

Convocation Address Fall, 2012

Members of the Board of Trustees

President Lewis

Faculty

The College Community

Members of the student body

And especially students new to Catawba,

On behalf of the faculty, I extend greetings to all!

We are off to an exciting start for the 2012 -2013 academic year.

New students, we are pleased that you have chosen to join us at Catawba College to pursue your education. We look forward to getting to know you and to working with you over the next 4 years.

Returning students, we are glad to see you back. We look forward to another exceptional year with you.

We are excited about the opportunities that will emerge to pursue our love for sharing experiences and learning challenges with you in the classroom, lab, and fieldwork, and through clubs, organizations, athletics, performances, and community service.

Heraclitus, a 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC Greek philosopher said, "Everything in the universe is in a constant state of flux. The only constant is change and change changes in ever-changing directions at an ever-changing rate."

Never in the history of humankind has change changed so rapidly as it does today.

We are becoming increasingly aware that we are preparing you for jobs that do not yet exist, that will involve technology that has not yet been invented, to solve problems that we are not yet aware are problems.

However, the psychologist Carl Rogers noted that "the leading threat to America today is the inability to adjust to change."

How is Catawba going to adjust to constant change?

Helen Keller wrote, “The greatest tragedy of all is people who have sight but no vision.

Not only people but institutions need vision – the capacity to see and dream about the big picture.

What is our vision for Catawba?

The faculty are currently teaming with the administration and staff to examine the feasibility of initiatives in a Strategic Plan to implement our vision for Catawba, including:

1. Continuing to create a curriculum that provides the best opportunities possible for our students to strengthen their skills in written and spoken communication, critical thinking and problem-solving, team building and the use of technology.
2. Continuing to implement technology and interactive learning strategies to facilitate student-centered learning and expand on-line course opportunities.
3. Continuing to blend the knowledge and skills of liberal studies with professional preparation through expanded internships, study abroad and community service learning opportunities, and new or strengthened professional-based programs.

In the true spirit of a liberal education, we the faculty are challenging ourselves and we challenge all of you to be open-minded and open to change in every area of the College as we realize our vision.

Finally, my wish is that all of us – faculty, staff, students and administrators, have a new, bright and interesting year.

Thank you.

