February 6, 2012

Dear Colleagues:

I am pleased to send you the February 2012 President’s Pause. As always, the goal of the “Pause” is to keep our faculty and staff “in the loop” with this in-house communication on activities that are underway and substantive issues that we are addressing.

As we enter our spring semester, I want to share with you additional “firsts” I have recently experienced at our University:

1. First Commencement celebrations at La Verne—the pride I saw in our students and their families was palpable. Even though others had told me about the pride I would see, now I know that “experiencing is believing.” Having participated in many commencements at other institutions, this Commencement, without compare, was the most memorable for me. Kudos to Ruby Montano-Cordova and her campus-wide team of supporters whose stellar efforts make our ceremonies so memorable. (ALSO, it is the first time I participated in three commencements in one day! When I awoke on Sunday, I felt like I had completed a marathon.)

2. First spring semester at La Verne—on the first day of this semester, I spent time with students in Johnson Plaza. Every student with whom I interacted expressed excitement about their spring courses and being back on campus.
3. First winter in California as an adult—the weather is perfect!

**PLOTTING OUR COURSE—STRATEGIC PLANNING:** Dr. Richard Simpson, CBPM, is facilitating a campus-wide Strategic Planning process. During the fall term, the Strategic Planning Committee conducted visioning exercises throughout the campus community with the intent of discussing who we are and whom we should serve. These discussions include not only the elements of our campus and mission, but also the external environment and recent reports and speculations about the future of higher education.

Throughout the year, and into fall 2012, we are centering these discussions on where we want to be as an institution in 2020, taking into consideration the following elements: Educational Excellence; Facilities; Financial, Technological and “Human” Resources; Institutional Visibility and Reputation. During its February meeting, the Board of Trustees will consider all of the information from these fall sessions and shape the next phase of developing the 2020 Vision. Following this Board visioning, Dr. Simpson and the committee will continue with campus-wide discussions. It is anticipated that the 2020 Vision will be completed and disseminated by the end of fall 2012.

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**ENROLLMENT UPDATE:** I am pleased to report that, in aggregate, we have met and exceeded our target enrollment. The traditional-age undergraduate program for 2011-2012 met the target for the year. However, we did not meet our spring 2012 undergraduate student transfer goal. We have record enrollments in both our CAPA and MBA programs this spring, with regional campus programs meeting their overall targets. In some areas such as law and programs offered on the main and regional campuses through College of Education and Organizational Leadership, as well as a few of our regional campuses, the programs either did not or had difficulty in meeting their projections. Along with the deans,
we are developing strategies and programs to address the challenges we face in these areas.

**LA VERNE EXPERIENCE:** In January 2012, over 130 individuals attended La Verne’s Faculty Retreat in Temecula featuring in-depth discussions on The La Verne Experience. Five focus groups explored different aspects of creating a common educational experience for all La Verne students (Traditional Undergraduate students, RCA students, Graduate Programs, Co-curricular Programming, and, Civic and Community Engagement). I was able to participate in segments of most of these groups during the retreat. The high energy, productivity and exchange of ideas was amazing. I was most encouraged by the pervasive attitude of, “How should we effectively create The La Verne Experience to deepen our mission and benefit all of our students?” This work will continue through February with a series of weekly meetings led by The La Verne Experience Committee co-chairs, Peggy Redman and Gitty Amini. The schedule was recently emailed and we encourage all from the campus community to attend. Subcommittee meetings will be used to generate action plans on the implementation of different aspects of this initiative. The various groups will come together at a retreat in the first week of March to discuss specific actions to be taken in the next academic year. It is important to note that the first phase of The La Verne Experience, *First Semester La Verne Experience*, will begin with our incoming traditional undergraduate freshman in fall 2012.

