

This monthly report is intended to provide the Vernon College Board of Trustees, Vernon College Foundation Board members, as well as college faculty and staff, with updated information regarding significant college activities, issues, and accomplishments.

College Governance – Dr. Dusty R. Johnston

- In a letter dated January 15, Governor Perry, Lt. Governor Dewhurst, and Speaker Straus requested that state agencies and institutions of higher education submit written proposals identifying a five percent biennial reduction to their 2010-2011 General Revenue appropriations.
Dr. Johnston joined officials from the 50 community colleges on February 27 in Austin to discuss the mandate and to brainstorm about the possibility of an exemption for community colleges from the budget cut. Primary reasons for the exemption request include:
 - Community college enrollment in Texas increased nearly 12% statewide for the Fall 2009 semester—adding an additional 66,000 students to the state’s educational system. Vernon College experienced a 10% growth in students this past year. Any cuts in funding will impact the colleges’ ability to meet the needs of current students and to enroll additional students who are already making inquiries about classes that will be available in upcoming semesters.
 - At a time of unprecedented unemployment (Texas stands at just over 8%), community colleges are leaders in job skill training and in working to help Texans during this difficult economic period. Vernon College provides a tremendous volume of workforce training programs and specific business and industry training in Vernon, Wichita Falls, and the 12- county service area.
 - Community colleges serve in the role of economic development engines for their local communities and the state at large. Vernon College employs over 215 individuals and has an annual budget exceeding \$17 million, most of which stays within our 12-county service area.

Vernon College expected to receive \$5,806,042 in state appropriations for 2010. This appropriation represents 33% of the total college revenue. The five percent reduction will total \$290,302 for FY 2010 and an additional \$294,843 for FY 2011. Other important sources of revenue which fund the total college budget include: student tuition and fees (40%), auxiliary income (15%), and local taxes (12%). Any decrease in the state appropriation will result in budget cuts to instructional and student services. Appropriated formula funds are limited to the following elements of costs: instruction, academic support, student services, institutional support, organized activities, and staff benefits associated with the salaries paid from the appropriation. These cuts in state appropriations will lead to an increasing shift of the burden to the other three revenue sources in an effort to continue current instructional programs and services to students just at current levels.

The administrative team will be going over the 2009-2010 budget line by line to try to find the \$290,000 plus dollars for the reduction while causing the least disruption to instruction and to direct student services. The timing of this request causes additional hardship since most of the fixed costs associated with the Fall 2009 semester and the Spring 2010 semester have already been committed. I can assure you that Vernon College will continue to put the needs of students first in our decision making process. The reduction plan must be submitted by February 15, 2010.

- Dr. Johnston conducted a meeting on January 19 with the Wichita County Advisory Committee at the Century City Campus in Wichita Falls. The agenda included the updated Institutional Profile, a summary of current activities, and a discussion of future activities for Vernon College in Wichita Falls.
- The renovation plans for the Skills Training Center are near completion. The next phase will be to work with the architect to develop bid proposals so that construction can begin soon.
- Discussions are beginning to develop plans for new signage for the Century City Center campus in Wichita Falls.

- An Academic Advising Task Force is being formed to full review all policies, procedures, process, practices, and functions regarding academic advising at Vernon College. The Task Force will make recommendations for change and improvement to be piloted this summer and to be fully implemented prior to the Fall 2010 semester.
- The Vernon College baseball field will be undergoing expansion and renovation this summer due to the generosity of an external donor with a love for baseball. This is exciting news for the VC baseball program. The expansion and renovation will be completed using only donor funds, no College funds will be used in the project.
- February is the month when most employee evaluations/peer reviews are conducted. These peer reviews are essential to ensuring that Vernon College is an effective and efficient institution that meets the needs of students, communities, and employees.

Instruction – Dr. Gary Don Harkey

- The disbursement and removal of equipment from the discontinued Aircraft Maintenance program at STC is nearing completion and architectural plans are being finalized for the renovation of space formerly occupied by that program.
- At the end of late registration (Jan 21, 2010) 10,461 duplicated students were enrolled at Vernon College for the Spring 16 week and Spring I eight week semesters. This represents approximately 73% of the 14,250 seats available.
- On February 4, representatives of Vernon College, Texas Workforce Commission, Pratt & Whitney, and the Wichita Falls Chamber of Commerce and Industry met at the Skills Training Center for the presentation of a TWC Skills Development Fund Grant in the amount of \$120,827. The grant was written by Shana Munson, Associate Dean of Career and Technology Education and will be used to provide training for approximately 90 Pratt & Whitney employees in the areas of machining, computer technology, and leadership.
- Six students from area high schools participated in “job shadowing” at the Skills Training Center this past week as part of career exploration activities sponsored by the North Texas Tech-Prep Consortium.
- Summer and Fall course schedules are currently being developed.
- The Calendar Committee will be meeting this month to develop the 2010-2011 Academic Calendar.
- The first draft of the 2010-2011 Annual Action Plan for Instructional Services is nearing completion.
- Gary Don Harkey, Mark Holcomb, and Jessica Sutherland will be attending workshops in conjunction with the TACTE conference which focus on “best practices “for community colleges in effectively working with high schools.

Student Services/Athletics – John Hardin, III

- Baseball and Softball getting ready to gear up for their seasons.
- Volleyball interviewing for assistant coach position.
- Dorms full again and everyone moved back in.
- Student Activities great beginning of the year activity with local NFL player in attendance and getting ready to restart Student Government.
- Student Forum gauging interest for Spring Semester to determine viability.
- Testing resigned VISD contract for GED for 2010-2011.
- Counseling completed registration and late registration without problems beginning planning for the Spring semester.
- Security has completed schedule with Cannedy security for guards for Spring 2010 semester and working on security policy for new classroom phones.

