MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS

OCTOBER 5, 2011

I.

[GREETINGS AND INTRODUCTIONS]

I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND WILLINGNESS TO MOVE THE DATE OF THE STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY SPEECH TO MAKE IT, I HOPE, A MORE INCLUSIVE EVENT FOR THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY, AND NOT ONE MORE THING WEDGED IN TO THE VERY BUSY START OF ANOTHER ACADEMIC TERM…I THINK IT IS IMPORTATANT TO DO THIS, PARTICULARLY THIS YEAR, AS I HOPE YOU'LL SEE FROM THE SOMEWHAT WATERSHED NATURE OF THE TALK FOR THIS FALL.

AS WITH MY PREVIOUS SOU ADDRESSES, TODAY WILL NOT BE A VALEDICTORY OR ANY SORT OF RECAP OF ALL WE'VE DONE TOGETHER THE PAST YEAR…THERE ARE OTHER PLACES TO FIND THAT INFORMATION IF ANYONE HERE NEEDS IT (ALTHOUGH YOU WILL SEE A SLIDE A LITTLE LATER ON THAT TIPS THE HAT TO SOME THINGS WE'VE TRIED TO ACCOMPLISH OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS).

HOWEVER, I'VE HAD OCCASION TO TALK TO A NUMBER OF PRESIDENTS OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF MONTHS WHO ARE DOING THEIR ADDRESSES ON THEIR CAMPUSES AT ABOUT THIS TIME AS WELL (AND UNLIKE MY COLLEAGUES AT NKU, SIU EDWARDSVILLE, AND OTHER LOCATIONS AROUND THE COUNTRY, I DON'T INTEND TO ANNOUNCE MY RETIREMENT AT THE CLOSE OF THIS SPEECH!).

THESE OTHER PRESIDENTS HAVE TALKED ABOUT HOW HELPFUL IT IS TO GET A READ OF THE CAMPUS ONCE EVERYONE HAS RETURNED AND TO HAVE THE WHOLE OF THE UNIVERSITY AVAILABLE TO ASSIST IN TESTING OUT ASSUMPTIONS AND VETTING OUT IDEAS—AND MANY OF YOU HAVE ASSISTED ME IN THAT PROCESS SINCE STARTING BACK TO SCHOOL THIS FALL.

SO WHENEVER IT'S HELD, WE'VE HAD THE TRADITION OF A STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY ADDRESS AT MSU— IT SETS THE STAGE FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR, ALLOWS ME TO DISCUSS SOME NEW INITIATIVES WHEN APPLICABLE—BUT BEYOND JUST THE TRADITION, IT'S IMPORTANT FOR OTHER REASONS I BELIEVE…

I BELIEVE IT'S CRITICAL FOR LARGE, COMPLICATED, MULTIPURPOSE ORGANIZATIONS TO HAVE 2 OR 3 OR 4 FOCI OR THREADS TO DIRECT ITS CORE WORK TOWARD STRATEGIC ENDS…YES, A UNIVERSITY IS ABOUT TEACHING & LEARNING, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE, SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY—AND EVERY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TAKES ON THAT WORK IN VARYING RELATIVE DEGREES…BUT HAVING A VERY FEW STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS MAKES THE UNIVERSITY ORGANIC, ALLOWS IT TO SERVE A GREATER AND LARGER GOOD, AND MAKES IT SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST THE SUM OF ITS THREE-PRONG PARTS.

THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES I ESSENTIALLY BROUGHT TO THE UNIVERSITY 5 YEARS AGO (WITH THE ASSENT OF A VERY DIFFERENT BOARD OF REGENTS AT THAT TIME, OF COURSE) WERE AN ATTEMPT TO OFFER THAT BROAD, VALUE-ADDED DIRECTION TO MURRAY STATE…AND IT SERVED THAT PURPOSE, I HOPE, AS WE'VE PROVIDED A TANGIBLE CONCENTRATION ON WAYS TO FOSTER EXCELLENCE, BUILD PARTNERSHIPS, AND CREATE COMMUNITIES.

IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING A FRAMEWORK THAT ADDS A POLESTAR FOR THE CORE WORK OF MSU TAKING PLACE ACROSS ALL ACADEMIC, SERVICE, AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS AT MSU…YOU KNOW THAT I'VE TRIED AS PRESIDENT TO MAKE THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES ALSO SERVE AS THE ANCHORS TO SOME VITAL AND LARGE-SCALE INITIATIVES WE'VE UNDERTAKEN INSTITUTIONALLY SINCE 2006 AND BEYOND.

FOR INSTANCE, TO PAY FOR THE EXCELLENCE WE SEEK, WE PUBLICLY LAUNCHED THE HOLD THY BANNER HIGH COMPREHENSIVE FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN IN 2009—AFTER ABOUT 3 YEARS IN ITS SILENT PHASE TO DO NECESSARY GROUNDWORK, THE CASE STATEMENT

DOCUMENT, AND RESTRUCTURING IN OUR DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS—AND HAVE SINCE HAD UNBELIEVABLE SUCCESS IN REACHING OUR FUNDRAISING GOAL OF $60 MILLION A YEAR EARLY…WITH THE STRETCH GOAL OF $70 MILLION SET FOR HOMECOMING OF 2012 (AND YES, WE'LL HAVE A BIG PARTY TO CELEBRATE).

