



State of the College August 11, 2008



As we wrap up a very busy year, commence a new year, and draw closer to 2010, I wanted to take a few moments to recap some of our accomplishments, review the status of our major initiatives, project what is likely to lie ahead of us for 2009 and 2010, and close with a few comments about my personal goals.

Although I generally prefer to talk a bit more extemporaneously, because not everyone can be here today and I will be posting my comments, I'll try to stay with my written script a bit more closely than usual. You therefore may want to jot down your thoughts and questions so we can have a dialogue after my prepared comments. But first, I'd like to thank Chancellor Wall for being here today and showing his support of our college.

As I began preparing my comments, I started with the strategic goals we set for the college last year. Last year's goals, as well as the ones for 2008-09 represent an evolution of the goals formulated when we designed our 2010 Plan. As we prepare the college goals each year we sometimes have done so in conjunction with a college retreat, while other times a core group revised the previous year's goals and circulated them for feedback. As we near complete implementation of our 2010 Plan however, we will need to begin looking ahead toward the future and development of a new long-term strategic plan for the college.

Regardless of how the strategic planning and goal setting process unfolded, it has and always will remain focused on teaching, research, practice, and service; regardless of how they might be phrased or the format du jour which is currently:

Student Access and Success
Research and Economic Development
Clinical Care
Outreach and Globalization
With Organization, Resources, and Communication
added to address the operational aspects of our organization

Let's take a look at each of these missions in turn, focusing on the status of our ongoing initiatives, and our goals and challenges for the upcoming the year.

First, Student Access and Success

Last year we had three major goals related to student access and success; 1st, to implement year 03 of our 2010 Plan, 2nd, to conduct a systematic review of the PhD program, and 3rd, to enhance student access & success with a focus on diversity.

I don't think anyone could argue that our 2010 Plan isn't an ambitious forward-looking plan that is in alignment with the legacy of our college for leading academic innovation. Leading innovation does not come without criticism and hard work though, a fact I know you appreciate. But, it has also brought us recognition and accolades, testifying to the fact that we are leading the way and heading in the right direction.



As we look to next year and our goal to implement year 04 of the 2010 Plan, and the next to the last year I might add; I can guarantee you that the hard work will continue—curricular transition and especially that which is leading edge—is never easy. As we get close to full implementation of our 2010 Plan, this year will also bring a renewed urgency for us to establish closer partnerships with our clinical partners as the admission of our first cohort of MSN-entry students approaches, and as we plan for the regions first Dedicated Education Units.

Our second teaching-related goal focused on our PhD program which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The program has undergone fairly minimal change since it opened which speaks to the foresightedness of those who created it. Still, there have been tremendous advances in doctoral education and research during this time that significantly impacts our program making its review a priority. This review must occur in the broader context of what's happening in research nationally as well as locally, and specifically as it relates to the CTSI and the likelihood that AACN's Quality Indicators of Doctoral Programs will be revisited in the near future. Our review has begun at a fairly high level with discussions about program mission and vision. During the upcoming year this work will need to pick up more momentum and drill down to finer levels if we want to make any meaningful revisions to the program before the next admission cycle.

Three accreditation visits are also on our agenda for this year; CCNE for our Masters and DNP programs, ANCC for our continuing education program, and COA for our anesthesia program. We know we have outstanding programs, but just as we tell our students, "If it isn't documented, it isn't done". This is particularly true for program evaluation. Because this was the weakest link in our last accreditation visit, we can be assured that our visitors will take a close look at all aspects of evaluation during this visit. One accreditation, let alone three can be an overwhelming thing to think about. Fortunately, we have some folks that have been down this road before and who know the terrain from the inside. So, again I'll tell you the same thing I recently told our over-whelmed stressed-out students who felt the faculty was expecting

the impossible of them. It's true, we are headed down a difficult journey, however we've got great guides who have travelled the journey before us and know the pitfalls ahead; they also know us and our abilities. We have to trust them, listen to them, keep focused on the end goal, and let them lead us to it; we will be successful and get there before you know it.

