School of Education and Professional Studies

2007-2008 Academic Year Opening Address
August 29, 2007
11:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Introduction

Welcome, Introductions, Note of Appreciation. First, let me welcome you all back to another academic year. A special welcome to our new faculty, professionals, and staff:

- Rachel Aery, Literacy Center Assistant for the coming year.
- Marta Albert, New Faculty Member in the Department of Literacy
- Debbie Anderson, faculty member in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and responsible for classroom management courses at the early childhood and childhood levels.
- Sally Barber, Graduate Assistant in the Literacy Center
- Bruce Brydges, our coordinator of assessment.
- Valerie Chiarenzelli, Visiting Faculty Member in the area of Secondary Social Studies.
- Ronny Diederick, TaskStream-Assessment Graduate Assistant
- Joshua Holmes, Full-time in the Graduate Studies Office
- Donna Kennedy, Visiting Faculty member in the area of Secondary Mathematics, taking Don Straight’s place this year while he is attending a doctoral program at Clarkson.
- Glenn Seminelli, Faculty member in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and responsible for science education and the early childhood and childhood levels.
- Annie Butterfield, Receptionist in the Graduate Studies Office
- Diane Billings, Secretary for the ICT and Community Health Depts.

I would also like to extend our congratulations to Edd Schneider on the birth of their daughter, Ella, this past summer.

Accomplishments Over the Last Year: Before looking to the coming year, I would like to review some of the accomplishments that were made over last year:
1. The Department of Community Health, using the College’s process for program review that is used by all departments in the School of Arts and Sciences, welcomed a visiting team here from April 22 through April 24. I applaud Maureen McCarthy, who coordinated the visit and was responsible for writing the self-study, and the Community Health faculty for a successful visit. The team was truly impressed with the faculty, students and program. Well done.

2. We received a response last year on the 15 Specialized Professional Association or SPA Reports that were submitted. All but three programs were nationally recognized. This success rate certainly reflects well on the quality of our programs. Those programs not accredited are working on program revisions and will also become nationally accredited before too long.

3. We have been very successful over the last year in fund-raising. I do have to take this opportunity to thank publicly Nancy Griffin, our liaison from the Advancement Office, who works with us in raising funds for the school. (1) Over $140,000 was raised last year for the Mary English Commons that is housed just outside the Literacy Center and dedicated during Alumni Weekend this past July. The Mary English Commons presents the history and traditions of this institution, the oldest in the SUNY System, founded in 1816 as St. Lawrence Academy. Teacher education at St. Lawrence Academy, while done on an informal basis from the early years, was nevertheless not officially recognized and funded by the state until 1834, making teacher education at this institution among the oldest in the state with approximately 173 years of service to providing quality teachers for New York State and beyond. If you haven’t taken time to go through the exhibit, I strongly encourage you to do so. It provides valuable information about our history. I mention this facility in my address because it was the Teacher Education Alumni Board members, who initiated the project and guided it through to its completion. The co-chairs of this effort included my wife, Molly, Vicki Hayes, and Jane Subramanian, the archivist in the Crumb Library. (2) We received over the last year a donation given to provide, annually, our first “full-tuition” scholarship; a scholarship to be offered to a student majoring in Early Childhood education. This was thanks to an endowment established by John Shattuck of Brownville, New York, in memory of his wife Susan Holly Dierks, who was an Early Childhood teacher. You can read more about this scholarship in the Newsletter that was recently published and put in
your mailboxes. It is appalling the size of the debt that students leave College with. This scholarship will help some students to graduate with less debt.

(3) We also received a $50,000 donation from a generous alumna, Ms. Elaine Lucas. This will be used to help fund an endowment for the new Center of Excellence for the Teaching of Math and Science in Satterlee 301 that will be fully functional by the spring semester.

(4) In addition to the above donations, we have also received over $20,000 of additional donations that will be used to support student scholarships.

4. Last year I asked all departments to submit their resource needs. I received requests from departments that totaled approximately $144,000, according to the estimates received from departments. Enclosed in your folders is a spreadsheet that contains all of the equipment and materials requested and what was funded out of Academic Equipment Replacement, entitled AER on the spreadsheet, or funds from the SOE&PS. I am pleased to report that I was able to approve the purchasing of most of the equipment and materials that related to instruction. The equipment and materials were purchased using the $18,000 we received from the College for Academic Equipment Replacement and funds from the Korean and part-time Canadian Initiatives. It is critical that we maintain what we have and continue to fund the addition of new equipment and materials needed for instructional purposes. To this end, I shall try to budget each year funds for the purchase of instructional equipment and materials. Please submit to me by November 1, any equipment or materials that you need to support your instructional program. Please provide the cost of the items you are requesting as well. If we continue this process each year, we should be able to fund most, if not all, of the resources you need to support your courses and programs.

