WELCOME

I am delighted to extend a warm “welcome back” to Ivy Tech’s faculty and academic advisors. Among my responsibilities as the college’s chief academic officer are to provide academic leadership and to promote excellence in all of our academic programs and initiatives. It is my privilege to lead and support our distinguished faculty and advisors.

I am humbled by your dedication to serving our students. Despite stretched resources and competing demands for your time, you have accomplished several significant student retention projects over a relatively short period. Only because of your innovation and commitment to student success were these initiatives attainable.

My intent for this newsletter is to provide you with an overview of the academic initiatives from the past year, outline major projects planned for 2014-15, and familiarize you with a few recent retention-related policy changes. So find a comfortable chair, grab a cup or glass of your favorite caffeinated beverage, and find a quiet spot to read.

I look forward to seeing many of you during my fall campus visits. Along with a casual presentation, there should be plenty of time for your questions.

Together, we will make a difference in moving Indiana's degree attainment out of the bottom ten states.

What are we doing to make this happen, to assure that Ivy Tech is significantly contributing to the state's completion goals? What follows are eight of our high impact initiatives launched or soon to be implemented and designed to positively impact student success.

FOCUS ON ENGAGEMENT & QUALITY

Studies show the close alignment between student engagement and student retention. Learning, persistence, and degree attainment are consistently associated with active and intentional student engagement — with college faculty and staff, with peers, and with the subject matter they are studying. Most recently, active and collaborative learning and support for learners were cited as significant predictors of college completion in a published study using data collected from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. The report outlines the five CCSSE benchmarks of effective educational practices related to outcome measures of student success: Noteworthy is that “academic challenge” exhibited the strongest effects on the academic outcomes benchmark, while “support for learners” demonstrated the strongest effects on persistence. Access the full report at http://www.ccsse.org/docs/Matter_of_Degrees_2.pdf.

This focus on engagement provides rationale for why community colleges are using data to understand and improve the educational experiences of their students. The importance of intentionally engaging students is known, but the challenge is identifying and implementing scalable, high impact practices to increase college completion rates. Many of Ivy Tech’s curricular changes, initiatives, and policy changes are designed for this purpose. As you read over the next eight initiatives, you will find strong linkages between each of these and what is defined in the CCSSE report as high impact practices.

ACADEMIC POLICY CHANGES IMPACTING RETENTION

Assignments on Blackboard

The first new policy relates to increasing instances of student engagement in course materials. For several years, Ivy Tech policy has required instructors to post course syllabus and grade information on Blackboard for every course they teach. Starting with the fall of 2014, faculty are also required to utilize Blackboard for posting and receiving course assignments. Although there will be instances where this is not possible (ex., file size or nature of the assignment), these exceptions should be limited.
Why is this important? We are now able to assemble data from a variety of sources, including Blackboard and Starfish, to create student activity profiles. The expected outcome is to accurately model successful student behavior and use it to predict students at risk for failing and withdrawing from class. Using student data this past spring semester from approximately 400 sections, an algorithm was developed achieving a prediction accuracy of 65 percent. Modifications increased this to 85 percent accuracy. IT expects to expand the use of this analysis throughout the 2014-15 academic year. Note that the algorithm can only work in classes where student engagement points can be measured, which is why required use of Blackboard for assignments and continued use of Starfish flags is critical to identifying students at risk early in the semester.

**Student Attendance Expectations and Faculty Reporting**
The second policy change expected to positively impact retention is an expansion of the college's attendance policy, ASOM 4.8 Student Attendance Expectations and Faculty Reporting Requirements. Attendance and engagement in courses are clearly essential components of the student learning process, and it is faculty who must impress the importance of attendance upon their students. The policy changes require faculty expectations for attendance and relationship to course grades to be clearly stated in the syllabus. That is, “Course syllabi must include an attendance policy that specifies the effect of missing class on students' grades.” Defining attendance for online instruction is clearer in the revised policy, and examples of acceptable consequences to unacceptable attendance are provided. For clarification, faculty are not prohibited from taking attendance; and second, course grades may be lowered due to poor attendance as long as consequences are clearly stated in the course syllabus. The policy takes effect for all courses beginning spring semester 2015. Take time to review the entire policy before preparing future syllabi.