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW BY NOW, ALMOST HALF OF THE MONEY RAISED UNDER HTBH IS GOING FOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS IN SOME FORM OR FASHION…AND THUS PROVIDES A BASIS FOR MSU TO SUSTAIN BOTH EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT ACCESS TO ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND RELATED SERVICES IN PERPETUITY…AS STATE APPROPRIATIONS WILL LIKELY CONTINUE TO LAG FROM WHAT WE HAD COME TO EXPECT JUST A FEW YEARS AGO, GIVEN A DWINDLING SHARE OF PUBLIC DOLLARS AVAILABLE TO US…COMPOUNDED BY POLITICAL PRESSURES THAT MOUNT EACH YEAR TO SUPPRESS ANNUAL PERCENTAGE JUMPS IN STUDENT TUITION.

WE'VE SOUGHT TO ADDRESS THE IMPERATIVE OF COMMUNITY-BUILDING IN A VARIETY OF WAYS THESE PAST YEARS TOO…INCLUDING A MORE DEFINED AND TARGETED INTERNATIONAL FOCUS.

BUT OUR PRIMARY INITIATIVE UNDER THIS IMPERATIVE HAS BEEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND NOW-FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S OFFICE OF REGIONAL OUTREACH, TO THE POINT THAT OVER THE LAST 3 YEARS THIS INITIATIVE HAS PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT RESULTS THROUGH A RE-GRANTING PROCESS TO OUR 18-COUNTY SERVICE REGION…COMBINED TOTALS FOR THE PAST 3 YEARS RESULTED IN 41 PROJECTS FUNDED FOR OVER $800,000 IN TOTAL INVESTMENT…THE RESULT WAS 156 REGIONAL EVENTS THAT IMPACTED 52,449 PEOPLE AND LEVERAGED OVER $1 MILLION DOLLARS PRIMARILY TO IMPACT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT…IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT ALTHOUGH THE REGIONAL OUTREACH BUDGET HAS RECEIVED CUTS ANNUALLY DUE TO REDUCTIONS IN OVERALL STATE SUPPORT, THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED HAS CONTINUED TO GROW, AND EVEN DOUBLED LAST YEAR.

AND AS YOU KNOW IF YOU'VE TRIED TO GET FUNDING FOR A NEW IDEA FROM MY OFFICE OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS, BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS HAS ANCHORED NEARLY EVERY OTHER NEW PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT I'VE SUPPORTED AT MURRAY STATE DURING THIS TIME…AND THAT'S LED TO SOME WONDERFUL PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES THAT HAVE EMERGED FROM BOTH THE ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC SIDE OF THE HOUSE (FAR TOO MANY TO TRY TO LIST OUT HERE) ALTHOUGH WE'VE TRIED TO SHOW A FEW IN THE SLIDE THAT'S COMING UP!

IN MY VIEW, THOUGH, WE'VE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO TAKE ON THESE ADDITIONAL, ANCILLARY MISSIONS AS REPRESENTED BY THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES.

SHARING A PASSAGE FROM THE JULY 2011 NEWSLETTER COMPLIED BY THE STATE RELATIONS AND POLICY ANALYSIS STAFFS AT AASCU, THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC REGIONAL PRESIDENTS THAT WAS LED BY OUR OWN BOARD OF REGENTS CHAIR, DR. DENO CURRIS:

IN ITS *2011 OUTLOOK FOR U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION*, THE RATINGS FIRM MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE CITES A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES FACING SMALL AND MID-SIZED PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, LEADING TO CONTINUED NEGATIVE CREDIT CONDITIONS FOR THESE INSTITUTIONS…COMPARED TO THEIR LARGER PUBLIC UNIVERSITY COUNTERPARTS, THEY ARE CHARACTERIZED BY A MORE REGIONAL STUDENT/CONSUMER DRAW, LESS DIVERSIFIED REVENUE STREAMS, LIMITED FINANCIAL RESERVES, WEAKER PRICING POWER, LESS INSULARITY AGAINST CUTS IN STATE FUNDING AND GREATER SUSCEPTIBILITY TO ENROLLMENT COMPETITION FROM COMMUNITY COLLEGES.

THE CENTRAL TENETS OF TYPICAL, TRADITIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING ARE WELL KNOWN…IT IS A DATA-DRIVEN PROCESS WITH A SHORTER-TERM MINDSET THAT HAS (AGAIN, FROM MY PERSPECTIVE) TOO STRICT A VIEW ON EXISTING CLIENTS (SUCH AS STUDENTS OR COMMUNITIES OR BUSINESS ENTERPRISES OR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS), AS OPPOSED TO EMERGING ONES—AN OBSESSION WITH TODAY'S RIVALS, AS OPPOSED TO POTENTIAL

ENTRANTS IN OUR FIELD—AND AN EMPHASIS ON LEVERAGING EXISTING PRACTICES RATHER THAN ESTABLISHING NEW ONES.

HOWEVER, OUR UTILIZATION OF A SET OF A LIMITED AND MANAGABLE NUMBER OF STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES HELPS US TO IDENTIFY, SORT OUT, AND PRIORITIZE WHAT CAN UNIQUELY BENEFIT OUR STUDENTS AND THE REGION WE ARE CHARGED TO SERVE…LEVERAGING OUR HISTORICAL WORK IN THE ACADEMY WHILE DIFFERENTIATING US FROM EVERYONE ELSE DOING THIS SAME WORK…AND THAT MAXIMIZES THE RETURN-ON-INVESTMENT TO THOSE TAXPAYERS, PARENTS, STUDENTS, GRANTMAKERS, DONORS, AND OTHERS WHO PAY FOR ALL IT IS THAT WE DO HERE.