5. Last year the Information and Communication Technology Department successfully launched a Chinese Initiative and admitted 16 Chinese graduate students into their programs last year. These students study for a year-and-a-half and will earn a master’s degree upon completion of their program. In addition to the 16 returning Chinese students, we have 15 new Chinese students, who will begin their graduate program in the ICT Department this fall. Like the Korean and Canadian Initiatives, the school will receive extra funds as a result of the Chinese Initiative that will be used for the benefit of the school. Funds will be used from the Chinese Initiative to contribute to
the costs of renovating Satterlee 301 and establishing the Center of Excellence for the Teaching of Math and Science that will be located in Satterlee 301.

6. Finally, after approximately six years, thanks to the efforts of Sergei Abramovich and others, we received official approval from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to offer a part-time Master of Science in Teaching program in Ottawa, leading to Ontario teacher certification at the primary/junior divisions. We shall recruit for that program this year and begin the program at the Derry Byrne Centre in Ottawa, Canada, during the fall 2008 semester. Once that program begins, the program in Ogdensburg will cease admitting new students.

7. Professional Development for faculty, professionals, and staff within the school will continue to be a priority. In the past, I have been able to provide additional support for professional-development activities as a result of funds received from the Korean and part-time Canadian Initiatives. The Chinese Initiative, began by the Information and Communication Technology Department last year, will also be able to provide additional funds this year for professional development.

8. Last year, for the first time, all departments were allocated OTPS budgets that provided sufficient funding to support normal OTPS operating expenses and provided additional funds for departments to use at their discretion to support departmental activities and priorities. Enclosed in your folders is the spreadsheet I used in determining departmental OTPS budgets. A total of $67,500 was allocated to OTPS. As you’ll see in the column entitled, Formula Portion, $55,000 was distributed by the formula and the remainder I distributed to adjust for additional needs that some departments have over others. For example, ICT has greater equipment needs than other departments and therefore had an adjustment for that factor. Last year was the first time this process was used. I shall review it this year with the chairs to determine what changes, if any, we might make in the process. I should also mention that I distributed and went over the formula with department chairs about one-and-a-half years ago during a School of Education and Professional Studies Council meeting. Furthermore, for the first time, there seems to be parity in the OTPS budgets across the three schools. We have been informed that
departments will be able, this year, to carry over unspent funds into the next budget year. This is important as it will provide you with more flexibility and allow you to plan funding priorities from year-to-year.

The above presents only a sampling of the accomplishments achieved last year. It was indeed a busy year, but a productive and rewarding one. This is thanks to all of you. Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for your dedication and commitment to this institution. It is greatly appreciated.

**Theme for 2007-2008 Academic Year.** Each year I try to identify a theme for the year. Last year, I identified standards as our major theme. I asked departments to consider a number of issues related to standards, such as admission requirements, grade inflation, and course assignments (such as research and writing assignments). I asked for a response from each department chair as to whether or not there were any standards that they wanted to modify in some way. I have not heard from all chairs on this issue. I would ask any department who did not address this issue to do so this fall and send me any recommendations you have by the end of the semester. If your department has any questions about this, I would be happy to attend one of your department meetings.

This year, however, I wish to identify scholarship as the theme for the year. I would like to form a small group to identify ways to encourage and support scholarship activities within the school. Please let me know by September 6, if you would be willing to serve on a small committee to discuss ways in which the school might encourage and support scholarship better than it does at present. I would anticipate no more than a couple of meetings during the fall semester to accomplish this task.

**Assessment of Learning Outcomes:** Assessment of learning outcomes is something that has consumed every department within this school over the past few years. We’ve taken one step farther in trying to implement an outcomes-based assessment system by hiring Bruce Brydges, whose responsibility it is to work with each and every department in the implementation of their assessment system. He will also be responsible for developing a mechanism, once you have finalized your assessment systems, for retrieving and organizing the data each year, as appropriate, and to provide it to you for your review and consideration in program revision. I
hope you will all take advantage of Bruce’s knowledge of assessment and willingness to work with you in the implementation of an assessment system appropriate for your program. This continues to be a major objective of this school. It is hoped that Bruce will be able to work with you over the year and by next year, we should have an assessment system that is systemic and that begins to provide valid data each year for use in program assessment and revision.

