

LCCC prez paranoid? - "Us vs. Them?"

Everyone

As you all know, we are going through a very difficult time at the College, and we are doing everything possible to continue to serve students and operate the College efficiently. I understand that many of you feel frightened that you will lose your jobs or feel intimidated if you make comments re: a variety of issues. But we must not let these challenges create an environment of disrespect and unprofessionalism. Our concern is not necessarily the disagreement. Rather, it is the disagreeable method that some of you are choosing to express your concerns.

Now is not the time for us to fall prey to rumor mongering, grasp at innuendo, and descend into negative attitudes. Normally, rumors have no basis and are usually concocted because someone-or "someones"-do not have all of truth and/or have failed to search out the truth. Any rumor is unhealthy and unfounded. Those who create and spread these rumors are creating an environment and climate that are damaging the entire campus-students, faculty, staff, and others. I would request that if you are engaged in any of these practices, that you immediately refrain from doing so.

Now is the time for us to have honest, open, civil, and well-informed dialogue.

Now is the time for us to come together to overcome any challenges that come our way, to be that "family" that we all say we are in our conversations with students and the community.

Now is the time for us to adhere to the College's values of: Educational Excellence, Integrity, Respect, and Community.

Now is the time to adhere to the College's civility statement: "We believe that academic inquiry, personal integrity, and respect for self and others are the foundation of the educational experience. Therefore, all members of the campus community will strive to create a campus environment of mutual respect and high ethical standards. Laramie County Community College students, faculty, and staff have the right to experience, and the responsibility to maintain, a safe educational community that is civil in all aspects of human relations" (Bold added).

Now is the time to remember that it is not just the "administration's challenge." Rather, the creation of a positive campus and the "fixing" of any of these challenges are a reciprocal obligation and responsibility-all of our responsibility.

Now is the time to remember that when we all signed our contracts, we committed to uphold the standards of this College. Yes, there is an expectation that we adhere to the mission, vision, and values.

Now is the time for all of us to re-read, and re-think and re-commit to the mission, values, and civility statement and make a concerted effort to do the right thing and do the things that you committed to do.

Now is the time to make this College a better place, a more efficient place, a fun place, a place where all of us can feel good about coming to work and not feel threatened and frightened. It is our duty and our responsibility to make this happen because we are professionals and because we can "see afar off." Our destiny lies with all of us.

Please join with me in informing people, both internal and external, know that our College is progressive and proactive. We can either progress or retrogress. And my choice-and I hope yours-is to progress, to rise above the froth of life and the current challenges, to rise above the negativity and innuendo, to understand who we are and why we are here, and to behave in such a way that is beyond reproach-for we are Laramie County Community College, one of the finest higher education institutions in the country. And we are accountable and responsible to keep it that way.

If you have questions or comments about what is going on or heard something that does not seem quite true, please refer them to ask lccc@lccc.wy.edu. Only one person will read the comments and questions, and that person is Lisa Murphy. Lisa will congregate the questions and keep them anonymous, but I will answer them and send them out to the campus each week.

Thank you.

Darrel L. Hammon, Ph.D.

President, Laramie County Community College

Now's a bad time to increase any fees at LCCC

Thou doth protest too much, Hammon. *Your* actions have caused the need to circle the wagons, no one else's.

My introduction to LCCC was back when I first arrived in Cheyenne, 23 years ago. Whomever I was speaking with referred to a "Last Chance Cowboy College." That wasn't a complimentary way to speak of a junior college many in town, or children of many in town, had attended.

Community colleges are usually thought of as a place near home where young people can bridge the gap of education between high school and real college. And with more and more colleges claiming that high school graduates, as a whole, are not prepared to enter colleges and universities, junior colleges (or community colleges) can provide two years of remedial course work in preparation for four or five more years to earn a college degree. Five to seven years to earn a degree, after thirteen years of preparation in our public schools, seems excessive but with longer life expectancies, students have the time.

Some trades and vocations can be learned, or at least adequate preparation can be provided, in community colleges like LCCC. (And I did find out those initials did not stand for the Cowboy College I was told they represented.) And these schools are critical because of their location and availability to most in the state of Wyoming.

Because they can better sort out those prepared for and qualified to matriculate to the state's only four year university, community colleges need to be kept affordable and void of attention-seeking or resume-building presidents.

Darrel Hammon is now being compared to the former hospital CEO, Charlie Harms. More everyday are concluding that Hammon's success in cozying up to enough board members to retain his job has stood him in better stead than his actual performance at LCCC - or at other schools before LCCC. Transient heads of organizations like LCCC are not worried about popularity with the public - only with the board that can hire or fire them - so the notion, even though the Wyoming Constitution provides for "Free Tuition" and an education "as free as possible," is of secondary concern to empire-building and cultivating affection from staff closest to him. LCCC has had a free ride from the Cheyenne Herald in the past.

No more. The honeymoon is over.



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What is the Cheyenne Herald? It is a bi-weekly publication that I hesitate to refer to as a "newspaper" but calling it only an Opinion/Commentary publication does not adequately describe it, either. While much of what appears on these pages is in an opinion, commentary, essay, and/or writing mode, there is also no denying that much of it is breaking news. When we disclosed that Cheyenne Police Chief Bob Fecht had purchased, with public money, a master's degree in criminal justice from an unaccredited diploma mill in Mississippi, that was not opinion. That was not commentary. That was fact. That was news. On the other side of the coin, when I opine that James Johnson of Cheyenne will have a long and productive NBA career, that is not news, that is my opinion. The long and short of it is that the Cheyenne Herald is many things to many people. I will explain what each story is if challenged. Otherwise, it is what you will make of it. Pages will no longer be headed with any description for the words on that page. They are what you will make of them.

Dave Featherly