

TO: Faculty Senate

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

DATE: February 2, 2024

SUBJECT: Academic Affairs Report for February 9, 2024

1. **Spring Convocation**

Spring Convocation will be held on Thursday, February 15th from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m. in DeNaples 407, lunch will be provided following the program.

2. **Shared Governance**

Please find listed below Provost and Dean initiatives that have been or will be introduced in the 2023-2024 academic year in response to the Faculty Senate Shared Governance survey and concerns raised by faculty in other venues. I remind us that under the definition of Shared Governance at our University the Faculty Governance Group listed in our Governance Structure is the Faculty Senate. These conversations and initiatives are distinctive from those which fall under the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Provost's Updates:

- **Laudato Si':** Fall 2023 I hosted an open forum with faculty to discuss the Ecological Education theme of the Laudato Si' Action Plan. I have also worked with administrators to ensure that faculty are collaborating with staff, administrators, and students on the other thematic areas.
- **Environmental Scanning process:** The environmental scanning process has modeled shared governance in its collaborative model encouraging faculty and administrators to come together to review and discuss the Gray data. In addition to the August training with chairs and the Fall Town Hall on the topic, departments have met with their Deans offices as part of this process.
- **Beginning in Summer 2024** I will reinitiate the practice of meeting with chairs and their Dean to discuss their departmental annual reports.
- **Committee on Gender Equity:** I hosted an open discussion inviting faculty, staff, and students to discuss the mission, leadership, and membership of the Committee on Gender Equity. I then hosted a follow-up conversation with faculty who have had leadership positions on this Committee to consult them on the future of the committee. I discussed this with Staff Senate when I was invited to their December meeting.
- **Two Meetings on the Future of Graduate Education:** I hosted two meetings (one in the Fall semester, one over Intersession) to consult with faculty on the future of Graduate Education at the University. The first meeting centered on faculty who are teaching in our Wiley online programs. The second was an open forum to discuss Graduate Education considering the Environmental Scan.
- **ICP Advisory Committee:** I have invited Joseph De Feo, Executive Director of the Ignatian Colleagues Program, to visit the University in March. The purpose of the visit is two-fold: to give a talk through the Jesuit Center for faculty and staff and to assist in the formation of the Ignatian Colleagues Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee will be a group of ICP alumni who are faculty and administrators and will advise the President on Mission. The hope is that this type of collaborative work can be a model for faculty-administrator partnerships.
- I continue to host Academic Affairs Town Halls twice a semester and share Monthly Memos.

- I have a standing offer to attend department meetings to answer any questions/concerns and learn about departmental initiatives. Thank you to the Communications Department for inviting me this Fall.
- In light of faculty concerns regarding funding for student research, in collaboration with our Development Office I have initiated fundraising for student research and travel and we are currently reviewing the funding for the Presidential Summer Research Fellowships.
- I met twice in the Fall with the Shared Governance Committee and will continue these meetings at their request in the Spring.
- Last Spring, I formed the First Year Experience Committee which began meeting this Fall and includes elected representation from the Faculty Senate.
- Since May of 2023 I have hosted over 40 hours of meetings with faculty to discuss our new Center for Workforce Development and Applied Research and the MakerSpace/Innovation Hub that will be housed within it. This included two open faculty forums, as well as meetings with departments, chairs, individual faculty, and faculty groups.

Dean's Updates:

- As part of our retreat in January the Deans, Associate Provost, and I met with Patti Tetreault to discuss how to improve communication and how to cultivate a stronger culture of listening.
- I have conveyed to the President of the Faculty Senate that the Deans would like to be invited to attend Faculty Senate meetings so they can have firsthand knowledge of faculty concerns.
- The Deans will now invite Chairs to add agenda items to Dean's Conference so that it is not only the Dean setting the agenda.
- The Deans extend an offer to attend department meetings to answer any questions/concerns and learn about departmental initiatives.
- While this is happening in some academic units, the Deans will initiate regular one on one meetings with Chairs.
- There may be other initiatives that are housed in a particular School, College, or the Library. Those will be communicated directly from the appropriate Dean.

I continue to have conversations regarding Shared Governance with the Administration. I am open to hear any recommendations from faculty on how better to improve shared governance here at our university. In December I asked the Shared Governance Committee to share best practices with me from other universities, particularly those within the AJCU and peer and aspirational institutions. As I await their feedback, I also extend that invitation to share best practices to all of the faculty. Please do not hesitate to reach out to Peggy Burke to schedule a meeting with me.