**Goals for Academic Affairs:** Enclosed in your folders, for your information, are the goals set for the Academic Affairs Division for the coming year. Let me just highlight a few that will directly impact me or the school in some way. They include:

1. **Rehab classrooms, labs, and studios:** As mentioned by President Schwaller in his address at the Opening Breakfast, funds have been put aside by the College to upgrade classroom furniture. Provost Madden will develop a process for this. The College should upgrade the furniture in a number of the rooms in Satterlee Hall, as well as other buildings on campus. One question that usually arises is—should we put tables with caster wheels in classrooms or the traditional chair with the tablet arm found in many classrooms. To help me, could I have a show of hands to indicate your preference for tables over chairs with connected tablet arms?

2. **Enhance Distance Learning-** The continued development of courses for on-line delivery will continue to be a priority for the Academic Affairs Division, especially courses that service our Watertown population in a teacher education program or business administration, or our campus-based evening Business Administration program for non-traditional adult learners.

3. **Respond to Graduate Studies Assessment--** Academic Affairs will continue to monitor graduate enrollments and will consider increased marketing of graduate programs.

Again, the complete list of goals for Academic Affairs is included in your folders for your information.

**SOE&PS Goals:** Every year at this time I also identify major goals and priorities for the school for that particular year. As most of you know, these not only serve to set priorities for the year, they are also considered the
following year as part of the criteria used for determining discretionary increases.

The goals or priorities set for this year include:

1. involvement in efforts to fully implement performance-based assessment in all programs within the school will continue to be a priority.
2. involvement in efforts to ensure that TaskStream is fully implemented, where appropriate, will also continue to be a priority for the school.
3. Efforts to increase scholarship activities in ones professional field of interest will be given special recognition when considering discretionary increases during the next round.
4. development and offering of on-line courses, in particular on-line courses offered in Watertown for teacher-education and business programs and on campus at the upper-division level for business will also continue to be a priority.

**Discretionary Allocations:**

I have been working through the Faculty Information Forms and student evaluations that have been submitted.

As you know from prior communications, the criteria to be used for determining discretionary increases include: (1) the Board of Trustees Criteria where applicable—i.e., teaching, scholarship, and service, (2) performance programs for professionals, and (3) the specific objectives set for the school during my Opening Address the prior year.

Please make certain to include activities that relate to any of the above-mentioned items in your Faculty Information Form to be submitted at the end of each academic year, since these forms, along with your teaching evaluations if applicable, serve as the primary documentation for discretionary increases. For professionals who feel that the Faculty Information Form is inappropriate, please submit, instead, an assessment and documentation of how well you have accomplished the items contained in your performance programs. Faculty Information Forms or Performance Program Assessments covering the 2007-2008 academic year should be submitted, electronically, to Martha or me by the end of June 2008.
I have explained the process I use for making discretionary recommendations in earlier written communications and during my Opening Address over the past couple of years. I shall not take time here to explain the process in detail. However, it is important that you fully understand the criteria and process used for determining discretionary increases. I try to make it as objective and fair as possible. Again realize that funds are limited and discretionary increases cannot be given to everyone, so I need a system that will help to make the process as fair and objective as possible. While no process is perfect, I do think that the process I use is reasonable, fair, and objective. I shall schedule a luncheon meeting some time over the next month or two for people, who do not already understand the process I use, to attend. During that meeting I’ll try to explain, in as much detail as possible, the process I use for determining my recommendations for discretionary increases. I shall also respond to questions that you might have to help clarify any questions you might have.

Also, know that I am always available in my office to answer any questions you might have about discretionary increases.

Don’t forget, discretionary increases can include an amount for merit, as well as an amount for equity. As I mentioned in earlier communications, if you feel your salary is not on a level consistent with your rank and years of service, please see me within the next week, so we can discuss your situation.

**In Conclusion:** I continue to be honored to serve as dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies. It is a pleasure to work with so many dedicated and loyal members of this institution. We are all working together to provide the highest quality of education possible to the students who come to this great institution to learn. Our obligation is to continue this institution’s tradition of excellence or what President Schwaller calls “handcrafted education”. I look forward to working with you over the coming year to ensure that quality education is preserved for generations to come. It is incumbent on all of us to make every effort to leave this institution in a stronger and better position that when we arrived. By working together with a common purpose, we can continue the rich tradition of excellence this institution is known for and make certain that it continues long after we are gone.
I thank you for listening this afternoon and, again, look forward to working with you in making the SOE&PS stronger and more distinctive--certainly consistent with our long and distinguished history that goes back to 1834 and beyond.