TO: Members, OCC Board of Trustees

FROM: Jon H. Larson, Ph.D.
President

SUBJECT: Items of Interest for the December 12, 2005, Board Meeting

DATE: December 7, 2005

Executive Order #65, New Jersey Executive Commission on Ethical Standards

As you know, Acting Governor Codey signed Executive Order #65 on November 15th, which contains prohibitions and ethical standards for county college presidents and trustees. The Order focuses on the eligibility of presidents and trustees to hold office where the individual or an immediate family member has an employment or ownership relationship with an entity that does business with the College. The Order also requires termination of the business relationship, the submission of an exemption request to the Commission on Ethical Standards, or the removal from office of the affected president or trustee in order to avoid an appearance that the individual has an interest in directing college business to a particular vendor.

We recently sent to you disclosure forms that must be completed and returned to the Commission on Ethical Standards. If you have not already done so, please return your disclosure form or bring it with you to the meeting on Monday. The Executive Order will be discussed at the meeting.

Task Force on Class Scheduling

I have established a Task Force on Class Scheduling for the purpose of examining our current practices and their impact on both student achievement and facilities utilization. I have asked Mrs. Linda Novak and Ms. Janet Hubbs, Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness, to co-chair the task force. Representatives from the faculty and administration have been invited to participate in this effort, which will build on the work of the College’s Process Improvement Team on Scheduling and the Scheduling Guidelines developed by the team.
There has been a tendency, nationally, to drift toward three- and four-day school weeks, which has had some very negative outcomes over the past several years on student achievement, student engagement, student retention, and persistence to graduation. In addition, facilities utilization is heavily affected, with crowding during prime time and under-utilization during early morning and late afternoon hours. OCC is pledged to join with many of the country’s leading colleges and universities in returning to a fully scheduled week of classes.

I will keep you informed as this process evolves. The task force plans to work diligently on this project, so it is anticipated that recommendations will be forthcoming early next year.

New Jersey STARS Program

On Monday, December 5th, Dr. Dan Duffy, on my behalf, attended a State House Press Conference in Trenton on the NJ STARS II Program. Senator Wayne R. Bryant, who chairs the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee and hosted the event, announced the introduction of legislation to expand the NJ STARS Program for participants who advance to New Jersey four-year public institutions of higher education. Provisions of the bill extend the scholarship for four semesters, provided the students attain an associate degree and maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average throughout completion of the four-year degree.

Several NJ STARS Program students attended the press conference, one of whom was OCC’s Eric Scherm. Eric, who plans to continue his education at either The College of New Jersey or Rowan University to study biomedical engineering, is excited about the possibility of continuing in his junior and senior years under the proposed program.

Later that afternoon, Senator Bryant received approval for the NJ STARS II Program legislation from the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. Under this proposed bill, eligible students would continue to receive $2,000 per semester, with public four-year colleges required to waive the difference between actual tuition and fees, the NJ STARS II scholarship, and other financial aid received.
New Jersey Council of County Colleges

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges has announced the following activities for 2006:

♦ February 5-8 – The ACCT Legislative Seminar in Washington, D.C.
♦ April 17 – Trustee Educational Seminar at Forsgate Country Club in Monroe Township
♦ April 28 – Best Practices Conference at Mercer County Community College
♦ May 4 – Phi Theta Kappa Day at the Marriott Hotel in Trenton
♦ June 12 – Spirit Awards Dinner at the Breakers in Spring Lake
♦ June 33 – Annual Trustee Conference at the Marriott Hotel in Trenton

ACCT Legislative Seminar

The New Jersey Council of County Colleges is coordinating a number of activities to assist trustees during their time at the ACCT Legislative Seminar in Washington, D.C., from February 5th through 8th:

♦ The Council is hosting a special reception for New Jersey trustees from 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday, February 6th, at the J.W. Marriott Hotel.
♦ The Council is coordinating individual meetings with as many members of the 13 Congressional Districts (or their staffs) as possible.
♦ A Wednesday morning breakfast on Capitol Hill is also being hosted by the Council, with the time and location to be provided at a later date.

I would be delighted if you would consider accompanying me and Judy to Washington, D.C., for this very informative seminar. We have been very fortunate in the past in obtaining meetings with our Congressmen.

The New Jersey Hydrogen Learning Center

On Wednesday, November 16th, the College hosted the inaugural stakeholder networking event sponsored by the New Jersey Hydrogen Learning Center, which was established by Rutgers University’s Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy. The first of its kind in the state, the Hydrogen Learning Center is a distributed educational and networking resource that will be an important mechanism for the dissemination and exchange of ideas and information about hydrogen. The November 16th meeting was the
first in a series of four seminars to address various aspects and elements of developing hydrogen-related energy policy at the state level.

The overarching goal of the Center is to help inform policymakers, business leaders, and other stakeholders in making the decision whether New Jersey will take a leading or adaptive role in the emerging hydrogen economy. The education of New Jersey’s future decision makers and outreach to a broad network will be key in arriving at a policy consensus.

Because the College’s fuel cell represents the cutting edge of stationary fuel cell technology and the possible future for distributed generation energy resources in the state, nation, and world, OCC has been invited to be a University Partner in this effort.

**Learning Outcomes and Institutional Assessment**

At Monday’s Board meeting, Ms. Janet Hubbs, Assistant to the President for Institutional Effectiveness, and Ms. Carolyn Lafferty, Assistant Vice President for Learning Outcomes, will give a brief update on institutional assessment. Ms. Hubbs will describe the College’s efforts to develop multiple measures of proficiency of institutional effectiveness while Ms. Lafferty will discuss learning outcome measures that move beyond course grades, as well as the College’s use of assessment results to improve teaching and learning.