

Address to the Board of Trustees

May 4, 2012

President Courtway, Chairman Reynolds, Trustees,

One of the single-most important accomplishments this year was the completion of the Higher Learning Commission Monitoring Report. While Team members will be identified later, I want to recognize in particular Neil Hattlestad for his leadership, Maurice Lee for serving as co-Chair, and Jonathan Glenn for his AMAZING organizational skills. While the report has been sent off, in reality, the hard work has begun because now we ALL have the responsibility of implementing the action steps that support the mission and strategic plan of UCA.

One item noted as a concern by the HLC in 2010 and in my speech last August, relates to issues of shared governance and communication across campus. I would like to credit President Courtway for operating from a position of transparency and opening lines of communication through the creation of such programs as “Campus Talks” and meetings every other week with Staff Senate President Dianna Winters, SGA President Austin Hall, and myself (even though these meetings were at 8 am on a Monday morning!). When the reporting lines from these three bodies were inadvertently dropped last summer on the new organizational structure for the university, President Courtway had them reinstated as solid lines rather than dotted ones. While this may seem to be a minor point to some, I feel it is yet another example of how an atmosphere of transparency and open communication has been fostered more this year than in many recent ones.

In this same vein, I want to thank Board of Trustees Chairman Bobby Reynolds for allowing the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate and SGA Presidents to ask questions of the administration prior to any action item votes. Although it may have felt awkward at first, it is one way to make sure we are all on the same page and share an understanding of the topic at hand. And I can promise you, I was a lot more familiar with the Board agenda after this policy was put into place!

Additionally, in my August speech it was noted that we had faculty, as well as a degree program that resided outside the direct supervision of Academic Affairs. In two short months Interim Provost Steve Runge not only resolved these two items in an acceptable manner for all involved, but he has clarified the organizational structure of the Office of the Provost addressing yet another concern expressed by the HLC in 2010.

All of the Budget Advisory Committee members should be recognized this year because they participated in a restructuring of the committee so that it could more effectively review budget increase requests and have a larger voice in recommending expenditures. I was pleased to see a number of our prioritized recommendations as funded items in the FY 2013 budget. Special credit, however, should be given to Diane Newton, Vice President of Finance and Administration. I fully believe we would not have seen the level of financial recovery as an

institution had it not been for the work of Ms. Newton and her staff. For those who would like a clearer picture of the state of finances at UCA, I'd urge you to review Chapter 7 of the HLC Monitoring Report or the slide presentation that was part of the April 2nd Board of Trustees Budget Workshop. In addition, all can sit in on salary and new funding request hearings to be held in the Fall term.

While I can take no credit for how the university has responded to HLC concerns regarding assessment across campus and specifically within general education, I can recognize the countless hours invested in this topic by Lynn Burley, who was the Immediate Past President of the Faculty Senate and Director of Assessment; Conrad Shumaker, the Director of General Education; and the General Education Council. During the 2012-2013 academic year, there will be a lot of opportunities for faculty to have a voice in the structure of general education, or UCA Core, and how we assess student success as a whole. I challenge faculty to get involved in this process.

Finally, I must recognize the 2011-2012 Senators who, yet again, faced a year of change and challenge with professionalism and class. You represented your constituents in a responsible manner and held to the standard that ALL must behave with integrity for the good of the university. Thanks to my Executive Committee: Lisa Ray, George Bratton, and now President Kevin Browne for putting up with my countdown.

Earlier this week, the Faculty Senate elected the new Executive Committee for 2012-2013: George Bratton is Vice President, Lisa Ray is Secretary, and Charles Watson is Parliamentarian. I know that President Kevin Browne is AVID about what the Faculty Senate will be able to accomplish this year. I'd like to recognize him now.

Dr. Janet K. Wilson, Past President of the Faculty Senate