December 5, 2011

Dear Faculty and Staff:

I am pleased to send you the December 2011 “The President’s Pause,” a continuing communiqué to faculty and staff. The goal of the Pause is to provide a substantive and timely summary of campus initiatives and activities.

As I think about La Verne, the economy and higher education’s financial model of rising tuitions and increasing financial aid I see the public’s confidence in higher education eroding. The dominant question families ask is: Is the price we are paying for higher education worth the value we are receiving? This refrain is being voiced nationally and in California’s public institutions.

We at La Verne are in an enviable position among our nation’s universities. Our traditional undergraduate, CAPA and graduate programs are experiencing healthy growth in numbers of students. I believe our increasing enrollment is a result of two factors: the current economic situation facing California’s public institutions coupled with the quality of La Verne’s instruction and co-curricular offerings. But can our healthy enrollment be sustained? It behooves us to further distinguish our
curriculum and co-curriculum from other institutions — it is that which will sustain our healthy human and financial resources throughout the repair of this economy. La Verne must be nimble and visionary as we help our student population understand that the value of the La Verne diploma is distinctive, compelling and competitive.

Students graduating from La Verne, regardless of location, college or program will have the experience, the skills, and the values that will lead to success in their future academic pursuits and/or in their workplace. Grounded in our values orientation, student-centered approach, excellent academic and co-curricular programs, the campus-wide strategic planning process and The La Verne Experience will provide greater opportunities for our students and their families to recognize that the value of their University of La Verne diploma will benefit them today and throughout their lives.

CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

From my first meetings a year ago, I have been impressed by how well many across campus work together for common outcomes and the greater good of our community. A few examples of note: The 2010 Faculty Retreat (One University, Four Colleges); the Diversity Strategic Plan; and, the Haiti Relief Effort. Those efforts would not have happened without campus-wide involvement and collaboration. I firmly believe that if we are even more purposeful about expanding our ‘culture of collaboration,’ the University of La Verne will increase its ability to meet our institutional mission and vision.
When I think of collaboration, I think of actively seeking opportunities to work together to meet challenges, to address issues of mutual concern, and to set goals for our future. Collaboration requires that we trust ourselves and each other. If we trust and demonstrate daily our respect for each other, we will share our individual perspectives during difficult and important dialogues. These will lead to collaborative endeavors in achieving common goals on short and/or long-term initiatives. Within the last few months of seeking opportunities for furthering a culture of ongoing communication and collaboration, the following have been established:

**Written Communications:** A summer letter from the president to the entire campus; monthly *President’s Pause* communications that highlight substantive and topical La Verne issues; beginning and end-of-semester letters sent to the homes of parents of current students; weekly electronic communications to the Board of Trustees; co-written communications by the university and ASULV presidents entitled *Presidents’ Paws* sent to the student body each semester; regular electronic communications to all alumni.

**Face-to-face, Campus-Wide Consistent Interactions:** Devorah’s *Magical Mystery Tour* — visiting places and offices throughout the campus to meet, greet and learn about each area; scheduling visits to each regional campus; meeting with faculty and staff within each college, and then with each division; regularly scheduled meetings with the Executive Committee of the Senate, monthly meetings with the Senior Management Council; scheduled President’s Office Hours for individual faculty and staff members or groups of members to meet and discuss their topics of choice. As the Faculty
Representative to the Board of Trustees, Jack Meek understands the importance of his role in communicating faculty interests to the Board. Jack provides regular reports on items such as: Faculty accomplishments in research, teaching and service, status updates on shared governance issues, and administrative and faculty efforts to enhance communications on critical issues of community and university governance, while concurrently updating the faculty regarding Board decisions, challenges, interests and participation.

