

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Tracy Stewart, Ph.D.
Interim Provost/SVPAA

DATE: December 5, 2025

SUBJECT: Provost Report for December 2025

Provost

A variety of initiatives have been slowed or put on pause during contract negotiations. A more thorough update on an Academic Affairs AI policy and the creation of a task force to establish an Institutional Program Health and Sustainability process should be available in the future. A request will be made at the December Senate meeting.

Division Updates

Rank and Tenure

A public meeting to inform faculty of the rank and tenure policies and procedures was held on September 11th. Twenty-seven faculty have applied for tenure and/or promotion for 2025-2026. Five faculty have applied for full professor, four have applied for associate, six have applied for associate and tenure, and twelve have applied for tenure. The deadline for submitting dossiers and CVs was October 22, 2025.

Graduate Academic and Student Services

- Applications for graduate assistant positions are now open for the upcoming academic year. Interest in these roles continues to grow. Last year, we received more than 1,000 applications for approximately 130 available positions across campus. These competitive roles provide students with valuable experience while supporting key academic and administrative functions of the University.
- To further assist students, graduate assistant information sessions are being planned for the upcoming weeks. These sessions will provide an overview of the hiring timeline and position expectations. Students will also have the opportunity to ask questions about assistantship responsibilities and departmental placements.
- In addition to assistantship support, we continue efforts to strengthen graduate student engagement and community-building. A graduate student social was held on Friday, November 14, with thirteen students in attendance. The event offered students the chance to connect across colleges, campuses, and academic disciplines in an informal setting. Feedback from participants was positive, and additional social and professional development events are being planned for the spring.

Center for Teaching Excellence

- Upcoming Workshops
 - a. *Preparing for Spring 2026: Brightspace Updates & Microsoft Teams Overview*

Join us for an engaging workshop to explore key Brightspace features and recent updates while preparing your courses for Spring 2026. You'll also receive an introduction to *Microsoft Teams meetings*, including how to schedule sessions and connect with students and colleagues. The workshop will be offered in person and live-streamed and is open to faculty of all experience levels.

Session 1: January 9, 11:00 AM – 12:00 pm LSC 433

Session 2: January 16, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM LSC 433

Please register for the workshop on the My Scranton site, using the Employee CTE Events Card. The event is listed under Brightspace (D2L) Workshops.

- b. Follow the [CTE Community on Viva Engage](#) for access to workshop resources and information on upcoming events.
- Course Evaluation Tool
 - The demos have been completed for the four tools we are considering to replace our homegrown course evaluation tool, which will not be supported by Banner indefinitely. If you were unable to attend and are interested in viewing the demo recordings, reach out to mary.murphy-bowne@scranton.edu. The next steps will be to meet with members of the Course Evaluation Committee and IT to reflect on the demos, share our feedback, and determine which tool best meets our needs. The goal is to pilot the new tool in Summer 2026 with full implementation by Fall 2026.
- Technical Consultation
 - TechCons are available for consultation during finals and the intersession on a revised schedule. [You can see the TechCon lab hours for finals and the intersession on the CTE website](#). If you have a Brightspace question when TechCons are not available, reach out to Cuong at 4365 or Mary Jane at 4040.
- Brightspace Updates
 - There are two recent integrations added to Brightspace that may support your teaching. We are working on guides for using these new tools, which will be available on the CTE Website and on the Viva Engage Community soon. If you need assistance with them, please reach out to Mary Jane (ext. 4040) or Cuong (ext. 4365).
 - a. Panopto Video Quiz – add quiz questions to your video content or provide student credit for viewing the media. Please note that there is a slight delay between when the student completes the video quiz and when the results are posted in the gradebook.
 - b. Microsoft Education – this integration allows you to schedule recurring Teams meetings for your class through a Brightspace connection that looks very similar to the Zoom integration.

- Online Course Development Support
The CTE is working with faculty in the Leahy College of Health Sciences Nursing and Counseling departments in new online course development projects. If you are considering new online programs, we would love to support these efforts.
- LMS Specialist Position
We have an open position in the CTE. We are looking to fill the role of LMS Specialist to continue to grow our services.

International Students & Scholars

Currently 176 students are participating in Post-Completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) or STEM OPT extension.

- The University of Scranton is following the Nationwide trend in which OPT students outnumber actively enrolled students in the U.S. according the recently released 2024/2025 OPENDOORS report.
- We are also following the trend of international graduate student enrollment being higher than undergraduate enrollment.
- Other interesting highlights: Top 5 countries of origin for Intl. Students in the U.S.: India, China, South Korea, Canada, Vietnam. India and China combined make up over 50% of the international student population in the U.S.
- Top 3 fields of study: Math & Computer Science, Engineering, Business & Management.
- Other OPEN Doors Highlights: https://opendoorsdata.org/fact_sheets/fast-facts/
<https://opendoorsdata.org/data/international-students/>

Presidential Proclamation Restricts Entry of H-1B Workers Unless Employer Pays \$100K Fee.

