It has been more than a year in the making…And, we are one!

It’s an exhilarating time to be part of the new chapter of Sullivan University. We will spend the next year fine-tuning our processes and procedures to ensure the best customer service to the students and support of our programs.

I want to take this opportunity to say “Thank You” to all of those who worked so diligently to make this merger a reality. It honestly took a village. Since the merger is now official, we can begin the next phase in our development. There will be much more information to come. As we move forward, I can promise that communication will be more critical than ever before. We are looking to develop an academic SharePoint site as well as other tools that will allow easy access to consistent information for those in leadership positions as well as faculty. I asked for patience because there are many, many steps in what we need to accomplish. But, through the exceptional academic leadership and support of the University leadership, I do not doubt that we will not only achieve all that we set out to do, but we will be exceedingly prepared for the future.

Again, “Thank You” for all that you do, now and in the future!
Academic Accolades

In this column of the Academic Illuminator, we highlight faculty accomplishments and current events for all Sullivan University locations, both physical and virtual, as well as information of interest to readers from our many locations.

- **Sullivan University is expanding**, we opened a new Center for Learning in Carlisle, KY.

**Center for Learning in Northern Kentucky**

- Sullivan University has signed a 3+1 articulation agreement with Gateway Community & Technical College. According to the terms of the agreement, students will spend three years at the community college, where they will earn an AAS in Supply Chain Management, then transfer to Sullivan University for one year. Upon completion of their year at Sullivan, they will earn a bachelor’s degree in Interdisciplinary Business Studies with a concentration in Supply Chain and Logistics Management. This agreement is the fifth one between the two schools so far.

**Fort Knox**

- A Memorandum of Understanding has been completed with the Barr Memorial Library in Fort Knox to place a community service Federal Work Study Student to assist with their Makerspace area!
- In addition, we are in the final stages of an articulation agreement with the Recruiting and Retention College for the Associate of Science in Marketing Sales Management, Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity, Bachelor of Science in Business Administration – Marketing concentration, and Master of Science in Management for selection by CMF 79 soldiers and graduates of the Army Recruiting Course. Thank You to all that worked on this to make it a reality.
Lexington Campus

- Accounting student Amber Anthony won a very competitive scholarship from the Kentucky Society of CPAs. Congratulations, Amber!
- Six Lexington students were accepted into the Kentucky Society of Certified Public Accountants’ College Leadership Institute this summer. The program is for college accounting majors, designed to enhance professional skills; develop leadership skills desired by prospective employers; master interviewing techniques to help edge out the competition for internships and jobs; perfect networking and communication skills; learn about career opportunities; and get the inside scope on hiring practices.
- The Lexington campus culinary department won the Judge’s Choice Award for Best Entree at Taste of Bluegrass! The entree was a house-cured brisket with cold pickle relish.

Louisville Campus

- Congratulations go to Jennifer Gaither (fulltime Paralegal Studies Professor) and Ashley Lile (adjunct Paralegal Studies and Justice & Public Safety Administration Professor) for being selected to serve on the Seneca High School Pre-Law Committee!
- Dr. Jason James’ paper “Multifactor authentication using duo: Universities eliminating password authentication and deterring cybercriminal phishing” was presented at the ISECON 2018 annual meeting in San Antonio, Texas (April 5-7, 2018).
Linda Blair has become a member of the Health Career Collaborative of Greater Louisville Board of Directors. There are 16 members from various sectors of health care employers, Government, Kentuckiana Works, Educational Facilities, and at-Large members. Her category is Comprehensive College, and she will serve through 2020.

Dr. Sarah Lawrence has been elected to the role of President-Elect of the national Pharmacy Technician Educators Council. This is a two year term, with the first year as President-Elect and the second as President. She will be installed in her new role at the PTEC national conference in Indianapolis in July.

Librarians George Bergstrom, Jody Ford, and Nathan Ragland gave a well-received presentation entitled “Drawing Students in with Games while Conferring Marketable Skills” at the 2018 KLA Joint Spring Conference.

