

TO: Faculty Senate Report

FROM: Jeff Gingerich, PhD  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: March 12, 2020

RE: Provost's Report for March

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### **COVID-19 or novel coronavirus developments**

Much of our attention over the past few weeks has been concentrated on preparing a safe response to the COVID-19, or novel coronavirus, pandemic. As you know by now we are responding through the following measures

- The University will cease face-to-face instruction and move classes remotely beginning on Monday, March 30, 2020. Classes will operate as normal with the regular schedule until March 13.
- This decision extends Spring Break by one week. We are asking faculty to use the time between March 14 and March 29 to take advantage of the resources we are providing to transition your classes to remote instruction.
- As always, you are free to reach out to students during break but should not hold class or require assignments to be due between Saturday, March 14 and Sunday, March 29.
- Remote instruction will continue at least until the conclusion of Easter Break, which begins on April 9. We hope to resume on-campus classes on April 14, but will continue to monitor the situation and continue regular communication with you until that time.
- Current online graduate programs will continue as previously scheduled.
- Midterm grades should still be submitted by Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> by noon.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to those faculty who I've worked with particularly over the past few days and those I've talked to who have expressed their willingness to offer resources and to transition their courses to a distance format. I know this is not easy for everyone and yet it was important that we made this decision for the health and safety of our faculty, students and staff.

The CTLE and ITR have prepared a number of faculty workshops that I encourage everyone to take part in; they are adjusting their staffing and support to provide extra support to faculty making the transition.

College deans are working with departments and their faculty to provide specific support, and you will receive communication from them. Most of the specific questions around course adaption will be addressed through the dean's office.

The University has established a [COVID-19 information webpage](#) that includes campus communications and links to information about COVID-19. The University's Incident Management Team has met since the beginning of the semester to monitor the situation, and will

continue to provide information and updates on this webpage as warranted by changing circumstances. FAC and Faculty Senate leadership are now meeting with this group.

One of the key decisions in the upcoming days will be whether we extend the semester for an additional week (into “senior week”) or whether we end the semester as planned (effectively shortening the semester). I fully recognize that this impacts how faculty revise their course design and will continue to try to move this decision forward. Consistent communication with faculty will be important. Again, thank you for your efforts on behalf of our student learning. I especially hope that everyone continues safe practices for your own individual health and the health of your families.

### **Strategic Plan**

The Board of Trustees affirmed the following strategic goals for our next university strategic plan at their February board meeting. The trustees were very impressed by the goals and unanimously affirmed their use in creating the strategic plan. You may view a copy of the goals via the my.scranton portal, News tab, University Planning channel.

I am grateful to all who have been a part of this process, submitting your comments and feedback through a survey of faculty and staff related to important strategic questions, and reacting to emerging draft goals at one of several open fora. What we learned from these activities gives us confidence that the draft goals accurately represent the needs and desired direction of our campus community, drawn as they are from prior assessments including our Middle States Self-Study and Mission Priority Examen, as well as the Strategic Enrollment Planning (SEP) process. Our new plan will help us directly address the recommendations that emerged from these processes.

Positive feedback to these draft goals during four faculty and staff fora was complemented by several consistent suggestions, including that we more clearly articulate our commitment to inclusivity and to affordability for students and their families. Other suggestions included streamlining the language of some of the goals to be more focused and concise.

In the weeks ahead, the Planning Office, University Planning Committee, and President’s Cabinet will draft objectives for each of the five goals. In this process, they will be gathering ideas from those submitted via the faculty and staff survey and campus conversations, recommendations from our Self-Study, SEP and Examen, and other resources. Updated draft documents will be shared with members of the University community later this spring as we strive to submit a final draft strategic plan to the Board in early May.

### **Dean of the Library Search**

Members of the Search Committee for the next Dean of the Library have been selected by faculty, staff and students:

Colleen Farry	Library Representative
Donna Witek	Library Representative
Adam Pratt	At-Large Representative
Sheli Pratt-McHugh	Staff Representative
Adrianna Smith	Student Representative
Debra Pellegrino	Administrative Representative
TBA	Administrative Representative

I am excited to work with such a talented search committee. I will be meeting with them shortly to develop the position description and discuss the search process. We hope to fill this position in January 2021.

### **Faculty Searches**

We have successfully completed seventeen faculty searches and are very excited about the next cohort of incoming faculty

Lori Maria Walton	Professor	Physical Therapy
Mehmet Bastug	Assistant Professor	Sociology, Criminal Justice & Criminology
Matthew Shea	Assistant Professor	Philosophy
Amelia Randich	Assistant Professor	Biology
Vincent Farallo	Assistant Professor	Biology
Ashley Driver	Assistant Professor	Biology
JoyAnna Hopper	Assistant Professor	Political Science
Jason Shrive	Faculty Specialist	Sociology, Criminal Justice &
Criminology		
Christopher Hauser	Assistant Professor	Philosophy
Joshua Reynolds	Assistant Professor	Psychology
Christopher Fremaux	Assistant Professor	Philosophy
Paul Sampson	Instructor	History
Ziqian Song	Assistant Professor	Operations & Information Management
Emily Gerstle	Assistant Professor	Exercise Science & Sport
Amir Zamanian	Instructor	Physics and Engineering
Joseph Klobusicky	Assistant Professor	Mathematics
Cristen Walker	Assistant Professor	Nursing

### **Faculty Development**

#### *Faculty Internal Research Grants*

A call for proposals was sent out on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The deadline to submit proposals is April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Career Development**

The First Destination Survey (FDS) for the undergraduate and graduate students from the Class of 2019 is based on where students are within 6 months from graduation. Within the report, you will see a breakdown of information by college and major.

