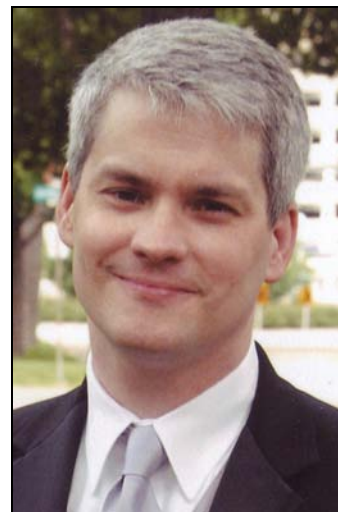


John O'Brien, Ph.D.

Last year, Dr. John O'Brien served as acting president of Century College, leading the college through a year of significant enrollment gains and funding cuts. Recognizing his commitment to students during a challenging time, the Century College student senate nominated him for the Minnesota State College Student Association 2008-2009 "president of the year" award.

Prior to this appointment, he was academic vice president for three years. As chief academic officer, he developed the college's master academic plan and promoted the development of innovative programs and curriculum, including the successful partnership with Inver Hills Community College that created the Access and Opportunity Center of Excellence.



He is currently on a one-year leave from Century College to lead the Students First initiative, a statewide effort to make student services more responsive to the changing needs of students. Students First is a key part of Chancellor McCormick's work plan with the Board of Trustees, and both statewide student associations have written letters in strong support of this work.

Prior to his campus leadership, he served for six years as associate vice chancellor at the Office of the Chancellor. As a system leader, his work focused on supporting strategic planning, improving consultation and shared governance, and providing improved instructional technology-related services to colleges and universities across the state.

For a number of years, he taught as adjunct faculty at several colleges and universities throughout the Twin Cities. For six years, he was a full-time faculty member at Normandale Community College, where he was president of the faculty association and was active in campus governance and campus life. Along with creative writing, he has published scholarship in his academic discipline over the years, and his book on Czech novelist Milan Kundera was published by St. Martin's Press.

John O'Brien earned his Ph.D. in English from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree in Anglo-Irish literature as a Rotary Scholar at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. His undergraduate degree from Augustana College is in English and Education with a minor in speech, communications, and theatre.

He is frequently asked to speak on higher education topics through the League for Innovation in the Community College--and on behalf of his campus and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

John was a first-generation college student, growing up in Worthington, Minnesota, and he has lived in metro area for the last 20 years. He and Kathryn currently live in south Minneapolis with their two children, Alex (15) and Thessaly (13). His son Nathan is a junior at the University of Minnesota.