



Good morning, Academic Affairs!

As we make our way through the last half of the semester, I have a lot of news to share.

- Thank you to everyone who helped with our SACSCOC visit at the end of last month. This was truly a campus-wide effort, from last-minute information requests, to answering committee members' questions, to ensuring that they enjoyed their last meal with us—Texas brisket. We started the week with 18 items marked non-compliant from our off-site review back in the fall. When the site visitors departed, only two of those items remained for further work—faculty qualifications and the approach to determining faculty adequacy by program. We will work over the summer to meet our accreditor's expectation of continuous improvement in these two areas and provide a final response in August. In addition, the team provided meaningful feedback on the QEP, which will allow us to better refine and focus our proposal. Those revisions are also due in August. Let me share again my gratitude for each and every one of you who helped to represent the Lion community, allowing us to truly show we are transforming lives. I would be remiss if I didn't recognize Dr. Ricky Dobbs and Ms. Alison Soeder for their outstanding leadership throughout the process. Please join me in expressing our gratitude through an email or if you see them on campus. They both went above and beyond, represented by the incredible results of the reaffirmation of our accreditation.
- As you saw in recent announcements, I am pleased to share that we have two new deans for the Honors College and CHSSA joining the Lion family. Dr. Erin Webster Garrett will be starting on July 1, while Dr. Joseph Romero begins his position June 1. Each of these individuals exemplifies outstanding leadership and comes to us with rich backgrounds in collaboration and innovation. I am excited to see their respective colleges grow and flourish under their guidance. There will be formal welcoming opportunities later this summer or early fall, but please be sure to welcome them to our campus and say "hello" if you have the opportunity.
- We have extended the [dean search for CASNR](#) until April 12th. I thank the search committee for their continued dedication to ensuring the right fit for both the college and the university.
- The dean search for the College of Business has begun in partnership with AGB. Dick Wueste was on campus this past week to meet with faculty and staff to learn more about

their thoughts on skill sets and competencies that are a must in the next COB dean. I will be sure to keep you updated as we move forward in this process.

- I am excited to announce the appointment of our next cohort of Provost Fellows. Dr. Dean Culpepper, Dr. Brian Zator, and Dr. Flavia Belpoliti will assume their roles this August with the beginning of the fall semester. These fellowships provide leadership development for faculty interested in honing their skills while learning more about administrative responsibilities throughout the Division of Academic Affairs and across the institution.

Additionally, I welcome Dr. Sharonda Pruitt as the first Junior Provost Fellow. This is the first year for the Junior Provost Fellowship, with the focus being on tenure-track assistant professors who are interested in learning more about the university and committed to investigating strategies for and providing opportunities for assistant professor colleagues. An official announcement regarding these four outstanding individuals is forthcoming.

I also want to thank Dr. Mark Moreno, Dr. Tami Morton, and Dr. Meifang Xiang for being the inaugural cohort. Their work as the first provost fellows was outstanding, and it was a privilege to work alongside them.

- As you all are now aware, Dr. Yvonne Villanueva-Russell is departing from our university to start a new and exciting chapter as Provost for the University of North Carolina Asheville. She has been a major part of our campus community, both as dean of CID and beyond. We will certainly miss her, but I know she will be successful in this future endeavor.
- Finally, this is a reminder for everyone about my open-door meetings as we come to the end of this semester. There's still time to share more about your research goals and interests, your teaching, ideas for campus improvement, or whatever else might be on your mind. I have set aside Tuesdays from 4-6 pm and Wednesdays from noon to 1 pm for these meetings. Other times are available upon request. Please email Cynthia.Rhodes@tamuc.edu to schedule a 30-minute appointment. Should you have plans to be on campus this summer, I will also be hosting faculty lunches. Please contact Cynthia Rhodes if you would like to attend.

As I finish with one of the last memos for this semester, I want to share a few thoughts. As you most likely know, we are in the process of becoming a student-ready university that is agile and continually evolving to meet the needs of our students, and the strategic alignments that will get us to this organizational priority involve intentional change. Although we know change can at times bring uncertainty or even discomfort, we also know that change is critical to enhancing our capabilities, expanding opportunities, and ultimately providing the best possible educational experience for our students. As we work toward being a student-ready university, we must remain nimble, actively involved, focused, and accountable. You each play a crucial role in our

institution, and it is your expertise and dedication that are essential in the navigation of these ongoing transitions that will get us to what we want to be. Thank you for your continued commitment to our shared mission and vision! I am confident that together we will continue to grow stronger, be more resilient, and ultimately be highly successful in transforming lives.

Thank you to everyone for your continued dedication to our university!

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