

Keynote Address -- SCCPA Conference, April 2006
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Hello and good morning --It's great to be back in the Palmetto State with you, my South Carolina CPA friends and colleagues!

I am very honored to be with you here today to serve as your keynote speaker. I would like to especially thank my wonderful hosts, SCCPA President Dr. Bob Hanley, Eric Fisher and Dr. Boyd Yarbrough – thank you. I also want to thank the entire conference planning committee. Would you please stand and be recognized. Thank you so much for the invitation to be with you today!

Speaking of conferences, many of us returned recently from the 2006 ACPA International Convention in Indianapolis and I've got to tell you more than ever before South Carolina was represented and visible on the national scene. I want to take a moment to recognize and honor those folks who served on the national planning committee- first – Dr. Boyd Yarbrough as convention chair, Jason Cassidy, Beau Seagraves, Linda Jamieson, Jeffrey Brown. Please stand so that we may recognize you now!

I also want to recognize Dr. Harry Shucker, VPSA, from The Furman University for Furman's support and congratulate you on the national visibility and pride that Dr. Yarbrough and his staff brought to South Carolina and your institution. On behalf of a grateful association and President of ACPA- thank you!

I'd like to begin my remarks by walking you through what I consider some of the crucial tasks that are needed by us to **Rethink Learning with New Structures and Partners**. The point being is that how are we able to actively engage and collaborate with our teaching and learning colleagues across the campus and beyond.

Some of the components that I would like to share with you to accomplish this necessary and critical task for all of us as college student educators includes:

1. **Attitude Needed to Collaborate -**
2. **Create a Realistic Vision- Mapping the Environment**
3. **Learning a New Language – that of Learning Outcomes**
4. **Assessment**
5. **Collaborations by/with Crossing Boundaries**
6. **Integrating Learning with Strategic Planning**
7. **Enhancing Professional Skill Development**

1) The Attitude Needed to Collaborate -Attain and Maintain a Positive and Realistic Focus!

Optimist's story

There is the story of identical twins. One was a hope-filled optimist. "Everything is coming up roses!" she would say. The other twin was a sad and hopeless pessimist. He thought

that Murphy, as in “Murphy’s Law,” was an optimist. The worried parents of the kids brought them to the local psychologist. He suggested to the parents a plan to balance their personalities. “On their next birthday, put them in separate rooms to open their gifts. Give the pessimist the best toys you can afford, and give the optimist a box of manure.” The parents followed these instructions and carefully observed the results.

When they peeked in on the pessimist, they heard him audibly complaining, “I don’t like the color of this computer . . . I’ll bet this calculator will break . . . I don’t like the game . . . I know someone who’s got a bigger and better toy car than this . . .”

Tiptoeing across the corridor, the parents peeked in and saw their little optimist gleefully throwing the manure up in the air. She was giggling. “You can’t fool me! Where there’s this much manure, there’s gotta be a new pony!” here somewhere!

How can we set out to teach and show our students and younger staff members how to view and address the world unless we show them the way as roles models? What types of ways might we approach the world to seek out new partners across the campus in the same way as we also looked for the pony?

Too often I have been in situations where I was told as a young college student educator—here’s \$100.00 just go and get more faculty involved in the residence halls and build a relationship with them because connecting with them leads to better retention for us and that is good for both them and us.

When we rethink learning we need to better understand our partners without some assumptions and stereotypes and for me that means have a better more realistic, framework on how this new relationship will help both of us grow as a university.

In order for our collaborations to be a success we need to create a realistic Vision to think about our next steps, a Plan and Make it Accountable (Become what You Want to Be)

Reverend Billy Graham tells of a time early in his ministry when he arrived in a small town to preach a sermon. Wanting to mail a letter, he asked a young girl where the post office was. When the girl had told him, Dr. Graham thanked her and said, “If you’ll come to the Baptist church this evening, you can hear me telling everyone how to get to heaven.”

“I don’t think I’ll be there,” the girl said. “You don’t even know your way to the post office.”

Part of plan to create road map to get to heaven or the post office is to be able to focus and think about your goals and set a vision to meet those goals.

2. Create a Realistic Vision- Mapping

I would like you to unravel the string from the paper clip contraption that you have before you. You need to put your personal stuff aside please. What I want you to do is to concentrate on making the string go clockwise, concentrate really concentrate and focus all of your energy on the paperclip. For some of you this will not be as successful, if that is the case please look on at your neighbor’s string and follow that. Continue to concentrate on the paperclip and now start to make the circle get bigger. There you go, now concentrate on stopping the paper clip and reversing the direction so it goes counterclockwise. Now make the string stop completely. Pretty cool huh?

What happened? Synapses commanded by your brain focused the muscle neurons down your arm into your hand and fingers to follow the commands of your brain.

Lessons from this example are that:

The first step in tapping and actualizing your potential as student educators and campus leaders is to define your goals and the qualities necessary to achieve them and into turn help your students achieve them.

Or Let Davidson said of this example:

- 1) you get what you focus on in life (great student service, great programs, good retention rate to graduation)
- 2) the creative process of change begins with a clear picture of the desired outcome
- 3) the most fundamental quality of effective leadership is clear vision
- 4) the clearer the more well-defined the vision or goal, the more you experience your ability to accomplish it.
- 5) Goals that are written, 50% believable and represent a stretch are most effective
- 6) Intention precedes method

That’s what setting a vision and making a plan and making it accountable can include! Now is the chance and the time to become what you want to be, but first you have to plan for it. Part of that plan is to be knowledgeable about your work.

What do you want out of a relationship or a new partnership with a faculty member in a specific college or with the boys and girls club, soup kitchen, etc. in the neighborhood next to the university?

Again, we are sometimes tasked to go out and do without the prep work to build a

3. Learning a New Language – Learning Outcomes

Before we go into the planning stages we need to be mindful of what we are planning for, to who and for what. We need a COMMON language to think about- learning outcomes.

- Developing Learning Outcomes
- Cognitive Complexity*
- Knowledge Acquisition, Integration & Application
- *Humanitarianism
- *Civic Engagement
- *Interpersonal & Intrapersonal
- * Practical Competence

—
Outcome to Practice*Practice to Outcome
How to Develop Learning Outcomes/Examples

4. Assessment

Assessing Internal
Environments

Step by Step Assessment Process Based on Mission/Goals with Examples

5. **Collaborations by/with Crossing Boundaries**

- Start Small- small group with realistic impact, ride a bike, run a race one foot in front of the other
- Identify Allies – allies in the gym, committees, great teachers, freshman forums, univ 100 , student and the university course, alumni, community partners
- Initiate the Conversation – it will be us to make the call
- Evaluate the Outcomes- did it work? Why or why not, if it did work- time to let folks know across campus and beyond – alumni magazine

6. **Integrating Learning with Strategic Planning**

Aligning Structure, Resources, and Priorities with Accountability for Student Outcomes

7. **Enhancing Professional Skill Development**

Expanded and Enhanced Skill Sets to Maximize Opportunities (Collaboration, Leadership, Organizational Change)

Some Thoughts

Learning in this new structure and with these new partners is

*Generative, builds upon the knowledge before and after it

*Systemic, not isolated in a silo- college, student organization, residence hall

*Developmentally complex- linear and cyclical

*Mutual ownership for the learning and teaching experience part of a larger integrative life plan- student affairs doesn't own student development and to my knowledge we aren't seeking any patents but what it means is that we are give the tools to assist the building

Before we end I just wanted to share a few things with you please.

I'd like to end with part of an Irish blessing:

May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind always break at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

May the rain fall softly upon your fields

May god or your higher power hold you in the palm of their hand.

Please know that your contributions to higher education are invaluable and immeasurable, you help galvanize and maximize the wonderfully diverse student experiences on our campus. For your work today and tom., thank you from the bottom of my heart. There is no great passion or nobler profession than that of a being a student educator. I hope that you will grow old with me in this profession and in the association. I am so proud to be a part of this profession and so proud to call you colleagues and close friends.

AND finally...

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

I hope to see you all in Orlando for the ACPA/NASPA Joint Meeting March 31- April 4, 2007.
Thank you for the opportunity to spend time with you today.