

"Winning is fun...Sure. But winning is not the point. Wanting to win is the point. Not giving up is the point. Never letting up is the point. Never being satisfied with what you've done is the point." —Pat Summitt

This edition of the *Provost Post* consists of articles that center on a theme of "never being satisfied." For as long as I have worked at GRCC, I have been amazed and inspired by the spirit that faculty and staff exude, the spirit of never being satisfied to simply do the work they have always done, the spirit of always striving mightily to be better, not in a quest for personal glory, but in the quest for a better student experience and improved student success. We don't have to do any of these things – adopting a new class scheduling tool, implementing year-long scheduling, name almost any initiative – but we do, because we really cannot do otherwise.

Enjoy the beautiful autumn season.

Best regards,
Laurie

Academic Pathways: Implementation Update

by Jennifer Batten and Tina Hoxie

Beginning in July, students applying for the winter 2018 semester started their college experience by selecting one of GRCC's 10 Academic Pathways:

- Art, Architecture, and Mechanical Design
- Business
- Computer Information Systems
- Culinary Arts, Hospitality, and Brewing
- Health and Exercise Sciences
- Human Services, Education, and Social Sciences
- Humanities, English, Language, and Communication
- Manufacturing and Applied Technology
- Math, Science, and Engineering
- Music and Theater

The Academic Pathways Steering Team prepared for implementation by developing the new Academic Pathways curriculum, aligning our current academic programs with the Pathways, and pairing Integrated Reading and Writing (IRW) courses with Pathway courses, all with the help of advisor liaisons, department heads, and program directors. Further, the team members updated the college's application, Catalog, and MyDegreePath. The declaration of academic program process was automated. An orientation session on Academic Pathways was held for advisors and the first communications that students will receive when they apply to the college, including those with information about secondary admission programs, were prepared. These items were all critical in order to launch Academic Pathways for students applying for the winter 2018 semester.

While much work has been done, the Team will continue to work toward full implementation. This work will include communications pieces like integrating Academic Pathways into New Student Orientation, developing communications for students who complete 15, 30, and 45 credits, and building a web presence with Academic Pathways information. In addition, the team members will continue to provide information sessions for faculty and staff, will hold student focus group meetings, and will develop the assessment tools needed to measure the project's success. Several sub-groups have been formed to address each of these remaining items.

The Academic Pathways Steering Team members come from all areas of the college and include the following faculty, staff, and administrators: Dillon Carr, Donna Kragt, Eric Mullen, Katie Daniels, Matheta Rigga, Amy Koning, Matthew Mekkes, Michael Passer, Mike Vargo, Pam Miller, Raynard Ross, Sheila Jones, Vikki Cooper, Ryan Nausieda, Rosario-Montes Sutton, Matt Novakoski, Deb DeWent, Nathan Hamilton, Evan Macklin, Bill Faber, Patrick Kamau, Vicki Maxa, Leah Nixon, Valerie Butterfield, Amanda Kruzona, Lori Cook, and Leigh Jajuga.

The Academic Pathways Steering Team co-chairs can be contacted with your questions and requests for presentations at department meetings:

Tina Hoxie (thoxie@grcc.edu) / (616) 234-3926 or
Jennifer Batten (jbatten@grcc.edu) / (616) 234-4254

College Scheduler – An Easy Button for Class Scheduling!

by Eric Mullen

This summer, a new tool was released to help our students more easily build their class schedules. College Scheduler was selected and implemented by a cross-college team, including members from academic affairs, information technology, student affairs, and student success and retention, as well as student leaders.

College Scheduler offers an automated system that replaces the manual pen and paper process that students previously used to find classes and build their schedules. With College Scheduler, students select their term, input times they are not available to attend classes, and then choose the courses they need. Then, College Scheduler returns every possible schedule that meets their specific needs.

Our media department put together this great [video](#) to show students how College Scheduler works and how it will make their scheduling experience hassle-free. So far, more than 6,000 students have used this system to sign up for their fall classes. We hope to grow this usage to all students. We are currently working with Institutional Research to evaluate the outcome of this new system. In addition to an improved student experience, College Scheduler has the potential to increase the average number of credits our students enroll in by helping them find schedule that fits their busy lives.

If you have questions about College Scheduler, or would like to see a demonstration, you can contact:

Eric Mullen (emullen@grcc.edu / (616) 234-3752)

Don't Forget...New Opportunity for Faculty Recognition

Last year, several faculty suggested that the College explore ways to recognize outstanding achievements from the Faculty Performance Evaluation system.

In response to this request, in 2017-18 we will be piloting an Award for Outstanding Substantive Projects. The deadline for nominations is March 30, the same day on which FPE Reports are due. Faculty can self-nominate through this online form: [Outstanding Substantive Project Award](#).

Up to two winners may be selected by the Center for Teaching Excellence Advisory Board, and awards will be presented at the annual Employee Recognition event at the end of the academic year. In addition to the recognition, faculty awardees may choose to receive up to \$2500 towards a conference at which they are accepted to present their work, or they may choose to receive up to two (2) contact hours of EOL in the coming year to share their work with other faculty through the Center for Teaching Excellence.

For more information, please contact your associate dean.

