

Good morning and welcome to the start of spring semester 2015. I hope you all were able to find time to recharge during the winter break. We have a lot of work to do this spring to continue to build on the great work we started in 2014.

Despite the budget and enrollment concerns that I will speak to shortly, great things have been accomplished the first half of the academic year and I hope that momentum continues to take us from where we are to where we need to be. The collaborations that have happened and the forward-thinking ideas that have surfaced are inspiring. These recent months have been outstanding in establishing relationships so very important to the educational process, especially at an institution that prides itself on community engagement.

Our students are gaining experience and hands-on training that only comes with working in the field through partnerships with community and business. Because of these opportunities, they are graduating prepared for the workforce needs of the region and beyond. The College of Science and Engineering is currently partnering with more than 10 businesses on projects in ISELF including Microbiologics and GeoComm, two industry leaders in their fields. These projects allow businesses to gain access to resources, knowledgeable faculty and staff and a strong pool of student talent. And our students are able to take what they learn

in the classroom and put it into practice through experiential learning. When the university partners with the community and business, everyone benefits.

Similarly is the work our Husky Productions students and staff are doing with FOX Sports to broadcast men's hockey live in HD to thousands of Huskies Fans locally and nationally. We turn out a large number of broadcast personnel and thanks to recent upgrades, our students are now able to work on the same cameras and equipment they will use after they graduate. They are gaining confidence, training and access to a large audience, which is preparing them for the professional broadcast world. The next broadcast is the conference game against Miami University at the Herb Brooks National Hockey Center on Friday (Jan. 9). I hope you'll tune in, or better yet come to the game and cheer on our Huskies in person.

Another example I would like to acknowledge is the simulated home visit experience our nursing students are receiving in Brown Hall thanks to a Provost Action Grant. The grant allowed the nursing science and social work departments to team up to equip the Homecare Lab with audio visual and other staging equipment to prepare students for working in the field. The lab also doubles as the Home Investigation Staging Room for the social work department. This cross-

department collaboration gives an added value to our students and the University and serves as a model that we need to emulate across the campus.

In the midst of all this great work, there also was a mid-term election and I would like to thank all of the leaders standing with me and many of you who take the time and communicate with our legislators. Telling the St Cloud State University story is extremely important and the work that the legislature and governor do over the next several months will have an impact on the university community. Individuals like Adam Klepetar, who is the statewide President of MSUAASF, have spent time at the hearing testifying and lobbying on our behalf and that is very important work. Thanks Adam and all who continue to step up.

I am encouraged by the innovative thinking of our colleges and schools as we contemplate ways to develop new academic programs or to revitalize existing programs to make them more distinctive or to extend their reach to new markets. This work will help us manage our future and is the kind of innovative thinking our entire campus community needs to embrace to help increase enrollment and assist in managing the budget.

All of us have felt the pressure brought by enrollment declines and operational staff patterns that have not fully responded to the challenges of an increasingly

healthy economy and changing demographics. It's not comfortable, I know. I feel the discomfort, anxiety and concern with you. We have a budget deficit of more than \$9 million for FY15 and additional deficits for FY16. In response, we have undertaken a number of initiatives to manage our FY15 budget including a soft-hiring freeze and a 5% holdback on non-staff budgets. We also are instituting new initiatives to increase enrollment. It is encouraging to hear that early efforts show a lot of promise. Under the leadership of Amber Schultz and Bruce Busby, admissions is experiencing an increase in attendance for admissions events across the board including daily campus visits, high school visits and fall preview days. This work is mission critical. It is just one piece of the enrollment and retention pie, but nothing works if this piece does not. As we contemplate enrollment, I want to reiterate a concept that sometimes gets lost at large, complex institutions. That concept is that each of us plays a role in the admission and enrollment process. We are all, as faculty and staff, ambassadors for St. Cloud State University and each of us needs to engage in whatever way possible to make the University a welcoming environment for others, including prospective students and their parents.

Return to script

Just as we engage to help resolve our admission issues, all of us need to be engaged in helping the University work through its budget challenges. On Monday, I sent a message updating the campus community on the progress of our program and portfolio management steering committee comprised of leaders from each of our bargaining units and key members of my administrative team. This steering committee was appointed because we are the ones who need to make sense of this. We collectively need to name our issues, study the issues and fix them. And we will. In their initial meetings, the steering group established broad outcome expectations including the need to strategically manage our programs and services to assure ongoing alignment with students, state and market needs. This is key to successfully position our university for the future through thinking strategically and innovatively about our academic program portfolio and how we do work together.

As we work through a program review, we are committed to growing our way out of this situation. Reality dictates that we take a deeper look. The program review estimates a savings of \$3-7 million and will help us identify where adjustments will do the least damage. I repeat that layoffs are not part of the conversation and I remain committed to my position that we will not cut our way out of these budget challenges.

Despite the issues, I continue to be uplifted by the examples of great work being done on this campus that represent the principles and values that will get us through this reality. I've already highlighted some of these efforts and as you entered this morning you saw many more distinctions from fall 2014. But now I'd like you to hear a few more in person from the talent on campus that is making it happen.

Although it just had its grand opening a few short months ago, the Northwestern Mutual Sales Lab in the Herberger Business School has already hosted its first Professional Selling Competition and has given students in the marketing department's Professional Selling Specialization program an interactive technologically-advanced learning experience thanks to a grant from Northwestern Mutual and technical assistance from our own HuskyTech staff. Please help me welcome Professor Denny Bristow who was instrumental in bringing the Sales Lab to life.

[Denny Bristow presentation]

St. Cloud State is focused on diversity and preparing students for life and work in a global society. We experienced an 8.8% year-over-year increase in international students this year and soon, we will welcome our first cohort of students from

Binhai Nankai College in a unique 2 + 2 project. James Robinson, director of our Teaching English as a Second Language program at St. Cloud State, and Michael Schwartz, director of the Intensive English Center, were recently visiting scholars in Binhai and completed assessment of this first cohort. Here to tell us more about this unique partnership and other international studies milestones from this past semester is Thy Yang, associate vice provost for international studies.

[Thy Yang presentation]

I am thankful that all of you are participating to help us come out of this a stronger institution than we were before. Your innovative thinking, dedication and determination to moving our great university forward is encouraging and inspiring. Thank you for all you have done so far and thank you in advance for the work we will do together in the new year.