

PRESS CONFERENCE

APRIL 2, 2008 @ 10:30 a.m., Micheal H. Eldon Complex

Remarks by Janyne Hodder, President, The College of The Bahamas

Members of the media and colleagues, good morning.

Today marks another milestone in the life of The College of The Bahamas. After much thought, effort, and research, The College of The Bahamas is pleased to announce that online registration is now a reality. For any organization that prides itself in the development of human capital, as does The College, providing access to and knowledge of cutting edge technology is crucial toward this end. In the document *Building the Nation Through Education: The Strategic Plan of The College of The Bahamas (2007)*, The College indicates its commitment to invest in technology that provides quality academic support, such as web-based registration, stable intranet, wireless presence on campus, distance education tools and partnerships in international internet networks. These and other information technology systems are critical to our evolution to a University.

The online registration is a part of a larger picture for The College as we seek to adopt effective information and management systems. This process helps us to build capacity as we work toward the goal of having all of our operations at The College fully automated. In many universities in the United States and Canada, it is common to find electronic modes of communication as the order of the day for all university constituents. We know at The College that we must do more and we are well on our way.

As we move toward becoming the University of The Bahamas, one of our major focuses is on enhancing the student experience. With a commitment to the education of the whole person, our actions are very deliberate on increasing positive student experiences outside of the lecture room. We believe, therefore that this registration process, will do much to augment the student experience at the institution.

The College of The Bahamas remains committed to creating and maintaining a technically sound and efficient environment for all who attend and work here.

Remarks by Danny Davis, Registrar, The College of The Bahamas

Members of the media and colleagues, good morning.

We are excited to unveil our online registration process for you today. One of the primary mandates of my job as the Registrar is to improve the registration process. The online registration tool is designed to make the registration process as painless as possible for our students. We have invited you to this press conference to share our successes and aspirations as they relate to our online registration for the Summer and the Fall terms.

We are proud of the fact that our students can now register from any computer that is connected to the internet, this represents a significant milestone on our journey to improve the registration experience. Recognizing that not all students have access to a computer at home we have placed registration computers kiosks at various strategic locations around the campus in addition to the computers in our labs. The move to an online registration process affords the following benefits:

1. We now offer our students the ability to register at any time of the day or night.
An analysis of student registration activity over the past two days demonstrate that students are taking advantage of this new opportunity and a number of students are registering after 5 p.m. We expect the after hours usage to increase as students become familiar with the system.
2. Our part-time students are not required to visit the campus to register.
Instead of coming to campus these students can register prior to traveling to work or even during their coffee break or as mentioned in point 1, after work.
3. The online system allows for a computer managed registration grouping protocol to manage the number of concurrent users on the system. We have implemented the classic registration grouping model based on seniority, *i.e.*, senior students are given first preference to register. Seniority is determined based on the number of earned credits. Registration grouping affords the students that are closest to graduating the opportunity to enroll in the classes they require to graduate. This reduces student frustration and allows the College to increase its graduation rate thereby building the capacity of our country.
4. We have eliminated long queues that have sometime been associated with our manual registrations of the past.

To support the changes, that come with an implementation of this magnitude, we have built a new registration web page (www.cob.edu.bs/register) designed to educate and inform our faculty, staff and students as it relates to the new online registration process. This web page is instrumental in communicating the changes associated with our transitioning to the new system.

Today represents our third day of online registration for the Summer 2008 term. On Monday and Tuesday of this week (the first two days of summer registration) our web page recorded 1741 and 1133 hits, respectively. Historically, we can expect about 2000 students to register for the Summer term so the number of web page visits indicates that our users are embracing the web page to learn about the new registration process. We have been updating the web page as frequently as required to ensure that it is always current. We intend to update the registration web page today to reflect the registration grouping to be used for Fall 2008 registration.

Over the course of the first two days of the summer registration we registered 334 students into 435 classes. Seventy five percent of the registered students (264) registered themselves using the online registration system and the balance was registered using the legacy manual process. We are encouraging students to take advantage of the online registration process. The legacy system is being used as a backup so that special cases and other unforeseen situations can be addressed without disenfranchising any student.

Monday, 7 April 2008, will mark the start of online registration for the Fall 2008 term. We are entering this exercise with the knowledge and experience gained from our online pilot programme and the ongoing Summer registration. We expect more than 4500 will register for the Fall semester so this activity will be a true test of our online registration system.

We are very pleased with the progress made to date and we are looking forward to completing the implementation of our online registration product. Future enhancements include the introduction of online payment and online registration for new students. I look forward to inviting you to the unveiling of these milestones in our quest to improve the quality of our student services. Thank you for allowing me to share our successes with you.

[Viewing of live demonstration of the online registration process.]