**DEGREE MAPS AND A COMMON FIRST SEMESTER**
Over the past 12 months, the college restructured its 57 degree programs into four divisions: Business and Public Services, Health, Technology, and University and Transfer. Common elements defining each division assist students in identifying appropriate majors, and thus, are among the college's key retention strategies. Designing clear academic roadmaps (faculty) and assisting students in selecting appropriate pathways and establishing attainable academic goals (academic advisors) are evolving nationally as high-impact practices driving retention. In addition, all Indiana public higher education institutions are required to implement degree maps pursuant to HEA 1348-2013.

The first phase of defining structured and coherent educational pathways within each division was accomplished last year with the establishment of the four-to-six semester curricular program plans for full-time, part-time, and remedial students. Program chairs will be asked to review and refine these during the fall curriculum committee meetings. The next phase of degree map implementation, expected to be in place for new students enrolling this fall, involves customized degree roadmaps. Through Degree Completion Tracker (using DARS as its source for degree requirements), students will be able to build individualized semester-by-semester degree roadmaps that outline required course sequencing and a clear plan for on-time graduation. Students and academic advisors will be able to track progress and identify deviations from the plan. Academic advisor training is scheduled for September.

Finally, faculty will be asked to explore development of a common first semester for a division or cluster of programs within a division. These will be of great value to undecided students as they determine which program pathway to pursue.
NEW ADVISING TOOLS COMING YOUR WAY

Intrusive, quality academic advising is critical to degree and educational goal attainment. However, our 150 full-time professional academic advisors are not able to manage the task on their own. With over 1500 full-time and close to 4000 adjunct faculty, Ivy Tech’s faculty are crucial partners.

In response to faculty demand, many new academic advising training materials will be available this fall in both the HR Training Portal and on a new Campus Connect Advising Tab. The tools will include easy-read guides to help with policies and curriculum. Be on alert for an email to notify when these resources are available and how to access them.

Ivy Advising Fall Survey Dates
Fall survey dates for Ivy Advising are listed below, although know you can raise flags or kudos for students outside these windows:

Early Term Survey:
Opens: September 15
Closes September 26

End of Term Survey:
Opens: November 17
Closes: December 5

These survey times provide two opportunities to report student engagement during the semester, and your participation supports the IT student activity profile project outlined above (see Academic Policy Changes Impacting Retention). Your continued use of the Ivy Advising Early Alert System contributes to the college’s ability to identify and intervene with high-risk students before they fail or withdraw. The number of flags raised dropped significantly last term. In addition, some students report that the kudos flags motivated them to remain enrolled.

Midterm Grade Reporting Expands to All Classes
Midterm grade reporting is expanding to all courses meeting eight weeks or longer. Apprenticeship and dual credit classes are the only exceptions. Feedback from students receiving midterm grades during the pilot was positive. The initiative supports our efforts to provide timely information on academic performance to students and advisors.

By alerting our students early about their academic performance, we provide them with opportunities to seek additional help and/or encourage them to continue the good work they are doing. We also provide information to advisors so that they may assist these students with resources and alternative plans for success.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION EXPANDED COLLEGE WIDE

At Ivy Tech, supplemental instruction has been practiced at the North Central and Wabash Valley regions for several years and as part of our persistence/retention strategy will be implemented statewide starting this fall. Nationally, Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic support program that targets historically difficult courses http://www.umkc.edu/ASM/si/index.shtml.

There are several aspects of SI that are designed to help students be more successful in difficult courses. The SI Leader is a student who has taken the class before and excelled.