System-Wide

At the Distance Learning Administration Conference, Drs. Ken Moran and Anthony Piña received a Best Paper award. The paper, "Effects of an Open Educational Resources Initiative on Students, Faculty and Instructional Designers," were recognized at the conference’s award ceremonies, published in the Proceedings, and also be submitted to the peer-reviewed Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration. The research for this paper was funded by a Sullivan University faculty research grant.

From Dr. Tony Piña, Associate Provost for Instruction and Online Learning: “I just received word that my latest book, Leading and Managing e-Learning: What the e-Learning Leader Needs to Know, earned First Place in the 2018 Distance Learning Book Award competition sponsored by the Association for Educational Communications & Technology (AECT). AECT is the oldest and the leading international association for educational technology in higher education. The award will be presented at the AECT International Conference in Kansas City in October.”

Dr. Diana Lawrence was one of 40 academic leaders invited to attend the University Business Campus Climate Summit: Getting from Contention to Consensus in Cambridge, MA. Daniel Kinnaman, President & Publisher of University Business, stated that "the challenges of higher education leadership in the 21st century require new understanding and approaches. This special UB Summit provides campus leaders with opportunities to meet key colleagues and solution providers that share these challenges." She also met and spent time with authors and nationally-known educators James Martin and James Samels. A few of their books include The Provost’s Handbook and Consolidating Colleges and Merging Universities.
Portfolio pieces are NO LONGER uploaded to Turnitin.com for QEP. All resumes and capstone portfolio pieces should be uploaded in the QEP Organization of Blackboard. Now students can complete this requirement with just a couple of clicks:

Login to Blackboard
Click Organization
Click QEP
Click the Content - option on the left side bar to find your program of study folder and upload resumes and portfolio pieces.

All faculty have been added to the QEP Organization as Graders. However, please DON’T grade anything. This level of enrollment allows faculty to see work that students upload. Please do not make any edits within the QEP Organization.

Other important notes regarding QEP in Blackboard:
The gradebook for the QEP Organization tracks the Learn to Earn I CARE points earned for completing activities and assessments related to QEP. This does NOT reflect course grades or assignment grades for specific courses. This gradebook is updated at the end of each quarter as documentation is gathered from instructors and 3rd party assessments. Students will see a column in the gradebook where negative numbers are added. This is done after students complete I CARE redemption forms. A negative number of I CARE points are added so the total points can be adjusted as eGift or gift cards are awarded. All students will have access to the I CARE points at the end of the spring quarter. The I CARE points will be turned on for students at the end of Week 11 of the spring quarter.

Remember that if students complete activities and assessments related to the QEP, they can earn I CARE points – no registration required. To learn more about how “Learn to Earn” works, encourage students to check out the QEP Organization in Blackboard. Click I CARE Points on the Information link on the left side bar. Here they can track their point totals or turn their I CARE points into real money by completing the I CARE Point Redemption Request for a Kroger, Macy’s, Target, or Walmart e-certificate or gift card. Students should expect 2 - 4 weeks for processing. eGift cards will be sent to the students’ Sullivan email addresses.
For this issue of “Five Questions For...,” we interviewed Lisa DeBroka, MPM, RHIT, CCS-P. Lisa is the program director of the Health Information Management program here at Sullivan University, which encompasses both the Medical Coding diploma and the Associate of Science in Health Information Management. For five years, Lisa has been teaching and leading these programs at Sullivan University.

1. **How did you originally get into education? What was your motivation?**

I knew I wanted to teach when I went back to school to “refresh” my bachelor’s degree. Teaching gives me the opportunity to change students’ lives and teach them topics I am passionate about. My motivation to teach is simple: I want to share my knowledge with others. By sharing the knowledge we have, we can better our students and the community in which they live.

2. **What do you like the most about teaching? What do you find the most challenging?**

I like learning with my students the most. Health information management is an ever-changing field with new topics of discussion available seemingly every day. I love being able to share these topics with my students and begin the discussion. I think the most challenging part of teaching is no different than that of any other online instructor, student engagement. As an instructor, you are available to the students, but you have some you cannot reach. This is the most frustrating part of the profession.
3. Do you have any favorite anecdotes or memories of teaching, students, etc.?

