

# **Desired Characteristics of the Next SCC President**

## **A Statement by the Faculty Association of St. Charles Community College – Spring 2011**

Clearly, many people and functions are necessary to successfully operate any worthwhile educational institution, especially today, but it would seem that at the center should be the students and the teachers. Our college needs a president who views faculty as serving on the front line in the educational experience of SCC students, not merely as additional and more expensive support staff; a president who, ideally, considers faculty's role the most central to the future of the college, but at the very least as being equal in importance to that of the burgeoning roles of the marketing and technology departments. Such a president would actively seek faculty input to the college's planning process and ensure that to the extent possible, their input was reflected in policies affecting faculty and the fulfillment of their responsibilities as educators on the SCC campus.

SCC's president must have exceptional leadership skills – true leadership that draws the best out of all employees and students by enabling them to work cooperatively to achieve a shared vision. An “amplifying leader,” in other words, who works us hard but makes us love it because we are making the best use of our skills and interests in a supportive and mutually encouraging environment.

The college president must be a compassionate person of honest character and demonstrated wisdom. The president must also be capable of amicable engagement with all stakeholders in the college and community in order to build consensus and build a vision most effectively.

The new president must possess integrity and should be able to reveal intellectual depth and curiosity. He or she should view SCC as an academic institution, not as a corporation. The new president will invest in people and programs, not simply buildings. The president

should support innovative educational programs and the faculty that run them.

The SCC Faculty Association members hold differing views on whether the new president should have teaching experience; many note that the classroom experience the incoming president has is likely to have been some years ago, prior to the individual's obtaining experience in administration. We are nonetheless united in affirming that the new SCC president should have respect for those who teach. We would like to see a president who has visibility on campus and in the community.

The new president will confront a context that will require him or her to respond in bold, proactive terms. The Missouri legislature, for instance, has never reformed the formula that gives the community college district the funding that represents our growth. A new president must work with the elected legislators from our district to fight for our just share of the pie, whatever that is. Moreover, sooner or later, SCC will likely have to go to the public for a tax increase. SCC has never been successful with a tax increase initiative, aside from the very first one that started this institution. The president ought to have the persona necessary to go to the public and to sell our true worth in the community for all constituents of the community.

Consequently, our next president should have strong history of representing the educational mission of a community college. We want a college president, not one who thinks as a secondary education administrator, and this person should be capable of developing a vision.

In the discourse on characteristics of the next SCC president, the following qualities have repeatedly emerged: honesty, leadership, courage, wisdom, compassion, passion, amiability, thoughtful listening and effective facilitation, commitment to academic excellence, effectiveness in collaborative strategic planning.