**THE BUDGET:** The Budget Advisory Group (BAG) is meeting throughout the spring term to help with our 2012-2013 budget. The BAG, appointed by this office and chaired by Associate Vice President and Treasurer Avo Kechichian, met for the first time on January 25. The group comprises the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate (Tiffany Graham, Jason
Niedel, Laurie Schroeder, Richard Simpson); Deans Mark Goor, Phil Hawkey, Abe Helou, Jonathan Reed and Steve Lesniak; Faculty Salary Committee co-chair Michael Frantz; A/P representatives Dede Aguayo and Jim Irwin; Classified representatives Amanda Hanson and Kristin Howland. The President’s Executive Council (PEC) is also invited to attend the meetings. For more information visit the Department of Treasury Management and Budget, password protected Web site at http://sites.laverne.edu/treasurer/budget-advisory-group/.

**COLLEGE OF LAW:** On January 19, a small group of La Verne administrators and faculty seeking provisional accreditation presented to the American Bar Association Accreditation Committee. We are awaiting the response from the Accreditation Committee. If positive, this will move us forward to present on March 16 before the Council on the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association. Please note that the College of Law Subcommittee, created by the Board of Trustees, will continue to review the College of Law.

**WASC UPDATE:** In early January, La Verne submitted the Educational Effectiveness Review document to the Western Association of School & Colleges (WASC), our regional accrediting agency. This was a 50-page document with an additional 21 appendices and represents the hard work of the EER Committee consisting of 12 faculty and staff. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees will be discussing the report and the upcoming WASC Site Team visit at their February meeting. The team visit is scheduled for March 27-29 and the itinerary for that visit will be announced soon. The Provost will be meeting with groups throughout campus to prepare everyone for this visit.

**ATHLETIC CONSTRUCTION UPDATE:** Renovation of the existing football
field and track began Monday, February 6. It is anticipated that part of the project will span approximately 3-4 weeks followed by construction of the new facility. The renovated stadium, featuring a new, reinforced track and a synthetic turf football field, should be ready for use by late July 2012. Oleander bushes along the western fence of the stadium will be removed and replaced with 9-foot Carolina Cherry trees. Over time, these trees will merge to form a green hedge almost 20 feet tall. Staging for the stadium renovation project will occur on 1st Street (south of the project), eliminating the need to close the Mainiero parking lot. This project will transform the western side of campus and provide our students with wonderful new athletic facilities to practice and play on.

**CAMPUS-WIDE FACILITIES PLANNING:** To assist with space planning Provost Dewey contracted with a firm called Canon Design. During summer and fall terms, Provost Dewey’s committee met with the Canon Design Group to assess space and building usage as well as classroom size and usage. Once the report is finalized, the results will be shared with the Board of Trustees and the campus community.

**STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY:** The spring State of the University Address is on February 29 from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm in the Multipurpose Room of the Campus Center. In the spirit of continued interactive communication, I will address our current successes, and the issues and challenges that I see facing our university. I look forward to seeing you.

**FACULTY & STAFF RECOGNITION CEREMONY:** Join us as we celebrate our colleagues’ achievements on May 4, 2012, from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm in the Sports Science and Athletics Pavilion. The Excellence in Teaching Award(s), Ellsworth Johnson Service Award, inductee(s) into the University of La Verne Academy, and Administrative/Professional and Classified Employees of the Year will be announced, along with emeriti, promotions, tenure, sabbaticals, successful third-year reviews and years of service for 122
faculty and staff (in 5-year increments).

PERSONAL UPDATE: Finally, I originally intended The President’s Pause to only include content about university initiatives and issues. However, because my husband, Roger, suffered a stroke on December 5 and so many of you have reached out to support and help us, we want to thank you deeply for all you have done. Your support has truly been remarkable and has further demonstrated that caring and support is part of the DNA of the University of La Verne (apologies to the Biological Sciences for this loose reference to DNA). I am pleased to let you know that Roger is getting better every day and, before long, you will see him cheering on our athletes at games and attending campus events. Again, I cannot thank you enough for all you have done during this time for Roger and my entire family.

Sincerely,

Devorah Lieberman, Ph.D.
President