

Good morning! Welcome! Can you believe it? Already? Another August at CSI, but you know what? They just keep getting better. And as happy as I am to see all of you, I'll be even happier next week when all those new students show up!

Yes, we have a **lot** of new students. But I have to say this is sort of a good news-bad news situation. Let's start with the good news: as of today our new student credits are up dramatically from last year: almost \_\_\_%! In fact, freshman class sizes are up all over the state, so it appears that perhaps our downward tilt in enrollment was overwith last year. And **that** is more than good news, that's **great** news.

But now the bad news: even with a larger freshman class **this** year, overall enrollments are down about \_\_\_% due at least in part to the fact that we had a small freshman class **last** year, and so our returning student registrations are down from a year ago by about \_\_\_%. I'm consoling myself with the fact that there was little we could have done about this, and that again, this appears to be a statewide pattern. And I can't help but feel that we're back on the upswing.

We have changed how we're admitting students, which is obvious from SOAR, but what you may not know is that we stopped our admission of new students going into this week, understanding that if a student is only now considering applying, it's not going to bode well for them. We will still take them in and talk to them, but with a different kind of conversation. I have a little quiz here for you regarding what we should tell them if they show up this next week. Ready? You can vote or make your choice with applause... [click]

- A. "If it were up to me, we'd take you right now. But the administration told us we couldn't, so you're out of luck. Do you believe it? Maybe CWI will take you."
- B. "School starts Monday. What were you thinking?"
- C. "Everything is changing around here, so I have no idea what to tell you. Did you try calling Admissions?"

D. "Our official admission period for fall is over, but let's talk. What are your plans? What are you wanting to do?"

President Fox has been very clear that we aren't just going to turn people away automatically, but we need to qualify the **readiness** of those last minute students. We have four SOAR sessions scheduled for this week, so we're still doing a lot of intake and our Student Services staff will be very busy with that, keeping in mind that these are all new students. For the rest of us, we need to be especially available to grab those returning students and help them get registered, because they **will** be coming. We know that. They've **told** us that. [click]

By the way, I want to thank all those who were involved with SOAR since April. This was a huge change for us, but by and large we can say that the initial feedback has been positive. It did not appear to impact new student enrollment negatively. The proof of success will be in our ability to bring these students to the finish line. SOAR will evolve and continue to improve.

Yes, things continue to change around here...change **is** inevitable. But I believe that the **rate** of change will now be slowing and soon we'll be concentrating more on **creativity** and **innovation**.

Speaking of which, I have to tell you what happened when I got home from work on Friday. Well, actually I don't **have** to, and maybe I **shouldn't**, but I can't help myself. Many of you know of my man-child, Caleb. In some ways, he's that millennial that doesn't appear to have an interest in leaving home and honestly, that's fine with me. He's actually a good kid...but he's now **20**. Anyway, I came home Friday and it was his day off so he had some friends over. Shaun let me know that he had asked for permission to borrow the blender. This didn't really alarm me, but I did wonder for a moment if he and his buddies weren't making cocktails downstairs, but they aren't drinkers so I just let it go. And Shaun did say they also took some milk for smoothies.

A few minutes later they were out back on the patio, no cocktails in sight. About 30 minutes later Caleb came in and said they were headed back downstairs and I mentioned something about keeping things cleaned up. He bolted for the basement and shortly brought up the blender that appeared to have some drying chocolate residue inside, since it was brownish. So I asked the obvious question, “What were you guys blending down there?”

Caleb’s response: “Squid and eel.”

I won’t go into all the details of what happened the next few minutes, but here’s a takeaway for you: if you see a blender on eBay or Craigslist, just walk away.

Caleb is the pickiest eater I know since me, so I asked hiim, “You actually *tried* this?” He said, “The eel was better than the squid.” Think about that: ***they did this twice!***

Why am I telling you this? Because in a strange kind of way, I was actually kind of proud of him. He was willing to try something *new*. As disgusting and distasteful as it seemed to appear, he *tried* it. And I was a little proud of *me* for maybe creating an environment, where he wasn’t *afraid* to try something new. And I didn’t freak out. At least not completely.

So...strange as it may seem, that’s an example of what we’d like to see happen here at CSI. We want all of you to feel free and empowered to be creative, to look for new ways of ***doing*** things, ***trying*** new things, and maybe even being more open to others who are doing the trying.

Kevin Mark has made it very clear from the first time I met him: before innovation must come stabilization and security. We’ve spent the better part of the last two years doing just that. But we’re now on the brink of something very special. President Fox has used the Innovation Circle grants as something of a microcosm of what we can imagine for the entire campus, for everyone. So when I say that change may be slowing...that’s really up to everyone here in this room. But now that

we have a more stable environment, not just in technology, but in **many** ways, we can start having this conversation in earnest. In case it isn't clear yet, our desire is simple: to get **better**. To **be** better. To **do things** better. Not because we **aren't** doing them well, but because we **can**.