3. CAS Dean's Search

I am pleased to announce that Carolyn McNamara Barry, Ph.D. has been named Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences effective July 15, 2024. Dr. Barry has served as associate dean for Social Sciences and Graduate Programs at Loyola of Arts and Sciences, Loyola University since 2019. She also served as a professor, program director, and chair of Loyola's Department of Psychology. She joined the faculty of Loyola in 2001.

Dr. Barry's leadership experience working with deans, faculty, and students at Loyola as well as her work and training in DEI, and her extensive academic research makes her exceptionally qualified to work with our students and faculty. Dr. Barry exemplifies a deep understanding of and appreciation of Catholic and Jesuit higher education.

I wish to thank the search committee headed by Dean Aulisio for their efforts.

4. Registrar's Search

We launched our search for a new Registrar in January and have so far received a healthy pool of applicants.

5. Town Hall Meeting

The first Spring Academic Affairs Town Hall will be on Friday, February 16th at 3:30pm in Brennan 228. It will be followed by a reception in the Brennan 228 Lobby. The topics for this town hall are:

- the structure of the ORSSP
- internal faculty research funding
- an update on the environmental scan.

The first topic will be discussed by Julie Schumacher Cohen, Kate Yerkes, and David Marx. The second half will focus on soliciting faculty feedback and recommendations on the environmental scanning process since our contract expires in late May.

6. Breakfast with the President and Provost

This Spring semester we will continue our monthly breakfasts with the President and Provost. Spaces are limited and we ask faculty to sign up by emailing provost@scranton.edu. Please only sign up for one breakfast. The dates are February 13, March 20, and April 9 at 8:30am.

7. Rank and Tenure

The Board on Rank and Tenure held formal meetings on January 12, 13 and 19 to review the applications of twenty candidates. The President received the recommendations from the Board, the candidate's department, the deans, and the provost and has made his decision. I began meeting with the candidates this week to inform them of the decision. Official campus notification of the candidates will take place only after the 30-day appeal window closes; and the appeals, if any are submitted and resolved.

8. Faculty Development

Intersession grants

Six faculty members were awarded intersession grants:

- Shuhua Fan, Ph.D. *Confucius Institutes in the Xi Jinping Era: From Peak to Demise in the United States*
- Ozgur Isil, Ph.D. *Infusing "Ecological Education" (Laudato Si' Goal) into the Curriculum*
- Matthew Meyer, Ph.D. "Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*"
- Brian Snee, Ph.D. *Unfettered: The Rhetoric of John Fetterman's 2022 US Senate Campaign*
Chapter 4: "'That's What She Said': Humor as Inoculative Incongruity in Gisele Fetterman's Primary Acceptance Speech"
- Jong-Hyun Son, Ph.D. *Functional Characteristics of Oxygen in the Developing Dopaminergic Neurons of the Vertebrate Brain*

- Ziqian Song, Ph.D.

Words That Move Markets: Investigating Predictive Textual Features during Corporate Events for Stock Analysis

Ethics Across the Curriculum Grants

Applications for the first round of faculty development grants are due **March 1, 2024**. Email your proposal to [Dr. Sarah Kenehan](#) and [Dr. Christopher Hauser](#), co-directors of this initiative.

Summer Grants A call for proposals for Clavius and Summer grants were sent out in January. Applications should be submitted electronically to provost@scranton.edu or by campus mail to the Associate Provost's Office no later than March 4, 2024.

Provost Faculty Enhancement Awards

A request for nominations for the Provost Enhancement Awards was sent to the deans and department chairs. The deadline for nominations is March 11, 2024.

Affordable Learning Grants

Three faculty were approved for the Library's Affordable Learning Grant. They are replacing for-cost class materials with OER or Library-licensed materials in several courses. They are:

- Hank Willenbrink: ENLT 120 (SUM24), THTR 211 (F24), THTR 212 (SPR25)
- Laura Chapman: CSD 412 (SPR 24)
- Christiane McDonald: CSD 100, CSD 103, CSD 203 (All SPR24)

In Fall 23, we awarded the following:

- Satyajit Ghosh: ECO 361
- Ben Willis: COUN 577

A call for the grant will be offered again this semester for Summer 24 and Fall 24 courses. We plan to fund up to four faculty in that funding cycle.

