



Dr. Bardo's November 2015 Newsletter

When I met with a group of faculty and staff last week about diversity, Lyston Skerritt from Student Affairs said that the campus needed to know that diversity was as important to me as innovation. I assure you it is as important. In fact you can't have innovation without diversity, because innovation is often dependent upon the coming together of people and ideas in combinations that didn't previously exist.

Why all the emphasis on diversity now? It's because the turmoil at the University of Missouri was a wake-up call. We have good people in place all over campus attempting to do the right things for the right reasons around diversity. I want them to know they have this administration's support and that we are committed to improvements.

Here are some steps that we've already undertaken:

- Dr. Marche Fleming-Randle, assistant dean of the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, will become assistant to the president for diversity. She will report directly to me and will have a seat in my cabinet, which is referred to as the President's Executive Team. Student Affairs VP Eric Sexton and I also recently asked her to serve as Student Government Association adviser, so she has a direct line to student needs.
- At our diversity dialogue last week, speakers discussed increasing the diversity of the student body, faculty and staff and increasing diversity training. Dr. Fleming-Randle's responsibilities will include shaping those efforts and reporting directly to the executive team and me on barriers and progress.
- Judging by all of the student testimonials I've been hearing about the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, I believe that office does a good job and deserves our continued support. As of today, the office's website is linked directly from the Wichita.edu home page, and we'll be adding prominent diversity content.



Student leaders have told me that I didn't give them a feeling of being protected when they were subjected to hateful – even frightening – emails and social media postings during the recent controversy over the removal of pews from Grace Chapel. We had university police and the university's attorney review the communication to see if it threatened physical harm or crossed legal boundaries into criminal hate speech. That wasn't the case. I am sorry that people felt the need to resort to hateful speech to get their point across. That doesn't further any educational purpose of this university.

There will be more on diversity topics in coming weeks.

What I'm Reading – Academia and industry: Companies on campus

I enjoyed this brief and thought-provoking read from Nature.com, "Academia and industry: Companies on campus." The most important theme in the piece is this:

"Successful academia–industry partnerships require common interests, trust and good communication. For each of these, proximity helps."

These issues will become increasingly important to us with the completion around the beginning of 2017 of the first two buildings on Innovation Campus.

Read the full article at <http://bit.ly/1ONCD8o>

A Shocker You Should Know: Kevin Keplar



Kevin Keplar, director of technology, Elliott School of Communication

As director of technology for the Elliott School of Communication, Kevin Keplar personifies our mission of providing applied learning opportunities to all students.

Kevin teaches a number of multimedia courses, such as Audio Production, Studio Video Production and Sound for Picture. He's also active outside of the classroom doing freelance audio production and post-production work, as well as the occasional voiceover job for local and national clients.

Teaching in the same field that he's professionally involved in furthers Kevin's desire to provide the same experiential learning experiences for his students.

"I try to give students as much hands-on practice as I can," he says. "Beyond just giving them projects to work on, my classes will get exposure to more real-world kinds of projects."

Kevin's Studio Video Production class is a perfect example of that philosophy. This semester he's running the class more like a production crew than a traditional college class. The "crew" takes on various projects throughout the semester, including producing content for local musician Jenny Wood and covering WSU women's volleyball and basketball for ESPN3.

He plans to work on a film class this summer that will focus on the process of producing a film on a tight budget and schedule. Students will compete in a race/contest by writing, shooting and editing a short film in only 24 hours.

Kevin also teaches his students how to embrace the inevitable change that comes with working alongside technology.

"Technology changes on practically a daily basis, and that's a great thing," he says. "While some may fear and/or be intimidated by change, in regards to the business I am in and the topics I teach, change brings greater opportunity."

A new opportunity for ESC students recently came in the form of a mobile production cart built by Kevin and ESC Director Matt Cecil. The cart allows students to do full-scale video productions at any location on campus.

Complementing the cart is a remodeled room in the Elliott Hall basement that any ESC student can use as a studio. It has a green screen wall, various color backdrops and production lights.

"The studio space is a nice open area that can be used at just about any time," Kevin says.

As immersed as Kevin is in his field now, he actually stumbled into it accidentally. When he started college, Kevin wanted to be a lawyer. But like many students, he soon changed his mind and wasn't sure what was next for him. A friend suggested he take a job in radio because he thought he would be good at it. That eventually led to a full-time on-air job, and it just snowballed from there.

When he's not in the classroom or working on freelance projects, Kevin is with his wife and 2-year-old son and tries to get in as much time outdoors as he can. He enjoys riding his bicycle, camping, fishing and walking to the park with his family.

If you see Kevin looking a bit scruffy this month, it's because he's taking part No Shave November. After promoting many charity efforts during his radio days, he has continued involving himself each year in worthy causes – typically those that promote cancer awareness.

“While I don't have the power of a radio station behind me now, I still like to do whatever I can when I can,” Kevin says. “Cancer is one of those things that can affect anyone.”

He used to participate in Movember and grow out a mustache, but that didn't go over so well.

“My wife really didn't care for the mustache, so I switched to No Shave November so I could go with the full beard instead.”

About this Newsletter

OUR MISSION

The mission of Wichita State University is to be an essential educational, cultural and economic driver for Kansas and the greater public good. The President's Message is a monthly newsletter that highlights the university's progress toward fulfilling that mission.

CONTACT US

We would like to hear from you. Please send your comments and suggestions for future newsletters to lou.heldman@wichita.edu

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