I had a student a few years ago who was struggling in her course. I offered to set up phone calls to try to figure out where the disconnect was coming in. The student repeatedly declined. I kept pushing and she finally told me she did not have a land line or cell. She said it was a luxury she could not afford. She also had the added difficulty of working two jobs and only had availability for school work from midnight to four am. We had no choice but to communicate by email. She would email sometimes four or five messages over the course of those hours, and I would respond that morning for her to read that night. We worked through her struggles and she was successful in the class and graduated the program.

4. What are your favorite courses to teach, and why?

I enjoy teaching my core health information management courses. In particular, I enjoy teaching our legal course, exam review course and health information technology course. I have a new healthcare management course that I will teach for the first time in summer quarter and have a feeling that it will be at the top of my favorites list. I have always enjoyed the legal side of things, and enjoy showing a student the ins and outs of health information management legalities. The exam review course gives me an opportunity to see what the student retained through the program. When a student has not only retained the information but understands the concept for the exam and does well on their practice exams, my team and I have completed our goals. The health information technology course is the whole of health information management. All concepts for the career are introduced here and students can get a feel for what the profession is about.

5. What hobbies or interests do you have in your off time?

I have twin boys who are 13. In my limited free time, I am running them to various practices, meets or games. When I am not running back and forth, I enjoy reading, cross-stitching, knitting and crocheting.
**S t u d e n t  R e t e n t i o n**

**I Take It Personally!**

*A different look at retention of students in you class*

By James M. Kearfott, MSDR

Director of Student Retention for the Sullivan University System, Community Outreach

Has this ever happened to you? You plan a really nice event at your home such as a dinner for family and friends. You know that people you are expecting want to come and participate in the event. You plan the meal, you clean the house, and you make sure the yard is mowed and flowers watered. All members of the immediate family are put on their best behavior. Then it happens. The phone rings, and one then another calls and says something has come up, and now there is a conflict that cannot be avoided. Or worse, you watch the clock spin and they just do not show up! How do you feel? Does this sound like your class at times?

Doing the research for this article, I uncovered one reason that I have not had many problems with attendance in my classes and, with your indulgence, would like to share. On the first day of the class, I let the entire group know that “I TAKE IT PERSONALLY” when they miss. That is followed up by my belief in how important the class is and why each segment of the class is designed to help the student in their academic career. To many of the students, this is hard to believe at first, as I teach First Year Experience, a course that many students do not see to be of great importance and hear rumors of it as full of busy work. My goal from day one is to change that mind set! I have to make it personal, because it is!

Looking over many articles on the subject of student engagement, this practice is related to “Attachment Theory” which is defined as “a strong emotional and physical attachment to at least one primary caregiver is critical to personal development.”\(^1\)

Admittedly, much of the research done along these lines is drawn from work done with K-12 student populations, but it is not much of a stretch to make an inference to the population served by colleges today. An article published by NYU department of Applied Psychology
suggests the following:

“Although there is more research regarding the academic effects of positive teacher-student relationships for older students, there are notable social outcomes as well. Teachers are an important source of social capital for students (Muller, 2001). Social capital in a classroom setting is defined as caring teacher-student relationships where students feel that they are both cared for and expected to succeed (Muller, 2001). Social capital from positive teacher-student relationships can manifest itself in many different ways. For high school students, positive teacher-student relationships can reduce rates of dropping out by nearly half, help explore options for college, and provide support for further academic or vocational aspirations (Dika & Singh, 2002). Common reasons for dropping out include low levels of family support, low academic achievement, poor relationships with peers and adults, and low interest in academics (Henry, Knigh, & Thornberry, 2012). Positive teacher-student relationships can impact students social and academic outcomes, and thus reduce drop-out rates (Dika & Singh, 2002; Wentzel, 2003).”

Why do students go to one class and not the other? Why does a student make sure that they take the time to sit down and do the online work for one instructor and not a second? When you look at the expectations of each class and see similar rigor is required, expectations are equal, and outcomes just as important; then what makes the difference? One answer may be the perception of the students as to the relationship between them and the instructor. The old adage that “Perception is Reality” can very well play a role when you look at classes through this lens.