HOWEVER…AND WITHOUT DRASTICALLY CHANGING COURSE ON THE BROAD DIRECTIONS WE HAVE CHARTED FOR THE UNIVERSITY…I DO BELIEVE IT IS TIME TO REVISIT OUR IMPERATIVES—OR ESTABLISH THE NEXT VERSION OR GENERATION OF THE IMPERATIVES—FOR AT LEAST THREE REASONS WHICH I'LL TRY TO SET OUT HERE.

II.

THE FIRST REASON: IT'S SIMPLY TIME TO REFRESH—I ANNOUNCED THE ORIGINAL IMPERATIVES AT MY OPENING DAY PRESS CONFERENCE ON DEC 1, 2006—AND STRAGETIC STATEMENTS LIKE THESE CAN GET A LITTLE STALE OR SOUND HACKNEYED AFTER THAT LONG…SO WHILE NOT ABANDONING THE LARGER ARC OF WHERE I HOPE THE IMPERATIVES CAN TAKE US…AND THE DIRECTION THEY CAN PROVIDE, THERE IS, I THINK, SOME BENEFIT FROM JUST THE NOVELTY EFFECT OF NEW LANGUAGE TO REGENERATE INTEREST ONCE AGAIN…AND, EVEN POSSIBLY, A RENEWED DEDICATION TO THE LARGER INSTITUTIONAL CAUSES THEY REPRESENT.

SECOND: IT'S TIME TO REFRAME—EARLIER I ALLUDED TO THE FACT THAT MURRAY'S BOARD OF REGENTS HAS DRAMATICALLY CHANGED IN MEMBERSHIP OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS (WITH ONLY ONE HIRING BOARD MEMBER LEFT FROM MY ORIGIANL ELEVEN…AS OF LAST JULY 1…AND THAT IS A LOT OF CHURNING ON *ANY* BOARD)—AND I HAVE WANTED OUR

REGENTS TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN THE INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING FUNCTION… TOWARD THAT END THEY CREATED A NEW VISION DOCUMENT—THEIR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS STATEMENT—TO UNDERGIRD THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES THAT PROVIDE, AGAIN, AN ORGANIZATIONAL TRAJECTORY AROUND THE CORE TEACHING, SERVICE, AND SCHOLARSHIP WORK THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO CONDUCT AS LONG AS WE ARE A UNIVERSITY (OR AT LEAST AS LONG AS I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT IT, AS WE OBSERVE THE CUTTING DOWN OR SHORTENING OF THESE TRADITIONAL THREE LEGS OF THE STOOL IN TOO MANY STATES [MOST NOTABLY TEXAS] OF LATE).

FINALLY, IT'S A TIME TO REFINE THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES…TO PROVIDE MORE DEFINITION AND GREATER CLARIFICATION TO WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE ADVANCE EACH IMPERATIVE…TO BETTER DESCRIBE IT FOR THE WIDEST VARIETY OF UNIVERSITY CONSTITUENCIES.

AS I MENTIONED, THOSE OF YOU WITH SOME HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY—AS I TALKED ABOUT EARLIER WITH THE HTBH CAMPAIGN—KNOW THAT FOR EACH OF THE IMPERATIVES, WE ALSO LAUNCHED A MAJOR, BROAD-BASED, INSTITUTION-WIDE ACCOMPANYING INITIATIVE TO MORE VISIBLY DEMONSTRATE MURRAY STATE'S COMMITMENT TO BRINGING THE STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES TO LIFE FOR THOSE WE SERVE.

SO NOW, LET ME TALK FOR A BIT ABOUT THIS NEXT GENERATION OR VERSION OF THE UNIVERSITY'S IMPERATIVES…AND THE PARALLEL INITIATIVE THAT I'M THINKING ABOUT FOR EACH.

III.

I HOPE YOU HAD NO DOUBT THAT EXCELLENCE STILL REMAINS THE FIRST-AMONG-EQUALS OF THE IMPERATIVES THAT WILL SET OUR COURSE FOR THE COMING YEARS. IT HAS TO BE—IT IS WHAT MURRAY IS KNOWN FOR BEST—AND IT CONTINUES TO BE OUR STRONGEST CALLING CARD TO ATTRACT STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO THIS SMALL CORNER OF FAR WEST KENTUCKY FOR AN OUTSTANDING POSTSECONDARY EXPERIENCE.

EXCELLENCE CAN BE DEFINED IN MANY WAYS—HAVING THE LARGEST ENROLLMENT, VISIBILITYAND SUCCESS OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF SIGNATURE PROGRAMS, NOTORIETY OF AN INSTITUTION'S FACILITIES OR NOBEL-PRIZE-WINNING FACULTY OR AN EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT ADMISSIONS PROFILE--SOMETIMES GREAT ATHLETIC PROGRAMS EVEN PROVIDE THAT DEFINITION.

AS NOTED BY MY COLLEAGUE WALTER WENDLER IN HIS HIGHER EDUCATION BLOG…IN ONE CASE REPORTED LAST MARCH IN *INSIDEHIGHER ED.COM*, AN OFFICIAL FROM LOS RIOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE TOUTED THEIR NEW LABOR CONTRACT AS A MARKER FOR EXCELLENCE—AND PROUDLY STATED THAT IT "RECOGNIZE[S] THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE INSTITUTION AS A WHOLE," BUT NOWHERE DID SUCH INDICATORS AS TRANSFER RATE OR CERTIFCATE COMPLETION OR JOB PLACEMENT ENTER INTO THE EQUATION OF EXCELLENCE OR QUALITY AT LOS RIOS.

