

'How do you do?' policy working for President Keyser

by Paul Valencia
Staff Writer

Nearly everyone has heard of an open-door policy, but for Clackamas Community College President Dr. John Keyser, that would only begin to explain the way he does business. A "how do you do?" policy might be a better way to describe it.

If a student sees him for the first time, he can bet Keyser will extend his hand and introduce himself. Getting to know his students on a first-name basis is a top priority for Keyser.

It's been seven years since he came to Clackamas after working for three years at Linn-Benton Community College. He isn't thinking of leaving Clackamas any time soon; his working relationship with his staff is too good to do that.

"They are a wonderful group of people. It's a real privilege to work with the people and the community," he said.

At Clackamas, students are heard from. "We try to involve the students in every way possible," Keyser said. "It's very important for me to have a lot of contact with students and hear

from the student government about how things are working. We are one of the few colleges in the Northwest that really involve its students in planning."

In case you haven't guessed it, team work is the key to Clackamas' success with Keyser at the helm. It will take a team effort to take on the challenges ahead. Keyser thinks the biggest test will be to keep up with the growth demands.

Clackamas County is "probably one of the fastest growing counties in the Northwest" with a "great combination" of urban development and natural areas, said Keyser.

A big part of that test has already received an "A+." That was the passing of the bond issue in 1989, which paved the way for the construction of five new buildings.

That also happened to be Keyser's favorite moment as president. After a long, active campaign in the community, with hundreds of volunteers, including students, the bond issue passed.

"It was gratifying to see the campus come together and be successful since it is so difficult



photo by Nolan Kidwell

Clackamas Community College President John Keyser enjoys coming to work and meeting new people everyday.

to pass a bond issue," Keyser explained.

Soon, Keyser may have another item to place at the top of his list of favorite accomplishments. He is currently working with the college foundation to raise \$800,000 to complete the Family Resource Center, which has numerous programs for teen

parents, parent education and single women re-entering the work force, for example.

Keyser said one-third of his job is working with external groups and citizens, while two-thirds the job is related to campus-wide planning, budgeting and problem-solving.

That sounds like it comes

right out of a textbook, so what really makes Keyser come to work?

"A sense that we're making a difference in the community," he said, along with the opportunity to meet all the different people he gets to meet everyday. "There are lots of daily highs working with people," said Keyser.

In five years, Keyser sees Clackamas Community College to be more effective than it is already.

"If we continue to grow in our effectiveness, efficiency and size to meet the demands of the community in a more competitive world, we'll achieve our purpose," he said.

That's in five years, but in five minutes if you bump into Keyser, you can believe he'll introduce himself. "I like to get to know the names of people. It's a very powerful way to develop a relationship," he said.

With the relationship between Clackamas and its community, as well as between administration, faculty and students, it's not out of the question to say Keyser's "how do you do?" policy is working.

Streeter Hall, home of 'new kids on the block'

by Jeff Kemp
Staff Writer

The English Department of Clackamas Community College will include two new faces in the classrooms eager to make a difference this year: full time instructors David Mount and Kate Gray.

David Mount will be instructing English 104 and Writing 121 this term. Next term he will be teaching drama, and his favorite subject, poetry.

Mount's presence has already been felt by the students in his classes. "In 104 (short fiction), Professor Mount really covers the short stories well without going to extremes, like a lot of teachers have a tendency to do," Sophomore Thad Routson explained.

Mount began his education at Cal-State Fullerton and completed his schooling at UCLA, where he received a masters degree in English and fell a few credits short of a Phd.

His first teaching experience came while he was still in college. Mount tutored grade school children in reading and arithmetic. He taught part-time at several community colleges in his home state of California, and he also taught some guitar lessons.

Mount likes the small college

scene and close faculty-student relationships because it allows him to do what he believes he does best.

"I think I'm good at helping people find their underlying strengths," he said.

Like most of us, Mount went through phases when it came to deciding what to do when he grew up. "I had apprehensions," Mount said of coming to Oregon to teach, "I was nervous that Oregon students might be different and something I wasn't prepared for, but in fact they are just as nice as California students, and maybe a little more hard working and serious."

When asked if he would encourage students outside his classes to come in and see him in his office in Streeter Hall, room 121, Mount smiled and responded, "Of course. I'm lonely, come on down!"

English Instructor Kate Gray said she enjoys the nice feeling that CCC gives.

"The environment is interactive and I feel like I learn as much as they (students) do," she said.

The Williams College of Massachusetts graduate has a B.A. in Religion. Gray went to graduate school at the University of Washington where she received

her masters degree in fine arts and creative writing.

Gray's teaching experience began in a private boarding school in Delaware not far from her home state of Connecticut. Interestingly, it is the site from which the movie "Dead Poets Society" was filmed.

Gray has always wanted to be an English teacher, like Robin Williams' character in the movie. "Teaching is exactly what I wanted to do," she said, recalling her earliest aspirations.

Writing 121, 121 Honors, English 105, drama and Poetry 106 are Gray's educational duties for the Fall Term. Even though that's a full load, Gray looks at it differently.

"Teaching has the reputation of burning new teachers out, but I find that I am revitalized each day," she explained.

Coming for the Winter Term is a women's literature class, that Gray is looking forward to instructing. It will be held on Thursdays in the Harmony Center from 6-9 p.m. "I'm excited," she said of the new class.

Gray and Mount are the "new kids on the block" in Streeter Hall, and they encourage the students and faculty to drop by for a visit.



photo by Tina McFarland

David Mount joined the English Department after transferring from his home state of California.



photo by Tina McFarland

Kate Gray, the other new face in the English Department, is following her lifelong dream of being a teacher.

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