

**UMKC New Student Convocation**  
**Sunday, August 21, 2011**

**Provost Gail Hackett**

Students and colleagues: welcome and thank you for joining us today.

To our new freshmen and transfer students: welcome to UMKC! We've been waiting for you.

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the faculty of UMKC and introduce you, the newest members of the university community, to your teachers and mentors. Will the UMKC faculty please stand and be recognized?

You are all probably wondering, "What's a Provost?" I get that a lot. I am going to spare you the technical definition and just tell you that I am the Chief Academic Officer and, more importantly, along with the faculty and staff here at UMKC I am committed to your success as students. It's what keeps us up at night, it's what we focus on, and it's what we rally people around.

We are always trying to find new ways to ensure your success. For example, we at UMKC are excited to be participating, right now, in a project involving the 13 public Universities in Missouri, focused on using technology to improve student learning. We have received funding from a national grant competition to support these course redesign efforts and some of you may have the opportunity to participate in this project where we will be employing different learning approaches and technologies to master course material.

Because we all care about your success, I am going to let you in on a couple of trade secrets. I will keep the list short, just a half dozen tips for success.

**Secret of success number one: Go to class.** It really is that simple and there is no substitute. You need to go to class, ready to learn and understand what is expected of you in every class.

**Secret number two: Get to know the faculty.** I am proud to say that our students have the opportunity to learn from excellent teachers and scholars. Engage with them in the classroom and go visit with them during their office hours. Be curious, ask questions, and most importantly – **don't be afraid to seek help when you need it!** We have a huge array of resources available to help you succeed, but you need to take advantage of what is ready and waiting for you. Further, get to know the faculty and you will discover some of the greatest thinkers, scientists and artists you will ever encounter. They want to share their passion for learning and they want you to be successful – take full advantage of the opportunities you have here!

**Secret number three: get involved on campus.** I don't care where your mail gets delivered or where you go to sleep; I care where you spend your time: I hope that a great deal of your time is spent here, on campus. If all you ever see is the parking lot and your seat in the classroom you will miss out on half of your college experience. There are over 200 student organizations on campus and a wide range of enriching experiences that will be available to you, from the arts to sports. We know that students who get involved do better in the classroom. And we have fantastic new spaces to study and hang out. We've created new spaces for group work. Get engaged. And find that comfortable spot and make yourself at home.

**Secret number four is closely related to number three: get to know other students.** Studying together and discussing class work and assignments will help you understand the material and you will make new friends.

**Secret number five: being a student is a job and you need to put the time in.** The rule of thumb is **three hours of studying to every hour of class.**

You heard me right. Let me say that again: you need to put in **at least** three hours of studying in for every hour you spend in class. **Being a full-time student is a full-time job.** And that goes for everyone – including all of you students who earned straight As in High School!!!

But put in the time and being here on campus can be one of the best jobs you will ever have. Don't shortchange yourself on the experience. Push yourself to learn new things and step out of your comfort zone.

**And secret number six: don't ever forget why you are here.** Keep your eyes on the prize and savor the journey. Push yourself to do the things that you never thought possible.

Remember that there are a lot of people pulling for you. Good luck to each of you as you start your University journey!

Now I'd like to introduce the leader of UMKC. Please join me in welcoming Chancellor Leo Morton.