BE CERTAIN OF ONE THING…WE CAN'T MAKE THAT SAME MISTAKE--ANY METRIC THAT EXAMINES TRAITS OR CHARACTERISTICS OTHER THAN THOSE WHICH PROMOTE THE PERFORMANCE AND ABILITY OF OUR STUDENTS IS AN INFERIOR ALTERNATIVE SUBSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE AS A MEASURE OF OUR WORTH.

IT IS QUALITY THAT DRIVES EXCELLENCE…AND PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK OUT QUALITY WHEREVER IT IS TO BE FOUND—SO <u>EXCELLENCE THROUGH QUALITY</u> WILL SERVE AS THE UPDATED VERSION OF OUR EXCELLENCE IMPERATIVE.

AS SUCH, MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY WILL NOT JUST CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO EMPHASIZE, SPOTLIGHT, AND REPRESENT ITS HIGH QUALITY THROUGH OUR TYPICAL MEANS—BUT WE WILL REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS TO SHOWCASE AND DISPLAY QUALITY THROUGH EVERY POSSIBLE AVENUE INCLUDING DISCIPLINARY AND PROGRAM ACCREDITATIONS, A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PROGRAM REVIEW IN THOSE CASES WHERE ACCREDITATION MAY BE UNAVAILABLE, THE PURSUIT OF A WIDE VARIETY OF AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS, AND INDIVIDUAL HONORS (AND CREATING THE NECESSARY

INFRASTRUCTURE TO MAKE ONGOING AND CONTINUOUS RUNS AT THOSE ACCOLADES IN A CREDIBLE, VIABLE FASHION).

WE DO THIS NOW VERY WELL INSTITUTIONALLY—THINKING ABOUT RECENT RECOGNITION IN US NEWS, FORBES, THE CHRONICLE, GI JOBS MAGAZINE, THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD, AND NUMEROUS OTHER THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES WHICH HAVE NOTED OUR SUCCESS UNIVERSITY-WIDE, SOME FOR MANY YEARS RUNNING NOW.

OUR *POINTS OF PRIDE* REPORT AND SUNDRY OTHER MSU PRINT AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA ARE FILLED WITH THESE NOTICES ALL THE TIME TOO, OFTEN WITH REGARD TO INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

HOWEVER, I WANT US TO BUILD ON OUR DISTINCTIVE RECORD OF SUCCESS WHILE PUSHING EVEN HARDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE LEVELS OF EXCELLENCE AND PROMINENCE THAT WE ARE ALSO SECURING AT A PROGRAMMATIC, DEPARTMENTAL, AND COLLEGE LEVEL.

LET ME PROVIDE JUST A COUPLE OF ILLUSTRATIONS:

--CIO LINDA MILLER AND MSU INFORMATION SYSTEMS WAS JUST HONORED BY UNIVERSITY BUSINESS MAGAZINE WITH ITS “MODELS OF EFFICIENCY” AWARD

--FACILITIES MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN NOTED FOR BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION HONORS

--LAST FALL, UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS WAS RECOGNIZED BY THE STATE’S COUNCIL FOR THE ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION WITH 3 GRAND CHAMPION AWARDS FOR *ROUNDABOUT U*, MSU’S WEBSITE REDESIGN, AND OUR *POINTS OF PRIDE* ANNUAL REPORT AS JUST REFERENCED

--ACADEMICALLY, BOTH THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCCUATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH AND THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN CHOSEN RECENTLY AS THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY AT WHAT THEY DO

THE POINT HERE IS THAT WE ACTUALLY HAVE MANY MORE STORIES LIKE THIS, AND WE CANNOT BE SHY IN BLOWING OUR OWN HORN LOUDLY—WE NEED TO DO THAT HERE IN THE PURCHASE—ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH, REGIONALLY AND NATIONALLY—INDEED, IF WE DON'T TAKE ON THAT ROLE FOR US, WHO WILL?

IN THIS, WE'RE GOING TO ALSO EXERT GREATER EFFORT THAN PREVIOUSLY IN SHOWING HOW THESE CLEARLY DEFINED QUALITY MARKERS (NOT JUST STUFF WE MAKE UP!) WE MEET DEMONSTRATE THE EXCELLENCE OF THE INSTITUTION.

WE MAY NOT USE THE OLD KENTUCKY'S PUBLIC IVY LOGO ANYMORE (AND RIGHTLY SO IN MY OPINION) BUT WE ABSOLUTELY REMAIN THE GEM IN THE CROWN OF KENTUCKY'S REGIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM—AND WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY FOR SHOUTING THAT OUT ANEW.

LET ME TALK FOR JUST A MINUTE THEN ABOUT THE INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVE WE'VE IN FACT ALREADY STEPPED OUT ON FOR THE COMING 3 YEARS.

FOR A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY, NO MORE IMPORTANT FACTOR IS BASIC FOR INDICATING QUALITY THAN REAFFIRMATION BY OUR REGIONAL ACCREDITOR--IN THIS CASE, THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COMMISSION ON COLLEGES.

MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY IS ENGAGED IN ITS 10-YEAR RE-AFFIRMATION BY SACS…THIS PROCESS IS INSTITUTION-WIDE, ENGAGES EVERY ASPECT OF OUR INSTITUTION, FROM THE ACADEMIC UNITS TO THE NON-ACADEMIC UNITS AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN…THERE ARE 96 STANDARDS UPON WHICH OUR INSTITUTION WILL BE ASSESSED IN ADDITION TO THE EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP), A CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM WE ARE REQUIRED TO SELECT—WHICH FOR US DEALS WITH IMPROVING THE WRITING SKILLS OF OUR STUDENTS.