9. Presidential Summer Research Fellowships

The Provost's Office consulted with the Faculty Research Committee to address funding concerns for those Presidential Summer Research Fellows who require housing. The Committee has recommended that the number of Fellowships be reduced to six in order to provide a larger stipend to those students who would need housing. In addition, it was desired that faculty mentor only one student per summer through this fellowship. However, if this was not feasible the Committee recommended that faculty who mentor more than one student only receive one stipend, which would increase the possibility of funding an additional student.

10. Environmental Scan

Thank you to the departments that submitted proposals for those programs that they would like to transform or grow that would require additional fiscal resources. Please remember the deadline to submit new program ideas that will require additional fiscal resources must be submitted to your Dean and the Provost's Office by **February 15th** at the absolute latest.

11. Faculty Searches

Faculty searches continue into the spring semester. To date we have hired three new faculty.

Chi Hou Lei

Assistant Professor

Physics & Engineering

Michael Catalano
Megan Heeder

Assistant Professor
Assistant Professor

Political Science
Theology/Religious Studies

Please welcome Dr. Lei who started in January.

12. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Student Information Session

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is holding an information session for student researchers on Thursday, 2/15, from 3:00PM - 4:15PM in ELH 235 (Kane Forum). The session is open to undergraduate and graduate students who are conducting human research and may submit an IRB application. The session will be recorded for those unable to attend. The session will address, among other topics, the role of the IRB, when the IRB is needed for review of human-based research, types/levels of review, and the application process. Please encourage your students to attend, especially those who may be planning to submit an IRB application. Although the session is geared toward students, faculty and staff researchers are also welcome. If you have questions, please contact IRB Chair Dr. Bryan Burnham (ext. 6687) or the IRB Administrator, Kate Yerkes (ext. 6567), at your convenience.

13. Graduate Academic & Student Services

The office was busy preparing for the Spring semester. Orientation Sessions were held for International Orientation and luncheon for 41 new international students on January 22nd.

- Graduate Level Orientation and dinner on January 22nd where we provided information from various offices including the Office of Equity and Diversity, Bursar, Financial Aid, Career Services, Student Life, Library, IT, OSSS, and Registrar's Office.
- Graduate Assistant Orientation was held on January 17th for new spring assistants in collaboration with Human Resources, Payroll & the Office of Equity and Diversity.
- Applications are available for students who wish to apply for graduate assistantship positions for the 2024-25 academic year.
- We met with supervisors of graduate assistants along with department chairs and program directors to discuss the current process of hiring graduate assistants.

14. Slattery Center

The spring schedule for the Slattery Center is:

February 19 5:00 pm	Lecture presented by Fr. Kevin Spinale, S.J. in the Pearn Auditorium in Brennan Hall – He will speak about the digital lives of children and the ways in which AI is changing the exercise of writing.
February 20 5:00 pm	Ethics Across the Curriculum Lecture: “Got Ethics? The Role of Ethics in Healthcare” presented by Karen Smith, Ph.D., Director of Clinical Ethics, Banner Desert Medical Center. PNC Auditorium, Loyola Science Center
March 21 5:30 pm	Schemel Forum with the Slattery Center for Ignatian Humanities Collaborative Program: “Christian Nationalism” presented by Charles R. Gallagher, S.J., associate professor of history, Boston College, and former visiting fellow at the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations, College of the Holy Cross. Reception to follow. Heritage Room, Weinberg Memorial Library.
April 10	Slattery Center Lecture: “REARRANGED: An Opera Singer's Facial

5:30 pm

Cancer and Life Transposed” presented by Kathleen Watt. PNC Auditorium, Loyola Science Center.

