

Weekly Notes by East Georgia State College President

February 08, 2013

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Students at EGSC

After a very busy day this week, I had the opportunity to teach a class in the evening. Due to the unexpected, temporary absence of an instructor, I am teaching “The Legal and Regulatory Environment of Business” for about a month. The class meets in the evening once per week. A majority of students in the class work during the day and pursue their associate degree in the evening. Some drive a long distance after work to get to class. Despite the fact both the students and I were already tired when the class began, it was invigorating to spend this time with students. This reminded me of the importance of offering classes at times that make it possible for non-traditional students to attain degrees and providing student activities and services directed towards these students.

Following the class, I was able to go over to the PE Building to watch the basketball games. The men’s and women’s teams and the cheering squad represented the college admirably as they have done all season. In addition, it was great to see so many students in attendance at the game. The student section was enthusiastic in their support of the teams and was led through the game by a group of their peers covered with body paint and throwing t-shirts to the crowd. This reminded me of the importance of having a rich array of student activities which engage students in all aspects of the life of the college.

As I drove home from campus, I thought about the wide range of activities I had seen take place on campus that day. All of these shared a theme --- faculty and staff devoted to engaging students in every way possible in the life of an academic community in order to promote learning. Can’t think of a better way to spend a long day.

SACSCOC Visit to the College

This week, one of the main things on my mind has been the SACSCOC visit to the College. The following is a note I sent out yesterday to faculty and staff about that visit (note: I corrected the date of the visit which I incorrectly included in yesterday’s message as March instead of February):

As you know, EGSC's SACSCOC accreditation was reaffirmed in December 2011 following a visit earlier in 2011 by a review committee. However, the College's new mission (offering both associate degrees and targeted bachelors degree programs) required the College to submit an additional report to SACSCOC and to host another committee visit.

A committee composed of senior administrators/faculty from peer institutions was on campus from February 5-7, 2013 to review EGSC's level change. The committee conducted interviews on the Swainsboro and Statesboro campuses and conducted an extensive review of the College's report and accompanying documentation. The interviews included students in our new biology program, faculty in that program, staff and administrators.

The focus of the committee's attention was on our new bachelors of science in biology program. However, the committee's review extended beyond that program since it was required to review the College's overall compliance with a broad range of SACSCOC *Principles* (e.g., finances, facilities, student services, institutional effectiveness) because our new mission contemplates that we will ultimately offer other "targeted" bachelors degree programs.

I am extremely pleased to report that that, during the exit interview today, the committee informed the College that its report calls for approval of this level change without any "recommendations." The committee asked that I convey to the entire College community their appreciation for the collegiality and spirit of continuous improvement during the visit.

Please join me in congratulating the entire team that worked on this major project for the team effort which resulted in this extraordinary result. Also, please join me in extending special congratulations to David Gribbin, Director of Institutional Research and SACSCOC Liaison; Dr. Bob Brown, chair of the Math and Science Division; Jimmy Wedincamp, chair of the Biology Department; and all of the outstanding faculty, staff and students of that department.

The report of this committee is not final until the SACSCOC meeting in June 2013. However, we do anticipate final approval of the committee's report at that time.

Thanks for all that you do to make EGSC an outstanding learning community and to bring about results such as today's SACSCOC report.

Recruiting of Students

There have been declines in college enrollment across the U.S. during the last year. East Georgia State College was hit particularly hard by this trend in both fall 2012 and spring 2013 enrollment.

As one step to reverse this trend, I will be spending a significant amount of time with our Admissions staff this spring. Specifically, I will be holding meetings with the entire Admissions staff, the Athletics Director and the External Affairs Director each week as we work together to

implement a strategy to reverse this enrollment trend. Some of the strategies we will be working on are the following:

- Assuring that the College sends a consistent message to all potential students and their families
 - East Georgia State College is a great place to start - we provide an education with a personal touch
 - Talented and dedicated faculty
 - Small classes
 - Beautiful physical campus
 - East Georgia State College is one of the most affordable colleges in the state of Georgia
 - East Georgia State College now offers a bachelors degree in biology
- Focusing on high schools within the “golden triangle” (the area inside Augusta, Macon, and Savannah)
 - Visits (at least one and more when possible) to each high school inside the golden triangle during spring
 - Utilizing faculty, staff, alumni and students in these visits whenever possible
 - This will be an “all hands on deck” approach. In other words, when the Admissions Department indicates that they will be making a visit to a high school, it is a priority for all of the rest of us to accompany them when asked to do so.
- Enhancing our web and social media presence. Our communications with potential students and their families should drive those people to our Admissions website, Facebook page, Twitter feed, U-Tube Page and Pinterest site. Each of those sites should be improved and then updated continually to demonstrate the vibrant nature of the East Georgia State College community.
- Providing our recruiters with a high quality set of print and electronic presentation materials enabling them to convey a consistent message, present a professional appearance, and drive potential students to our Admissions website and social media sites for more information about the College.
 - Materials uniquely designed for each of our campus locations.

Emergency Preparedness

I am working with Chief Durden and others to schedule emergency preparedness exercises in Swainsboro and Statesboro. Given recent incidents on college campuses across the county, the importance of conducting these exercises has become even more evident. When these are scheduled, I encourage everyone to give the exercises high priority.

Have a great week.

Sincerely,

Bob Boehmer

President

East Georgia State College