#### *2019 Undergraduate Highlights*

- **99%** of the students have found **success** in their intended path (full-time employment, continued education, military, service, etc).
- We saw an increase in the average starting salary, taking it to **\$54,766**.
- **79%** of the class completed at least 1 experiential learning opportunity.

*2019 Graduate Highlights:*

- **99%** of the students have found **success** in their intended path (full-time employment, continued education, or part-time employment).
- We were able to gather information for **83%** of the class, far exceeding the national recommendation of 65% knowledge rate.
- The average salary of the graduates was **\$69,494**.

**Provost Council Updates**

The Council agreed that a framework, similar to the protocol that is in place for Faculty-Led Study Abroad courses, need to be developed to cover for non-credit international trips, international internships and domestic service trips.

**Curriculum Update**

<b>New Course</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
OT 491: Research and Scholarship	1/24/20
OT 493: Research & Scholarship II	2/24/20
OT 601: Seminar I Doctoral Capstone	1/8/20
OT 602: Seminar II Doctoral Capstone	1/8/20
OT 603: Seminar III Doctoral Capstone	1/8/20
OT 630: Topics in OT III	2/24/20
OT 644: Advanced Leadership Principles, Ethics & Pragmatics	1/8/20
OT 650: Advanced Assessment Across the Lifespan	1/8/20
OT 680: Capstone Experience	2/24/20
COMM 170: Intro. To Sport Communication	12/4/20
<b>Course Deletion</b>	
MATH 310: Applied Probability & Mathematical Statistics	12/4/19
HINF 501: Introduction to Health Care	1/24/20
HINF 502: Computer Information Tech for Health Prof.	1/24/20
<b>Course Change</b>	
HINF 570: Public Policy for Health Information	1/24/20
COMM 117: Foundations of Business Writing & Social Media Communication	1/16/20
LAS 295: Mexican Culture and Languages	1/16/20
<b>New Program</b>	
Actuarial Science Minor	12/4/19

**Faculty and Department Highlights:**

- Master’s Program Guide ranked the University’s online MBA program in accounting at No. 4 in the nation. The ranking is based on affordability, student satisfaction, support

services, accessibility and accreditation and commendation from such respected sources as *U.S. News*.

- Online College Plan ranked the University's online master in healthcare administration degree at No. 12 in the nation. The ranking is based on assessment of the program's reputation, cost, graduation rates and student-to-faculty ratio.
- Intelligent.com ranked the following nine online programs among the nation's best: master's in accounting at No. 13; master's in human resources at No. 15; human resources degree at No. 16; MBA in international business at No. 24; master's in health informatics at No. 26; master's in curriculum and instruction at No. 34; MBA in healthcare management at No. 37; MBA in human resources at No. 37; master's in finance at No. 39. The ranking is based on an assessment of student engagement, potential return on investment and leading third-party evaluations of the programs.
- *U.S. News & World Report's* 2020 "Best Online Graduate Programs" ranked The University of Scranton's online master's degree programs in business (excluding MBA) at No. 51 and its MBA program at No. 118 in the nation. *U.S. News* also ranked Scranton at No. 64 in the country for "Best Online MBA Programs for Veterans." This is the ninth consecutive year the *U.S. News* ranked the University's online programs among the best in the nation.
- In other rankings published by *U.S. News & World Report*, Scranton has been ranked among the top 10 "Best Regional Universities in the North" for 26 consecutive years. Scranton is ranked No. 6 in the 2020 edition of the guidebook. *U.S. News* also ranked Scranton No. 5 in its category in a ranking of the "Most Innovative Schools" and No. 12 in its category for "Best Undergraduate Teaching." *U.S. News* also ranked Scranton's programs in entrepreneurship at No. 33, finance at No. 43, and accounting at No. 52 in the country, among other rankings.
- Shuhua Fan, Ph.D, associate professor in the History Department, is the winner of the 2020 Distinguished Service Award from the Chinese Historians in the United States (CHUS) at the 2020 American Historical Association Annual Conference in New York City.
- Edward M. Scahill, Ph.D., associate professor of economics in the Economics/Finance Department has been named as a regular contributor on microeconomics to *The Wall Street Journal's Weekly Review*, which is an academic resource for faculty to integrate into their courses current news articles from *The Wall Street Journal* in 16 disciplines.