15. Curriculum Approvals

Program Change	Date Posted
Entrepreneurship	11/9/23
Biology	11/30/23
Supply Chain Management Certificate	11/30/23
MBA Program	12/14/23
M.S. Clinical Mental Health Counseling	12/13/23
Operations Management Major	12/5/23
Operations Management Minor	12/5/23
Operations Management MBA Specialization	12/5/23
Program Deletion	
MIS Specialization in MBA Program	12/11/23
New Course	
BIOL 340: Molecular Biology	11/30/23
BIOL 340L: Molecular Biology Lab	11/30/23
BIOL 440: Biotechnology	11/30/23
BIOL 440L: Biotechnology Lab	11/30/23
LIT 107: Global Aesthetics of Care	11/30/23
PS 245: Politics and International Law	11/30/23
NEUR/BIOL 232: Neurogenetics	12/22/23
Course Change	
OT 480: Level 1, Clinical 3: Physical Rehab	12/13/23
OT 381: Level I, Clinical 2: Psychosocial	12/13/23
OT 380: Level I, Clinical 1: Ped	12/13/23
KNES 229: Applied Anatomy and Kinesiology	12/13/23
KNES 210: Sport and Exercise Physiology	12/13/23
Course Deletion	
BIOL 361: Molecular Biology I	11/30/23
BIOL 361L: Molecular Biology Lab I	11/30/23
BIOL 362: Molecular Biology II	11/30/23
BIOL 362L: Molecular Biology II Lab	11/30/23
MIS 546: Business Database Management Systems	11/30/23
MIS 548: Business Intelligence	11/30/23
MIS 571: Information Networks and Electronic Commerce	11/30/23
MIS 572: Data Mining	11/30/23
MIS 573: Development of Business Applications	11/30/23
MIS 574: Business Process Reengineering	11/30/23
MIS 575: Internet Applications	11/30/23
MIS 577: Global Information Systems	11/30/23
MIS 579: Special Topics in Management Information Systems	11/30/23

16. Other Updates

- In conjunction with OSSS, the College of Arts and Sciences offered an Academic Success Workshop for all probation students in January 2024. Students attended a Zoom workshop

during the first week of January that explained what probation was and discussed strategies for improving academic performance. Students then had individual meetings with their advisors the following week. During the first week of the Spring term, these students were also required to attend an in-person workshop.

- The second round of CAS Student research grants have been awarded. In the Fall, 23 students received grants and this Spring an additional 27 students received grants. Students applied for support ranging from materials for research project to support for conference travel.
- On October 16-18, 2023, a team from the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) performed a site visit for the reaccreditation of the MS in Occupational Therapy Program. ACOTE voted to grant a status of Continuing Accreditation with Warning. There were four cited areas. A Plan of Correction addressing the areas of noncompliance cited below is due to ACOTE on or before February 12, 2024. For each cited area, the program is providing a description of the plan for bringing the program into compliance with the Standard, a projected timeline, a description of the documentation to be submitted to demonstrate compliance, and progress on actions implemented to date.
- The University of Scranton and the Geisinger Commonwealth College of Medicine (GCSOM) collaborated to reopen the Edward R. Leahy Jr. Clinic for the Uninsured on January 30, 2024. The medical clinic is under the larger umbrella of the Leahy Community Health and Family Center (LCHFC), which provides both clinical and non-clinical services to underserved individuals in our community.

There are notable differences in how this clinic will operate compared to the previous version of the clinic, including: 1) the clinic IS the *medical home* for a large group of uninsured adult patients, thus there will be opportunity to provide treatment, therapy and education to patients over time; and 2) the clinic will be student-run by University students and GCSOM medical students, with a paid Medical Director provided by Geisinger and a paid full-time Administrative Director, supported on grant funds, to assure quality medical care and regulatory compliance. The Clinic is being overseen by a Steering Committee with equal representation from both the University and from Geisinger.

- The Office of Equity and Diversity in collaboration with Human Resources and the Provost are offering a workshop for faculty and staff to guide participants through a series of reflective exercises that explore their understanding of race, ethnicity, privilege, bias, and inclusion. The workshop will be presented by Elizabeth Garcia and Tara Fay.

Two sessions have been scheduled: February 12 and 26 at 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. in the Provost Conference Room. Space is limited to 25 participants per session. Register at <https://forms.office.com/r/i9w2VYNRyx>

- Three of our online graduate programs were ranked among the top six programs in the nation in listings by Forbes.com and Intelligent.com. Our online MBA specialization in international business topped Forbes.com list of “Best International Business MBA Online Programs” of 2024. Forbes.com also ranked our online master’s degree program in health informatics No. 6 among the nation’s “Best Online Health Informatics Master’s Programs of 2024”.

Intelligent.com ranked our Masster of Accountancy Degree No. 4 in the nation for “Best Online Master’s Accounting” and its online MBA specialization in healthcare management at No. 13 in the country for “Best MBA in Healthcare Management.”