Dear Colleagues,

To loosely interplay with words from a seventeenth century philosopher, Leibniz, and a nineteenth century British author, Dickens, we live in a momentous time in our history. Forty-five years to the date of the historic March on Washington and the powerful call by Dr. King for all Americans to unite as one America, an African American is nominated as a candidate for the presidency. And as a native New Orleanian, I am emotionally reminded that today, August 29th, is the third anniversary of Katrina’s devastating destruction of a beautiful city whose unique culture and way of life are forever altered. The city is once again threatened by Gustav.

Closer to home, as the new academic year begins, the chancellor in her All-Campus remarks heralded the campus’ own milestones that all of us can take pride in celebrating: the opening of student residence halls, record enrollments in headcount and credit hours, the refurbishing of the entryway into the administration building that houses the Gateway within Student Services and the reconfiguration of faculty offices and seminar rooms for the School of Business and Economics. And with the arrival of the talented new tenure track faculty and the new dean of the Raclin School of the Arts, there is ample reason to think optimistically about the future and all that we can accomplish as we work together to move IU South Bend from a good university to a great one.
We’ll all get a chance to know the new faculty from a new link to the Academic Affairs webpage. Thanks to Johnny McIntosh, you will soon be able to see a picture of each new faculty member with a brief bio of his/her academic and scholarly interests. In this way the entire campus can become familiar with our new colleagues and use this resource to invite the new faculty to participate in campus life, thereby facilitating their transition to IU South Bend. Hopefully, many of you have already had a chance to meet Marvin Curtis, the new Raclin School of the Arts dean. With his prodigious gifts of affability and charm, Marvin has made many new campus and community friends within a very short time. As I hear from people in the community who have met him, expectations are high for a new level of accomplishment and prestige for our School of the Arts. He is certainly equipped to deliver. You may have already seen the Arts faculty and staff sporting bright red tee-shirts with the newly adopted motto, “It’s A New Day.” An internationally recognized composer of choral works, and the noted composer of the choral music for former President Bill Clinton’s first inauguration, Marvin transformed music education at his previous institution and forged strong alliances between the arts and the community.

This year’s campus theme is “Revolution in Thought,” and the campus reading associated with the theme is Charles Darwin’s The Origin of Species. My last academic exposure to Darwin was as a college freshman in my introduction to biology. For the first time, I will have read the entire book. I invite you to visit the campus theme webpage for information on the activities planned in conjunction with the One Book, One Campus. Reading and thinking about the important issues that surround us are at the crux of the educational environment we give to our students. More importantly, in the delivery of that education we challenge our students to think critically about their responses to these issues. As they enter their first year a transformation begins to takes root that informs their worldview with each bit of knowledge gained. By the time they leave, our students are equipped to face life’s inevitable challenges; their values have been examined and questioned; their fundamental beliefs have been either reinforced or changed; they have learned to think critically and analytically about the important issues of our time; and with their newly acquired knowledge and skills, they are poised to take their place in the world. The framework that permits our students to make this transformation is firmly in place: the one to one attention of faculty to student learning; faculty and staff mentors and advisors, the general education curriculum, the American Democracy Project, the Civil Rights Heritage Center, the One Book, One Campus with the consonant campus theme, the Information Commons and the library, the strong connectivity between student learning and technology, faculty/student undergraduate research, international programs, and Student Life programming and activities. These are the core experiences that make an Indiana University South Bend education the best possible for the citizens of our region.

As a regional public university, IU South Bend has a unique role in preparing students to participate fully in the democracy that we all support and cherish. To that end, you may have noticed the large placards located along the northeast corner of the Grille. IU South Bend is participating with other IU campuses in a statewide effort that invites faculty, staff, students, and interested citizens from the community to express in writing and/or drawings their personal interpretative expressions of democracy. The project titled, Writing on the Wall, encourages interested participants to answer the fundamental question, “What is democracy?” I’ve added comments and I invite you, your students and anyone whom you wish to invite to visit the Grille and add your commentary to this communal art project. At the end of this week, the canvasses will be on display in the Quiet Room of the Grille.

Diversity is another core element that sets Indiana University South Bend apart. For several years, the campus has been a trailblazer in examining arguably the most unsettling issue within the continental borders of the United States, race and society. Diversity and intercultural/international education is embedded within the general education curriculum; diversity programming within Student Affairs through student clubs has been a mainstay; Conversations on Race and the Black Man’s Think Tank, keynoted by national figures, have brought together in dialogue the community and the campus; the Civil Rights Heritage Center with its study tour of the Freedom Movement in the former segregated South has enlightened numerous students about the impact of that era on national politics; and lately the Summer Leadership Academy that brings to campus minority high school youth in college preparatory academic training as they learn key lessons of leadership from Civil Rights history, ordinary people making extraordinary change. But IU South Bend is not a campus to rest on its laurels. Diversity is and will continue to hold primacy as a core tenet of our existence. The vice chancellor for student affairs, Jeff Jones, and I, in dialogue with faculty, staff and students, have begun to re-examine diversity programming. It is our firm belief that we need a more unified approach to diversity activities that brings together all the stakeholders. We recognize that minor modifications of staff responsibilities and re-organization will have to occur. The campus will be kept abreast of the changes.

