He noted improvements that have been made, as well as challenges that need further study and review, such as a student social code, a more diverse constituent base, providing international experiences for all students, and more students going on to graduate and professional school. He shared data regarding 6-year graduation rates, which suggest an improvement from 40% in 2005, to 54% in 2006. The improvement is due, in large measure, to changes in the academic calendar and core curriculum in 2000.

Phyllis Whitney shared that the dining hall underwent a major transformation during the summer, especially to the kitchen area. She shared the status of the upgrading of HVAC equipment on campus, which will be on-going through the fall semester. She told the group that Roger Stephens has taken over responsibility for our copy center and much of the copying needs of the institution, and, she related that she is making contact with the architect for the new library to re-engage them on the design of the library, given the success of our fund-raising efforts to date.

Linda Buchanan noted that student housing is likely to be at capacity this year. She expressed thanks to Jack Slay and Kirby McCartney who have been juggling room assignments all summer given the fluid nature of our enrollment.

Weekly chapel services will undergo a significant change this year, according to Chaplain Quincy Brown, as requested by our students. Worship experiences will be in the chapel each Thursday from 12:15 until 12:45. The entire College community is invited. Quincy also spoke briefly about other activities occurring in religious life.

Greg McClanahan explained that a new date is being identified for attorney Janet Hill to share the results of her research, as requested by the faculty, on the differences between the 1977 and 1999 tenure policies.

Phyllis Whitney and Marty Pirrman gave a report on the College’s financial health, which suggested that the College is in very good shape financially. It was suggested that the report be modified to include FY 2006 information and then to make that information available to the entire College community at a town hall meeting in late October or early November.

Future IPC Meetings will be held on the following Wednesdays from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.: September 13, October 18, November 8, February 21, March 21, and April 18. The following were suggested as agenda items for the September meeting: enrollment report, U. S. News & World Report data review, retention rate review, and to undertake long-range planning longer than the next 3-5 years.
Respectfully submitted,

F. Stuart Gulley