Convocation Shows Spirit of GSU
Convocation was the news this week. Speaker after speaker (and boy, were there a lot of speakers!) at Convocation agreed that higher education and GSU are under fire and then said: (1) let's fight back; (2) let's change; (3) let's improve civility at GSU. Fact is, the speeches at Convocation were not “cleared” by the Provost. They were not approved by the President. They were not orchestrated by anyone. Each speaker's opinion was his or her own.

The Gruesome Details
Everyone knows that between Fiscal Years 2002 and 2004, higher education's share of state general funds declined significantly, not including mandated rescissions and charges for health insurance shortfalls. But President Stuart Fagan put a new twist on that sad state of affairs when he reported some numbers that had been released just a few days earlier. Due to the recent cuts, state funding for public universities, when adjusted for inflation, is $224 million less than in Fiscal Year 1990 - a reduction of 15 percent. State support for grant programs is $54 million less than in Fiscal Year 1990 - a decline of 47 percent. State general funds support as a percent of public universities declined by 17 percent. And capital funding in FY04 was one-third of that in FY03 and 25 percent of that in FY02.

A Call to Action
In his remarks, Fagan outlined an ambitious and challenging agenda for change. (1) Re-visit and update the Strategic Plan, with the university-wide Strategic Planning Committee's recommendations to be reflected in the budget GSU submits to IBHE in just 13 months. He promised to name the members of the committee by the end of the month. (2) Begin work to replace CARS. An ITPPC committee planning the project will present its preliminary recommendations to ITPPC and the Cabinet in February 2005. (3) Consider centralizing advising, as supported by two university committees, as well as the marketing activities now scattered throughout the university. On this controversial point, Fagan said he wanted more information, then added, “But I have an open mind,” noting that the decentralized approach is not always efficient or effective in a time of scarce resources. (4) Give serious consideration to outsourcing some administrative functions where there is clear potential for cost savings or improved service. (5) Set specific targets for enrollment. Hold Enrollment Services and, through an incentive based budget, the colleges accountable for meeting those targets. (6) Set specific goals for fundraising from individuals, corporations and businesses, foundations, and alumni. Establish a planned giving program. (7) Create a grants office, hopefully to be in place within the year.

Keeping Life Interesting: Academic Program Priorities and Initiatives
Provost Paul Keys said that the recent review of all academic programs brought new opportunities to light. He reported that the development of on-line courses and programs was a priority, along with the creation of a B.S. in Mathematics with a sequence in Secondary Education. And he identified other program priorities, including a Master of Science in Emergency and Disaster Management, developed by the College of Business and Public Administration, additional cohorts in the College of Health Professions, Criminal Justice programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, and additional cohorts in several disciplines in the College of Education, as well as expansion of the Board of Governors program. Keys also called for the creation of Centers of Excellence, citing opportunities in non-credit
Career Services will host an all-majors job fair for students on Wednesday, October 20 in the university gymnasium from 1 to 5 p.m. For more details, contact the Office of Career Services at 708 235 3974.

On the Web:
- GSU Events
- News Releases

IBHE News

SU Intranet (On campus only)

coming Soon:
October 23 "U.S.-China Relations: A Roundtable"
Saturday, October 23, from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the university’s Engbretson Hall.

Second Annual Cancer Awareness Fair - October 26, 27
Hall of Governors. For more information, contact Vanessa Newby at 708 534 4551.

University Open House - October 30
The university will hold its open house on Saturday, October 30, at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call 708 534 3148.

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offerings, the health professions, and information technology. He told the audience, “I have proposed that faculty in our existing Computer Science and Management Information programs together review curriculum revisions that could lead to an Institute of Advanced Information Technology, or something similar.”

Dreams Will Happen
Maribeth Kasik, vice president of the Faculty Senate, told the Convocation audience that “we need to stand together” in face of the pressures on higher education. “We are a team,” she said. “If we stand together, dreams will happen as long as we have civility.” Kasik stressed that because people with little understanding of higher education are attempting to dictate pedagogical practices, it is essential that the GSU community and all of public higher education in Illinois be resolute in the months to come.

