Faculty Presentation

Spring Faculty Meeting

May 1, 2013

To begin, I say thanks to each of you for your many contributions to this university.

My son recently shared with me an essay from the London Globe and Mail from a couple of weeks ago titled “How will universities compete: appeal to elites, move online” The heart of the essay identified 5 possible emerging models of higher education. The first model likely to survive was the elite university—the Cambridges and Yales and McGills—long and old traditions drawing the offspring of earlier generations of elite students (and an occasional entry from outside). This conclusion is not at all dissimilar to many other reports, and hardly surprising. But the essay also itemized a model for the local university, and the university as a lifelong learning mechanism

“Constant renewal of the local or regional economy and cultural and social environment through the learning opportunities provided by such institutions through the opportunities provided through education and applied research” Such is precisely the mission and vision we have set for ourselves at Clayton State. To paraphrase one colleague, we are moving from lamenting about what we are not, to celebrating and advancing the exceptional contributions we can make as an institution. According to Teresa Amabile, a Harvard Business School professor,” The single most important thing we can do on any given day is to have the perception that we are making progress on meaningful work.”

I thank the university faculty for making daily advances in that meaningful work—the core business of learning for students, faculty, staff, and community. While we will share accomplishments somemore at commencement, there are certain broad based accomplishments I would mention here. Our SACS reaffirmation process continues to make great progress—many people have contributed, and have benefited from the leadership of Jill Lane and Antoinette Miller. The Complete College Georgia initiative has benefited from great work of many colleagues, whose work has already has already begun to bear fruit—led in the office of university provost and involving faculty and staff throughout the campus. We have made a commitment to move forward with renovation and expansion of the university library—and the first phase of this work will begin this summer and continue for the next year—making this a center of accessing learning tools present now and emerging in the future. We thank the general assembly and hopefully the governor for bringing us dangerously close to construction dollars for the new science building—complaints about parking should be directed to Dean Momayezi. And again, while support for state wide salary initiatives continue on the chancellor’s agenda, we must make progress here in the coming years.

The faculty senate has helped us move through continued modifications in tenure and promotion policies—led in the last two senates by Antoinette Miller and Jim Keebler. I want to thank the senate for engaging us in thoughtful questions about the university, the university system, and about trees and plans on campus, among a whole range of topics. They have taken very seriously the need to assume shares in the process of shared governance.

Some here participated in the survey that lead to our being noted for a second consecutive year as one of the best 100 workplaces in Metro Atlanta. And you have done much to make this a great place for me. And so thanks