President’s Report

Faculty Senate

August 26, 2010

* Thanks for your willingness to serve and participate in shared governance at Clayton State University. Learning at our institution profits when we continue our commitment to communication (shared meaning), transparency of information and data, engagement of the university community as early as possible of policy possibilities, especially academic possibilities, and extensive collaboration across all divisions of the university.
* Hope you will share perspectives of decision making advanced by Garvin and Roberto—decisions are collaborative problem solving rather than contests; discussion is for the purpose of testing ideas, and evaluating them, rather than persuasion and lobbying for a particular position; participants in deliberation are critical thinkers rather than spokespersons for positions; all participants are striving for shared ownership for outcomes, rather than declaring winners and losers.
* The first of several reports about the university received was an audience analysis/market research from Paskell, Stapleton and Lord. (Work continues on strategic planning; facilities master planning reports close to campus wide review next month) Full text of the marketing report is available upon request. As observed at the general faculty meeting, there were a few surprises in the report. That the name of the institution did not emerge as a challenge for outside audiences was a bit of a surprise, as was a lack of familiarity by the campus community of some key programs, such as residence life, honors, career services, and intern opportunities. Recently, we shared a first take on some possible themes for communicating about us to ourselves and external audiences. From the 5 themes from Paskill, Stapleton and Lord, I distilled: for our current and future students—we build 21st century citizens—sure we help find jobs and careers with liberal learning supporting degree completion and professional preparation—but we also provide a place for practicing the engagement necessary for the next generation of citizens.  For a broader audience, we embrace changes necessary for 21st century learning. Our 40 year history is one of change, and our faculty and staff prepare programs indicative of those changes in learning for students, but also staff, faculty, and our community. Finally, we build 21st century collaborations and partnerships. We embrace our role as a steward of place in the southern crescent of Atlanta, and are poised to further engage partners from education, business, and government, civic and service organizations.  (Let us not lose sight of a really smart comment made by the consultants—our materials have been descriptive, and with themes, but often did not have evidence or a compelling narrative that would help us prove our point on earlier claims). Your advice and reactions to these searches for themes will continue in the coming weeks.
* Even in the face of challenges in the economy, we are excited to assume our shared responsibilities for learning.