Our last teaching related goal continues our desire to enhance student access, success and diversity. We have excelled in this area enrolling and graduating around 180 students last year; the largest number since the WWII Army Nurse Corps classes. Of our 400+ students, 21% of are African-American and 13% are men; both percentages above the national average. Our success is also reflected in what is probably the largest number of HRSA grants the college has ever had (n=6), and the increased involvement of students in SGA, SNA, and BSNA activities. As we look to next year, we will need to be mindful of our role as faculty in helping sustain the momentum of these efforts, particularly in light of our reduced budget. This is especially the case for student recruitment in light of the fact that we had to cancel our marketing campaign. Because of this, each of us will need to assume personal responsibility for actively promoting our programs and recruiting students for them. We are exploring some less expensive ways to do this so look for some materials to come out fairly soon.

The university's second mission is research and economic development.

Last year our goal was to invest resources to increase external funding and establish a new research infrastructure. Toward this goal, for the third time, and second year in a row, we funded faculty research fellowships. Last year, \$57,000 provided equipment, supplies, and research assistants to faculty to conduct pilot studies to support subsequent grant applications. Although our budget won't allow us to be quite as generous this upcoming year, we have a strong foundation to build on given the previous awards.



It is also important to note the contributions that the Office of Research and Grant Support has made to our research enterprise since its creation only a few of years ago. By having this physical home for our research and grant activities we have been able to provide support that most schools of our size and even larger don't enjoy. We have been able to coordinate our grant and publication efforts for greater efficiency and monitor productivity in a manner that enables us to better express our accomplishments. For example, in FY 04 we received less than \$400,000 in grant funding and this last fiscal year we received greater than \$1.2 million. Support of the ORGS office will be even more important for faculty in the upcoming year as our enrollment peaks, curriculum work continues, accreditation visits approach, external funding gets even more competitive, and budget constraints impact our daily work. Additionally, new resources at the campus level primarily through the CTSI will provide even more opportunities for support of faculty research.

The scholarly work that emerges from both our research and practice is gaining momentum and can enjoy continued growth given the resources we have, in spite of budget cuts. The critical issue will be to find ways for our tenure track faculty to take advantage of these opportunities in the face of the competing demands. The loss of faculty positions is a threat to our scholarly enterprises that should not be ignored. Being as lean as we are means that when we recruit new faculty the focus must be on what teaching holes they can fill, not what they can bring to further strengthen our research or practice enterprises.

As we consider these challenges, we should first look internally at what we do and how we could work smarter not harder. One way we can do this, as individuals and as a college, is to visualize our efforts in teaching, scholarship, and service as three overlapping circles in a Venn diagram; and then find ways we can increase the degree to which these circles overlap to better leverage our time, effort, and resources.

Our third mission is clinical care.

In my visits to schools across the country I proudly describe the way our college equally values research and practice—this is not the norm in most schools. Still, nursing faculty everywhere has immense challenges establishing practice due in part to the way nursing has historically separated academe and practice, and the roadblocks our health care system has in place for advanced practice nurses.



Our faculty practice has taken different courses over the years and depending on what view you take has been stronger or weaker as the direction evolved. From a financial perspective, if you scratch the surface of any faculty practice you'll discover that regardless of the type of enterprise or size, at best they break even; and essentially all are subsidized. However, financial status alone cannot be the only measure of success. If a school offers advanced practice education, faculty must maintain APN certification and the school should therefore assume some responsibility for supporting maintenance of these credentials.

So where does that put our faculty practice? Financially we are very sound; we can honestly say we have a million dollar practice enterprise because that is the revenue we generate. Expenses are another matter, but even at that, we have gone from an annual deficit of \$300,000 to one that has us slightly in the black. In terms of faculty placement, all faculty who want to practice are practicing; perhaps not in an ideal setting but given our constraints, we are better off than most schools that still have faculty moonlighting week-ends and holidays. Further testimony to the health of our faculty practice is the \$33,000 in practice incentives that were paid to individual faculty last year in addition to \$13,000 in research incentives.

Why then does it feel like our faculty practice enterprise is struggling? I believe it is because like most nursing faculty practices, ours is made up of individual practices and it doesn't feel like there is a cohesive overarching structure holding us together. This may be acceptable to most schools that see practice merely as a way to assure everyone maintains their individual certification, but it is not acceptable to us. We view faculty practice as a scholarly endeavor and just a big science is team science, we see big practice as team practice. So, while each faculty practitioner is a strong clinician and leader in their own right, we need a practice leader focused on our collective practice enterprise to bring us together as a team.

