

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**.