What ties many students to a college does not exist at Sullivan University and will never exist in the online presence of any college. Social organizations and sports teams that may have a stigma about academic standing and or NCAA requirements to require class participation do not exist and cannot be relied on to hold students to a class. However, the bond that can occur in the communication between faculty and class can make such a difference.
USnews.com blogged an article that spoke to the “10 Warning Signs of a Bad Professor” written by Jeremy S Hyman and Lynn F. Jacobs. The talking points are worth looking at and reflecting. The ten points are these:

“The professor is boring” – How is the content viewed by your students? What is your delivery method?

“The professor is bummed out” – How are you perceived by your students? Is the time lag in responding to a student’s email or other contact making a statement about your personal involvement with the class?

“The professor does not give out a syllabus” – you would think that, because of our policies, there is no problem here. It is suggested that explaining why components of the syllabus are important to the student is just as important here. Do not make this time the equivalent of the parental response, “Because I said so!”

“The professor isn’t clear about the requirements and how much they count” – taking it beyond that point to explain why each component will be important in student success beyond this class can also help. First Year Experience is a clear example of this; explaining why each requirement is the testing ground to perfect skills necessary for future class and life does help with expectations later in the term.

“The professor assigns an undoable amount of work” – this is a real perception area. What is undoable work can and often is measured by the amount of importance the student sees in the class. Helping the class or an individual student realize the importance of the work and why may make this argument go away.

“The professor has incredibly petty rules” – explanation of the reason behind rules and exampling why they are in place shows that you understand a student’s concern and shows you take their feeling personally. Explaining the purpose for a rule may take a little more time than you feel is needed but can save time working with disciplinary action down the line and/or dealing with argumentative students all term.

“The professor can’t fill the whole class period” – The amount of work expected and time given to students to perform that task is just something to consider.

“The professor seems unsure about the material” – are you prepared for every lesson, is the software working, have you tested links to make sure there is no malfunction. All of
this reflects back on the class and the ultimate feeling the student has about that class. “The professor presents the material in a confused way” – a welcomed occurrence is to have the department chair monitor your delivery and give you feedback on your class delivery. You may think that your methods are clear, and they may be to you and your circle of peers, but to the students that perception might be completely different.

“The professor never involves the students” – Lecturing all the time is something all are getting away from and concepts of active engagement, flipped classes, and project group work make a big difference in student perception and outcomes.

These quoted points come from a *U.S. News and World Report* blog of January 6, 2010 at 10:07 a.m.³

Making your class aware of the depth you care about your subject and them as individuals can make a difference when they are making day to day decisions about what to do and when to do it. The perception they have of the class and the desire not to let the class down, their classmates down, and themselves down can stem from the fact that “You take it Personally.”

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References


As chair of the Sullivan University Academic Council, I am pleased to write another edition of Academic Council Highlights (ACH). The goal of ACH is to keep faculty and other interested parties informed, on a quarterly basis, about the workings of the Academic Council (Council), the matters it addresses, and related events.

With the proposed Merger on our doorstep (or even a reality by the time you read this), I would like to provide a breakdown of the purpose, role, structure, and process of the Council. [Most of the following is taken from the Academic Council Charter.]

☑️ The purpose of the Council is to:

- Advise and support the administrative prerogatives that sustain the academic function of the University and foster continuous improvement;
- Promote an academic standard of quality education to enhance institutional effectiveness; and
- Advance bilateral communications throughout the University and the Sullivan University System.

☑️ The role of the Council is to:

- Report to and advise the Provost on matters pertaining to the University's academic policies; and
- Receive and disseminate information to the faculty of the University, directly and through the appropriate Deans and Directors.

☑️ The structure of the Council includes the following voting members:

- Academic Deans and Directors of the University;
- Up to two additional representatives from each academic unit of the University;
• Up to two academic representatives from the Lexington campus;
• Up to two representatives from the University Libraries; and
• Four (will be five, post-merger) faculty members elected from the faculty at large.

