

A Message from the Provost – November 13, 2007

Dear Colleagues:

“Long Range Planning for Faculty and Staff to Meet Lehigh’s Mission and Goals” is one of the long range “Goals in Strategic Thinking” documents that President Gast shared with the campus community at her Town Hall meeting on November 8, 2007. The faculty portion of this goal was the focus of in-depth discussions at the October 2007 Board of Trustees meeting. In preparation for this meeting, the Provost’s Office, in consultation with the senior leadership of the university and members of the faculty and staff, prepared the appropriate documents and data to facilitate discussion within breakout sessions. Each of the breakout sessions was co-facilitated by one Board member and one senior faculty member. Board members, along with Lehigh faculty and staff, participated in what turned out to be an excellent dialogue and vibrant discussion about issues that pertain to faculty hiring, retention, and tenure and promotion, as well as the impact on Lehigh of the process of the deliberate hiring of faculty during the past seven years.

The first document “The Role of Faculty: Challenges and Responsibilities in the 21st Century” (October 2007) provides historical and statistical data about the numbers of faculty, staff, and students at the university, Lehigh’s tenure and retention data for two cohorts of faculty hired during two periods of six years each, available national tenure data, and faculty hiring and resignation rates over the most recent period of 2000 – 2007. Also included are select data on the productivity and achievements of the cohort of faculty hired during the period of 2000-2006. All of these data serve to demonstrate the role of the faculty in helping to meet Lehigh’s institutional and academic goals.

The second document “Blackboard2Blackboard” (October 2007) provides interesting documentation of how Lehigh has changed over the course of the past forty years in the areas of student population, campus diversity, academic and student life programming, teaching, research, administration, building and grounds, and fund raising, among other areas. The document tells a compelling story about the vast and noticeable changes which have taken place at Lehigh over the course of the past several decades, changes which mimic national trends in higher education towards greater diversity, inclusivity, and accountability. This was a significant study, conducted in order to provide participants at the October 2007 Board meeting not only with important information about the many ways in which Lehigh has evolved during the past forty years, but also to highlight the ways in which Lehigh must continue to evolve and change in the future, in order to continue to be a major player in higher education, on both the national and international levels.

In each of these two documents, please click on the “Bookmarks” tab on the left of the PDF file to access the content of the document.

We intend to update the data in these documents on a regular basis, perhaps annually, and also to add other missing and relevant data in the future. Please send your comments and observations to provost@lehigh.edu. Thank you and best regards.

Mohamed El-Aasser