

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Michelle Maldonado, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost/Senior VPAA

DATE: September 2, 2022

SUBJECT: Provost Report for September 9, 2022

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### 1. COVID 19 Update

The updated policy was sent to the University community before the start of the fall semester. Indoor masking in all campus buildings remains optional regardless of vaccination status. Faculty may require that well-fitted, higher-grade masks or double masks be worn in instructional spaces. Employees and students can also require individuals to wear well-fitted, higher-grade masks or double masks in their personal workspaces or residence hall rooms.

Faculty will receive an email from [absencenotificaiton@scranton.edu](mailto:absencenotificaiton@scranton.edu) of student COVID-related absences. Faculty will be notified of all other excused student absences by their Dean's Office. We are asking again this semester for faculty to accommodate students who are in isolation. Mirroring our practice from previous semesters, if you, as a faculty member, are not able to come to class due to COVID protocol, I ask that you work with your department chair and dean to discern how to best address your classroom absences. I also strongly encourage you to put language regarding this, and any other COVID related protocols, in your syllabus

### 2. Administrative Searches

We will begin our search for our next Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The following are members of the Search Committee:

#### Board of Trustees Representatives

- Anthony Yanni, M.D., Committee Chair
- Crystal Newby, Ed.D.

#### Faculty Representatives

- Ann Pang-White, Ph.D., Professor, Philosophy
- Douglas Boyle, D.B.A., Chair and Professor, Accounting
- Daniel Haggerty, Ph.D., Chair and Professor, Philosophy
- Daniel West, Ph.D., Professor, Health Administration and Human Resources

#### Professional Staff Representative

- Mark Murphy, Director of Sustainability & Energy Management

#### Administrator Representative

- Lauren Rivera, J.D., Assistant Vice President for Student Life, Dean of Students
- Carl Hurst, Associate Vice President for Information Technology & CIO

#### Student Representatives

- Clara Downey, Senior, Political Science
- Serena Martin, Sophomore, Political Science

Isaacson Miller, a national search firm with extensive experience working with Catholic and Jesuit Institutions, will assist us in the overall process.

**3. Director of the Slattery Center**

Sarah Kenehan, Ph.D. has been named Executive Director of the Gail and Francis Slattery Center of Ignatian Humanities. Sarah earned her bachelor's degree in biology and philosophy from the University of Scranton in 2002 as a member of the SJLA Honors Program. She earned her master's degree from the University of Tennessee and her Ph.D. from the University of Graz in Austria.

**4. Commencement Weekend**

Graduate and Undergraduate Commencement will be held on Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Mohegan Sun Area.

**5. Planning & Institutional Effectiveness, and Accreditation Updates**

Strategic Plan

University-wide efforts to implement our 2020 Strategic Plan continue. A key focal area for the plan's first full year was the successful development of the new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan. Following the Board's approval of the plan in May, the Strategic Plan language itself has been updated to include the term "equity" in key locations. The DEI plan implementation is being coordinated through the Council for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI).

During the Board's discussion about strategic plan progress during the spring, other implementation priorities were discussed, including furthering our commitment to sustainability through the development of a new campus-wide plan for Sustainability, to expand the institutional scope of that aspect of the strategic plan, and respond to the University Apostolic Preference's call to "care of our common home" and the *Laudato si'* initiative; the University Planning Committee, Sustainability Committee and other groups will be involved in shaping this new direction. Another priority is reviewing the strategic enrollment planning process and its connections to the strategic plan and academic planning priorities, in light of shifting realities within higher education, an increased focus on non-traditional learning and innovative graduate programs, and a desire to create a more transfer-friendly culture at the University.

Annual Planning and Reporting

Over the spring and summer months, academic and administrative units completed the Annual Planning and Reporting cycle. Content captured in these operational plans outlines contributions to the strategic plan, key outcomes and achievements in their own disciplines and operational areas, and detailed resource requests to support their needs and align with the strategic plan's goals and objectives. New this year is a focused reflection space for those submitting reports to describe their operational support for the new DEI plan. The Office of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness is currently analyzing these materials to identify outcomes to include in our fall 2022 Strategic Plan Progress update. This update will include reflection key findings and performance metrics from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). The UPC and Cabinet will review this updated report, as well as operational priorities and updates from the CDI, college deans, and other leadership, to monitor the plan's holistic progression and to identify additional priorities, interventions, or support that may be necessary to continue to move the plan forward.

Middle States

Over the spring months, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) undertook a review of its *Requirements for Affiliation and Standards for Accreditation*. A draft of

these updated standards were released in late August, and, following public review and comment, are expected to be in place in late fall. Amongst other changes, the draft includes new language to clarify Middle States' expectations regarding institutional commitment and action for diversity, equity, and inclusion, including within the institutional administration and governing bodies. These new documents will guide out institutional accreditation efforts for the years ahead, including our preparations for the University's next MSCHE review, scheduled for 2027-2028. Later this month, we will be submitting our Annual Institutional Update to Middle States, which includes details of our continuing response to the 2018 self-study recommendation regarding further improvements to the educational effectiveness assessment process.

