

TO: Faculty Senate

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

DATE: November 3, 2023

SUBJECT: Academic Affairs Report for November 2023

1. Rankings

U.S. News & World Report has ranked us No. 5 among regional universities in the north in its 2024 guidebook. The *Princeton Review* included us in its list of “Best Colleges” for 22 consecutive years, and No. 18 in the nation for “Best Science Lab Facilities” in its latest edition of the guidebook. The *Washington Monthly* ranked us No.10 among the 604 master’s universities in the nation in the “community and national service” category.

2. Faculty Development

Intersession Grants

The Faculty Research Committee awarded the following intersession grants:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Shuhua Fan, Ph.D. | <i>Confucius Institutes in the Xi Jinping Era: From Peak to Demise in the United States</i> |
| Ozgur Isil, Ph.D. | <i>Infusing “Ecological Education” (Laudato Si’ Goal) into the Curriculum</i> |
| Matthew Meyer, Ph.D. | “Nietzsche’s <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> ” |
| Brian Snee, Ph.D. | <i>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”</i> |
| Jong-Hyun Son, Ph.D. | <i>Functional Characteristics of Oxygen in the Developing Dopaminergic Neurons of the Vertebrate Brain</i> |
| Ziqian Song, Ph.D. | <i>Words That Move Markets: Investigating Predictive Textual Features during Corporate Events for Stock Analysis</i> |

Sabbatical Applications

The Faculty Research Committee is reviewing nineteen sabbatical applications, 7 for Fall 2024, 4 for Spring 2025, and 8 are for the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

3. Weinberg Memorial Library

The library will award up to four \$1,000 Affordable Learning Implementation Grants

for Spring/Summer Courses. Affordable Learning aims to reduce the financial burden on students by eliminating expensive for-cost textbooks and course materials with no-cost or low-cost educational resources. Deadline to submit an application is December 1, 2023. <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/infolit/oer-grants.shtml>

- *Learning to Write: American Penmanship Manuals from the David Kaminski and Zaner-Bloser Collections 1791-1980* is the Heritage Room autumn exhibit. The exhibit presents a wide range of manuals used by students of penmanship in the United States, from the first known manual, *The Art of Writing Reduced to a Plain and Easy System* by John Jenkins, through manuals produced by the Zaner-Bloser Company in the later 20th century. The exhibit will run through Friday, December 15.
- *Scranton's Story: Oral History Portrait Photographs* will be displayed in the Hope Horn Art Gallery from October 27 through November 17, 2023. Over the past two years, the Scranton community has explored themes of history and identity through *Scranton's Story: Our Nation's Story*, a series of lectures and events funded partly by the National Endowment for the Humanities. This exhibition showcases photographs and statements gathered from some twenty-five community members as part of the project's final Oral History phase, giving voice to various Scranton experiences and connecting them to American history.

4. Faculty Searches

We are currently searching for thirteen tenure track positions, two faculty specialists and one lecturer position.

5. Office of Student Support and Success/Center for Teaching Excellence

The OSSS has been busy this semester.

Total	2022	2023
Tutoring Requests	1320	1275
Tutoring Sessions	1444	2917
Drop-in Tutoring		280
Tutors employed by OSSS	195	283
Students Receiving Accommodations	291	436
Exams Administered	695	797
Writing Center Tutoring Sessions	183	260
Number of Consultations held in the Writing Center	398	524
Number of Exams Administered	695	797
Success Sessions		102

Other Statistics:

- 121 Note-takers are employed by OSSS.
- 315 classes have note-takers.

- 100 students receive note-taking accommodations.

The CTE was also busy this semester. Staff created two videos for onboarding new adjunct faculty. They also offered Brightspace workshops and provided additional plagiarism and artificial intelligence resources for faculty on their website. The staff is currently evaluating *ZeroGPT*, *Turnitin*, *Copyleaks* and *Sapling* for their effectiveness in detecting AI in writing.

Administration of the course evaluation system went well. CTE is in collaboration with IT on some suggested improvements to the daily administration and reporting, with the main focus on converting documentation to PDF.

6. Planning

This fall, the University will launch the administration of two important surveys. Undergraduate and graduate students will be invited to take part in the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) survey, while faculty and staff will be invited to submit the companion Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS). Each asks about various expectations students have for their college experience, gathering input about how important they are, and how well they are being met. Both surveys are entirely voluntary and will be open from November 13th through November 30th. Details about how to access and submit will be emailed to all students, faculty, and staff on November 13th, with several reminders to follow. Please consider taking part in the IPS survey, and to also encourage your colleagues, and your students, to submit their own surveys as well.

7. Graduate Academic and Student Services

A trip to NYC is being planned for graduate students for December 10 (a day on your own). Students are being asked to pay \$40.00, and then we will subsidize the rest.

We currently have 125 graduate assistant positions being filled by our graduate students with 25%, 50% or 75% tuition remission in addition to stipends.

8. Committee Updates

Faculty Handbook Committee

The committee discussed adding language to Section 32 to clarify that if a deadline to submit material is moved, because it falls on a day the University is closed, the date access is granted to that material is move to the following day.

The Subcommittee working on the course scheduling language reported that they tried to merge the current language with new language, and it was not fitting. As a result, the subcommittee decided that it makes more sense to start over.

The committee continued to work on the language in Appendix VI – the faculty role in search for tenure-track faculty.

PCAPC

The committee met on October 12th and reviewed 47 and approved 44 block scheduling exception requests. The committee also discussed draft language for a University of Scranton Ph.D. Program Policies and Procedures.

Graduate Program Council

The Graduate Program Council met on October 18th. Students applying for admission into a graduate program must submit three professional letters of recommendation. The council discussed reducing the number of letters of recommendation from three to two. The committee saw no problems with making this change. Since this is an enrollment management issue Ms. Hollingshead will inform Ms. Zottola of the council's recommendation.