Last year's goals had our practice faculty conducting a systematic evaluation of our practice enterprise to address some of these issues. I believe we did a great job with the first step of this process. We formed an active practice committee, everyone participated in a thorough environmental scan of our practice enterprise, and as a group everyone learned a great deal about our overall practice efforts. Subsequently, we were to design and implement a plan. This is where we fell short. Why? I believe as reasonable as it may have seemed for us to determine a direction prior to hiring a leader, the complexity of operating an active faculty practice kept us from devoting the time and energy needed to envision the future. It was based on these insights that I decided to move forward as quickly as possible with hiring a new Assistant Dean for Faculty Practice, a position that, by the way is not funded with orange dollars but rather by the revenue we generate through practice.

The fourth mission of the university is outreach and globalization.



Our outreach goals for 2007-2008 spanned the community, state, and globe. Our community efforts centered on our 2010 Roadshow presentations. In terms of success, we've appeared before over a dozen groups and have more scheduled. Has community awareness been enhanced? Yes. Do we feel success had been totally achieved? No. Will we ever feel like the level of community awareness about our college is where it needs to be? Doubtful...but, we have a better chance now than we have had in decades.

Chancellor Wall has reversed the previous posture of this campus to avoid the press, and for the first time in my memory our campus is seeking out publicity. We also felt the benefit and impact of having a professional PR firm design our marketing campaign. Even though budget cuts necessitated we cancel our campaign, the campus now plans to retain a PR firm and we should be able to ride the coattails of a campus effort. However, as a college and as individuals we must assume more responsibility for promoting ourselves and recruiting our students. So as opportunities to spread the word about our college present themselves, we need to take advantage of them wherever they occur; in clinical sites, at church, during soccer practice, or in my husband's case when the computer repairman says his wife is interested in nursing but planning on going someplace other than UT, because she didn't know we had a program.

Last year many of you and our students were involved in a variety of community service related activities. It is more critical than ever that we document these efforts so we can impress upon our legislators the significant contributions we are making to the community and state. The positive press we garner from your work at health fairs, airport disaster drills, mission trips, and the like brings visibility to our college with potential students as well as our legislators; so don't be shy sharing your good works. And, thank you for your generous gift of time to our community.

Another local outreach effort that shouldn't be forgotten is our CE, DVP, and alumni activities. These activities and attendance have grown tremendously over the years and is another way to make our presence known to the community. It was for this reason that we strategically opened up our DVP and Alumni activities to the community, while retaining a focus on our students and alumni. Not only did this enhance our visibility it has also enabled our students to enjoy a richer and more meaningful experience. The best example of our successes here is the contrast between alumni day activities early in my deanship when there were around 30 attendees, versus our last alumni day where the attendance was over 300.

Outreach goals at the state level had us exploring opportunities to partner with sister UT



nursing programs. Because there has never been a strong connection among the four UT nursing programs, we strategically decided to move this goal forward in a slow and deliberate manner. The dean's of the four schools have had two meetings where we agreed to explore ways to collaborate on efforts around the university's new global mission. I drafted a framework for the collaborative which the deans reviewed and will discuss at a meeting in Nashville September 11. The next step will be to bring leadership and key faculty from each school into joint conversation, so look for that to occur sometime during in 2009. Though still in the early stages, the importance of establishing this relationship should not be minimized. It is because of the collaboration among our colleagues in the Regent's schools that they have a strong collective voice and influence. Even though our four voices will be smaller in number, it's greater than one and will have the power of the Big Orange behind it.

Although Globalization is a new priority for the university, what we have been able to accomplish in a short period of time has been remarkable. In addition to exploring ways we might be able to collaborate with our sister UT nursing programs, we were able to offer a Spanish course, take some students to Mexico, begin work with St Jude's on an international program, and some faculty and students have established individual international collaborations. As we look toward the New Year, it should be with the goal of expanding these opportunities and weaving them into the fabric of the college.

