REPORT OF THE
President

to the
Slippery Rock University
Council of Trustees

Friday

September 12, 2008
Quarterly Report
To the Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees
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By Robert M. Smith, President

Slippery Rock University begins its 119th year with every indication that this will be another successful experience for our students, faculty, staff, and constituents.

We began the academic year by welcoming one of the most competitive classes in our history. By pursuing a limit on enrollment growth to operate within our resources, the University has had to be more selective in admission policies. The result is a freshman class of 1552 from 5,792 applications. More students were denied than accepted for the 2012 entering class. The tables to the left show how competitive this entering group is compared to previous classes. Approximately 40% of the class comes from the top 25% of their high school class. This is an increase of 62.5% since 2001. The average SAT scores for the class have increased 85 points since 2000 to an average of 1030 and the high school grade average has increased to 3.39.

Total University enrollment topped another record with approximately 8,500 students. This resulted from an increase in retention and transfer students. Retention has increased to approximately 79%, an increase of 12% over the retention levels in 2000. This year also has shown an increase in every other category of student recruitment: transfers, freshman from out-of-state (an increase of 150% since the new out-of-state tuition program was instituted), and international students. The only area where enrollment fell was in new graduate students. However, the total enrollment of graduate students increased.

Indicators of our students’ success have also reached new levels. The University graduation rates continue to improve as seen in the tables on the next page. Stronger initiatives by our staff in Enrollment Services and Student Life have resulted in outstanding success for our students. Some of these initiatives were recently highlighted in a September Post-Gazette six-day series on higher education in Pennsylvania.

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1 As of September 7, 2008. The official enrollment and retention data will be based on the snapshot at September 15, 2008. We anticipate some decline in the final enrollment data by that date.
only State System school featured in the article.

The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's performance review also presented a picture of success for Slippery Rock University. Improvement from the baseline measures has been particularly successful over the past years as seen in the chart on the following page. The institution's comparison to national peers has been flat as has the performance compared to the aspirational targets set by the State System.

Several of the performance indicators deserve to be highlighted because of the successful work by the University to improve them. The overall productivity of our faculty remains second best in the State System. The percentage of our faculty who hold their highest academic degree has increased to just shy of 90%, up from 80.5% in 2000.

The diversity of the faculty and staff have also improved considerably over the last few years. Since 2000, the percent of the faculty of color has increased 75% to a level well above the System performance target. The ratio of women faculty continues to increase to 49% for the past year, an increase of 16% since 2000.

This coming year is the final year of the five-year performance indicator program. We have set our own goals to finish the program strong. We have carefully targeted areas where we can improve in this final year. We also anticipate that changes will be made during the year as this program moves forward. SRU's success remains the example used by the System in championing
which have touched the 800-win coach in her amazing life. The building is divided into four wings: infants (Scarlet Knights), toddlers (The Rock), transition (Hawkeyes), and pre-school (Wolves). Stringer is the third woman, the second coach, and the first African-American woman to have a building named after her on Nike’s campus. Photo and diagram of the Beaverton, Oregon facilities are below. Ms. Stringer is the 2009 Commencement speaker for SRU.

The coming academic year is full of promise and extraordinary opportunities. This Fall has begun with such great promise. I believe that we have the nicest and most engaged students you can find on a campus. Walk among them on our campus and you will easily discover that this is a wonderful time for SRU as we take on the challenge of changing lives and shaping destinies for our students. That challenge is what drive the work of all of us at Slippery Rock University.