

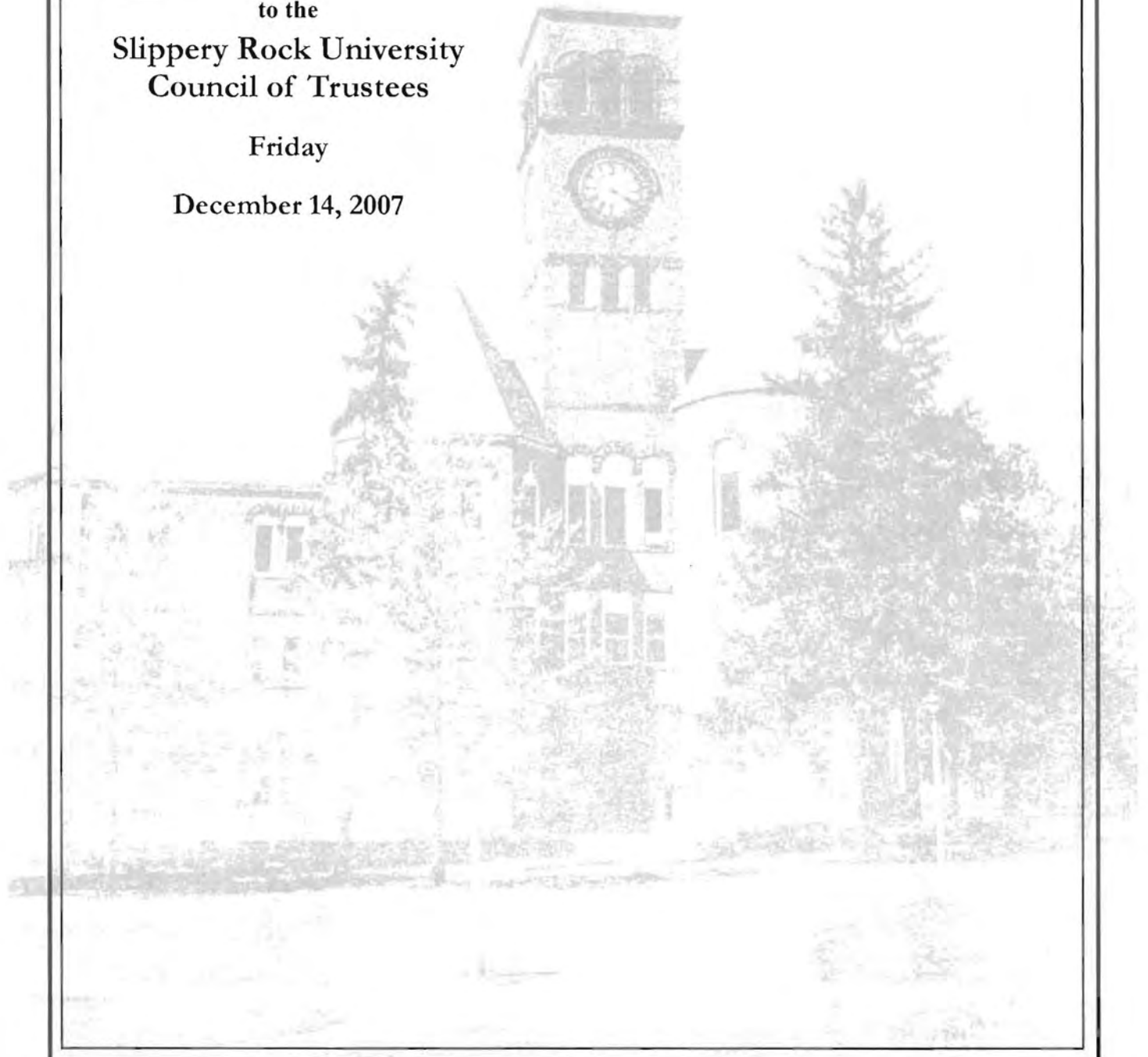
REPORT OF THE

President

to the
Slippery Rock University
Council of Trustees

Friday

December 14, 2007



Quarterly Report
To the Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees
December 14, 2007
By Robert M. Smith, President

Successful universities are characterized by enthusiasm for the mission and vision of the institution and observable achievements of their plans. For Slippery Rock University, success is apparent from the continued upward momentum by our talented faculty and engaged staff to make this a better place for our students. In the fall, 2007 term, the University continues to build a legacy of success.

Among the notable evidence of success are the performance-funding awards for reaching Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education goals. With an award of \$3,966,281, Slippery Rock University demonstrated high achievement in every area. Most notably, the University's faculty productivity and employee diversity goals returned over half of the total money received. The University's performance is ahead of the target goals for 2009, having already met or exceeded goals for faculty diversity, faculty productivity, and the percent of faculty who hold a terminal degree in their discipline.

Another sign of our continued success is enrollment management. Since our last quarterly report, we have finalized our enrollment statistics with another record enrollment (8,325 students, an increase of 1.2 percent) while sustaining an increase in the quality of the entering freshman cohort. Enrollment by students of color continued to grow. Black student enrollment was up 5.6 percent compared to a year ago and Hispanic student enrollment was up 16.7 percent. One special area of emphasis for us this year has been increasing graduate student enrollment and those numbers are moving in the right direction. At the other end of the enrollment spectrum, we improved retention of continuing students and have increased the graduation rate for both four year and six year cohorts.

Work on the university strategic planning document continues. The University Strategic Planning Committee has a draft of the latest version that assembles all of the University's planning activities into a single overarching document. Each committee member has been encouraged to edit and comment on the document. In addition, I have been meeting with individual academic departments to encourage their direct involvement in shaping the plan. Everyone on campus has direct access to the document electronically where they can suggest edits and changes. That access has resulted in many suggestions and improvements in the plan. Within the next month, the President's Cabinet will concentrate on how each division is represented in the plan. Our goal is to have a final version completed for the campus by the end of the academic year.

