

February 24, 2023

Colleagues:

Shortened workweeks just mean more to do on the days we are here!

This week was particularly intense, given lingering issues with email migration and assorted challenges, but on the bright side, my daily commute was a breeze with schools being out-of-session! It allowed me to spend my time in the office productively as we continue to work on issues related to budget and basic campus operations. As some of you heard at the last College Council meeting, we are projecting for a return to pre-pandemic enrollment numbers (10,600 for the Fall term) which will considerably alleviate our financial distress. Although ambitious, I feel this target is realizable, but only if all of us are able to provide optimal experiences for our students, both inside the classroom and beyond. Exit interviews with students who are no longer matriculated suggest that most leave CSI for reasons largely outside of our control (health issues, change in employment or financial status)...but more than a few point to “sub-optimal” experiences on our campus. We must do everything to make those factors that are within our control appealing to our students if we want to increase our retention and enrollment numbers.

In addition to my usual meetings, this week I had the pleasure of speaking with New York City Councilpersons David Carr and Joseph Borelli. Both are strong advocates for their districts and our campus, and I was able to share with them news of the many good things that are happening at CSI...along with our need for their continued support. These meetings follow on conversations that I had with numerous state legislators in Albany last weekend, and preface those I will have with Borough President Vito Fossella next week. Advocacy for the College is an important part of this job and it—like enrollment—cannot be left in the hands of one or a few persons. I ask that any time you have a chance to speak to those in government positions that you do so passionately in support of CSI.

Speaking of passion...this week I also had the pleasure of sitting in on a panel organized by the PSC-CUNY's Anti-Racism Collective, where we discussed challenges facing students from marginalized communities and how we can assist them in persisting and graduating from our institution. Such conversations are important and insightful and I learned much about strategies implemented elsewhere. I believe that we are well-positioned to close equity gaps and continue

fulfilling both the access component of our mission and the academic excellence that we provide. On Friday, my short but hectic week concluded with a conversation—the first of the Spring term—with the Institutional Planning Committee, where we discussed facilities usage and the ongoing strategic planning process. From a brief and anecdotal survey, we know that many are committed to the College and its future....and that we have significant work to do so that we can continue to provide the transformational educational opportunities to our students. I know that I can count on your support to make this happen.

Until next time,



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