Working Together
Civil Service Senate President Kathy Miller invoked the spirit of mutual respect and trust, emphasizing the interconnectedness of the various groups that make Governors State a true university: faculty, administration, civil service, and students. “We must work together to achieve success,” she said, adding that GSU’s sense of family has allowed it to thrive in the past. “We have seen many changes, both negative and positive,” she said. “And we have survived. We persevere, striving together, to serve the GSU community.”

In Appreciation for What GSU Has Done for Students, a Special Gift from Students
At Convocation, Linda Williams, president of the Student Senate, presented the university with a gift of five wheelchairs. Fagan said, “What a wonderful contribution. Nothing could better reflect GSU’s commitment to accessibility.” In her remarks, Williams described some of the accomplishments of the Student Senate: increased student involvement, student participation in an increasing number of university-wide committees, a second commencement to be held in January, television monitors in the cafeteria and Hall of Governors, and more.

The Academy Is Under Siege
Excellence Award winner Adriela Fernandez said, “Today the academy is under siege. The soul of the university needs to be safeguarded, nourished.” Fernandez drew a larger picture. Following 9/11, she said that higher education “is the repository of hope for our nation.” She also noted the unique contribution of GSU by citing what she called the “multiplier effect.” Because of who GSU’s students are, when each completes a college education, “the impact goes to their children and then to the community immediately.”

We Have to Change
Excellence Award winner Byron Waller acknowledged that there are challenging times ahead. “Many of us do not deal well with change. We can become frustrated by change,” he said. But change we must, Waller said, because of the challenging times ahead. In his remarks, he defined the concept of excellence. “Excellence is not only on SEI’s. It’s in the lives of our students. They need us to let them be afraid, to try, and to succeed.” He added, “We need to keep pursuing excellence. We owe it to our students, the university, ourselves, and our legacy.”

From the Taskforce on Scheduling
The Taskforce on Scheduling asks that the faculty help in publicizing a survey that is conducting to determine what our students and potential students prefer in scheduling options. The survey asks questions regarding the academic calendar, the times of traditional classroom offerings, and options which might be available for non-traditional scheduling of coursework. The faculty are being asked to distribute to their students information sheets that describe the survey and give its web address. The faculty are also encouraged to partake in the survey by indicating their preferences on a faculty survey form. The surveys are located at www.govst.edu/survey and will be available on the web from October 19 to November 2. If you have questions about the survey, please contact John Stoll at x4565 or via e-mail at j-stoll@govst.edu.

ITPPC: Technology-Enhanced Classrooms Open House
Drop in and check it out: Diane Dates Casey, coordinator of Academic Information Technology, will be on hand in Room D34050 for a four-day Smart and Genius Classroom open house, October 25, 26, 27, and 28. Between 3 and 3:30 p.m. she'll field questions and demonstrate the newfangled smart gadgets and genius whatnots for faculty and staff. She'll also explain the process for being scheduled to teach in one of the rooms.

ScholarShip Sails On: Writing
Becky Nugent, Writing Center coordinate, presented “Strange Company: Writing Centers, Legal Counsel, FERPA, and Deprivatized Pedagogy” at the Thomas R. Watson Conference on...
Composition and Rhetoric in Louisville, Kentucky, on October 7.

This Just In...
...from the Illinois Council on Economic Education: “Sheryl Gallaher, director of the GSU Office for Economic Education, will be awarded the Excellence in Economic Education Award on October 26th at the Union League Club of Chicago. She is being honored for her long-term commitment and contribution to economic education.”

From the Civil Service Senate
Members of the Civil Service Senate will be attending the Seventh Annual Council of Councils at Northern Illinois University on October 15, 2004. The day long retreat will host key speakers Sen. J. Bradley Burzynski (R-Sycamore), Rep. Robert Pritchard (R-Hinkley), Tom Morelock, director of the State Universities Civil Service System, and Jim Hacking, director of the State Universities Retirement System. Along with GSU senate members, other state universities sending representatives include Chicago State, Eastern Illinois, SIU-Edwardsville, SIU School of Medicine Springfield, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois at Springfield, and Western Illinois.