## 6. Accreditation Update

- The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CAA) of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) will be conducting a Candidacy Site Visit on September 7-8, 2022 for our new MS in Speech Language Pathology program. Following the site visit and upon being granted candidacy status, the program can officially accept and enroll students for the Fall 2023 term. Candidacy status is granted for a period of 5 years, with the program having the option to apply for full accreditation after 3 years.
- Due to the backlog of site visits created by COVID, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) has extended the accreditation of our graduate counseling programs until October 31, 2023. We expect a reaccreditation site visit to be scheduled in spring 2023.
- The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) conducted a site visit on March 28-30, 2022 to perform an accreditation review of the BS in Nursing, MS in Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice, and the Post-Graduate APRN Certificate Programs. All accreditation standards were met for all programs, but there was a compliance concern noted for the baccalaureate program due to seven of the adjunct faculty teaching clinical sections in spring semester not having graduate degrees. Staffing all sections of clinicals with master's prepared faculty has been a challenge for many universities, including us, owing to an overall labor shortage in nursing and inability to compete with market rates for compensation in the clinical practice arena. Further, many of our master's prepared adjuncts accepted full-time jobs that prevent them from continuing to teach for us. We continue to work on strategies to attract and retain qualified adjunct faculty.

## 7. Faculty Hiring

Please join me in welcoming our new faculty.

NAME	RANK	DEPT
Wesam AlRamadeen	Instructor	Operations & Analytics
Ran An	Assistant Professor	Health and Human Performance
Uzoamaka (Melissa) Anyiwo	Associate Professor	History
Anthony Betancourt	Assistant Professor	Psychology
Joseph Brague	Assistant Professor	Biology

Michele Boland	Lecturer	Nursing
Laura Skoronski Chavez	Assistant Professor	Nursing
Katherine Cummings	Assistant Professor	Library
Stephanie DeNaples	Faculty Specialist	Occupational Therapy
Kenneth Dudeck	Visiting Assistant Professor	Physics & Engineering
Daniel Jackowitz	Visiting Assistant Professor	Computer Science
Riddhiman Medhi	Assistant Professor	Chemistry
Pedro Monteiro	Assistant Professor	Economics/Finance
Julie Murphy	Assistant Professor	Nursing
Michael Nytz	Lecturer	Counseling & Human Services
Jason Phillips	Faculty Specialist	Nursing
Timothy Powers	Lecturer	Counseling & Human Services
Mojib Saei	Assistant Professor	Physics & Engineering
Rebecca Sullivan	Lecturer	Education
Elizabeth Vento	Visiting Assistant Professor	Psychology
Laura Zagacki	Assistant Professor	Occupational Therapy

In addition to the new faculty, 37 Faculty Specialist contracts were renewed.

#### 8. **Fulbright Scholars**

We are excited to have 4 Fulbright foreign language teaching assistants taking courses and teaching their native languages.

- Ms. Paula Magali Ferrer from Argentina
- Dr. Badoor Albuloushi from Kuwait
- Ms. Celine Seeger from Germany
- Ms. Audrey Lecerf from France

We are also hosting a Visiting Instructor, Ms. Yun (Lily) Chiang from Taiwan, through our arrangement with the Taiwan Ministry of Education.

#### 9. **Sabbaticals**

The Faculty Research Committee has approved the following sabbaticals:

##### **FALL**

Shuhua Fan  
 Matthew Meyer  
 Ann Pang-White  
 Eric Plumer  
 Robert Waldeck  
 Michael Bermudez (pre-tenure)

Patrick Clark  
 Teresa Grettano  
 Gary Kwiecinski  
 Julie Nastasi

##### **Intersession/Summer 2023**

Marleen Cloutier (pre-tenure)  
 Sheli McHugh Pratt

##### **SPRING**

## 10. Graduate Education

Since our online course calendar and our on-campus course calendar are now aligned, a redesign of our online courses offered through our online partners, Wiley Education, was needed. We are nearing the end of the project that has provided the opportunity for our faculty to redesign each of their courses from 8-week versions to 7-week versions. A total of 102 courses are within the scope of this project. We expect the project to be completed by the spring 2022 semester.

- the design of the on-campus (delivered online) graduate program, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program has been completed with the assistance of Awesome Films and Collegis Education Services;
- the Criminal Justice and Criminology Department has launched their on-campus (delivered online) graduate program; Awesome Films has been hired to film and record some courses and edit videos for others; the first set of courses have begun fall 2022;
- discussions have continued with Wiley about marketing, recruitment, admissions and re-enrollment of graduate students; the Wiley team was on campus in August to discuss these areas with the respective offices;
- Orientation was held for 103 new graduate students on Thursday, August 25;
- Currently, we have 124 graduate students in graduate assistant positions. Their responsibilities range from clerical to teaching assistants in lab settings.

## 11. Global Education

### Global Insights

The Global Insights program provides the campus community the opportunity to learn about the world, the different cultures and experiences through the lens of the speakers. As faculty, we would appreciate you sharing this program with your students or incorporating this program into your curriculum (if applicable) to enhance classroom learning.