SI Leaders should be prepared to share with students how to effectively study for the course and attend the same class every day, taking notes and listening closely to the professor. This is a part-time temporary position, limited to fewer than 20 hours per week, and employees in this position must be active Ivy Tech students or recent Ivy Tech graduates. Generally, one class will result in a total of six to nine hours per week.

Regionally hired SI Leaders will be trained by regional SI Supervisors or Coordinators. To ensure they will be able to get their SI Leaders off to a strong start in the fall semester, training for SI Supervisors occurred on August 22 in Indianapolis. Training included a description of the principles and philosophy of the SI program, an overview of how to train SI Leaders, and information on data collection. On September 5, Kate Gold of the University of Missouri/Kansas City will travel to Indianapolis to conduct a workshop on how to effectively train SI Leaders (student peers).
While regions determine the course sections in which to offer SI, each region will need to track the SI section data for student persistence/retention. Registrar Ann Yater has created a statewide course attribute of “SI” in Banner form SSADETL to attach to those course sections. Overall implementation of the SI initiative will be managed by the Student Retention & Success Council.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF MATH PATHWAYS**

In the fall and spring terms of 2013-2014, all College curriculum groups selected one of three pathways — the Tech Pathway, the Quantitative Reasoning Pathway, or the Algebra/Calculus Prep Pathway — that best facilitate student learning and success in the related career. The outcome is an identified math requirement for each program that can assist advisor and students in choosing appropriate majors and degree/credential types. Prior to this exercise, most degree programs required college algebra or an algebra-centric math requirement. Beginning this academic year, approximately 51% of our majors require the new QR course; 15% require technical math; and only 34% require algebra or calculus.

**Tech Pathway**
The majority of technology students will follow the Tech Pathway, taking MATH 122, Applied Technical Mathematics, offered in all regions beginning this fall. The course, which is activity and project based, employs custom textbook, Blackboard, and MyMathLab components. Students who demonstrate a need for math skill development will take Foundations 070 and 071 prior to enrollment in the credit class. MATH 122 is designed to be taken along with an introductory technology class.

**QR Pathway**
MATH 123, Quantitative Reasoning, will serve applied programs outside of technology and many transfer programs. MATH 123 meets Indiana’s statewide general education competencies for quantitative reasoning, and thus, is a choice on the 30 credit hour General Education Transfer Core certificate. In addition, there are three public institutions that accept the course as a direct transfer: Indiana State University as MA 102, fulfilling ISU’s quantitative literacy requirement for Foundational Students/General Education; Ball State University as MATHS 125, which is the math course taken by all non-STEM and non-business majors; and University of Southern Indiana as MATH 114, satisfying USI’s new Core 39 learning outcomes requirement for quantitative reasoning.

By January 2015, MATH 123 is expected to be brought to scale statewide, although it is offered in all regions this fall. Students who show through assessment a need for math skill development will enroll in a redesigned MATH 080 as a co-requisite course to MATH 123. Fall 2014 will serve as a transition semester with both MATH 118 and MATH 123 on the schedule. Both will be offered as stand-alone and co-requisite courses. MATH 118 will not be offered after this fall.

Lead instructors have been named in each region for MATH 080, MATH 122, and MATH 123 to act as resources to both faculty and staff in the transition to the new courses. They will serve as communication links to appointed state leads and will be responsible for facilitating these courses in their regions.

**Algebra/Calculus Pathway**
Finally, MATH 035 and MATH 043 were offered for the last time this summer. Students in the Algebra/Calculus Pathway requiring skill development will complete MATH 023/MATH 100 or MATH 100 prior to enrolling in MATH 136, College Algebra.

**CO-REQUISITE REMEDIAL MODEL SUCCESSES**

There is much to celebrate upon reviewing data from two semesters of offering the co-requisite instructional model. This “best practice” model allows for concurrent enrollment in remedial and gateway courses. Students benefit from the linked instruction and “just in time” remediation, allowing for the completion of their gateway math and English in their first semester of enrollment. Last year’s results demonstrate significant gains in gateway course completion for this population of students.

