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## Higher Learning Commission Visit

Every ten years, Southeastern Illinois College is up for reaccreditation. The institution was first accredited in 1976. A group of peer reviewers, representing the Higher Learning Commission, visit the campus to insure that a positive culture is in place and that the institution is doing what they say they are doing. The reviewers meet with a small group of students and interview them to hear their experiences at the institution. They want to hear about the student’s involvement in clubs, sports, and other activities on campus. The college will host a visit on April 22nd and April 23rd 2019 in the PDR/Heritage Room. President Dr. Rice and Vice President Dr. Weiss will be hosting a prep session with the students before the evaluation by the peer reviewers. Even though Southeastern Illinois College is a small institution, the students can reflect on all of the achievements this college has made. The Forensic Falcons, the women’s and men’s basketball teams, and the other clubs and organizations at this institution have all contributed to these achievements.

According to hlcommission.org, the Higher Learning Commission is an independent corporation that was founded in 1895 as one of the six regional institutional accreditors in the United States. This is the accrediting association that evaluates our institution. The Higher Learning Commission has ten guiding values to demonstrate a better understanding. These values include to focus on student learning, education as a public purpose, planning management of resources to ensure institutional sustainability, and accreditation through peer reviewers. “The Higher Learning Commission works in concert with the federal government to ensure the college is providing students a quality education, faculty, classes, and activities.” said Dr. Karen Weiss.

Our institution follows the open pathway ten year cycle. In years one through three, the institution prepares assurance filing. Year four includes submitting an assurance review. Years five through seven, the institution submits a quality initiative proposal. Years seven through nine, they submit a quality initiative report. Finally, during year ten, they submit a comprehensive evaluation and a group of peer reviewers will schedule a day and a half to come observe the college and speak with the students and faculty. The peer reviewers will then read over the comprehensive evaluation and make the decision to accredit the institution. Dr. Karen Weiss has been with the institution for 20 years, working in various roles, so she has been exposed to the campus as a whole. Dr. Weiss is the Vice President of Academic Affairs and one of her responsibilities as Vice President is to work on the HLC Accreditation process. “This has really opened my eyes to the process we have been working on for the past five years. I have had to adapt to new criteria and I have had the opportunity to work with all of the faculty and staff. I have enjoyed working with the people. They are very pleasant to work with and they are very hard working,” said Dr. Weiss.

“The process has been multi here. We have had a lot of staff, faculty, administration, student workers, and many others who have done a lot of work putting together what is called our Assurance argument. We submit it to the corporation and they have a group of peers who evaluate us.” states Dr. Rice. They see how the student services are and if the institution meets the criteria they shared in the argument. The peer reviewers will be here for a day and a half and will be hosting open forums to hear the student’s personal experiences at the institution. “They will have an open forum for Criteria 1, which is on the mission. Criteria 2, which is over ethical conduct. Criteria 3 and 4 will be over teaching and resources such as the courses, programs, support systems. For example, library, counseling, testing, tutoring. Criteria 5 will be over Institutional Effectiveness. Students, teachers, administrators, and community members are encouraged to attend.

**The Falcon Flyer is brought to you by the SIC Student Government.**

**Graphic layout by Randy Daniels.**

*Article by Bridget Payne*

## Mr. Kimball Going Full Circle

It is the end of an era and how else to end it than to end it as it began. This is what Allan Kimball had in mind when he chose *The Boys Next Door* as one of his last productions. *The Boys Next Door* follows four mentally handicapped men who try to live normal everyday lives together. For them, even the smallest tasks feel like a mountain to climb. Donovan Valdez who plays Mr. Kempler stated “It is unusual that we do a play instead of a musical, but it is fun and I am enjoying it. It is deeper in terms of characters and more challenging to be those characters, but I fully enjoy it.”

It was also Mr. Kimball’s first production here at SIC. Mr. Kimball stated, “I believe things needed to come full circle.” When he began teaching and directing he said “Everyday was a learning experience. Everything felt almost new.” Today is a very different story though. “Now everything is second nature. It’s comfortable and you know where everything is. It feels like home. Going to work is like going home.”



Even though he feels at home here, he makes his students feel at home also. Braden Cummins who plays Lucian P. Smith in the play stated “It’s very sad to see him go. It’s also very honoring to be his last group of students he gets to work with, and it’s honoring that we get to send him off.”