The arrival of Deidra Turner, the new Affirmative Action Officer, signals the new direction toward diversity and multicultural education and training. Deidra who comes to us from Memorial Hospital will also lead our efforts in the Summer Leadership Academy. She is also the co-chair with Becky Torstrick of the newly formed legislatively mandated, Diversity Committee. Members of the committee include Ken Smith, Cynthia Murphy-Wardlow, R. Lee Smith, Charlotte Pfeifer, David Vollrath, Michelle Verges, Jeremy Linton, and the student representative, Robyn Black.

The university’s partnership with the City of South Bend and the South Bend Heritage Foundation for the renovation of the once segregated Engmann Natatorium is also a symbol of the university’s firm commitment to diversity. Scheduled to open in the Fall of 2009, the Natatorium has been the focus of recent fundraising efforts led by Dina Harris, Director of Foundation Relations. She and I are working with a team of community volunteers in raising money in small and large donations from a broad spectrum of the community. Additionally, she and I have spoken and made presentations to the regional Kiwanis, Rotary and Lions’ Clubs as well as...
to neighborhood and community groups. She, in particular, has made solicitations from individuals, corporations, and has written proposals to regional foundations. There are two phases to our fundraising efforts, the first phase includes raising $300,000 for the interior renovation of the building and for the exterior Peace Garden; the second phase includes fundraising for an endowment of 1.5 million dollars for programming. Happily, the first phase has garnered wide community support and we are confident that we will reach our goal. Many faculty and staff have made pledges; if you would like to contribute, please contact Dina. I’ve also begun conversations with faculty and with community members regarding staffing and programming in the Natatorium. In the end we envision a vibrant array of programming activities that connect us to our community. The Natatorium will be home for activities for the Civil Rights Heritage Center, the Leadership Academy and the 21st Century Scholars as well as a center for scholarly presentations on local history and the Civil Rights Movement. It will be a gathering place for community conversations and neighborhood groups.

In my October newsletter, I will speak more of our campus’ efforts in sustainability. As you are aware, we are seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for the community building in student housing. Last spring the Academic Leadership Council of Indiana University approved the Center for a Sustainable Future led by Mike Keen. Mike will be presenting ideas for the center to the chancellor’s cabinet later this month. I welcome any information or comments that you want me to share with the campus community regarding sustainability in the next newsletter.

Sincerely, Alfred J. Guillaume, Jr., Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Assessment

The assessment committee is looking forward to a full year in 2008/09. In addition to its regular activities, the committee is planning an assessment workshop for this fall. This workshop will be a valuable opportunity for anyone striving to make the student learning experience on our campus the best possible. Stay tuned for more details.

Also this fall, the assessment committee website will undergo a complete overhaul to make it even more useful and user-friendly.

The committee is welcoming several new members this year: Michelle Bakerson from Education, Julie Allee from Communications and Feng Shan from the library. The committee will benefit from their fresh perspectives.

The Assessment Institute will be held October 26-28 in Indianapolis. The Assessment Institute is one of the best assessment-themed conferences in the country, with national and international participation. Since it is so convenient, it is a great opportunity to interact with leading scholars and practitioners in the field of assessment. This year, the conference is emphasizing tracks in Civic Engagement, ePortfolios, Faculty Development, First-Year Experience and Student Development and Diversity. The conference brochure is available at: www.planning.iupui.edu/institute. This Assessment Committee is able to sponsor registration, travel and hotel costs for a limited number of IU South Bend faculty. The conference fills up quickly, so if you are interested in attending, or know of someone in your department that might benefit from this opportunity, please contact Rhonda Culbertson (rculbert@iusb.edu) as soon as possible. The conference hotel reservation deadline is September 25.

The academic year has begun, and students are back in the classroom. Do you ever wonder if they are absorbing the things you are teaching them? Would you like to know if the graduating students in your major have the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the paths they pursue -- in careers, in graduate school or as life-long learners?

If you have these, or similar, questions the Assessment Committee would like to encourage you to apply for an assessment grant. These grants, for up to $3000, can be used for a variety of projects and learning opportunities to assess and improve student learning. Guidelines and application forms can be found at: http://www.iusb.edu/~sbassess/grants/grappli.shtml If you have any questions please contact the assessment committee through rculbert@iusb.edu

UCET

UCET has established a Technology Mentor Program, composed of a group of 15 full time faculty, professional staff, and librarian volunteers. The goal of this program is for more faculty members to become familiar with what UCET has to offer in the areas of podcasting, wikis, blogs, Oncourse CL, software programs, and other technology related to excellent teaching. Tech Mentors from various departments are the “go to” people in the college, school, division, or department she/he represents, and will soon have a UCET Tech Mentor sign on their office door. The group met once during the summer, when Dr. Matt Mooney demonstrated how to create and post a ProfCast for students. The group will meet monthly throughout the coming year.

Deans’ Seminar

The first Deans’ Seminar of the year will be held, Friday September 19th at noon in the UCET Classroom. Micheline Nilsen will present her research entitled “The Architecture of Everyday Places: Nineteenth Century Photographs of the Vernacular” which outlines the curatorial preparation and research for two exhibitions of nineteenth century photographs of architecture from the Snite Museum Collection at the University of Notre Dame. I look forward to seeing you all there.