FOR YOU MSU SEASONED VETERANS OUT THERE: THIS IS A CHANGED AND MUCH MORE DEMANDING PROCESS THAN PREVIOUS SACS ACCREDITATIONS, AND OUR PREPARATION

FOR THIS OVER THE COMING 3 YEARS WILL HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON UNITS EVERYWHERE IN THE UNIVERSITY…PRESENTLY, OVER 170 STAFF AND FACULTY ARE ENGAGED IN WRITING THE REQUIRED SELF-STUDY REPORT…AS A RESULT, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALL OF US WITH MSU RECOGNIZE THEIR INDIVIDUAL ROLE IN OUR RE-AFFIRMATION.

I MADE A VERSION OF THIS COMMENT AT AN ADMINISTRATIVE MEETING THAT I GUESS GOT PEOPLE'S ATTENTION: RE-AFFIRMATION IS NOT AN OPTION OR A CHOICE, IT'S A NECESSITY FOR US TO REMAIN IN BUSINESS…ACCREDITATION PROBLEMS SHUT THE DOOR TO ACCESSING FEDERAL STUDENT AID AND THAT MEANS A LOT OF US WON'T BE NEEDED AROUND HERE. [IN THAT CASE, THE 12x12 GOAL WOULD TURN INTO ABOUT A 4x12 GOAL!]

AS IT SAYS IN THE FRONT OF OUR SACS 3-RING BINDERS THAT ASSOCIATE PROVOST JAY MORGAN HAS PUT TOGETHER FOR US: "THIS IS WHAT DEFINES US A QUALITY UNIVERSITY"…I LOOK FORWARD TO SHOWING THAT ON-SITE REVIEW TEAM THAT VISITS IN THE SPRING OF 2014 EXACTLY WHAT EXCELLENCE THROUGH QUALITY LOOKS LIKE.

OUTREACH REMAINS THE SPECIAL CALLING FOR PUBLIC COMPREHENSIVE UNIVERSITIES IN THIS COUNTRY—WE ARE STEWARDS OF THE REGION WE SERVE…AND PARTICULARLY IN THIS PLACE WHERE MURRAY STATE IS LOCATED, THERE ARE SO MANY LIFE ENDEAVORS THAT WE CAN BE THE ENGINE OF CHANGE FOR, FOR THE BETTER FOR LITERALLY THOUSANDS OF INDIVIDUALS.

OUR TWO "FIRST GENERATION" IMPERATIVES AROUND <u>BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS</u> AND <u>CREATING COMMUNITY</u> WERE DRIVEN FULLY BY THE PURPOSE OF EXPANDING OUR OUTREACH—AND GIVEN THAT CALLING FOR GREAT REGIONAL PUBLICS, THE LARGER OUTREACH GOAL HAS NOT CHANGED FOR US…IN FACT, IT'S ONLY TAKEN ON MORE IMPORTANCE WITH THE STRESSORS OF THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL CHANGE ON BUSINESS ENTERPRISES, NONPROFIT AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, K-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROVIDERS, AND OTHER ENTITIES.

REMEMBER TOO THAT BECAUSE OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND OTHER RELATED PHENOMENA, NOTHING BIG OR IMPORTANT OR TRANSFORMATIONAL IS REALLY DONE WITHOUT PARTNERSHIPS ANYMORE.

IN FACT, LARRY PAGE, NAMED AS GOOGLE'S CEO THIS PAST APRIL, HAS SAID THAT IF YOU CAN RUN AN ORGANIZATION A BIT MORE COLLABORATIVELY—AS A PARTNERSHIP—YOU GAIN MORE ORGANIZATIONAL BANDWIDTH PLUS GREATER CHECKS AND BALANCES GOING ON, WHICH LEADS TO A BETTER OUTCOME FOR THE ENTERPRISE.

WE'VE DISCOVERED THIS FOR OURSELVES THROUGH THE MYGATE ADOPTION, THAT TECHNOLOGY ITSELF ALMOST DEMANDS THE FORMATION OF ALLIANCES TO TAKE ANY IMPROVEMENT TO SCALE AND MAKE IT IMPACTFUL.

ACKNOWLEDGING THESE TRUTHS IN A MORE DIRECT MODE, THEN, WE WILL MOVE FORWARD WITH THE SECOND REDEFINED STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE OF <u>OUTREACH WITH PARTNERSHIPS.</u>

THE UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVE UNDERGIRDING THIS RESTATED OUTREACH-PARTNERSHIPS IMPERATIVE HAS ITS ROOTS IN ONE OF MY BIGGEST DISAPPOINTMENTS SINCE COMING TO MURRAY STATE AS ITS PRESIDENT.

MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT I SPENT ALMOST HALF OF MY CAREER IN K-12 EDUCATION…AND THEN AFTER I JOINED THE ACADEMY ALMOST 18 YEARS AGO, I SERVED AS A PROFESSOR IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION (AND I'VE TOLD REGENT ROSE THAT WHEN I EVENTUALLY RETURN TO THE FACULTY, IT'S MY PLAN TO STEAL ALL OF HIS SUPERINTENDENCY COURSES AWAY FROM HIM!).

ANYWAY, JUST BEFORE COMING TO MSU, TOO, I WAS IN CHARGE OF K-12 EDUCATION FOR ABOUT 2.2 MILLION STUDENTS IN THE 5TH LARGEST STATE IN THIS NATION…BUT I DON'T FEEL I'VE CAPITALIZED NEARLY ENOUGH ON THAT BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE TO LIFT UP PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE "BACK YARD" OF THE UNIVERSITY.

WE HAVE VESTED INTEREST FOR OUR UNIVERSITY AS WE CAN DO A BETTER JOB OF HELPING TO PREPARE STUDENTS TO COME TO US FOR THEIR POSTSECONDARY CAREERS, AND AS WE INCREASE K-12'S EFFECTIVENESS IN AN ERA OF DECLINING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS.