- Applies to workers applying for H1B from outside the U.S. (through the consulate) not those applying for Change of Status within the U.S. through USCIS. Workers applying for change of status will not be subject to the fee if he/she subsequently departs the U.S. and applies for a visa based on the approved petition and/or seeks to reenter U.S. on current H1B.

DHS. SEVP Reminds Schools of Authority to Conduct Site Visits.

- On November 14, 2025, SEVP sent a broadcast message to schools to remind them of SEVP's authority to conduct out-of-cycle on-site visits with or without notice, and the consequences of failing to comply with an out-of-cycle review.

Study Abroad

- In Summer 2025, 58 students participated in study abroad. They attended 12 host universities across 9 countries including Italy, Sweden, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, South Korea, Australia, Ireland, and Spain. There were 3 Scranton faculty-led courses this summer, of which 12 students went to Greece with Dr. Joan Grossman and Dr. Andrew Venezia on KNES 296 Sport and Physical Culture in Ancient Greece; 9 students went to Spain with Dr. Michael Jenkins and Dr. Sinchul Back on S/CJ 295 Global Crime, Justice, and Security in Spain; and 6 students went to Germany with Dr. Michael Azar on T/RS 396 Christ, Resistance, and Reconciliation in Germany.
- In the Fall 2025 semester, 10 students are studying abroad for the semester. They are attending universities in Australia, Spain, France, and Ireland.

- Approximately 160 students will study abroad in the January Intersession 2026. Of the 160, about 80 will take part in faculty-led courses in the Galapagos, Uganda, Brazil, Ireland & Northern Ireland, and the Dominican Republic.
- In the Spring 2026 Semester, it is anticipated that 28 students will study abroad for the full semester. They will attend host programs in Spain, France, Czech Republic, Morocco, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Italy, Ireland, Australia, and Japan.

Fulbright

- Our May 2025 graduate and Fulbright winner, Jenyah Cunningham is spending the 2025-26 academic year teaching English in Taiwan as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant.
- Three undergraduate seniors submitted Fulbright applications in October 2025, hoping to spend the 2026-27 academic year abroad through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. The students applied to the following 3 programs: English Teaching Assistantship in Greece, English Teaching Assistant in Malta, and Study/Research in a master's degree program in Finland. We anticipate hearing semi-finalist decisions in February 2026 and finalist decisions in May 2026.

College and Library Updates

College of Arts and Science

- Staff Updates:
 - a. A part-time animal caretaker, Amy Christiana, has begun working within the Biology department.
 - b. All full-time faculty searches in CAS have been posted and are under way. Most of them are conducting zoom interviews in December or the latest of January with plans to bring finalists to campus at the start of the semester.
- Dean Barry, Associate Dean Marenda, and Assistant Dean Hunter have spent the month of November meeting with individual departments and programs that have operating accounts to provide feedback to them about their budget justifications. In turn, they will be receiving revisions of these budget justifications in December from all departments/programs. Then, Dean Barry, in conversation with her two colleagues, will provide recommendations for the FY27 CAS budgets to Finance by mid-January 2026.
- Building upon the MOU with Loyola University Maryland, Dean Barry is finalizing an expanded and now bidirectional MOU with Fairfield University that will also create pipelines for each institution to send our undergraduates to our graduate programs that are distinctive.
- The Assessment Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences (ACCAS) has now met. They began with a full assessment of each of our 47 programs PLOs. Their goal is to determine what the updated PLOs are for each program, how these PLOs map to ILOs and SLOs, and to establish a schedule to assess 2 PLOs per year. They will then move to assessing artifacts and rubrics for each program. Chemistry, Philosophy, Political Science, and Military Science have been randomly selected to be the first programs for review.
- Curriculum Committee for CAS (CCCAS) has still not met. Nevertheless, the Dean's Office is receiving proposals for the GE to ICC conversion. To date, we have received 22 capstone proposals, 10 CIV, 3DC and 3DJ.
- Great things happening in CAS:

- a. Thanks to Dr. Joe Klobusicky for hosting yet another successful Data Science Day for local high school youth on November 13th.
- b. Thanks to Dr. Brian Snee for having Black Scranton Project CEO and Founder to discuss with faculty ways to enhance CIV courses in the new ICC on December 1st.
- c. Thanks to Dr. Matt Meyer with support from Brad Troy for hosting a successful pre-law alumni panel and networking event on November 21st.
- d. Thanks to Dr. Nicole Ferentino and Will Vinsko (President of Health Professions Organization) with support from Brad Troy for hosting a range of alumni from pre-med students through seasoned alumni doctors at the Chapman Retreat Center on November 22nd for a full day of talks, discussion, and reflection for our pre-health students.
- e. Dean Barry, in her role as President of the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood, just announced the launch of a second journal for the Society, entitled Applied Studies in Emerging Adulthood. The search for the editor for the new journal will be underway shortly. To read more about the new journal, see this link: [APA and the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood announce publishing partnership.](#)

