

26665

RECEIVED AND PLACED ON FILE

APRIL 7, 2005

Wilbur Wright College

One of the City Colleges of Chicago

4300 North Narragansett Avenue
Chicago, IL 60634-1591

Main Office, **773/777-7900**; Admissions, **481-8200**; Financial Aid, **481-8100**;
Business Services, **481-8500**; Continuing Education, **481-8800**; ALSP/GED, **481-8821**;
Humboldt Park Vocational Educational Center, **489-8989**

Address to Board of Trustees
April Meeting
Thursday, April 7, 2005

Greetings, Chairman Tyree, Chancellor Watson, members of the Board, Officers of the District and all others present.

Committee A and Faculty Council met in March and discussed the actions proposed for the three nursing programs under review, the programs at Kennedy-King, Olive Harvey, and Malcolm X. I know that the Board members and the chancellor are as passionate about providing a quality nursing education as the nursing faculty and staff; I know that the District Office and the nursing faculty both want superb programs with strong retention rates; I know that both groups are struggling to work for change to benefit our students. But there is still a fundamental communication disjunction between what I hear at the Board meetings and what I hear at the Faculty Council meetings.

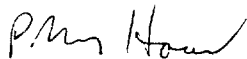
The yawning communication gap between our Board and District Office and our faculty and staff is both chronic and critical. We all want the same things: to provide the best education to our students at whatever stage they may be at; to support our people, administrators, faculty, and staff, in that endeavor; and to promote the excellence of our programs in our communities. But the problem arises once we consider the question of how we implement these goals.

As I've said numerous times here and at other venues, the business paradigm doesn't work for higher education. We don't produce educated individuals as though we were vendors of Pepsi-cola, and contractual failure is not determined by the number of undelivered cases of soft drinks. Nor is this paradigm particularly new to educational policy. (I would direct you to, for instance, John Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education*, Kevin Dougherty, *The Contradictory College: The Conflict, Origins, Impacts, and Future of the Community College*, and particularly Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, *The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985*, in which the authors argue that the rise of the community college and alternative education successfully diverted non-traditional students away from four-

year institutions and away from economic prosperity.) Using that paradigm to increase workload for full and part-time instructors, to disregard the institutional contributions of senior faculty and staff, and to increase the demands on the professional and administrative staff, all may seem like good cost-cutting measures, but the impact on student learning, as the sociological and historical studies suggest, will be long term and devastating to our communities.

What is even more problematic is the apparent deafness by the Board members to the concerns and criticisms of the faculty in this process. Even if there is disagreement all around (as I think there is), we need to be able to communicate, to have free and open discussion, and the faculty and staff need to be heard. The danger, if you do not listen to the faculty and staff, is that you run the risk of the faculty and staff not listening to you. And that is a combustible and volatile situation for any institution.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Polly Hoover".

Polly Hoover

President of Faculty Council of the City Colleges of Chicago