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Everyone Counts Fall 2012 Semester Kickoff

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Everyone Counts Fall 2012 Semester Kickoff
Dr. John M. Dunn
9/21/2012

- Good morning. I am so pleased to be with you here today to kick off the third year of Everyone Counts. This program was developed collaboratively by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and the Office of Faculty Development. Two years ago we launched this as a pilot project engaging more than 50 faculty and staff members. It has worked incredibly well, so we did the logical thing--we decided to offer the opportunity again. That's why we're gathered here today.
- The Everyone Counts mission is to build a supportive learning community that helps create a campus that is inclusive and welcoming to all of its members. That's a mission that central to what I've worked for my entire professional life. I think we have carved out a reputation--a justified reputation--for being an inclusive campus and one that is welcoming to the broad range of students, faculty and staff. We have made great strides in this area, but we're not there yet. There's still a lot of work to do.
- News from the past week indicates how important our work is. Our enrollment figures for this year include two striking pieces of data:
 - Our minority enrollment increased by **3.4** percent
 - Our international enrollment increased by **12.9** percent
- Those figures tell us that students already feel comfortable here. They respond to the climate we've established. But we have to keep our goals in the forefront of our daily choices and activities. We must make sure we pause to consider the decisions we make and how they might impact the diverse population that has put

its trust in us. Old habits tempt us to “keep the project moving, no matter what” or “do it just like we did last semester” without giving our actions a quick quality check. Remaining mindful that Everyone Counts helps us to avoid oversights which might slight a portion of our campus family unintentionally, but in a very real way. (*Example: last year’s homecoming and Yom Kippur*).

- When we offend some members of our campus, we offend all of the members of our campus. You know that. That's why you've made a commitment to this initiative.

Those of you who have been part of Everyone Counts since the beginning have set the bar high for this year. Everyone Counts has led to worthwhile initiatives that make lasting impressions on our campus. Although the bar is high, I know we can match and surpass it.

Thank you for being willing to be part of this important effort.