☑ The **process** of the Council includes:

• Initiating actions to advance its aims;
• Receiving recommended actions from any member of the University community on matters of Council concern;
• Reviewing, discussing, and approving/disapproving all matters brought before the Council;
• Submitting approved Council actions to the Provost for review and approval by the Provost and/or University President/CEO.  *Approved actions become the policy of the University. If the Provost or University President/CEO disagrees with the actions of the Council, the Provost provides to the Council written reasons for the disagreement.*; and
• Establishing standing committees to review, discuss and propose action on complex academic related matters.

When the Merger becomes official, stayed tuned for a future **ACH** article that will feature a roster of all Council members, their titles, and their voting status.

Rest assured that the Council has lively debate and discussion at all meetings and regularly sends important matters to the Provost for consideration and requested action. With that in mind, please don’t hesitate to send me an item for Council deliberation at nriggs@sullivan.edu. The Academic Council is here to serve you!

Submitted 05/24/2018

**UPDATE: Congratulations to the NEW At-large Members:**

Jill Ferrari  
Dr. Chris Hughes  
Dr. Tonnie Renfro  
Laura Stokes
Calendar Of Events
Summer 2018 Quarter

New Day Student Registration (Louisville and Lexington) .............................................. June 14, 2018
New Night Student Registration .......................................................................................... June 14, 2018
New Housing Student Registration ..................................................................................... June 20, 2018
Late Registration .................................................................................................................. June 23, 2018
First day of classes .............................................................................................................. June 25, 2018
Last day that a student can enter an online class ............................................................... June 28, 2018
International Orientation (Louisville and Lexington) .......................................................... June 29, 2018
International/Hybrid Weekend (Louisville and Lexington) .............................................. June 29-30, 2018
Last day students can engage in an online class ................................................................. July 1, 2018
QEP Committee Meeting, Louisville (2:00-3:00, Room 121) ............................................ July 2, 2018
QEP Committee Meeting, Lexington (2:00-3:00) ................................................................ July 3, 2018
Last day that a student can enter a day class* ................................................................. July 5, 2018
Last day that a student can enter an evening or weekend class ........................................ July 5, 2018
Academic Council Meets (2:00, Louisville Campus) .......................................................... July 12, 2018
International/Hybrid Weekend (Louisville and Lexington) .............................................. July 27-28, 2018
Academic Council Meets (2:00, Louisville Campus) .......................................................... August 16, 2018
International/Hybrid Weekend (Louisville and Lexington) .............................................. August 17-18, 2018
Last day that a student can withdraw and still receive a “W” ............................................. August 24, 2018
Fall Break ............................................................................................................................ September 10-21, 2018
First Day of Fall 2018 classes .............................................................................................. September 24, 2018
Recently, futurists have predicted dire consequences for higher education due to a weakening of its mainstay demographics. Signal among these is a post-recession decline in birth rates of 13 percent in just five years (Grawe, 2018, p. 1). By 2017, a Moody’s Investors Service report suggested that “closure rate of small colleges is likely to triple from the rate [average was 5 per year] of the past decade” (Thomason, September 25, 2015, n. p.); and, a 2018 Moody’s Outlook continued the downward projection of “the higher education sector to negative from stable. The annual change in aggregate operating revenue for four-year colleges and universities will soften to about 3.5% and will not keep pace with expense growth, which we expect to be almost 4.0%. A growing number of universities will have even weaker revenue growth, pressuring operating performance. Public universities will face more revenue strain than private universities. The negative outlook also incorporates uncertainty at the federal level over potential policy changes” (Moody’s Investors Service, 2017, n. p.).

However, the dire predictions for future enrollments for many small private institutions of higher education has been markedly apparent for several years. The Post and Courier reported that Denmark Tech may be South Carolina’s “first casualty in an impending crisis in higher education as fewer students pursue college degrees” (Pan, 2018; see also: Zaleski, 2018). The article continues: “Enrollment at colleges and universities has slid every year since the fall of 2011, according to data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Apart from for-profit institutions, two-year community colleges have witnessed the most dramatic declines in enrollment. They had 97,000 fewer students this past fall than the year before.” Low student enrollments precipitate negative financial and strategic issues for universities; and, consequentially, the increased competition for those fewer students dramatically exacerbates those vital issues. In his study of the merger of Clarkson University and Union Graduate College in New York State, Eisenberg also postulates that impactful “emerging technologies in education are changing how students engage with learning institutions” (Eisenberg, 2016, p. 20). Prior (1960 to 1994) U.S. private college closures and

