Good morning. Before I get into my comments, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to the stage for greetings; members of the Board of Governors who are here with us today – Dr. Laura Buffaloe and Ms. Bunny Sanders.

(greetings)

Happy New Year and welcome back to Elizabeth City State University. I trust all of you had a rewarding and restful holiday and ready for a successful semester. I realize that unforeseen challenges will sometimes maneuver into our well developed plans as we work towards elevating our goals; however, we must continue to remain focused so that we, along with our students emerge stronger. Continue to look at our challenges as opportunities. Our vision for ECSU has not changed. We will endure with our vision as outlined at our Fall convocation.
As a reminder, I would like to take the next couple of minutes to note the challenges and congratulate you on some of our accomplishments from the first semester:

**CHALLENGES:**

- Air quality conditions in Fine Arts, GR Little theatre
- Three audit exceptions with our financials
- Reduction of Tier 1 and Tier 2 positions

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

*Competitive Grant Awards:*

- Master of Education – 3million
- Improvement/School of Education – 3million
- Senegal Book Project – 13million
- Moore Hall Renovation – 500,000
- Research Project under the leadership of Dr. Gwebu – 1.2million
- HUD grant for $51thousand (assist with educating first time home buyers) and another HUD grant of $800 thousand to be used for home repairs, computer
education and technical assistance to community organizations

Other accomplishments include:

- ECSU ranked as No. 2 among Best Colleges in the South
- ECSU ranked as No. 11 among Best Historically Black Colleges and Universities
- Our Volleyball team – Eastern Division Champions
- Our Football team – 3 way tie for Eastern Division Champions
- Successful Federal Financial Aid Audit
- Award winning campus newspaper – The Compass
- Progress of our Pharmacy facility construction project
- Three new paved parking lots
- Newly paved road through the campus
- Outstanding 149th commencement exercise
- Unveiling of a new, improved and attractive website
• Completion of the new Strategic Plan

• Successful Gala sponsored by the ECSU Foundation featuring the Honorable Maxine Waters

I remind you of our tagline...."Elevate Higher, Emerge Stronger.”

With every task we undertake, there will be obstacles. The difference in success and failure is maintaining focus on the vision and being able to make the necessary adjustments along the way.

It is imperative that we make SACS reaffirmation a major priority for this institution. I commend each of you for a job well done up to this point.

We are on schedule as outlined by the steering committee under the leadership of Dr. Flora Brown. We have participated in
several conferences, we have contracted with the most prominent consultants, all of our necessary prospectuses were submitted and we await our submission to be read with recommendations arriving to the university within days.

Our QEP is on schedule thanks to many of you and the leadership of Dr. Barbara Johnson and her committee. Thank you for selecting a topic centered on writing. As you are aware, many of America’s youth are very entrenched with technology many of them are emailing and texting (and not using correct spelling, grammar or sentence structure; therefore our youth are loosing good communication skills.

Again, our QEP is very appropriate and will assist with our students emerging stronger and ready for society.

SACS reaffirmation is not an option for ECSU. I encourage each
of you to stay on course and not allow any challenge to hinder our progress.

Faculty credentials seem to be a concern for some; however, this is a task that must be done without compromise.

I encourage those of you with reluctance – get it done. Don’t allow the hour glass to work against you.

We had an opportunity to address several groups of students prior to the close of first semester concerning tuition increases. Students were very understanding with the various proposed increases. As you may be aware; the 2010-2011 proposed tuition and fee increases are:

6.5% resident undergraduate/graduate tuition increase;

6.5% increase in the meal plan;
6.5% student health fee increase;
6.5% increase for athletic fees;
6% student activities increase;
6% increasing in the New student orientation fees; and
6.5% increase for the education and technology fee.

Based on the Presidents four year plan, ECSU qualified for the maximum allowed tuition increase of 6.5%. Again, our students were very supportive of the increase. Fifty percent of the increase will go toward need base scholarship and fifty percent toward student retention. Again, you have been stellar in your support of the retention efforts as designed by our university. Thank you for your input in this endeavor. I do support the vision of the President in tying funding with retention. We have done well however, we must do better. I encourage you to continue providing office hours as well as making recommendations to the
appropriate office for tutorial services. In order for our students to compete in this economy, your rigor is key to their success. Under the leadership of Dr. Monette Williams, we were able to establish a team of your colleagues to ensure success in this endeavor. In order to accomplish this goal, we need your untiring support. It is great to provide an opportunity to young people, however; it is equally as important to assist them throughout their entire college life.

I encourage you to continue on this path.

Salary increases are not an agenda item for discussion this year. As you are aware, the state of North Carolina is still recovering from its economic situation. No tuition increases funds will be used for faculty salaries.
Although SACS is our major thrust, we must continue multi-tasking with other initiatives as well. The following projects will remain very high on our list: PACE, UNC-Fit and UNC Tomorrow. We will continue posting information on the web related to these projects to keep you informed.

Finally, our university must take a look at our admissions requirements. I am appointing the following individual to study and recommend new criteria for admissions with the focus on a minimum SAT score, ACT score and high school GPA with a recommendation ready for the 2011-2012 academic year.