The presentations are from 11:30 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. and are held in the **Rose Room, Brennan 509**. The dates are listed below:

- September 20, 2022 – Argentina
- October 20, 2022 – Poland
- November 15, 2022 – Nepal

### International Students

<i>New FI International Students</i>		
Country	Count	Level
Czech Republic	1	GR
Dominican Republic	1	UG
Ethiopia	1	GR
Ghana	2	GR
India	41	GR
Ireland	1	UG
Korea (ROK)	1	GR
Nepal	2	1 GR & 1 UG

Pakistan	1	GR
Saudi Arabia	4	GR
Ukraine	1	UG
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	
<i>New J1 Exchange Undergraduate</i>		
Ireland	1	UG
Japan	1	UG
Korea (ROK)	2	UG
Mexico	1	UG
Spain	2	UG
Sweden	1	UG
Taiwan	4	UG
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>Total New</b>	<b>68</b>	
<b>Total Returning Students</b>	<b>59</b>	
<b>Grand Total (Students)</b>	<b>127</b>	

### Study Abroad

*Summer* - 11 students went on independent programs to Italy, Denmark, Spain, France, and Ireland

9 students went to South Korea on a faculty-led program in Criminal Justice with Dr. Back and Dr. Jenkins

*Fall* – 9 students are spending their Fall semester abroad in Ireland, Italy, Spain, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom

The annual Study Abroad fair will be held on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Ten partner programs will send a representative to attend and faculty leading faculty-led study abroad programs will also have tables at the fair.

## **12. Provost Events and Deadlines**

### Rank and Tenure

The deadline for faculty members to inform the provost's office of his or her intent to apply for tenure or promotion is September 22, 2022. Submission of the candidate's application: digital submission of dossier, curriculum vitae, and optional supporting materials is October 22, 2022. A public meeting designed to inform faculty of the rank and tenure policies and procedures is scheduled on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, at noon in the Provost's Conference Room.

The following calls for proposals were sent to faculty:

### Intersession Grants

Intersession Grants are intended to promote scholarship and curriculum development. The deadline to submit applications to the Associate Provost's office is October 3, 2022.

## **13. Other Updates**

- In partnership with the Education Department, Dr. Gerard Dumancas, Associate Professor of Chemistry, has welcomed our first student into the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program. The program provides funding to institutions of higher education to provide scholarships, stipends, and programmatic support to recruit and prepare STEM majors and professionals to become K-12 teachers. The program seeks to increase the number of K-12 teachers with strong STEM content knowledge who teach in high-need school districts.
- Dr. Nathaniel Frissell has recently been notified by the National Science Foundation that his grant to expand his research with the low-cost Personal Space Weather Station has been approved. This \$400k collaborative award with Case Western University is 3-year project that will fully support a MS SE student at the University of Scranton.
- The medical clinic in the Leahy Community Health and Family Center (LCHFC) will remain closed for the 2022-23 academic year. Administration is working to pursue strategic partnerships for reopening. Some of the other clinics in the LCHFS reopened during 2021-22 and will continue to be fully operational during this academic year, i.e., the Physical Therapy Clinic and the Low-Vision Occupational Therapy Clinic. The first phase of the Counseling Clinic reopening will take place this fall with Peacemakers, an afterschool program for 9-13-year-old children to experience and explore the meaning, history and vision of peacemaking and to develop the skills necessary to carry these experiences into the future.
- The Leahy Physical Therapy Clinic Outreach Program for Refugee Women received a \$25,000 grant from AllOne Charities. The grant supports equipment and supplies, translation services and transportation for DPT students to set up and conduct faculty-supervised PT and health education clinics for uninsured and under-insured community members, particularly refugee or resettled women and families, in their own neighborhoods or community spaces.
- The PCPS Dean's Office has asked each of the department chairs in PCPS to identify one Diversity Equity and Inclusion goal from the DEI strategic plan to action and report on during the year and in their annual report. The PCPS Dean's Office is also taking steps to ensure that the Office of Equity and Diversity is included from the earliest stages in all of our faculty searches during this year.
- PCPS is developing a number of new programs that will leverage successful existing programs. These will include dual degree programs between fully on-line programs at the university, as well as accelerated programs such that an undergraduate student can accelerate into an on-line master's program during their final undergraduate year. Two programs already making their way through the curriculum approval process are 1) Bachelor's degree in Counseling and Human Services accelerating in the MS in Applied Behavioral Analysis and 2) Bachelor's degree in Psychology accelerating into the MS in Applied Behavioral Analysis.
- Michael Bermudez, Ed.D., assistant professor of occupational therapy at The University of Scranton, received the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program teaching and research award to Uganda for 2022-2023. Dr. Bermudez will spend six months working with faculty of the Special Needs and Rehabilitation Department at Kyambogo University, Kampala, Uganda, teaching undergraduate students studying in the occupational therapy and educational technology fields, as he researches "Educational Technology for Inclusive Learning in Uganda."
- There will be an exhibit this autumn on the history of the Weinberg Memorial Library in the Charles Kratz Scranton Heritage Room as part of our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Weinberg Memorial Library.