One of the more significant initiatives realized in the past few months was the launch of the University's accountability web site. The initiative was a response to U.S. Department of Education Secretary Margaret Spellings' challenge that universities and colleges provide potential students, parents, the public and policymakers with accessible,

transparent information about the University. While we have always made this information public, the new “SRU Institutional Profile: Accountability 2008” site includes in one place sections on student demographics; first year students; transfer students; graduate students; core educational outcomes; campus engagement; costs and financial aid; the classroom environment; campus living; institutional success and getting to know the University.

The “accountability” initiative received a great deal of national attention as one of the first and most comprehensive responses to Secretary Spelling’s challenge that colleges and universities be more transparent about cost, price and student success outcomes, and that institutions willingly share this information with students and families in a user friendly format. The web site was selected as the “Best College Web Site” in one national marketing report.

At the first of this year, the University announced several new initiatives that have been successfully implemented. One initiative was the campus-wide instructional grant program to faculty interested in enhancing the course content they devote to diversity issues within their courses. More than sixty faculty responded to our open invitation to attend a workshop on Professional Development Day, October 9, 2007, facilitated by Dr. Herman Jones and his recruited group of dedicated faculty.

Our goal for this project was to assure that students are repeatedly presented throughout their academic career with new and challenging ways to broaden their interpersonal and intercultural skills and leave Slippery Rock University with a basic set of multicultural competencies. The group continues to meet to achieve this goal and we now expect to exceed our original goal for curriculum changes initiated by our faculty.

We also announced a program to recognize each faculty retiree through a seminar in his or her honor prior to retirement. The seminar, featuring a presentation by the honoree, sponsored by the Office of the President and developed by Public Relations, was to provide a fitting remembrance of the person’s service to the University. Dr. Francene Haymon, professor in SRU’s Counseling Center and 33-year employee, was the inaugural speaker for the President’s Capstone Lecture Series. Thank you to Trustee Grace Hawkins for attending. We have several of these special retirement events scheduled for spring, 2008.

A third initiative announced at the beginning of this year was a pool of \$25,000 to be made available for “Angel Funding” to aspiring entrepreneurial ventures proposed by faculty or joint student/faculty teams. The intent of this fund was to encourage projects that have promise for the new university incubator and show a likelihood of developing to the stage of venture capital funding. Proposals are being submitted and in January, 2008, an organizing group will begin the process of deciding how to award the grant funds. This promises to be an excellent initiative for achieving multiple University goals for research, student engagement, and economic development of the region.

Throughout the semester, our students and faculty have brought great distinction to the

university. Here are some of the notable achievements earned in the past few months:

Faculty and Administration Accolades:

- Ramona Nelson, Slippery Rock University professor of nursing, was named a fellow in the Academy of Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing.
- The Pennsylvania State Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance named Slippery Rock University physical education instructor Randy Nichols Physical Education Teacher of the Year.
- Stacey Steele, a Slippery Rock University music faculty member, received a Red Apple Award from the United Way of Butler County. The award recognizes her leadership and dedication to students and the community.
- Dr. Jay Hertzog, dean of the College of Education at Slippery Rock University, has been named Pennsylvania Teacher Educator for 2007 by the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators.

Student Accolades:

- Christie D. Willison, a secondary education and English major, won the "Meritorious Student Paper Award" at the 2007 ISECON (Information Systems Education Conference) for her paper "Teaching Students How to Evaluate Sources in Online Research."
- Justin Brown, a Slippery Rock University freshman, received several awards for "The Real Enslavement," a Web site he co-created that examines the legacy and enduring problem of human slavery.
- The Slippery Rock University Army ROTC Ranger Challenge team captured second place in its tier and third place overall in the annual 2nd Brigade Eastern Region Ranger Challenge.

Notable Alumni Achievements:

- David Woten, a 1991 Slippery Rock University music education graduate, was named Pennsylvania's 2008 Teacher of the Year.
- Sandra Scurlie Kalin, a 1964 SRU education graduate, received the 2007 National Distinguished Principal Award from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals.
- U.S. Navy Capt. Kathlene Contres, a 1977 Slippery Rock University allied health graduate, received the 2007 HENAAC Santiago Rodriguez Diversity Award.
- Elaine Jewart, a 1966 Slippery Rock University graduate, was honored as an outstanding woman in the region by the Women and Girls Foundation of Southwest Pennsylvania.
- Patrick J. Geho, a 1992 Slippery Rock University graduate, who is now president of the Beaver County Chamber of Commerce, has been recognized by Pittsburgh Magazine and the Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project as No. 21 in its November "40 Under 40."

We conclude the fall 2007 term with Commencement on December 15 with more than 500 graduates to cross the stage. Ms. Suzanne Vessella, chair of the SRU Council of Trustees, will bring greetings from the council.

Our Commencement address will be presented by Dr. Carol Matteson, president of Mount Ida College and a nationally recognized leader and champion for the advancement of higher education. Dr. Matteson received her Bachelor of Science degree from SRU and was a successful faculty member and administrator at our University. Dr. Matteson's dedication to the University is unmatched. She helped launch SRU's Claire R. Schmieler Leadership Institute for Professional Women. In 1999, she created the Carol Matteson Women's Basketball and Track and Field Scholarship, which has been presented to seven women athletes. She also established the Katherine M. Moore Memorial Fund in 1989 to honor Moore, a 1975 SRU graduate and coordinator in SRU's McLachlan Student Health Center. The Moore scholarship has been awarded to 13 SRU students.