Happy New Year!
January 2015

Hopefully you had lots of time to refresh and reflect over the break – and to think about goals for this year. I certainly did and I’d like to share some of my goals with you.

**Take time to celebrate accomplishments.** This can be a challenge for me as my natural urge is to say “great, what’s next?” and immediately begin focusing on a new goal or initiative. Yet it’s extremely important to acknowledge and celebrate our victories. It not only improves morale and motivation, but gives us a chance to highlight actions and processes that can be replicated successfully in other endeavors. This year, I plan to herald and celebrate these accomplishments – if only for a few moments – before shifting my attention to the next goal on the list.

**Engage ever more with our student body.** I’ve been adamant from the beginning about involving students in our discussions and talking to them about their ideas and concerns. I want to increase that even more in the coming months because our students are the lifeblood of this university. Their success is our success and their needs must be paramount. Further, their perspectives are usually vastly different from my own and they have some truly exciting ideas. Listening to and engaging with students energizes me. And I always learn something new!

**Assume greater responsibility for the economic health and growth of our community.** UWG is a critical part of the local and regional economies. We’re one of the largest employers in this part of the state, we have the ability to increase and improve the area talent pool to aid in recruitment of new and expanded business, and we are a magnet capable of drawing significant numbers of consumers, workers, dollars, and economic growth to the community. We also have the research capabilities to help facilitate area growth and innovation as well as the educational capacity to help small business owners and entrepreneurs start and grow successful businesses. I look forward to expanding our reach in this critical need area.

**Establish new strategic partnerships.** We live in a highly interdependent world these days. Collaboration and partnerships have never been more vital to growth and success than they are right now. Over the coming months and years, I want to think critically and strategically about the kinds of partnerships that can help us create the best and most success for our students, faculty, staff, and community. We will be looking at ways to streamline the path to degree completion while increasing both the relevance of the learning outcomes and the value of the education. We will be looking at innovative technologies and ideas for sustainability and effective operation. And we will be focusing on cutting-edge academic, research, and engagement partnerships that allow us to become both thought- and action-leaders.

**Get back to my running schedule.** This one is highly personal, of course. I refuse to talk about the pies and cookies involved with the holiday season. Suffice it to say that running is an important part of my physical and mental health routine and I am recommitting to it as a priority. Don’t forget that there’s an open invitation to join me if this is also on your list.

So that’s what I’ll be up to this year. What about you? Do you have clear goals and plans, both professionally and personally? Share them when we see one another and let’s keep each other accountable. We’re all in this together, you know!