Year-Long Scheduling

by Jennifer Batten

The idea of allowing our students to schedule their classes for multiple terms at once has been a long-standing discussion topic at GRCC. This summer, a team of faculty, staff, and administrators was formed to evaluate a year-long scheduling (YLS) model. After presenting this analysis to the provost and deans, along with a recommendation to make this change, this team has been tasked to move this idea into implementation.

Currently, students can only register for one semester at a time, but with the implementation of YLS, students will be able to register for the summer, fall, and winter semesters, in that order and at the same time, beginning in March. The benefits of YLS are many, but mostly this change will allow students to plan their class schedules earlier. Allowing students to make their academic plans and register early is aligned with the goals of the College's Academic Pathways initiative, which recommends predictable class scheduling and letting students know class availability well in advance. A number of community colleges who are implementing Pathways are also investigating how YLS might work for them, and one of our main transfer partners, GVSU, has been allowing students to register for multiple semesters at the same time for many years. In addition to the benefits for students, the College may gain improved enrollment forecasting and section management, as well as more efficient advising.

The YLS Team has established a new schedule creation timeline for developing the Summer 2018, Fall 2018, and Winter 2019 schedules. This work will be completed during the 2017-18 school year with the goal of having all three semester schedules ready by March 13, 2018. In order to implement by that date, the academic departments and the offices of SAS and SWD will review and update their class schedules earlier, faculty names will need to be on base load classes earlier so that the Registrar's office can complete rooming, and the 2018-19 College Catalog must be ready. The team feels that this goal can be accomplished because it is mostly a slight adjustment of the timing of when work is completed and not additional work.

The YLS Team includes Andrew Rozema, Bryan Vliem, Debbie DeWent, Evan Macklin, Fred Zomer, Jennifer Rockafellow, Jody Graves, Kevin Dobreff, Kevin Perrin, Lori Cook, Nanci Guigue, Pamela Miller, Sandra Gregory, Susan Mowers, Thomas Street, and Valerie Butterfield. For more information, please contact the team chairpersons:

Eric Mullen (emullen@grcc.edu / (616) 234-3752) or
Jennifer Batten (jbatten@grcc.edu / (616) 234-4254)

Recent Tuition and Fee Refund Appeal Policy Revisions

by Ann Isackson

The Tuition and Fee Refund Appeal Policy allows students with extenuating circumstances requiring withdrawal from course(s) to appeal for the refund of tuition and fees. Recent policy revisions were made to ensure improved compliance with federal financial aid regulations.

Under the revised policy, students must now withdraw from courses(s) prior to submitting their appeal. Federal satisfactory academic progress standards require all course attempts remain on the academic transcript. Although exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis, students who have attended courses beyond the 70 percent drop deadline are ineligible for a refund. After the 70 percent drop deadline, students with a qualifying circumstance should be referred to the Medical/Hardship Withdrawal process. Students needing additional information about the Medical/Hardship Withdrawal process should contact Raynard Ross at: ross@grcc.edu / (616) 234-4154.

Please be aware that representatives from the Tuition and Fee Refund Appeal Committee may request specific last date of attendance information from faculty prior to the semester end. Last date of attendance information is necessary to determine earned aid and expedite processing of approved appeals.

See policy [10.5 Student Refunds](#). Please be advised that the appeal process is administered through the Cashier's Office. Please refer students to [Payments and Refunds](#), which includes a detailed appeal form.

Faculty and staff with questions related to this policy and how best to advise students should contact:

Erica Brown, Director of the Cashier's Office

(ebrown@grcc.edu / (616) 234-4195)

Ann Isackson, Director of Financial Aid

(aisackson@grcc.edu / (616) 234-4059)

Investiture of Dr. Bill Pink, Ph.D.

Be Relevant, Be Responsive: Elevating Our Community Together

A week-long celebration of the investiture of the college's 10th president, Bill Pink, Ph.D.

Relevant and Responsive at the Lakeshore

This reception is your opportunity to hear Dr. Pink's vision for the future of GRCC and our region. RSVP to Vicki Janowiak at (616) 234-3565 or vjanowia@grcc.edu.

Monday, Sept. 25
3-5 p.m.
Midtown Center
96 W. 15th St.
Holland, MI 49423

Today and Tomorrow: The GRCC Alumni Journey – This Is How We Did It!

Tuesday, Sept. 26
11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m.,
Snedden Hall, DeVos Campus
Grand Rapids

Elevating Our Community Together: A Community Reception

Thursday, Sept. 28
5:30-7:30 p.m.
Heritage Restaurant
Wisner-Bottrall Applied Technology Center, Main Campus
Grand Rapids

Community Business Conversation with GRCC's 10th President

Friday, Sept. 29
7:30-9 a.m.
Leslie E. Tassell Michigan Technical Education Center
Grand Rapids

Investiture of Bill Pink, Ph.D.

Friday, Sept. 29
2 p.m.
Fountain Street Church
Grand Rapids

If you have questions about these events, please contact:
Amy Bennett (abennett@grcc.edu / (616) 234-3908),
Misty McClure-Anderson (mmclure@grcc.edu / (616) 234-3901),
Nikki Banks (nbanks@grcc.edu / (616) 234-4109), or
Laurie Chesley (lchesley@grcc.edu / (616) 234-4486).