



No matter what your role is on campus, I'm sure you'll agree that this summer is going entirely too fast! In these weeks between the end of summer orientation programs and the arrival of students in late August, the campus is busy with continued construction projects, youth camps in athletics and the arts, summer courses, research and grant projects, fall course preparations, budgeting, annual report development, and performance evaluation processes. I hope that whatever you're working on this summer is going well and that you're taking some time to enjoy the amazing weather we've enjoyed this year.

This letter offers information about a number of topics. I welcome your responses and suggestions, as well as questions that you would like to see me address in future letters.

With best wishes,

Virginia S. Stuvatt



Institutional Research and the Cabinet

Beginning July 1, the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment (IRPA) was moved out of Academic Affairs and became a direct report to the President. The office itself is in the same physical location, but this change in the organizational structure reflects the central role of the three core areas of IRPA across all divisions of the university. An important standard of accreditation is institutional effectiveness, and this change in the structure will allow SUNY Fredonia to support efforts planning, assessment, and institutional research. IRPA Director Xiao Zhang will be meeting with the entire Cabinet at least once each month, and she and the new Assistant Director of IRPA will be valuable resources as we implement the Power of Fredonia strategic plan.

Assessment Retreat Follow-Up

On June 12-13, a group of faculty and staff from across several divisions participated in a workshop that was facilitated by Ingrid Johnston-Robledo and Marissa Cope. This workshop arose from discussions of the Assessment Committee last year under the leadership of Jacky Swansinger. That committee identified a need for greater understanding of assessment across campus and more conversation about the ways student learning and institutional effectiveness might be assessed. By all reports, the retreat was a success, and I look forward to seeing the full report from the organizers soon.

Thank you to those who joined this workshop and to those who planned and facilitated. Participants were **Gary Bice**, Residence Life; **Roger Byrne**, College of Arts and Sciences; **Mary Carney**, Sociology, Anthropology, Criminal Justice, and Social Work; **KimMarie Cole**, English; **Jeremy Corrente**, Financial Aid; **Amy Cuhel-Schuckers**, Office of Sponsored Programs; **Dawn Eckenrode**, Professional Development Center; **Carrie Fitzgerald**, Language, Learning, and Leadership; **Mike Grady**, Physics; **Mary Hills**, International Education; **Mike Jabot**, Science Education; **David Kinkela**, History; **Kate Levy**, Music; **Sam Mason**, Chemistry; **Kay McDonough**, Communication; **Sue McNamara**, Business Administration; **Lisa**

Newell, Judicial Affairs; **Sandy Noble**, University Accounting; **Mojtaba Seyedian**, Business Administration; **Mary Beth Sievens**, History; **Gurmukh Singh**, Computer and Information Sciences; **Angelika Summerton**, Theatre and Dance; **Jacky Swansinger**, History; **Leanna White**, Counseling Center; **Kerrie Wilkes**, Reed Library; **Randy Woodbury**, Geosciences. I hope that colleagues ask you about what you learned and engage you in considering ways to set goals and measure progress in your areas.

Search: Director of the Center for Multicultural Affairs

A search is now underway for a new Director of the Center for Multicultural Affairs (CMA) to replace outgoing Director Averl Harbin. That Center provides support for a number of student groups and encourages communication, programming, and collaboration across cultures. David Herman, Vice President for Student Affairs, notes that the Center may pull in some of the other multicultural groups that did not exist when that office was created, and he expects that the new director will work with an advisory committee.

With a new Director for the CMA and a new Chief Diversity Officer, SUNY Fredonia can explore new ways to promote diversity and to link initiatives that support diversity across academic and student support areas. This search is being chaired by Monica White, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs.

AASCU Summer Council of President

I have been fortunate to participate in the Summer Council of Presidents American Association of State Colleges and Universities. This meeting brings together presidents and chancellors from AASCU's 430 member institutions, all of which face similar challenges with student learning, state allocations, and other issues that may seem to be isolated and unique. Of particular interest as we begin the process of implementing the baccalaureate goals at Fredonia were two sessions on creativity and innovation. Charlan Nemeth, a professor in psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, offered her research on the habits of mind that lead to truly creative approaches to problem-solving. Roberta Ness, a dean of health sciences at the University of Texas, presented information from her recently published book, *Innovation Generation: How to Produce Creative and Useful Scientific Ideas* (Oxford University Press). She provides strategies that faculty, administrators, and students can use to overcome habitual cognitive patterns that prevent us from moving forward in our thinking and actions. My husband, Brooke, and I also participated in the AASCU Footprint service-learning project at the Aspen Community School, where we helped children paint a mural and build miniature adobe homes. These and other sessions provided much to think about as we plan for the year ahead.

Updates on Summer Construction

As you walk across campus these days, you see renovation, construction, and maintenance work being done. Karen Porpiglia, Vice President for Administration, reports that at this point, all projects are on schedule.

- Williams Center renovation: scheduled to re-open when students return
- Science Center: construction continues, with an expected opening in August 2014
- Maytum Hall: renovation continues, with offices expected to return over winter break
- Fitness Center: construction in Dods Hall continues, with expected opening in Spring 2013
- Rockefeller Arts Center addition: construction manager selected, with actual construction expected to begin in Spring 2013 (with anticipated completion in August 2015)
- Houghton Hall: beginning preliminary meetings to plan for renovations

In addition, the upgrades of the electrical and water lines continue through the summer. These upgrades do result in some planned power and water shut-downs, which will be announced in advance.

Save the Date: Back-to-Campus Party

Please mark your calendars for August 31, when we'll continue the tradition of the campus-wide party to celebrate the opening of the academic year. On the survey about presidential traditions, many respondents indicated that they enjoy this event and are glad for the chance to celebrate across offices, divisions, and positions on campus. Many people also made suggestions for changes, however, and I will be working with FSA and the Cabinet to try some new approaches. You'll receive an invitation once these details are in place, but for now, please hold the evening of Friday, August 31, for this event!

Presidential Advisory Groups

On the presidential transitions survey, I asked your views about two groups that had been advisory to the President: the Student Cabinet and the Faculty Cabinet. Based on your comments and my own approach, I will not be convening a faculty cabinet but relying instead on regular governance channels to seek feedback from faculty and staff. I do want to continue the Student Cabinet, but I would like to seek student input on this before finalizing the composition of this group. So I will wait to appoint this group until students return to campus in August.

Orientation for New First-Year and Transfer Students

The summer orientation program ended successfully last Friday, thanks to the efforts of Michael Lemieux, Amy Leclair, student leaders, faculty advisors, FSA, Residence Life, and many staff members who gave presentations in each of the five two-day sessions for first-year students and the one-day session for transfer students. We welcomed a total of 1,659 people to campus: 152 transfer students, 906 first-year students, and 601 parents/family members. Admissions staff are now calling those who were not able to be at orientation to confirm their intentions to matriculate and to assist them with the transition.

The comments of parents and students in these sessions give a clear picture of why students choose Fredonia. Some remark on the strength of programs and the appeal of the facilities, but most tell the stories of the faculty and staff who reached out and welcomed prospective students and their families. Thank you to all who contact students, make them feel special and welcome, and give them good reasons to study and live here. This entering class is off to a good start!

In the Next Letter

These are some topics I expect to address in the July 31 letter:

- Reports from visits with Directors across campus
- Update on searches

Please send your ideas, questions, and comments to me at horvath@fredonia.edu.