Leahy College of Health Sciences

- **CRC Grant** - The University of Scranton's Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling (CRC) program has received a five-year training grant, totaling nearly \$1 million, from the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Clinical rehabilitation counseling practitioners are charged with helping individuals overcome developmental, emotional, mental and physical disabilities while also encouraging autonomy and removing the social and attitudinal barriers that restrict full participation for people with disabilities. Eighty-five percent of the grant will go to fund tuition scholarships. This will increase the pool of highly qualified, master's-level rehabilitation counselors, thus addressing regional personnel shortages. The CRC program was previously offered only on-campus, but it will now also be offered entirely online or as an on-campus/online hybrid, making it accessible to more students. The grant will award the University's program with five payments each of the next five years, totaling \$999,909.16. The first budget period is Oct. 1, 2025, through Sept. 30, 2026. The final budget period is Oct. 1, 2029, through Sept. 30, 2030.
- **Conference on DisAbility** - The 24th annual U.S. Conference on Disability focused on the intersection of technology, accessibility and action. The all-day event on Oct. 8, 2025, brought together thought leaders, advocates and professionals in support of disability rights and services. This year's theme, "A.I. — Access — Action!," highlighted the evolving role and benefits of artificial intelligence use for individuals with disabilities. The conference, which was presented by the LCHS and the Edward R. Leahy, Jr., Endowment, was free for attendees and featured advocates, policy makers and employers from across the country. The Honorable Robert P. Casey, the Leahy Distinguished Fellow in Public Service at the University of Scranton, opened the conference by highlighting opportunities and challenges regarding disability policy. Issac Shapiro, co-CEO of Cleanlogic, shared a powerful and deeply personal message about how growing up with a mother who lost her

sight at age seven inspired him to dedicate his career to creating employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Dr. Rory Cooper from the University of Pittsburgh summarized his current work in the Human Engineering Research Laboratories (HERL) at Pitt, which is creating transformative technology for people with disabilities. Laurie Allen, a senior accessibility technology evangelist and leader of the Global Commercial Accessibility Program at Microsoft, discussed advancing disability inclusion through technology. The closing keynote featured Tiffany Yu, an author and social media creator. Yu, who earlier this year appeared on [Forbes' Accessibility 100](#) list, is a renowned disability advocate, entrepreneur and content creator with 134,000-plus TikTok followers. Yu's book, ["The Anti-Ableist Manifesto: Smashing Stereotypes, Forging Change and Building a Disability-Inclusive World."](#) is an Amazon Editors' Pick.

- **60th Anniversary Celebration** - The Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling program celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the program on October 30th, 2025. Dr. Lori Bruch, former Department Chair and former CRC Program Director, shared the history and contributions of the CRC program. The evening's featured speakers were Rob and Helen Froehlich, graduates of the program, who presented on the Ethics of AI use in the counseling profession.
- **Edward R. Leahy Jr. Clinic for the Uninsured** - The Leahy Clinic is one of the most "on brand" things that we do as an institution relative to the social justice aspect of our mission. Many students volunteer in the clinic, from across majors at the University (e.g., Accounting, Health Administration, Theology, Neuroscience, Biology, Physiology, BCMB, Nursing, Advertising/Public Relations/Social Media, Kinesiology, OT, PT, Counseling). Any student who wants to can get involved.

Some curricular requirements of LCHS programs are being met in the clinic.

1. BSN students all rotate through the clinic as part of their clinical in Community Nursing.
2. DPT students offer PT services in the PT Pro-bono Clinic under the supervision of volunteer faculty.
3. Graduate Counseling students complete Practicum and Internship hours in the Counseling and Behavioral Health Clinic.

The Leahy Clinic represents an important recruitment opportunity. The Dean's Office highlights the clinic at LCHS recruitment events, such as Royal Days, and we are further developing our collaboration with Pre-Health Professions Office so that they too can highlight the Leahy Clinic in their student recruitment efforts.

(All numbers for 2025 are as of 11-18-2025)

	2024	2025	Total
Total Patient Visits	776	879	1655
Total Unique Patients	312	219	531
Total Visits requiring interpretation	391	529	2186
U of S Student Volunteer hours	1,242	3,058	4,300

Number of Community volunteer hours (no Physicians)	636.5	1,036	1672.5
LCHS Faculty Volunteers	12	15	

Note:

Numbers for the Counseling and Behavioral Health Clinic and the PT Clinic for Fall 2025 are not included; they will provide their final count by mid-December. The number of medical students from Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine and their hours are also not included in the table.

The Weinberg Memorial Library

- **Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) subscriptions:** Following evaluation and a recommendation from the Electronic Resources Subcommittee of the Library Advisory Committee, the Library will cancel subscription access to RSC Complete due to low usage relative to cost. Access to RSC Complete will end 12/31/2025. The Library will retain access to the following RSC sub-packages: *Green Chemistry*, *Faraday Reviews*, and *Chemical Society Reviews Online*. These sub-packages account for the majority of use (views/downloads) within the RSC content and will remain active.
- **New resource – Mometrix Test Preparation eLibrary:** The Library has acquired the Mometrix Test Preparation eLibrary, which provides test preparation through study guides and practice tests for 1,500+ graduate and professional exams (e.g., GRE, LSAT, MCAT, CPA, and more). Access is available via the Library's A–Z list of databases.