This morning is an example. We're trying something new. Yes, there will be food. But some of us felt like we cut you off while you were eating and socializing and ordered you in here before you were ready, so we decided to move that part to the end. Once we're done here and it won't be long, we'll migrate to the Taylor Building and recognize our long-time employees. The food and drinks will be there and you can stay and socialize as long as you want. But one important thing: please don't get started with the eating and socializing until **after** we've recognized the employees. Then take as much time as you like.

Another change is our logo. Kudos to Erin and her team for this design, which the Board of Trustees adopted a couple months back, along with a new athletic logo. But with this change, we are also taking more responsibility for the **brand**. We need to protect it, and protect the image of the College that it represents. So please know that any publications, brochures, tshirts...anything that the public will see, will need to abide by what we call Visual Identity Standards. Erin, Doug, and Kim have put together a publication to help with this information, and if you are someone who is involved in these kinds of things, you'll want to check it out. I hope you enjoy and proudly wear your new lapel pin.

In order for the College to have attained the degree of excellence that it has and the reputation that we've all built together, there are **many** who contribute. Over the past couple of years, and especially this past summer, I've seen more examples of this than I can count. It seems that every time I pick up the newspaper, some CSI person is there, working in the community, working for this campus, giving of themselves, with this same notion: this commitment to **excellence**. This commitment to **success**. I won't mention names, because inevitably I would leave

someone out. But I've had both faculty and staff in my office and my inbox, volunteering, pushing the envelope, wanting to be a part of what's happening. I've heard incredibly moving stories, from refugees fighting their way to safety (and I'm talking about our **employees** now), to expressing excitement about subjects from general education to service learning to an amphitheater to maker spaces to giant fighting robots. We've experimented with a summer bridge program, a preschool-to-university or **P20** teacher conference, a dual credit academy, we hosted the state CTE summer conference, and a conference for band teachers. I don't recall a time in my CSI career when I've seen more people giving of themselves to make this school and this community a better place, and our students more successful. You guys are awesome.

But one thing in particular caught my eye a few weeks ago and I almost missed it. Did any of you catch the news story about the person that was repeatedly abusing, assaulting, and attacking Twin Falls County law enforcement officers as they tried to arrest him? As I read the story, I felt that the officers showed incredible restraint and courage in not simply shooting this guy, but finally, after a long struggle including Tasers and chases on foot and punches, the suspect was tackled, subdued, handcuffed, and taken into custody. By our own Jon Hardesty. I am so proud to be associated with all of you. Great things are in store. And I'm not talking about squid smoothies here...really, truly great things. Here are a few of them:

This afternoon, the CSI Board of Trustees will vote on a proposal to invest nearly \$400,000 in an end-to-end redesign and construction of all CSI web experiences. Keep your fingers crossed!

Without getting into a lot of detail here, please remember the CSI Employee Picnic this Saturday. RSVP deadline is tomorrow, so check your email for the details. We're looking forward to a great time at Centennial Park. Ben Lustig is your primary contact. The Faculty Staff

Connections Committee is also sponsoring an ice cream social again this year, later this week.

Also watch your email for a link to a SharePoint Calendar that includes all the inservice activities and training scheduled. For those of you who are delivering training, please check to make sure yours was included and get the information to Shonna if you'd like it included. It can be updated on the fly.

Something new this year is an attempt to start and maintain Gilbert's Pantry (everyone know Gilbert?). Operating out of the Office of Student Affairs upstairs in Taylor, we are looking for two things: contributions of non-perishable food items and/or noting students who could benefit and getting them the information. Contacts include Michelle Schutt, Rosa, Samra, or Jasmine, or even our brand new Dean of Students, Jason Ostrowski. This is an attempt to provide another form of aid to our students in need.

We do have a bit of a change in our topic for the all faculty session tomorrow morning at 8:30. The analysis of all the comments and findings of the May Town Hall has been completed and we're anxious to describe what we learned, especially with regard to General Education and Assessment.

Don't forget the Foundation Welcome Back Bash tonight at 5:30 at the Turf Club. Once again, thank you Deb, Cyndie, and Tamara.

We'll be announcing the recipients of our Pioneering Grants later this week, so watch for that as well.

Now...some of you are going to think that this next is just about me sucking up to my boss. But that simply isn't true, since she isn't even here. The fact is, we have an exemplary leader, in ways that many of you don't get to see, or can't imagine. As proud as I am to be working with all of you, I am equally proud to be working in support of President Fox. Let's all express our gratitude and welcome him to the stage.