Campus Presidential Update
November 3, 2009

Exciting things happen each day on the University of Central Missouri campus. These periodic updates share important news, recognitions, and progress reports regarding ongoing and new initiatives. Updates can be found at http://www.ucmo.edu/about/president/letters.cfm.
- Aaron Podolefsky

UCM and Metropolitan Community College Sign Dual Enrollment Agreement

Metropolitan Community College (MCC) in Kansas City and UCM have entered an articulation agreement designed to boost opportunities for students at both schools. The agreement includes a dual admission provision that will allow students to take advantage of facilities and programs at both institutions making the transition from a two-year associate’s degree track to a program leading to a four-year bachelor’s degree. Benefits to students include the option of taking classes at both institutions simultaneously, as well as enjoying access to each school’s libraries, athletic events and dining facilities. Also included in the agreement is a reverse transfer option, allowing UCM students to seamlessly transfer to MCC for the purpose of completing an associate’s degree. This option is directed toward students who start at MCC, transfer to UCM and then leave prior to completing their baccalaureate degree or who still want to complete their associate’s degree. Congratulations to everyone who helped make this agreement possible!

Campus Emergency Lighting

During the recent electrical outage on campus, staff and faculty noted that there are several buildings in need of additional emergency lighting. When we inquired about the situation, we were told that the university has a $500,000 placeholder on our deferred maintenance list for emergency/exit lighting upgrades. A building audit has been completed, and we are aware of the areas in need of additional lighting.

Stafford Loan Default Rates Below National Average

Data recently provided by the U.S. Department of Education regarding the Federal Stafford (student) Loan default rate shows that the default rate for University of Central Missouri student
borrowers is nearly 2 percent below the national average. Data for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007, the most recent statistics available, indicate that the national default rate for all public four-year schools increased to 5.9 percent, from 3.4 percent in FY 2006 and 3.0 percent in FY 2005. UCM’s default rate was only 4.1 percent, an increase of only one-tenth of a percentage point from the previous fiscal year, the smallest increase among all 13 four-year public universities in Missouri.

According to the UCM Office of Student Financial Services, common factors that impact a school’s default rate include the socio-economic levels of students attending a school; the amount of “need-based” institutional grant funds available; resources available to assist marginal and “at-risk” students; the cultural/ethnic composition of a school’s student body; increases in a school’s total cost; the criteria for admission; employment placement rates of graduating students; and the average annual earnings of graduating students.

**National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)**

UCM’s professional education unit received official notification of national accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). UCM has been continuously accredited since 1954, the longest of any institution in Missouri, and accreditation is on a seven-year cycle. There are 62 individual certification programs embedded in the various degree programs in the professional education unit. The NCATE accreditation system is a voluntary peer review process that involves a comprehensive evaluation of the professional education unit. The review is based on NCATE Unit Standards, a set of research-based national standards developed by all sectors of the teaching profession. Accreditation included an extensive self-study and a five-day on-site review of the unit and of the individual programs within the unit by a Board of Examiners.

**Chair of Department of Communication Disorders**

Many of you are aware that Carl Harlan, chair of the Department of Communication Disorders, will retire Dec. 31, 2009. Blaine Duesing will step in as interim department chair effective Jan. 1, 2010.

**College of Education Receives Gift from J.E. Dunn Construction Company Foundation**

The College of Education’s Kansas City Initiative received confirmation of a three-year $50,000 gift from the J.E. Dunn Construction Company Foundation. The J.E. Dunn Foundation has a strong commitment to quality education in the Kansas City region. The purpose of the Kansas City Initiative is two-fold: to better serve students in the Kansas City metropolitan area who have not been well-served by UCM in the past, and to provide increased opportunities for UCM students to have meaningful, quality urban field experiences. Through this effort, the College of Education aspires to be Kansas City’s “University of Choice” for education professionals.