AS THE *LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER* EDITORIALIZED LAST DECEMBER, IT IS ONLY COMMON SENSE FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TO WORK WITH HIGH SCHOOLS TO ASSURE THAT STUDENTS ARE READY FOR US WHEN THEY ARRIVE ON CAMPUS…KENTUCKY'S CPE HAS DECIDED THAT TOO, WITH A SEPARATE PERFORMANCE METRIC IN THEIR *STRONGER BY DEGREES* STRATEGIC AGENDA THAT NOW ASSESSES US AROUND THE READINESS OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES WHO ENTER COLLEGE.

WE'VE HAD GREAT SUCCESS IN STARTING OUR "RACER ACADEMY" DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM, BRINGING IN OVER 400 STUDENTS TO EARLY CREDIT-BEARING COURSEWORK HERE AT THE UNIVERSITY.

WE'VE ENTERED INTO A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT TO HOUSE THEIR PROGRAM OFFICES SERVING JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE REGION.

YOU MIGHT ALSO KNOW WE ARE SUPPORTING EFFORTS WITH THE FOUR RIVERS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM SERVING THE CHALLENGED HIGH SCHOOLS IN OUR RIVER REGION…THIS IS A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM THAT IS GETTING STUDENTS READY AND INTO COLLLEGE RIGHT NOW.

AND WE'RE GOING TO DO MORE.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE THESE AND MANY MORE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS UNDER A "K12CONNECT" BRANDING AND COORDINATION PROJECT JOINTLY OVERSEEN BETWEEN THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND THE OFFICE FOR REGIONAL OUTREACH—AN INITIATIVE THAT WE'LL BEGIN BUILDING THIS SPRING

--TOWARD THIS END, WE'LL KEEP PURSUING PROJECTS SUCH AS THE REGGIO EMILIA EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM IN CONJUNCTION WITH HENDERSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE THAT WE'LL KICK OFF DURING THE 2012-13 YEAR…GOOD EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING IS SOMETHING DESPERATLY NEEDED IN KENTUCKY.

--WE'RE GOING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO HELP FUND THE PURCHASE AREA WRITING PROJECT IF FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL WRITING PROJECT DROPS OUT—AND WE'LL KEEP UP OUR MATCHING GRANT OF WAIVERS FOR P-A-W-P PARTICIPANTS…WE'RE TALKING PRESENTLY WITH A DONOR ABOUT A MAJOR GIFT ON WAYS TO STRENGTHEN STEM INSTRUCTION—PARTICULARLY MATH EDUCATION—IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS OF OUR REGION…AND WE'RE HOPING TO LEVERAGE APPROXIMATELY A HALF-MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE NELL HALL VICKREY ESTATE WE'VE RECENTLY RECEIVED TO THEN SUPPORT THESE STUDENTS WHEN THEY COME TO MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

WE HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO DO HERE…AND IN MY VIEW, IT'S PAST TIME TO GET THIS WORK UNDERWAY…WATCH FOR AN EVEN GREATER VARIETY OF K12CONNECT PARTNERSHIPS TO START TAKING OFF OVER THE COURSE OF THE NEXT YEAR.

AND FINALLY…

OUR THIRD (AND NEW) IMPERATIVE GOING FORWARD—ALBEIT ONE THAT I'VE BEEN HINTING AT IN PUBLIC COMMENTS CAMPUSWIDE FOR ABOUT A YEAR OR SO NOW IS <u>INNOVATION FOR IMPACT.</u>

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM NOW IS STATING THAT UNIVERSITIES HAVE TO BREAK WITH OLD HABITS AND KNOWN TRADITIONS TO FIND INNOVATIVE, LESS COSTLY WAYS OF PERFORMING THEIR UNIQUELY VALUABLE FUNCTIONS—HOWEVER THEY DEFINE THOSE.

INTERESTINGLY, I'VE BEEN READING *THE INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY* BOOK LOOKING AT SORT OF A COMPARE-AND-CONTRAST STUDY BETWEEN HARVARD AND BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY-IDAHO—ONE INSTITUTION WITH MORE MONEY THAN GOD, AND THE OTHER THAT CHANGED INSTANTANEOUSLY BECAUSE ITS CHURCH LEADER HAD A REVELATION FROM GOD

AND DICTATED THE NEW TENETS THAT WOULD GUIDE THE TRANSITION OF THE FORMER RICKS COLLEGE INTO BYU-IDAHO…I'M NOT SURE HOW MUCH THOSE PARTICULAR STORIES HOLD CURRENCY FOR US…

NONETHELESS, WE MUST ALWAYS BE WILLING TO TAKE A TOUGH LOOK AT WHAT WE CAN DO WELL, AND ALSO SHED THAT WHICH WE CANNOT AFFORD OR OTHERWISE JUSTIFY, IN REACHING THE BIG GOALS WE HAVE SET OUT TO ACCOMPLISH AS A UNIVERSITY.

WE CAN'T MOVE UP—GOING ALWAYS FORWARD TO PREVENT FROM FALLING BACK (THERE IS NO STASIS IN COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS)—BY OVERSTRETCHING OURSELVES, BECOMING RISK AVERSE, GETTING TOO SMUG OR SELF-SATISFIED, WISHING AWAY MARKET FORCES, REFUSING TO CONFRONT GLOBALIZATION, DIVERSITY AND OTHER SOCIAL CHANGES…OR IGNORING THE TECHNOLOGICAL NATURE OF LIFE TODAY.