As an endnote to our community outreach mission I should comment on our role in the recently established Nursing Institute of the Mid South. Briefly, about two years ago the Assisi Foundation challenged the chief nursing officers of Memphis hospitals and schools to collectively find a community solution for our nursing workforce crisis. Over the subsequent 18 months and lots of meetings, arm twisting, and creative financing, the Institute was formed. I am exceptionally proud to point out that our University is the strongest supporter of this nurse-driven initiative. Chancellor Wall and Vice Chancellor Brown deserve a huge expression of gratitude from the entire Memphis nursing community for putting substance behind their words of support for nursing.

Nursing Institute
OF THE *Mid South*
A COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE FOR A
TOP-QUALITY NURSING WORKFORCE

The last mission of the university surrounds organization, resources, and communication.

Here, our 2007-08 strategic goals focused on faculty development. The last few years we have been exceptionally fortunate to have had the resources needed to provide a vast array of faculty development opportunities. We have been able to be quite generous in these efforts, sending all faculty and a significant number of our students to professional conferences. In addition, we've brought in several consultants and have purchased lots of materials, supplies, equipment, and have upgraded classrooms and labs.

Now as we enter much more austere times, we will need to be more strategic and targeted in our faculty development activities. I know we've discussed this as a faculty, and I listened with great pride as you discussed ways to adopt some creative cost-saving approaches to faculty development and scholarly activities. Thank you for displaying such insight and consideration of our current circumstances.

This brings us to our goal of consolidating departments in Alexander and 920 Madison. We continue to move forward and hopefully over the next few weeks will know the costs associated with a move, can project a timeline, and begin to actively seek out funding.

Speaking of funding, the search for additional funding in general will be a major goal for the upcoming year, not just for our departmental consolidation but for operation of the college in general. The good news is that even though the year is very young, there has already been a great deal of progress in this regard. I've shared many of the details related to our budget cuts so won't belabor them again. Instead I want to update you with our successes.

The most significant development success is the verbal commitment of Methodist to restore the level of funding for our professional entry program that we had been anticipating. In addition, we are working on a proposal that will provide ongoing funds through a permanent endowment. I am also pleased to report that the new Methodist University Hospital leadership has pledged to donate faculty for two clinical rotations and perhaps more, that I was

able to get minority funds from the university to support a faculty position, that I am working with the development office to make some additional endowment income accessible to support faculty salaries and activities, and that I've identified three additional possibilities for professorships that we will be vetting with individuals and groups this year. So stay tuned for updates on these initiatives.

These development efforts will also contribute to the achievement of our last goal which is to assure the future of the CON and its national stature. Toward that end we will need to begin asking ourselves, "What comes after 2010?" Although our focus this year will be on the final stages of implementing our 2010 Plan, we need to begin envisioning what our college will be like when 2010 arrives and what's next for us. So begin thinking, dreaming, and talking among yourselves about post 2010; and after all our accreditation visits and admission cycles are over we'll begin more formal discussions about a 2015 Plan.

In closing, I'd like to say that the state of the college is strong and with the challenges and opportunities on the horizon we can look forward to a bright a future. We already have a world renowned DNP program and opportunity exists for us to mirror this in our PhD program. As we undertake our review of this program it must be the broader context of our place in the new world of big team interdisciplinary science. Similarly, our research and practice enterprises are at a turning point and have the opportunity to catapult forward to new heights. Last, our new master's RN-entry program is certainly poised to set the standard for the next generation of nursing education. I am not aware of any other program that is coupling a professional entry master's CNL with dedicated educational units and an enhanced practice partnership the same way we are. Our success in this endeavor has the potential to capture the national spotlight in the same way our DNP program has.

We've just been through almost 5 years of rapid growth and change where we have, in essence, created an entirely new college. This has not been easy for anyone, faculty, staff or students; or, regardless of whether we were among the "old-timers" who have been with the college for many years, or were among the "new-comers" who came more recently. Even though we came together knowing it wouldn't be easy, I don't think anyone realized the hard work was not just about developing new programs and growing in size; it was more about creating an entirely new college and culture.

What should make us all very proud is that our new culture continues to embrace the legacy our college established over 100 years ago...one of educational innovation and leadership; and setting a standard for the nation. That, is what you are doing and what you all should be very proud of.