Regarding implementation, regions successfully met completion targets for English and writing with 50 percent of ENGL 093 sections being taught as co-requisite last spring. This accounted for 36 percent of the developmental writing student enrollment. Goal for fall is 75 percent and is expected to be met or surpassed. Success in the model
exceeds projections. Fall 2013, 56 percent of students enrolled in co-requisite sections of ENGL 093/ENGL 111 passed the gateway ENGL 111 class. Spring 2014 saw 54 percent pass ENGL 111 while co-enrolled in linked sections of either ENGL 083/ENGL 111, ENGL 093/ENGL 111, or ENGL 095/ENGL 111. For comparison, the college’s baseline data reflects that only 24 percent of the students who began in ENGL 093 in fall 2011 had completed ENGL 111 within the next three semesters.

Math has seen an even higher gateway completion rate. During fall 2013, 58 percent of students enrolled in co-requisite sections of MATH 080/MATH 118 passed MATH 118. Spring 2014 saw 52 percent pass MATH 080/118 and MATH/123. In comparison, our baseline data reflects that only 9 percent of students who began one level below program ready completed their gateway math in one year.

As we have scaled co-requisite statewide, some changes have occurred. Reading and writing faculty developed an integrated reading and writing course (ENGL 095) to better meet the needs of students. New co-requisite course numbers have been established for English co-requisite, effective spring 2015: ENGL 063 Co-requisite Reading Strategies, ENGL 073 Co-requisite Writing Strategies, and ENGL 075 Co-requisite Reading and Writing Strategies.

Because of these positive co-requisite results, we will be focusing on providing increased opportunities for our students to succeed, and shifting from a goal of number/percentage of co-requisite sections, to number and percentage of overall student enrollment.

Co-Requisite Enrollment Targets
Target for 2014-15: 50% of enrollment in writing remediation via co-requisite sections.
2016-17: 100% of enrollment in writing remediation via co-requisite sections.

Target for 2014-15: 25% of enrollment in reading remediation (to include ENGL 075) via co-requisite sections.

2015-16: TBD

Target for 2014-15: 100% of enrollment in math remediation for QR pathway via co-requisite sections.

CUSTOM ACCUPLACER DIAGNOSTIC & DOE ADOPTION

First, the good news! Ivy Tech was informed that Indiana Department of Education chose the college’s custom ACCUPLACER Diagnostic as the statewide high school tool for assessing college readiness in the absence of other standardized test scores. This will serve to facilitate a smoother transition from high school to Ivy Tech. Anticipated start date is spring 2015.

The custom ACCUPLACER Diagnostic was implemented February 3, 2014. This was a collaborative effort between Ivy Tech faculty and the College Board that occurred over a 24-month period. The first step in this process was the identification of five reading and 11 math competencies by our faculty, and the decision to use WritePlacer as the writing assessment. With that information, the College Board began the test development process. Our reading, writing, and math faculty then met for an item analysis session during the winter of 2013, and for a week-long standard setting process during the summer of 2013. Faculty participating in these critical steps considered the skills and level of proficiency needed for placement into our remedial and 100-level courses. During fall 2013, reading, writing, and math curriculum groups used the results of the standard setting
to align the assessment results to our courses and to determine placement cut scores. The three areas of assessment are:

**English:** Students write an untimed, electronic essay which is electronically evaluated using a scoring rubric of 1-8. Students receive a score and feedback about their writing proficiency.

**Math:** All students begin in the Elementary Algebra portion of ACCUPLACER placement. Depending on their placement score, they are then branched to one of three groups in which the identified 11 competencies are organized. Students receive a placement/diagnostic report that includes both placement score and competency (strand) feedback.