MURRAY STATE HAS TO EXHIBIT AND DEMONSTRATE THIS WILLINGNESS TO INNOVATE AT EVERY TURN WHERE IT FITS WITH OUR BUSINESS MODEL, IF I MAY USE THAT TERM.

AGAIN, A FEW EXAMPLES…

--I'M ESPECIALLY HAPPY WE WERE ABLE TO INITIATE THE GRADUATE RESEARCH INNOVATION ASSISTANTSHIPS THIS YEAR AND WANT TO THANK THE PROVOST'S OFFICE FOR COORDINATING THAT INITIATIVE FOR US

--WE'RE EXPLORING BOTH A SOLAR FARM AND BIOMASS ENERGY PROJECT FOR THE HUTSON SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE FARMS…WE'LL SEE WHERE THAT TAKES US

--WE'RE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO DRAMATICALLY EXPAND A "MECHATRONICS" PROGRAM IN ELECTRO-MECHANICAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY THAT WOULD PARTNER WITH THE ADVANCED INDUSTRIAL INTEGRATION TECHNOLOGY CURRICULUM AT MADISONVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE—PROVIDE A POTENTIAL NSF FUNDING AVENUE—AND HAVE A K-12 COMPONENT...(THAT'S HITTING ON ALL CYLINDERS I WOULD SAY!)

AND WE HAVE TO BE READY TO INNOVATE IN THE SOCIAL AND CULTURE DIMENSIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY AS WELL—SO TODAY I'M ANNOUNCING THE PROVISION OF EXTENDED FAMILY/QUALIFIED DEPENDENT INSURANCE BENEFITS TO THE EMPLOYEES OF MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY…I WANT TO THANK MSU'S INSURANCE & BENEFITS COMMITTEE AND HR DIRECTOR TOM HOFFACKER AND HIS STAFF FOR THEIR PERSEVERANCE IN GETTING THIS PROGRAM PUT TOGETHER…YOU'LL SEE INFORMATION ON THIS WHEN THE OPEN ENROLLMENT MATERIALS FOR THE 2012 INSURANCE YEAR COME OUT IN A FEW WEEKS.

LASTLY HERE, TO PUT MY MONETY WHERE MY MOUTH IS, WE'RE GOING TO EXPAND THE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES MINI-GRANT FUNDING—THAT WE INCORPORATED FOR THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS AS PART OF THE TRIPLE-I UNIT PLANNING PROCESS—TO ADD UP TO $250,000 BY NEXT SUMMER FOR A ROLLING (HOPEFULLY SELF-SUSTAINING) INNOVATION FUND THAT HAS SOME PUNCH AND WILL PROVIDE SEED MONEY FOR PROJECTS THAT ARE GAME-CHANGERS FOR MSU…THINGS THAT WILL HAVE US MOVING INTO AREAS THAT ARE NOVEL, PROVIDING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES, AND ARE A FIT WITH THE NEEDS OF THE REGION AND COMMONWEALTH.

EXCELLENCE THROUGH QUALITY…OUTREACH WITH PARTNERSHIPS…INNOVATION FOR IMPACT…THESE IMPERATIVES ARE OUR STRATEGY—A LARGER PURPOSE—A BIGGER MEANING—THAT SURROUNDS AND SHAPES THE OUTSTANDING WORK THAT TAKES PLACE ON MURRAY STATE'S CAMPUSES EACH AND EVERY DAY.

IV.

IT IS NO SURPRISE TO ANYBODY GATHERED HERE TODAY THAT THERE IS FAIRLY RAMPANT CONCERN ACROSS THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY ABOUT WHAT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS WILL BE ABLE TO DO AND THE SUPPORT—PARTICULARLY STATE SUPPORT—WE WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE.

THERE WILL BE CONTINUING PRESSURE TO RUN THE UNIVERSITY THIS WAY OR THAT WAY—CERTAINLY MORE LIKE A BUSINESS IN MANY RESPECTS—AS OPPOSED TO WHAT I THINK IS

MORE APPROPRIATE, AND THAT IS INSTEAD INCORPORATING BETTER BUSINESS-LIKE PRACTICES INTO HIGHER ED OPERATING MODELS.

I SUPPOSE GIVEN ALL OF THIS, THEN, THAT WE CAN'T BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN WHAT WILL BE HERE IN 50 YEARS—MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY OR THE MURRAY STATE BUSINESS, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER.

HOWEVER, I'M BETTING ON MSU AND CONTINUING TO DO WHAT WE DO AMONG THE BEST OF OUR SECTOR OF UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY.

THE DAYMARS OF THE WORLD—AND THOSE OF THE SAME ILK WHICH WE CONTINUE TO SEE IN CHURCH BASEMENTS, SHOPPING CENTERS, STRIP MALLS, AND SUBURBAN PARKS ACROSS AMERICA WILL HAVE THEIR PLACE—AND (THOUGH THE MARKET AND REGULATION WILL SHAKE MANY OF THEM OUT OVER THE NEXT 10 TO 20 YEARS) CONTINUE TO FILL THEIR NICHE IN THE INCREASINGLY NARROW-CASTED WORLD OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION…BUT REST ASSURED, THERE WILL STILL BE A NEED FOR PLACES THAT FOSTER EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT—BUILD CHARACTER—AND ENHANCE CRITICAL THINKING AND DISCERNMENT.