Admissions, Records & Financial Aid/Registrar – Joe Hite

- Complete processing of Spring semester new student Applications for Admission

- Completed and submitted February 1st Coordinating Board 006 and 002 end of semester class and TSI reports
- Assisting students with late registration, Campus Connect and on-site, at Vernon and CCC
- Submitted revised 2010-11 annual plans for Admissions, Records, and Financial Aid
- Conducted on-site registration on Vernon Campus January 12
- Conducted on-site registration at Century City Center January 13 and 14
- Completed Fall semester grade processing and academic status updates
- Completed checking of graduation applications for December 12, 2009 graduation
- Reviewing SAP (satisfactory progress standards) for Fall semester financial aid students
- Melissa Elliott, Jeanne Ballard, and Aletha Newman presented the Vernon High School financial aid workshop
- Training half-time Financial Aid Office counter-staff position that will begin January 4, 2010
- Currently certifying student loans for Spring 2010 semester
- Continue packaging late applicants for 2010 Spring financial aid awards

Finance/Administrative Services/Physical Plant – Garry David

- Completed the sale of aviation equipment to Tarrant County Community College. Equipment should all be gone by the end of the week.
- Processed and mailed 2009 W-2's for all employees – If you haven't received yours contact Mindi
- Processed payments for all Spring enrolled students.
- Financial Aid checks will be released Thursday the 28th.
- IT - Installed a new Email archiving system that will allow users to access their archived emails remotely. System should be activated in the next week or so.
- Installation of Security phones is complete. We are working on emergency protocol's, recorded messages, training etc. More information and system activation coming soon.
- Facilities – Completed various remodel projects that were started over the Holiday break.

College Effectiveness – Betsy Harkey

Betsy made Annual Planning Process presentations to the Vernon College Faculty and Staff at Spring Kick Off on January 15 and to the Board of Trustees on January 20. The information included:

- An overview of the Annual Planning Process and structure that is serving as a pilot for 2010-2011
- The agreed upon timeline for completion of the project
- Discussion of opportunities for and importance of faculty and staff involvement in the process
- And introduction of the Planning and Assessment Committee members.

A College Effectiveness Resource List was also provided to all.

Components of the College have had a busy January in order to complete their 2010-2011 Annual Action Plans by the end of the month.

Institutional Advancement – Michelle Alexander

- Working on bringing the new STARS Scholarship Tracking and Review System online. Once up and running our current and prospective students will be able to apply for Vernon College and Vernon College Foundation Scholarships online. It will help reduce the amount of paper handled by the Institutional Advancement and Financial Aid Departments when working with scholarships and awards.
- The Vernon College Foundation Annual Meeting was rescheduled to Thursday, February 11, 2010.

- As of December 31, 2009 a total of \$286,277.58 had been given in total philanthropy to the Vernon College Foundation and Vernon College. To date, 39% of the faculty and staff have participated along with 54% of the Foundation's Board of Directors and 43% of the College's Board of Trustees.

Quality Enhancement – Criquett Lehman

- The VC Café has resources available for use upon your request. The Quality Enhancement Resource Inventory includes the following: Wimba Live Classroom, Camtasia Software, Adobe Premier Elements, Qwizdom Clickers & Action Point Software (Site License), Audacity, Webcams & Headsets. For more information or to schedule a training please contact Criquett Lehman (VER ext 2335, CCC ext 3308) or Roxie Hill (VER ext 2316, CCC ext 3308).
- Melissa Elliott, Director of Financial Aid and QEP Pilot Participant, conducted her first high school financial aid presentation using Qwizdom clickers on Thursday, January 21 to an audience of 58 at Vernon High School. The night was very successful and she received several positive comments including “as someone who has attended similar presentations, the use of clickers made an absolutely wonderful difference”, “there truly seemed to be a sense of understanding and comfort with the information presented” and “the use of the clickers got the students involved and made them more attentive to what the presenter was saying”.

Human Resources – Haven David

- Planwithease (Third Party Administrator) is up and running for 403b Plan.
- Faculty/Staff Directory is now online.
- 2009-2010 Employee Handbook is updated online.
- Compensatory Time/Overtime Pay policy clarification in Employee Handbook.
- Angie and I met with three representatives from MetLife (our account for our part-time employees) to resolve some issues we are having with those accounts and to discuss some possible new benefit products for Vernon College to offer in the future.
- Completed IPEDS, CMS and TXP reports.
- Remember to use new I-9, W-4 and Criminal Background forms in new employee packets.
- Processing applications for : Director of Information Technology
Assistant Volleyball Coach
- New Hires: January 11th – Elaine Naylor – Biology Instructor
January 25th – Kevin Monroe – Custodial Technician - STC

DRJ Comments –

- The spring semester has gotten off to a great start. Classes are full, enrollment is up, students seem eager to learn, faculty are refreshed from the Christmas break, and all staff are working hard to keep this engine we call Vernon College moving forward.
- The consistent emphasis on college effectiveness and planning seems to be taking a toe hold and becoming more ingrained in everyday conversation and action.
- The funding reductions will be a pretty good bump in the road if they come to actuality (and I believe they will). As I mentioned on January 15, the future will test our creativity, our innovativeness, and maybe even our fortitude.
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