**Strategic Planning:** I begin first with an expression of gratitude to Richard Simpson, Professor of Strategic Management, for taking the lead on The 2020 Vision initiative. There has been extensive participation by the larger Leo family. “Visioning" sessions on a number of La Verne campuses have included traditional age undergraduates, non-traditional age undergraduates, graduate students, various student organizations, alumni, faculty, staff, senior management and the Board of Trustees. The process is generating a positive "buzz" across our campuses. The committee reaffirmed the university's values and tentatively, the current mission statement. The committee continues to further refine the proposed motto and to propose one vision statement.

**The La Verne Experience:** Recently, the provost formed a Steering Committee to oversee the developing initiative on educational excellence called: “The La Verne Experience.” This initiative is intended to bring together our current educational elements resulting in a more distinctive curricular and co-curricular experience for all La Verne student populations, using learning communities and “theory to practice” to integrate our core
values into all activities.

The Steering Committee is co-chaired by Peggy Redman from CEOL and Gitty Amini from CAS and has broad representation from the university community. The committee, which meets weekly, is composed of Valerie Beltran, Sean Bernard, Caroline Chizever, Greg Dewey, Kathy Duncan, Allen Easley, Mark Goor, Abe Helou, Steve Lesniak, Jonathan Reed, Mark Roark, and Laurie Schroeder.

They are creating subcommittees for The La Verne Experience, which will focus on Traditional Undergraduates, Working Adult Students, Professional and Graduate Students, Community Engagement and Co-Curricular Experiences. We recently solicited subcommittee volunteers and they will join the Faculty Retreat in January. There has been a tremendous positive response for participation. If you have not yet responded and would like to participate, I invite you to contact the provost.

**BUDGET PLANNING:** The process to assemble the University’s fiscal year 2012-2013 budget is under way. Academic units will funnel budget requests through the Provost. Administrative units will submit their requests through their respective vice presidents. Institutional strategic priorities will guide and influence resource allocation. The President’s Executive Council will review the prioritized college, school and unit budget requests and formulate recommendations to the president.

The budget development and draft budget will be reviewed and discussed at multiple university forums. A Budget Advisory Group (BAG), comprised of
university representatives, is being appointed by the president to communicate to and solicit feedback from their respective constituent groups on matters and decisions required in balancing the annual operating budget. I anticipate that this process will result in a greater understanding of our expenses, revenues and priorities. Community members will be able to follow budget development postings located on the Department of Treasury Management and Budget, password protected Web site: http://sites.laverne.edu/treasurer/budget-advisory-group/ (Password: transparency.)

**WASC EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW:** The draft of our Educational Effectiveness Review (EER) is nearly ready for University-wide comment. The EER Workgroup is completing the rough draft, which the group sessions helped to refine. The 50-page primary document focuses on program reviews, our three chosen themes — assessment, campus climate, and strategic planning — and La Verne's educational effectiveness in general. Before winter break the draft will go to the WASC staff, the Board, and the entire University community. All are encouraged to provide the Workgroup with feedback. La Verne will submit a sterling EER on January 10.

**NEW RESIDENCE HALL:** Currently under construction, La Verne’s new residence hall, which will serve as home to nearly 380 students, is set to open in July 2012. This project — the largest in our 120-year history — standing four-stories high and at 102,000 square feet, is currently on budget and on schedule. It will be submitted for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (L.E.E.D) certification as an environmentally-friendly
ATHLETICS: Soon demolition work will begin on the track and football field in preparation for the installation of a new state-of-the-art track surface and a synthetic turf football field. These improved facilities will bring four of our sports teams back to campus — men’s and women’s soccer, and men’s and women’s track and field. Adding women’s lacrosse in the near future will bring the number to five. Completion is expected by Summer 2012.

FUNDRAISING: University Advancement reports significant increases year-to-date. As of mid-November we were 30% ahead of last year in total giving: $814,118 vs. $625,033. We are also ahead of giving to Property and Buildings: $199,613 vs. $158,652 — a 26% increase. In Current Operations Annual Giving (unrestricted, restricted & agency funds) we are ahead by $194,655 or a 62% increase, $508,576 vs. 313,921. Continuing to further increase philanthropic giving to La Verne remains a high priority.