An outside audit that was conducted cited inconsistency in graduate advising. In order to standardize the graduate student advising system, program directors were asked to share how advising is done in their college/program. Some programs send students to their advising center, some programs assign faculty to advise students, and some students are advised by program directors.

A group of faculty teaching on our Wiley Programs met with me, Lisa Lobasso and Dave Marx on October 24th to discuss our current Wiley contract and get feedback on the services that Wiley provides that are essential for online graduate education.

9. Curriculum

I have approved the following curriculum proposals:

Program Change	Date Posted
Women's and Gender Studies Concentration (CHS 333)	03/01/23
Women's and Gender Studies Major (CHS 333)	03/01/23
Occupational Therapy, MS	04/20/23
Nursing Program	04/20/23
Business Analytics Program	05/03/23
Business Analytics, MS	09/27/23
Forensic Chemistry	10/06/23
Women's and Gender Studies Concentration (COMM 216-ENLT 226)	10/18/23
Women's and Gender Studies Major (COMM 216-ENLT 226)	10/18/23
New Course	
BUAN 500: Business Analytics Tools	09/27/23
ENLT 326: Queer Writers & Queer Writing	10/06/23
Course Change	
COMM 115: Writing for Communication	09/25/23
THTR 211: Theatre History I	10/06/23
THTR 212: Theatre History II	10/06/23
THTR/ENLT 276: America Drama 1916-1968	10/06/23

THTR/ENLT 277: America Drama 1968-2011	10/06/23
PSYC 235: Learning and Behavior	10/06/23
INTD 112: EP Foundation	09/05/23

Course Deletion

WRTG 218: Writing the Web	10/06/23
---------------------------	----------

10. Laudato Si'

I want to thank the faculty that joined me for a conversation on October 19th on how best to move forward with the Ecological Education theme in Laudato Si'. While many of the goals are based within curriculum and therefore faculty led, the emphasis on providing research and pedagogical opportunities, as well as speakers, will be funded through Academic Affairs in collaboration with other divisions within the University.

11. Ethics Across the Curriculum

The Ethics Across the Curriculum website will launch this month and include the call for proposals for the May 2024 workshop. The website will be accessed through the left sidebar on the Office of the Provost's homepage.

12. Environmental Scan: Economic Database

Gray Associates have completed the development of the Economics tool. A brief overview was presented by Gray to Academic and University administrators in October. The database provides various views of academic financial information from fiscal years 2019-20 through 2022-23 in dashboard form. This dashboard can only be accessed by administrators. Faculty will be welcome to meet with administrators to review this database in the weeks ahead. Additionally, this database generates reports. Reports will be created and distributed to department chairs through the Deans Offices. These reports will provide comparable information similar to those received from the CRR-Cost of Education packets that had been distributed to the department chairs in the past. These updated files from the Gray system will provide the Chairs with reports that include course level data, faculty statistics, as well as summaries with student revenues, student financial aid, instruction costs, and financial contributions by college, department, and program. Report examples may include:

1. Faculty Statistics Report: This report is able to provide information by academic year and term. It would be able to show, by instructor department, the number of courses taught, number of sections taught, student counts, student credit hours, students per section, as well as gross revenue, financial aid discount, direct instructional cost, and contribution totals.
2. Course Department Report: This report is able to provide information by academic year and term. It would be able to show by course college, course department, course subject, and course level the number of courses taught, number of sections taught, student counts, student credit hours, students per section, as well as gross revenue, financial aid discount, direct instructional cost, and contribution totals.

3. Student Program Report: This report is able to provide information by academic year and term. It would be able to show, by student program college and student program name the number of courses taught, number of sections taught, student counts, student credit hours, students per section, as well as gross revenue, financial aid discount, direct instructional cost, and contribution totals.

13. Updates

- 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. The MS in Occupational Therapy was previously accredited for 10 years in 2014. ACOTE will make a reaccreditation decision based on the self-study and site visit at their December 1, 2023, meeting with notification to follow in January.
- After an exemplary site visit April 3-5, 2023, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) reaffirmed the accreditation of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling MS Degree and the School Counseling MS Degree and awarded accreditation to the Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling MS Degree program (previously accredited by CORE) on August 7, 2023. The accreditation cycle will run until October 31, 2031.
- PCPS hosted the 22nd Annual U.S. Conference on disABILITY October 5, 2023, in the DeNaples Center. This year's conference was an offered in person since before the pandemic, with 132 students, service providers, educators, and healthcare professionals in attendance. The conference co-chairs, Dr. Rebecca Dalgin and Dr. Lori Bruch, did a wonderful job of organizing the conference and are deserving of much praise and gratitude for their service.
- The University's 37th Henry George Lecture is scheduled On November 9th. Dr. Robert C. Feenstra, Ph.D. the C. Bryan Cameron Distinguished Chair in International Economics at University of California, (UC), Davis will present "The 'China Shock' After 22 Years.
- "The Honorable T. Linus Hoban Memoria Lecture" will be held on November 16th at 7:00 pm in the DeNaples Center Ballroom. Danielle Allen, Ph.D. is the James Bryant Conant University Professor and director of the Allen Lab for Renovation Democracy at Harvard's Kennedy School's Ash Center.
- Dr. Farallo, assistant professor of biology was awarded a \$488,947 grant from the National Science Foundation to research the physiology and chemical ecology of poison frogs. The funding for the 3-year project will allow for the participation of 30 or more undergraduate students, who will learn cutting-edge respirometry techniques as they work with faculty.
- University of Scranton students earned 1st and 2nd place finishes in all three competitions (Sumo Bot, Hack-5K, and Micro Mouse) that took place at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Student Activities Conference hosted by Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia.