

Provost-gram

An Update from Rowan University Provost Ali Houshmand

Volume 8, March/April 2008

Comments from the Provost

At a recent lunch that I hosted for newly tenured faculty, I was asked about the lessons that I, as a relatively new Rowan employee had learned since I first came to Rowan. My immediate response – the importance of inclusiveness and shared governance in moving the institution forward. A lot of people have been very active this past year in developing and refining initiatives. Now we should ensure that we are including all interested members of the campus in shaping the direction for Rowan.

Inclusiveness takes many forms; working within the governing structures, regularly communicating with the campus about initiatives, updating constituencies about the work of committees and task forces, and providing opportunities for us to engage in dialogue about important issues. One way in which we do the latter is through our open forums. RU Engaged has held three open forums and the Rowan University Self Study team (RUSS) for our Middle States accreditation has held two within the last few months. I want to highlight some of the open forums that are being planned for the near future and encourage you to participate.

On April 11 the RUSS team will conduct its third open forum. The focus will be on assessment of institutional effectiveness and assessment of student learning. Participants will be asked to respond to a rubric to evaluate the status of institutional conditions that support and sustain a culture of assessment. They will also have an opportunity to share their reactions to the assessment sections of the Self Study document and provide suggestions for the document.

RU Engaged will hold its fourth and final open forum for the year on April 18 at 2:00 in the townhouses. The previous open forums have given us all an opportunity to discuss our thoughts about the direction for Rowan. At this final forum, President Farish will summarize what he has heard from these campus conversations and share his response.

In spring 2007 President Farish charged a Strategic Task Force, co-chaired by Christy Faison, Jim Newell, and Karen Siefing to review our current strategic plan and make suggestions for revision as needed. The task force will host open hearings for the draft Strategic Plan 2007-2017. The hearings will be held on Wednesday, April 23, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. and Friday, April 25, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. Both hearings will be held in Campbell Library, Room 126. The document is available for your review on the Rowan website at <http://www.rowan.edu/open/usp/>.

In September I asked Dean Sosa to work in collaboration with the academic deans and the Graduate Executive Committee to provide a long term restructuring plan regarding the Graduate School by the end of the spring semester, 2008. A draft restructuring plan has been shared with the campus leadership and the committee is now planning an open forum for all interested faculty, staff, and students.

I have disseminated a new summer school model to administrators, the senate and union leadership, and department chairs, and have in turn, asked them to share the plan with their departments. I believe the plan will strengthen our summer school and reward faculty, staff, and administrators for all their hard work. I hope you will all join me in helping make the new summer school a vibrant and successful program for our students, our faculty and the University.

A new task force has been formed to develop new initiatives at our Camden campus. Our Camden campus has much to be proud of for its accomplishments over the years. I believe that we can build upon our reputation and expertise to work in partnership with the citizens of Camden for all our benefit. I am also working with the Deans and the Senate to establish a number of new task forces to examine the feasibility of new programs, utilizing our facilities at all three campuses. I will provide continued updates on the work of these task forces in future Provost-grams.

I realize that it is a very busy time of the academic year for all of us. But I ask of you, please take the time to read the documents from the different committees, provide feedback, and come out to the open forums. It's an opportunity for us to listen to one another and have our voices heard. It is in this way that we can work together to create the type of institution that we would like Rowan to be.



CPCE Update – Dr. Horacio Sosa

The College of Professional and Continuing Education continues to offer training in the form of workshops and seminars to New Jersey educators and administrators. So far this spring our continuing education team has provided 16 workshops to approximately 600 educators and administrators. This includes the Fifth Annual Symposium for Speech Language Specialists which hosted 183 speech language specialists and educators from as far as Bergen

County, New Jersey. In addition, 40 different workshops were customized for individual school districts. The CPCE is also working to grow enrollment and improve processes for the summer semester. A new Coordinator of Summer Programs, dedicated to all activities related to the summer semester, joined the CPCE staff in March. The CPCE is looking forward to continued growth in both our academic and continuing education offerings.

Task Force Updates

Below is an update on the work of the joint Academics/Provost task forces that were created for 2007-2008.

- ❖ Undeclared Students has completed its work and is preparing a final report with recommendations to be distributed to the Senate and Academic Affairs Council.
Statewide Transfer Agreement has completed its work. The report led to a pair of resolutions from the University Senate that has been signed by the Provost. The Artistic and Creative Experience, M/G, WI, LIT, public speaking and Rowan Seminar have been removed from the General Education model and are now termed “The Rowan Experience.” Programs can no longer require specific Gen Ed courses and programs may make no reference to General Education Requirements except for a single statement that, “In addition to fulfilling the program requirements, all students are required to fulfill the university-wide General Education Requirements and Rowan Experience Requirements.” All major requirements and other courses (including specific general education courses required for graduation) must be listed under a single heading – Required Courses. No curriculum process is required for departments to make these changes.
- ❖ Strategic Enrollment Management has been gathering data, developing a model to predict program-levels enrollments across semesters, and trying to determine general categories for programs to allow comparison and analysis.
- ❖ Tenure/Recontracting/Promotion Merger is completing its work and will shortly present a report and draft document to the bargaining unit for consideration of one document for tenure, recontracting, and promotion to associate professor.
- ❖ Deans’ Review has drafted a document for a comprehensive five-year review of deans. The draft has been shared with the Academic Affairs Council and with the Senate president. Once the document has been finalized it will be disseminated to the university community.
- ❖ Turnitin has drafted an interim policy for the use of Turnitin by faculty. Matt Lund, the representative from the Senate Executive Committee has submitted it to the Senate executive. It will be presented to the full Senate for discussion and vote.

Admissions Update – Mr. Albert Betts, Jr.

After a record high of over 10,000 applications for fall 2007, applications are down slightly for fall 2008 – about 5% for both freshmen and transfers. Deposits, however, are only slightly lower than at this time last year. Applications were received from students in 36 states, a record for Rowan.

The first two of five scheduled accepted student receptions on campus were held at the end of March. These events were extremely well-attended, as were both the March and April regular open houses.