FOUNDATION GRANTS: For many years, foundations and corporations like W.M. Keck Foundation, Ahmanson Foundation, Fletcher Jones Foundation, Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, Edison International (SCE), Verizon and Wells Fargo have supported faculty research and programs. The University Advancement Office has sustained these relationships over the years by introducing them to the needs of the faculty and their programs. Most recent gifts total over $130,000 from corporate and foundation donors. I invite you to participate in the grant application process. For guidance in how to apply for a grant, Sponsored Research Director Amy Velasco and Foundation Grants Director Denise Gutierrez, have created a guide located
TRADITIONAL UNDERGRADUATE TUITION: In order to sustain our institutional quality as well as determine how we can provide even better, stronger learning environments for our students, we needed to review the use of tuition fees. After assessing what needs to be funded, and comparing our tuition with similarly-aligned institutions, the Board of Trustees has calculated the rate of traditional undergraduate student 2012-2013 tuition, which will be $33,400, compared to $31,300 this year.

ENROLLMENT: We expect to meet or exceed our target enrollment for traditional undergraduate program again in spring 2012. The number of applications received year-to-date for main campus masters and doctoral programs has increased by 24% over last year. The Office of Admission has already received more than 2,000 applications for traditional undergraduate students for fall 2012. This represents a 30% increase over the same period last year. RCA enrollment in business programs have met and exceeded our goals. However, we continue to face enrollment challenges in education and teacher preparation courses.

COLLEGE OF LAW: Last week, the College of Law received the 2011 first-time bar passage rate and scores. Our first-time pass rate has improved from 53% (2010) to nearly 56% (2010). As indicated in previous communications, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees is thoughtfully reviewing the college’s bar pass rate, ABA Site Review Team Report, and external consultants’ reports. Based upon this review, they will be making recommendations to the full Board.
**LA VERNE IN THE NEWS:** The university has received a good deal of positive media attention in recent weeks including coverage of the Yoko Ono exhibit “Imagine Peace,” an NEA grant to Sean Bernard, a recent grant to La Verne from the USDA, the Literacy Center, a panel of speakers co-hosted with the American Society for Public Administration, and College of Arts & Sciences speakers for November. For a summary click here: [http://laverne.edu/advancement/public-relations/in-the-news/](http://laverne.edu/advancement/public-relations/in-the-news/)

**NEW TRUSTEES:** I anticipate you will be as enthusiastic about our new Trustees’ qualifications and commitment to La Verne’s future as I am. I anticipate you will see them at upcoming campus events. The new Trustees are:
- **William Hawkins** MBA ’96, Managing Director of Overton Partners, Pasadena
- **Leslie Porras** BA ’83, MHA ’00 Director of Public Relations for Wellpoint, Inc.
- **Margaret Sedenquist**, real estate manager at Sedequist Fraser Enterprises in Pasadena
- **Owen “Ray” Skelton**, retired from senior sales management position as Regional Vice President of Black & Decker

**NCATE ACCREDITATION:** As the nation’s future depends on how well our youth are taught, attaining national accreditation by the National Council on Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was a significant achievement indeed for La Verne’s College of Education & Organizational Leadership (CEOL). NCATE announced the decision in October, four months after the college received full accreditation from the California Commission on Accreditation. This prestigious accreditation will be a tremendous aid to the college’s recruitment and will provide our students more options after graduation by opening up job opportunities in states outside California that trust the NCATE seal of approval. It also provides the college with advanced
standing and demonstrates across the nation that La Verne has met the very highest of standards.

**A NEW YEAR:** As we end this semester and calendar year, I thank you for your outpouring of support for the initiatives and endeavors we are undertaking together. In this spirit, I look forward to continuing these activities through the next year and beyond. Enjoy your winter holidays! I anticipate us all returning refreshed, re-energized and enthusiastic about our spring endeavors.

Sincerely,

Devorah Lieberman, Ph.D.
President