

Welcome

Good morning and welcome to the kickoff of our 2014 Fall inservice week. The format will be a bit different than what we're used to. President Fox and a top secret group has been working on something special for you and I'm anxious to see and hear what he has planned for us...but for now, we'll turn things around a bit and start with some announcements.

First, I'd like to recognize some things and some people. Like many of you, I was absent a lot of the summer, likely for different reasons. But in my absence, so many things happened, things we might take for granted. The acres of lawns were watered and mowed. Classrooms and labs were cleaned, floors waxed, carpets cleaned. A new building was inspected, commissioned, and occupied. Our IT people spent hundreds of hours preparing Blackboard amidst other projects and kept the phones, the website, the network, and that God-awful email flowing. Bills were paid and a new multimillion dollar operating budget developed. We got paid every month, right on time. Millions of dollars in grants projects were administered and new proposals written. Scholarships were evaluated and awarded, student progress assessed, and millions of dollars in Federal Financial Aid carefully awarded. Tuition was collected, students were advised and literally hundreds of phone calls were made by volunteers who were vigilant in assuring that any student interested in being here next week was kept in the loop. Several newly minted SOAR orientations were conducted. And students registered. So next week when classes begin, even for those of you who were not here, you'll find students ready and waiting to learn, in clean classrooms, on the most beautiful campus in Idaho, with computer systems operating, meals and dormitory rooms ready

for soon-to-be homesick students, and this culture, this desire for students to succeed. Because we define **our** success in terms of our **students'** success. To all those who kept the wheels turning this summer and did it so well...please join me in thanking them.

Remarks

When we're welcoming new employees I'm always reminded of my own first days at CSI, now 26 years ago. I was lucky in that I started a month before my predecessor left. At the end of the summer term, I diligently spent every day preparing for my students to show up the end of August. One day, the custodial staff came in and informed me that I needed to leave so they could wax the floor of the lab. Concerned that I would get in trouble for deserting my post (apparently I didn't notice how empty the Canyon Building was), and anxious to explain what was going on, I tried to find my department chair. I couldn't find him, so I scrambled over to the Taylor Building to find the vocational dean and associate dean, Dr. Bradley and Dr. Cross and explain the situation. Both were enjoying a quiet, summer afternoon with legs crossed atop their desks. I assured them that I would work diligently from home for a few days while the wax dried and would be back as soon as possible. They found my concern and dedication not so much **inspiring** as **amusing**. They told me not to worry and they trusted me to get my work done and myself prepared.

They never **did** tell me I was off contract until the end of August...

Coming here from the private sector was shocking at times...that's just one example. I came from a very difficult, sometimes toxic work environment. Since then, I've loved (almost) every day here and I still do. When we look around the world, from Iraq to Afghanistan to the Ukraine and beyond, and see what is happening, it's clear to see just how fortunate we are. And I see what can happen when a lack of integrity and civility are taken to extremes. So while we watch **those** extremes somewhat from a distance, today and tomorrow we'll have our **own** conversations about integrity, not just about our students' but ourselves. We'll emphasize that civility is not only **desirable**, but **an imperative** as our campus culture continues to develop. In my mind, civility extends far beyond attempts to be kind, but to be **helpful** as well ... sort of an **assistive civility**. Not just smiling, but solving problems...part of who we are and why we're here.

Not long ago I saw a quote from the CEO of Starbucks who said, "Treating people with respect and valuing them is a universal language. **Culture trumps strategy.**" As was once pointed out to me, Martin Luther King didn't stand on the Lincoln Memorial steps and say, "I have a plan...I have a strategy." Well, you know what he said. And why he said it.

Here's something you may **not** have heard him say. As a young man in 1947, he wrote a short essay for the Morehouse College student newspaper describing his notions regarding the purpose of education. This is part of that article, and it is no less relevant today:

*As I engage in the so-called "bull sessions" around and about the school, I too often find that most college men have a misconception of the purpose of education. Most of the "brethren" think that education should equip them with the proper instruments of exploitation so that they can forever trample over the masses. Still others think that education should furnish them with noble ends rather than **means** to an end.*

*It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society: the one is **utility** and the other is **culture**. Education must enable a man to become more efficient, to achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life.*

Education must also train one for quick, resolute and effective thinking. To think incisively and to think for one's self is very difficult. We are prone to let our mental life become invaded by legions of half-truths, prejudices, and propaganda. At this point, I often wonder whether or not education is fulfilling its purpose. ... Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.

The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals. ...

*We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character--that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one **not only** power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate. ...*

Over the next year, we will be refining our own notions of a higher education by redefining our general education core and creating a new program of study. These words may help guide our discussion.

I'm so glad (blessed, actually) to be in a position and work at a place where we can collectively contribute to human development and success, to carry out ***another*** dream of Dr. Martin Luther King. I love this place and I love what we do. And I especially like doing it with all of you. Thank you for everything you have done and will do!