How does Allan Kimball feel about retiring? Well, he answered “it hasn’t fully sunk in yet. When planning for the fall shows, I won’t be there so I’m not involved. I’m not sure what I’m going to be doing.”

*The Boys Next Door* was a success like the rest of Kimball’s productions. For all of his outstanding work and many hours of commitment to his time here, he was honored by a surprise visit during intermission of the second showing of the play. Dr. Rice and Paul Cummins spoke to the audience commending Mr. Kimball on all of his hard work and dedication he has shown to his productions and students. He was honored with a plaque dedicating the stage by naming it the Allan G. Kimball Stage. What an honor! Paige Clore who plays Sheila said, “Everyone was applauding and it was a very heartfelt moment for everyone.”

If Mr. Kimball could leave his students with something, it would be this. “Believe in yourself, and you can do it. That’s what I tried to do with the students in our productions. Through the productions we have put on and the sets we have built, just believe in yourself and you can do it.” Through the years Mr. Kimball has inspired countless students in a variety of ways, and he did succeed in teaching them to believe in themselves. Mr. Kimball will be greatly missed.

*Article by Christian Murray*

**Update:****Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art**

I'm sure just about everyone has seen the new building being built over on the end of campus. "But what is it?" you may ask. It is the new Ella Elizabeth Hise Museum of Regional Art! This comes as a generous gift from Ella's brothers, William C. Hise and their late brother James C. Hise. Ella Elizabeth Hise was a teacher and art supervisor at the Harrisburg Public schools for many years. The brothers wanted to honor Ella and her love of art. What better way of doing this than having a new art museum built in her honor and carry on her passion.

The museum will be hosting exhibits containing artwork from around Southern Illinois and the surrounding regions. Along with the main exhibit space, the museum is set to have a classroom and professional workspace. The art and music appreciation classes are set to be held here when the building is complete. When these classes are not in place, workshops will be held there. There will also be traveling exhibits and art talks along with the exhibits.

The Hise Museum has a attentive opening date in August with an exhibit running from August to December. This exhibit is set to have artwork made from the 1930's to today. There will be another one in the spring running from January to April. The artwork featured in this exhibit will be quilting. From May to June another will run featuring the artwork of a local artist named Jesse Rouse.

If you or someone you know have artwork that you would like to donate, there is more information on the school's website. A tentative selection process is there as well as the form for submissions. The same form is used for those who simply want to loan their work. Various pieces will be considered to be placed in the museum so make sure you or whoever it is sends in the form. At the very least, be sure to stop by and see all the great pieces.

*Article by JeanLu Peak*





## Fowler Visits SIC About New Learning Commons Plans

Sen. Dale Fowler visited Southeastern Illinois College students, staff, board members and administrators Oct. 17 to learn more about the college's plans to utilize state funds for the renovation of the Melba Patton Learning Resource Center (MPLRC) and the Dana Keating Student Success Center (DKSSC) to create a Learning Commons area for students. Both the MPLRC and the DKSSC will be housed in the Commons.

Southeastern will receive \$101,735 from the state as part of a \$150 million appropriation to community colleges across the state, which was announced in September. The state funds are for deferred maintenance projects, and the improvements are long overdue from prior leaks before a new roof was installed. The SIC Board of Trustees approved the use of bond funds to match state dollars to complete the project with modernizing in mind.

"We're always coming out to SIC for groundbreaking and ribbon cuttings and it's exciting. We're so fortunate to have Southeastern Illinois College right here and it's growing. Obviously there's been issues with education and state budget recently, but we're working through that and things are going to be bigger and better," said Fowler.

"To be able to renovate a space like this has got to be good for the students. This room's been this way for a long time, as Dr. Rice stated. To be able to come into a complete new atmosphere with a comfort zone that's new and fresh and clean will give a lot of positive energy to students and staff."

The project includes a reinvention of the library and LRC to meet the current needs of students, with the use of technology for learning in the forefront. More specifically, it includes improvements such as new ceilings, lights, electrical additions and remodeling.

President Dr. Jonah Rice explained how the new Learning Commons idea came about with the idea to create a learning hub for the college. "The college engaged students and staff as well as experts in the field about how to re-conceptualize what we need to serve students best in this generation. The learning commons approach is a fusion of library, media support, tutoring, and testing all under one umbrella for a 'one stop' approach to academic support."