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**SACSCOC (STILL) MATTERS:**

An ongoing column addressing compliance issues

**The Merger of True Minds**

By

Charles Brown

Assistant Provost & Dean, University Libraries
mergers time-series data indicated “that private college mergers occur more often than empiricism suggests [and, except for the 1970’s, ‘at a greater rate than general businesses’]. Multiple regression analysis of the exit and merger decision reveals that private college closures and mergers are more likely when the real tuition rate declines and real faculty salaries rise at private colleges” (Bates, 2000, p. 267). In addition to these metrics, Bates’ microanalysis of aggregated a posteriori data indicate that private four-year college closures and mergers are more likely when “the student pool dries up, and religious institutions dominate less” (ibidem, p. 275). In combination with the aforementioned aggregated macroeconomic factors, clearly the microeconomic implications of Bates’ “non-linear [merger data] patterns” (Li, 2012, p. 735) percolate into the present.

Coincident to these market imperatives (Zemsky, 2017, passim) was also ACICS’s 2016 loss of U.S. Department of Education recognition and the concomitant loss of financial aid by its many member schools. However, Inside Higher Ed indicates that a Federal court has ordered the DOE Education to re-litigate ACICS’s fate. Most recently, the DOE states that ACICS “would again be eligible to serve as a gatekeeper of financial aid” (Kelderman, 2018, n. p.). Taken together, such dire issues constitute a cataclysmic “perfect storm” striking at the very heart of institutions of higher learning. Li posits that organizations are impacted by myriad social, political and economic vectors and by “ecological contingencies imposed by this environment require that organizations design strategies to defy unfavorable social changes” (Li, 2012, pp. 755-756). One turnaround response to these issues has been a higher incidence of complementarity-based (AKA horizontal-based) mergers – as manifested in more traditional Wall Street corporate mergers. Reminiscent of the sentiment articulated in the title of Jack Trout’s landmark 2001 marketing book, Differentiate or Die, Rabinowitz proposes “Partner or Perish” as a competitive expedient. One such complementarity-based merger between Capella Education Company and Strayer Education, Inc. has implications for 80,000 students across all 50 states. As a result of that proposed merger, a new corporate brand will debut: Strategic Education, Inc. “under which both Capella University and Strayer University will continue to operate as independent and separately accredited institutions” (Strayer, 2018, n. p.). Conceptually, mergers of multiple non-Wall Street higher education institutions would accord with similar entrepreneurial best-practice strategies by which not only remediation of current stagnation might be achieved, but also sector growth (Boling, 2017, abstract). This paper focuses on the 2017-8 Sullivan University System merger within the context of other prominent recent complementarity-based mergers within the SACSCOC region.

To read the conclusion of this article, please visit

https://libguides.sullivan.edu/ld.php?content_id=42422284
THE ACADEMIC ILLUMINATOR

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Special Thanks To:
Lisa DeBroka
Nathan Ragland, Editor

The Academic Illuminator is an informational publication for faculty members at Sullivan University. Issued before the start of each academic quarter, the Illuminator covers topics such as news and events of interest to faculty, policy changes, compliance with regulatory bodies, the ongoing process of accreditation, the activities of the Academic Council, and upcoming events. Back issues of the Academic Illuminator can be found at http://library.sullivan.edu/archives/sulou_illuminator.asp.

Questions, comments, requests for article coverage, and article submissions may be sent to editor Nathan Ragland, at nragland@sullivan.edu.

NOTES TO THE FACULTY

- Please remember to submit your gradebooks at the close of every quarter. Timely submission of gradebooks is mandatory for all instructors. This may not seem to be an important task, but it is critical. Every gradebook needs to be in the gradebook repository in order to meet Department of Education regulations on the matter.

- Reminder: Employees and students at Sullivan University must wear their identification badges at all times. NCHS students who have their names embroidered on their uniforms are exempt from this policy while wearing said uniforms.