Greetings, and welcome to The CSN Chronicle for November. The Chronicle lets me share some of the important questions raised by our faculty and staff members from time-to-time. The next Chronicle will be issued in January 2008.

CSN and the Budget

Leaders of the State of Nevada foresee a budget short fall during this biennium. Although I’m new to the state, I’m told that short falls in the budget are not. To the credit of the Chancellor and Board of Regents efforts are being made to minimize the impact of a budget cut on NSHE institutions, but a cut may be coming nonetheless. This is particularly troubling for CSN because we have experienced a 7.6% increase in FTE enrollments this fall and the CSN financial inequities identified in the Legislature’s own studies have never been addressed. And, of course, access, a hallmark of our mission, lacks necessary support during times of budget reductions.

We do not yet know the specific percentage or amount to be cut. Early forecasts ranged from 5-8% of state funds, but it might be more as the Governor exempts various state offices and services from the budget reduction.

Like the other institutions in the system, CSN has specific processes and policies in place in the event of a budget reduction. I’ve already discussed the issues generally with the chair of the Faculty Senate. Other leaders, faculty and staff will be involved should a budget reduction be imposed. Please know that the communication and transparency that has characterized my administration will continue through the budget process.

Several years ago CSN began a “tradition” of a college-wide party for the holidays. On Thursday, December 13 at the Las Vegas Hilton, we will host the 2007 holiday party, and I hope you are making plans to attend. We’ll be in the Conrad room with music and food and holiday fare for all of us to enjoy.

CSN Budget Request

In preparation for the 2009 Legislative session, institutions in NSHE have been invited to submit requests for operating and capital budgets. The number one priority will focus on re-instatement of any funding lost through the budget cuts that are proposed by the Governor for the current biennium. In addition CSN will be advancing five operating priorities which include: increase funding in the current formula, support funding equity (AB 203 recommendations), focus on student success, meet economic demand through a workforce initiative, and support innovation in learning and partnerships. The capital budget request rolls a number of projects from the 2007 session and adds the public safety building and renovation for the Henderson campus. Specifics of the request will take shape through a series of hearings, presentations, and other budget processes of the Board of Regents.

CSN’s Assessment Summit, sponsored each semester, is part of our continuing effort to improve our programs and services with thoughtful reviews. Dr. Diane Waryas and our Institutional Research Office organize the summit with meaningful dialog and presentations on assessment issues. Not only are the efforts appreciated, but the outcomes make CSN a better institution for students and for learning. If you’d like to participate or attend a forthcoming summit, please contact Diane.
Questions From Recent Meetings

“Is basketball returning to CSN?”
We’re exploring the feasibility of the idea. If it comes back, it has to be fully funded with private funds, and that challenge may be an obstacle before the merits of the idea can be thoroughly discussed. A group of faculty and staff, along with a consultant and draft business plan, will be weighing the question into spring semester. If you’d like to provide some input, contact Judy Stewart or Art Byrd.

“How soon will classes start at the Northwest Campus?”
Optimism is a remarkable force! We have developed an initial timeline for development of the Northwest campus, but there are a number of essential preliminaries that must fall into place. First is a Development Agreement with the City of Las Vegas that is nearing completion. Our target is to take the Agreement to the City Council in the next 30 days and to the Board of Regents in February.

“What is status of the presidential search?”
The Regents have appointed a search committee and an advisory committee to search for a new, permanent President of CSN. A search consultant, Cizek Associates, has also been retained. The next step in the process is a series of forums to be held over the next several weeks on each of the three campuses to invite input from faculty, staff, and students on the qualities and characteristics needed in a new President. If you’re interested in the search process, I would urge you to attend one of the forums. With that input, criteria and a position description will be formulated and release to the public. Interested candidates will then have an opportunity to apply. Future meetings of the search committee are posted for public notice, so if you’d like to attend, you’re most welcome.

“Is CSN closing for the Christmas break?”
Yes and no. We’re scaling back operations, but a number of our functions must continue during the days between Christmas and New Years. Each of our main campuses will have things going on, from the Law Enforcement Training Academy at Henderson to intersession classes at West Charleston.

“Have new salary schedules been approved for CSN?”
For administrative and instructional faculty at NSHE community colleges adjustments have been made to salary schedules effective July 1, 2008. The Regents have approved a wider range of salaries within each step and grade. For administrative faculty, the new schedule has 8 steps and a span of salary ranges that improves our competitive position when recruiting faculty. This new schedule will require a formal study of administrative positions and criteria to calibrate placement on the schedule. Human Resources working in collaboration with the Administrative Faculty Assembly and Financial Services issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the administrative position and salary study. The study will be underway during spring semester.

Academic faculty salary schedule adjustments were also approved and will take effect July 1, 2008. The changes include a $200 base adjustment and a roll up of the steps. This will result in an increase to the mid-point of the salary schedule, which will improve the initial salaries for new faculty, increase the level at which positions are funded by the Legislature, and ensure consistent alignment with the university and state college faculty salary levels. Additional information will be forthcoming on the implementation of the new schedules.

Best wishes for a happy and restful holiday season. --Mike Richards