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## Campus Board Meeting : 2008 : 09 : 12 : Supporting Documents

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Chancellor's Report  
September 12, 2008

The University of South Florida St. Petersburg has much to celebrate during the start of the Fall 2008 academic year. We have colleagues who have been honored with promotion and tenure and a freshman class of record size.

In the past year, USF St. Petersburg launched a new graduate program in Environmental Science and Policy, and in conjunction with the National Science Foundation, we recruited and provided scholarships for a group of students to major in sciences. This program has achieved a half million dollars in federal funding to support these students.

The community and USF St. Petersburg broke ground this summer on a state-funded Science and Technology Building that will enable eight more classrooms and thirteen laboratories for students and faculty in the sciences. The project is joint with the College of Marine Sciences. This building is the first LEED certified construction in the University of South Florida System.

The USF Faculty and Staff fundraising campaign was led by Dean Vivian Fueyo and her husband Dr. Mark Koorland and Dean Kathy Arsenault and her husband Dr. Ray Arsenault. USFSP exceeded the campaign goal. The university also exceeded its community fundraising goal for the USF Foundation. Among significant endowments received this year are planned gifts to provide scholarships for undergraduates, program support and one gift to benefit the College of Business building project. In a difficult economic climate, it is heartening to be the beneficiary of extraordinary individual and corporate generosity.

Earlier this spring and summer, USF St. Petersburg's institution-wide strategic planning forums united faculty and staff to create the new strategic plan. Interdisciplinary work teams will develop action plans for each goal during the fall term. Dean Frank Biafora and a committee of faculty, staff, and students provided leadership for the process. The plan that is coming to the board is thoughtful and thorough. It reflects our priorities and highlights those values we share – particularly the focus on students and their learning environment, student engagement, diversity, research and creative scholarship, environmental stewardship and sustainability, and effective financial management. The themes of the new strategic plan have been prominent throughout our past five years and I believe they are the fiber of our institution.

Since effective financial management is a primary topic of the strategic plan, it is appropriate to provide comment on our current budget. Since this time last year, we have experienced a three million dollar reduction to our budget and the state's economy is not improving. I am proud of the process by which the cuts were made, the university budget committee provided priorities by which we were

able to make decisions. As a result, we have been able to preserve the high quality educational experience that our students deserve. The number of individuals who were affected has been kept to a minimum, and all but one were placed in other open positions.

Our students are a point of pride. In 2006-07, we focused on increasing graduate enrollment and achieved significant gains in both numbers and quality of graduate students. Last year, we focused our recruitment efforts on the freshman class. Dr. Kent Kelso and Dr. Chris D'Elia led the Recruitment and Retention Committee to initiate new methods of recruitment and programs that make our freshman experience distinctive. The efforts of the team were successful in creating a new balance in our student mix. The new Lead, Learn, and Live program has proven very attractive. The new student tours and freshman orientations that included overnight stays in the residence halls have been well received. Dean Frank Hohengarten and his team in Enrollment Services shepherded this new group through the first day of class.

USF St. Petersburg continues its strategic rebalancing of its enrollment mix. Evidence of that success includes:

- Attendance at summer orientations is up nearly 50 percent,
- Enrollment yield exceeded projections,
- Residence Hall One is fully occupied,
- Data indicates that this freshman class is our largest and most diverse,
- There is a significant increase in freshmen from outside Tampa Bay.

In the past year, the USF St. Petersburg College of Business achieved dual accreditation from the AACSB in both International Business and Accounting. Its MBA program was ranked 34<sup>th</sup> in the Global Top 100 business program by the Aspen Institute's Beyond Grey Pinstripes survey for its emphasis on social responsibility and corporate reporting.

We have had many individual and collective successes in the past year, but we have one challenge that we have not conquered. Since our separate accreditation in June of 2006, we have responded to questions from the SACS commission regarding a number of compliance issues including governance, student success, and assessment. We were able to satisfy 87 of 89 standards.

Despite good work by many individuals, we did not demonstrate to the satisfaction of the SACS commission our compliance in the assessment of general education. In June, we were placed on a one-year probation period during which we must demonstrate conclusively our compliance on the assessment of general education. We have been and are assessing many aspects of our general education program, particularly writing, critical thinking, and math. The criticism of SACS was that we were not assessing the entire general education curriculum in similar, standardized methodologies.

Please know that USF St. Petersburg remains accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Our path as an autonomous, separately accredited institution is charted and we will continue on that path to complete compliance. There is no veering from the path and we will be successful. Dr. Norine Noonan, Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, working with our consultant, Dr. Margaret Sullivan, established an action plan that involves work by faculty in all colleges. Faculty senate committees will devote much of their time to issues of assessment of general education. And, the administrative group is singular in its priority to demonstrate compliance.