The diagnostic information is used by faculty, advisors, and Ivy Prep staff to guide students with curricular decisions. ACCUPLACER scores are used to determine course placement in the absence of other available criteria, such as recent high school GPA, prior college coursework, or SAT/ACT scores.

**Reading:** Both a placement and diagnostic, in which students answer 40 questions and are provided with both a placement score and competency (strand) feedback.

The following programs are launching fall 2014 in the Institute format:
- Automotive Services Technology TC
- Diesel Heavy Truck Technology TC
- Motorsports TC
- Auto Body Technology TC
- All stackable CT’s in Automotive
- Advanced Automation & Robotics Technology AAS
- Automation & Robotics Technology TC
- Mechatronics CT
- Energy Technology AAS
- Energy Technology TC
- Industrial Electrical Technology TC
- Industrial Mechanical Technology TC
- Process Operations Technology TC
- Quality Assurance Technology TC
- Welding Technology TC
- All stackable CT’s in Industrial Tech

**IVY INSTITUTE AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

The Indiana Works and Career Councils, charged by Governor Pence to link the needs of business and industry with secondary and postsecondary training opportunities, encourages innovative curriculum design that embeds significant real-world work experiences and accelerates credential attainment. The Ivy Institute does just that and more. The task underway within the School of Technology is to convert its programs to incorporate proven success elements of Ivy Institute. To achieve this goal, all programs will meet the following criteria:

- Students’ default schedule is the Technical Certificate
- No elective choices in the Technical Certificate or Certificate (CT)
- New students meet IVYT requirement through completion of a specialized IVYT course
- Developmental needs met by FOUN 070/071
- MATH 122, Technical Mathematics is the required math course
- Full and part time block scheduling options
- Contextualized, relevant curriculum
- Competencies must be aligned with a nationally recognized accreditation body and curriculum to include embedded certifications.

The IVY Institute does just that and more. The task underway within the School of Technology is to convert its programs to incorporate proven success elements of Ivy Institute. To achieve this goal, all programs will meet the following criteria:

- Students’ default schedule is the Technical Certificate
- No elective choices in the Technical Certificate or Certificate (CT)
- New students meet IVYT requirement through completion of a specialized IVYT course
- Developmental needs met by FOUN 070/071
- MATH 122, Technical Mathematics is the required math course
- Full and part time block scheduling options
- Contextualized, relevant curriculum
- Competencies must be aligned with a nationally recognized accreditation body and curriculum to include embedded certifications.

The following programs are launching fall 2014 in the Institute format:
- Automotive Services Technology TC
- Diesel Heavy Truck Technology TC
- Motorsports TC
- Auto Body Technology TC
- All stackable CT’s in Automotive
- Advanced Automation & Robotics Technology AAS
- Automation & Robotics Technology TC
- Mechatronics CT
- Energy Technology AAS
- Energy Technology TC
- Industrial Electrical Technology TC
- Industrial Mechanical Technology TC
- Process Operations Technology TC
- Quality Assurance Technology TC
- Welding Technology TC
- All stackable CT’s in Industrial Tech
Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning and Machine Tool are slated for redesign during the upcoming academic year. Considering Indiana’s identified need for high-demand middle skill technicians, this project positions the college to support Indiana’s economy.

**WHAT’S ON THE DOCKET FOR 2014-15? IDENTIFYING PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Clear program-level student learning outcomes serve and benefit several constituencies. To prospective students, choosing a program of study becomes less mysterious with well-defined outcomes; employers benefit knowing what to expect from an Ivy Tech graduate; assessment becomes manageable for faculty; program quality improves as curriculum linked to program outcomes is compared against industry and accreditations standards. Over the course of the year, lead program chairs will oversee the development and/or refinement of program-level learning outcomes, encompassing existing professional or industry standards and/or existing accreditation requirements. Many of you will be asked to assist in the project. Once created, these will be placed on the website for public view.