



**January 31, 2018**

## **What's Happening at WNC**

- Marti Cizek, the president search consultant visited the Fallon campus on Wednesday, 1/24, and met with stakeholders. She toured the Carson campus on Thursday, and she was able to speak with a number of faculty and other stakeholders. The search committee met that afternoon to finalize a position description. Advertising for the position is being arranged, and the consultant expects to bring candidates to the campus for in-person interviews during the week of 4/23.
- At the Special Board of Regents meeting on 1/19, the board began planning for the next legislative session. All of the institutions presented on their budget priorities. Our top priority was state funding for summer school, beyond nursing. Although nothing has been finalized, the board may support expanding the very limited funding now provided to other high demand workforce occupations.
- Enrollment is up 5.5% from last spring. This is a count year for funding purposes, so an increase will impact the budget.
- That enrollment is up is remarkable, given the direct correlation between enrollment and the unemployment rate. Rule of thumb: A 1% change in enrollment results in a 2.5% change in enrollment.
- A number of things account for this.
  - The college expanded the Academic Skills Center, created a Writing Center, hired more tutors, and increased our marketing efforts.
  - Online enrollment is up about 46.1%.
- Ribbon cutting for the new science and cadaver lab, now called the William N. Pennington Biophysical Science Lab was a very nice event. About 65 in attendance, including Regent Del Carlo, Chancellor Rielly, Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges Nate McKinnon, and others.
- The next project we are looking to complete over the summer will be a remodel of the Dini Library, which has suffered a 38% decline in usage over the past 6 years. Our new

library director has been collecting data from students as to what amenities they would like to see in a library. In her last position, the library makeover resulted in a 77% increase in student and community use. We believe there is an opportunity to get this partially funded externally.

- More open space
  - Movable furniture for collaboration and private study
  - More technology
  - Fewer books
- We are looking at consolidating the science labs in the Aspen Building by constructing two more science labs in the building and relocating Art classrooms to the Bristlecone Building. We would look to external funding for this project.
  - Received \$1M one-time distribution from the System reserve account. Will be applied toward the replacement of the HVAC system on Cedar, which is \$1.5M project. Will happen this summer. RFQ on the street for architects.
  - Jump Start program has 500+ students from 18 different high schools. 66% are taking 15 credits. Will slow growth. Institutionalize program for sustainability. Created JSOC.
  - Dean of Students John Kinkella has retired. Director of Admissions/ Registrar Dianne Hilliard has agreed to serve as Interim Dean of Students until a new president is in place and a search is conducted.
  - Expect to reach 25% Latino student population this year which would qualify us for Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status. Currently at 24%. Once we can sustain this number for two years, we would be eligible for a number of federal grant opportunities that would benefit all students.
  - Latino Cohort has 107 students enrolled in 15 credits. The cohort was started in 2010. Their three-year graduation rate is near 31%, which essentially mirrors the overall graduation rate. The result has been that the achievement gap among underserved population, specifically the Hispanic population, has been essentially closed. Will be doing a short presentation to the Board's Community College Committee on February 22.
  - We are still working toward a residence hall with the goal of having it up and running by August of 2019. This would be built through a PPP with a developer. No state funds would be used. We are looking at a company in Boise that uses a prefabricated method

to build hotels and at least one residence hall in sections. Our Facilities Director and a representative from the State Public Works Board have visited the plant and were impressed with the quality of construction. Using this method can reduce construction time from 12 to about 6 months and reduce costs by about 20%.