Once the reinvention need was recognized, he and a number of staff visited several other colleges that had recently updated their libraries in this manner to get a better feel for how it could all come together.

The project began this summer and will continue over the next few years, as the space is updated and redefined. Walls between the LRC and The SSC will be removed and instead of maintaining a quiet library for individual study, the college is moving toward an updated environment that includes space for collaboration and active learning. The redesign will create a barrier-free area that will encourage students and instructors to share ideas and communicate effectively.

"The new learning commons will incorporate all those elements in a more seamless manner of student service," said Dr. Rice. "The Board is committed to student success and will use both state grant funding and bond money to upgrade the entire area, top to bottom. This will happen in phases to minimize impact on student learning. It's an exciting project that keeps SIC on the forefront of innovation and service."

Board member and chair Dr. Pat York added, "We're here to serve students and this will help them directly. It is our duty to provide students with the best support for their success."

Katie Dusch, administrative assistant to the dean of academic services, holds a master's degree in library science and is excited about the project. "Today's student can't be pinned down to traditional or nontraditional student, or any specific category anymore, as each one is so varied in their needs, backgrounds, attitudes, etc. The learning commons, however, has the potential to accommodate many at once."

Gary Jones, SIC librarian since 1985, has seen the library grow over the years and is eager to see it "transform from basically a book warehouse to a multipurpose student use area" to better fit the needs of current students.

Jones and Dusch have already begun the process of what they call 'weeding' to make room for the new, more open spaces. The pair have already culled a lot of books for various reasons, such as poor condition, duplicates, reference that can be found more easily in a digital format, items that don't meet current curriculum needs and don't fit the purpose of the general collection. The 'weeding' akin to weeding a garden will allow for shorter bookshelves to open up the space and let in more natural light from the many windows, as well as allow for fewer shelves to make room for newer technology and group study spaces.

The reinvented space will offer both group and solo study areas, digital and print platforms, assistance and tutoring. It will also be a place to gather, relax, collaborate and communicate.

"We want to create a vibrant, friendly atmosphere where students will have access to whatever type of help they need – from tutoring and research to technology assistance – as well as a place for them to relax and socialize," said Karla Lewis, coordinator of media services and distance learning. "We are growing to meet the changing study, technology, and social needs of our students."

*Article by Angela Wilson*

## Spring Break

Name: Christian Murray

Hometown: Harrisburg, IL

What did you do over spring break?

Last minute trip and Speech trip.

Who did you go with? Chose randomly

What did you look forward to?

The beach



Name: Cole Trosen

Hometown: Elizabeth, IL

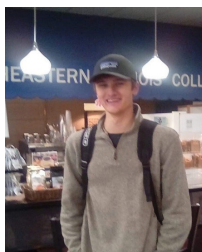
What did you do over spring break?

Going on vacation

Who did you go with? Friends

What did you look forward to?

Going to the beach



Name: Daphne Wallace

Hometown: Pope County

What did you do over spring break?

Watching Netflix and eating Oreos

What did you watch on Netflix?

The Office

Who did you watch it with? My dog, Rosco



Name: Randy Crittendon

Hometown: Ozark, AL

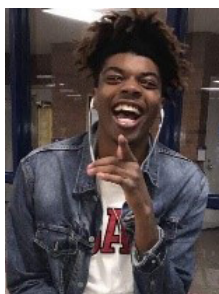
What did you do over spring break?

Panama City Beach, Florida

Who did you go with? Teammates

What did you look forward to?

Chilling at the beach



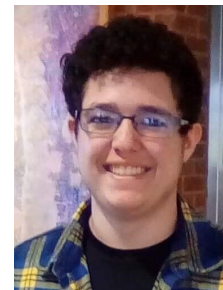
Name: Braden Cummins

Hometown: Carrier Mills, IL

What did you do over spring break?

Doing stuff with friends, take a trip, and a speech tournament.

Who did you go with? Friends and teammates.



Name: Paige Clore

Hometown: Norris City, IL

What did you do over spring break?

Speech team at State!

What did you look forward to?

Relaxing and enjoying the break!



Name: Angie Wilson

Hometown: Harrisburg, IL

What did you do over spring break?

Hiking and kayaking

Who did you go with? Friends and my mom