I UNDERSTAND...HIGHER EDUCATION FOR MANY WILL BE SOLELY AN IMPARTING OF EXPLICIT KNOWLEDGE OR WORK SKILLS—CAREER PREPARATION…

BUT THAT IS NOT ALL THAT IT WILL BE FOR MILLIONS OF TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS IN FUTURE GENERATIONS WHO WANT SOMETHING MORE AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE THEIR WAY TO PLACES LIKE MURRAY STATE…TO US…

OF COURSE, IT'S THE CULTURE AND "FEEL" OF A TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL CAMPUS, WITH ALL OF THE AMENITIES AND EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES STUDENTS HAVE COME TO EXPECT AT ANY NATIONALLY RANKED INSTITUTION THAT WILL ALWAYS BE A DRAW (WITH THE PROVISO THAT WE KEEP PROGRAMS CURRENT, WATCH AFFORDABILITY, PROVIDE ACCESS, AND THINGS OF THAT NATURE).

BUT REMEMBER TOO, IT'S ALSO AN ETHOS THAT WE SHARE…ONE THAT IS COMMUNICATED EVERY DAY IN A THOUSAND WAYS BY A TALENTED AND ENGAGED FACULTY—THE RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP THEY ACCOMPLISH—GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED TO STUDENTS—A CARING AND SUPPORTIVE STAFF—AN EXPOSURE TO STUDENTS' LARGER WORLD TO EXPLORE.

THAT IS *OUR* VOCATION—IT IS THE SPECIAL, DISTINCTIVE THING THAT WE DO—AND BECAUSE OUR WORK HAS THIS EMOTIONAL, PASSIONATE COMPONENT…VALUES ARE JUST AS IMPORTANT TO MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY AS ANY TANGIBLE ASSET WE HAVE, OR EQUITY THAT WE HOLD.

THE VALUES CURRENTLY IN OUR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN –THOSE OF ACCESSIBILITY—ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND SHARED GOVERNANCE—DIVERSITY—A NURTURING ENVIRONMENT—STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING—WILL CONTINUE TO BE OUR FUNDAMENTALS.

NOW A QUICK ASIDE (AND I KNOW I'M ABOUT DONE, BUT I HAVE TO COME BACK TO THAT NOTION OF SMART BUSINESS PRACTICES)…THAT'S NOT TO SAY THAT WE SHOULDN'T KEEP EXERCISING SOME MORE ENTREPRENEURIAL VALUES IN THE CARRYING OUT OF OUR MISSION AND COMPLETING OUR DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS IN AN EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WAY…SO LET ME SUGGEST A FEW OF THOSE THAT WE'LL KEEP HONING FOR THE FUTURE.

--MARKET AWARENESS AND NIMBLENESS: NEW DEGREES AND PROGRAMS—INCLUDING PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATES—SHOULD REFLECT MARKET, STUDENT, AND PROFESSIONAL NEEDS--WITH OUR UNIVERSITY BUDGET ALIGNED WITH ESTABLISHED PRIORITIES

--FUTURE-ORIENTATION: THIS ENTREPRENEURIAL VALUE CONSIDERS COMPETENCIES STUDENTS WILL NEED IN THE FUTURE—GEARED TO NEW INDUSTRIES AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY—THAT'S WHY WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A HARD LOOK AT MSU'S POSSIBILITIES IN MORE HEALTH OCCUPATION FIELDS, IN TOURISM, AND TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPLY-CHAIN MANAGEMENT

--WE ALSO NEED TO DEMONSTRATE COOPERATIVE AGGRESSIVENESS: MAKING SURE WE IDENTIFY AND EXPAND INTO NEW MARKETS—LOOK FOR OUR DISTINCTIVE NICHES—SEEK OUT NEW REVENUE STREAMS (AT LEAST FOR MSU ANYWAY)—LEVERAGE OUR PARTNERS--AND BUILD AWARENESS OF THE MURRAY STATE BRAND

CERTAINLY THOUGH, WHAT WE TEACH, HOW WE TEACH IT, WHO WE DETERMINE CAN TEACH—AND THE WAYS WE DETERMINE THAT SOMETHING HAS BEEN TAUGHT—WILL ALTER AND ADJUST OVER TIME DUE TO TECHNOLOGY, THE HIGHER ED MARKET, SOCIETAL NEEDS, AND EVEN BECAUSE OF AMBIENT SOCIAL CHANGE I SUPPOSE.

BUT FOR PLACES OF HIGHER LEARNING THAT STAY GREAT—LIKE MSU—OUR VALUES ARE FUNDAMENTAL, THEY ARE THE CONSTANT, THEY KEEP US PROVIDING THAT WHICH WILL BE FOREVER VALUED…BEING THE CONSIDERATE, INVOLVED, CARING, AND THOUGHTFUL MENTORS OF OUR STUDENTS THAT WILL OPEN THEM TO ENTIRELY NEW, EXCITING, AND THOROUGHLY UNPREDICTABLE LIVE AS LEARNED MEN AND WOMEN.

MY JOB IN ALL OF THIS IS TO AID YOU IN THAT PROCESS BY BRINGING US MORE STUDENTS OF ABILITY…PROVIDING BETTER CAMPUS FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY—BETTER REWARDS TO YOU, FINANCIAL AND OTHERWISE, FOR YOUR SUCCESSFUL WORK AND DEDICATION—AND THE CONTINUING SUPPORT AND RECOGNITION FOR THE GREAT THINGS WE ARE PERFORMING HERE.

I SHALL CONTINUE TO DO THAT JOB, AND DO SO WITH PRIDE, AS I CALL YOU MY COLLEAGUES AND LOOK ALWAYS FORWARD TO THE AMAZING THINGS WE CAN ACCOMPLISH TOGETHER IN THE YEAR TO COME.

THANK YOU EVERYONE AND…GO RACERS!