

OCC agenda: 25th anniversary, master plan

By R. Stephen Nicholson
special writer

LET ME share with you Oakland Community College's agenda for the next 12 months. This is not the complete picture. Rather it is a "tree topping" excursion that touches some of the features that seem to stand tall on our horizon.

The Board of Trustees' agenda is concerned with reviewing policies to assure clear means to achieve our goals. The board schedules reviews of virtually all college operations, but especially reports centered on teaching and learning activities.

Since teaching and learning continue to occupy center stage of OCC's agenda, the board makes it a point to invite a faculty person to each of its meetings, usually at 7:30 p.m. the third Thursday of each month, to report on various effective teaching techniques they use.

Members of the board are thus well-informed, work well together and work well with the administration. Ours is a superior board, and the trustees' sophistication is steadily growing.

STRATEGIC PLANNING that supports our two-year accreditation and guides our destiny will be a major task this year.

Bringing together the many discrete plans that now exist or are in formation into a master plan is never easy, but once the process is made an annual activity we will always have a blueprint.

The college's 25th anniversary celebration will be integrated into all our efforts — recruiting, marketing, funding and planning — so that we can use the events to gather attention, understanding and commitment from the public. Both internally and externally, our plans for observance



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— R. Stephen Nicholson
OCC chancellor

will provide ample opportunities for celebrations of the success of years past.

The budget process will clarify our use of resources and support the master plan. A new accounting system that fully uses the potential of our new computer to provide more "real time" accurate data for budget management is an imperative and is now being implemented.

"INSTITUTIONAL effectiveness" — student success — is a major concern for us, for the governor and for the Legislature.

In order to avoid an external imposition of an evaluation system, we are joining a consortium of colleges across the nation whose goal is the creation of a process that demonstrates, via student learning, the real values we add to our communities and to individual students.

Touch-tone automated registration by telephone continues to win friends. It will be introduced on a college-wide basis for registration this coming spring.

New equipment is to be installed in the libraries which will enable them to serve students more effectively.

It is anticipated that OCC will join a network of southeast Michigan universities and colleges whose inter-

linked library systems will give our students access to the combined book collections of these institutions.

Additionally, our telephone system will be integrated with the new optical-fiber laser systems of the telephone company which will enable us to expand services, yet save money on phone costs. Our present wiring system can also be used more effectively to transmit data, telephone calls and other digitalized functions.

Actually these costs will be no greater than our present system, and the resulting improvement should renew our library services.

SPECIAL NEEDS students are enrolling in large numbers. In fact, it is possible that during 1989 such enrollments will triple. We have much to learn in this field. With the arrival of these students comes the imperative to serve them well.

This relates to another matter of priority, though it will take more than a single year to accomplish: the integration of services that support student learning and welfare.

By this I mean a clustering of such operations as tutoring, libraries, financial aid, health and student activities — both in terms of the organization and in physical locations. The result will be a more comfortable, convenient and productive learning environment for our students.

Attention will be given to the edu-

cation needs of public employees, child care, fire science and bilingual programs in 1989. Each field is complex and will require much work in order to be served successfully.

Our organizational structure, which supports instructional and other essential operations, is being flattened to enable us to accomplish "real time" operations that are based on an accurate flow of up-to-the-second information.

THE SEARCH for funding for all programs is increasingly frustrating. Everyone seeks our support, but OCC must first find public and private resources that will serve as a foundation for our future.

A 1 mill local property tax for operations would more than meet our needs, not only for operations but for capital funds into the next century.

As our college workforce grows older, retirements and resignations will occur with greater frequency. We will devote even more attention

to the selection of new staff members to assure future quality in all areas. This is the most important single thing we can do — recruit talented and experienced persons who will deliver quality services to our students.

We are, first and foremost, an intellectual asset to the community, and it is vital to our well being that our ideas and plans address needs which fall within our statement of mission and goals. We must assure that this happens smoothly and in a timely manner.

Rather than relying on past successes we must combine new analysis and a process that develops consensus as our guide to a new future. This will enable us to transcend the challenges and controversies that limit institutions of lesser vision, integrity and quality.

Dr. Nicholson is chancellor of OCC, a two-year college with some 30,000 students on five campus locations.

OU Continuing Ed signing up

Registration is under way for January programs offered by the Oakland University Division of Continuing Education.

For brochures and registration information, call the Continuing Education office at 370-3120 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.

WORD PERFECT for Beginners will be conducted 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesdays, Jan. 18 to Feb. 8. Tuition is \$125.

"Operating the IBM PC" — including word processing, PC-File III, data base manager and Lotus 1-2-3 — will be instructed for beginners Saturdays, Jan. 21 to Feb. 11, from 9

a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuition is \$115.

Lotus 1-2-3 will be the focus of class offered Saturdays, Feb. 18 to March 11, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Tuition of \$141 includes a physical instructional package for post-class references.

A **THREE-SESSION** course covering how to plan a sensible investment program that reduces tax burdens will be 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 17-31.

Janet Krakowiak, certified financial planner from Rochester, will cover tax-saving strategies, managing money and selecting from the variety of investments available. Tu-

ition is \$30 per person or \$35 per couple and includes a reference planning workbook.

PARAPROFESSIONAL careers that have predicted growth and provide a diversity of job opportunities are offered in OU's Legal Assistant Program and Paraprofessional Accountant Program, beginning the week of Jan. 16. Both are evening programs, can be completed in as few as 15-18 months or at the enrollee's own speed and conclude with 80-hour internships and job referral service.

The paralegal career is predicted to be the fastest-growing paraprofession of the 1990s, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. OU pioneered legal assistant training approved by the American Bar Association in Michigan. Last fall it initiated day seminars to provide update "important for the working paralegal," according to program director

Gloria Boddy.

Paraprofessional accountants are increasing in the workplace according to 1986-88 surveys by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Program director Carmen Thomas said the number of accountants graduating is short of the demand. Thus, the accounting industry is turning to competent paraprofessionals.

THE LATEST information important for those providing financial services is offered in OU's Certificate Program in Personal Financial Planning, beginning Jan. 23.

Expertise for designing and executing comprehensive financial plans is presented in the courses, which may be taken singly without enrollment in the program.

A new course in operating the HP-12C calculator, useful for solving problems in time value of money, begins Feb. 25.

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