

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Tracy M. Stewart, Ph.D.
Interim Provost/Senior VPAA

DATE: March 6, 2026

SUBJECT: Academic Affairs Report for March 2026

Provost & Associate Provost

- Summer Grants – We have received 21 proposals that will be reviewed by the Faculty Development Board for consideration.
- Presidential Fellowship for Summer Research Awards – We have received 14 proposals that will be reviewed by the Faculty Research Committee for consideration.
- A call for nominations went out for the Provost Enhancement Awards. Look for the revised awards and a simplified nomination process for all faculty to nominate peer and departmental excellence.
- The Academic Affairs AI Policy Task Force has scheduled its first meeting on March 10, 2026.
- The Currently Nameless Task Force to create a program review/health/sustainability process has scheduled its first meeting on March 12, 2026.

Faculty Searches

To date we have hired 7 new faculty

- Charles Kulick Assistant Professor Mathematics
- Kaitlyn Clarke Assistant Professor Health & Human Performance
- Juliana Kazemi Assistant Professor Philosophy
- Greg Campbell Assistant Professor Physics & Engineering
- Sarah Livick-Moses Assistant Professor Theology
- Madison Conway Faculty Specialist Communication
- Jonathan Thai Assistant Professor Chemistry

College of Arts & Sciences

- Faculty searches are moving along steadily. Math, Mechanical Engineering, Philosophy, Communication, Chemistry, and Theology are secured. Additional lines have offers pending: Microbiology, Special Education, Physiology, and English/Theater. Due to recently announced resignations and retirements, there are forthcoming searches for faculty specialists focused on first-year writing, VAP in philosophy (funded through EATC), and VAP in Criminal Justice. These requested positions were reviewed and approved by the Resource Management Committee.

- The Assessment Committee for the College of Arts and Sciences (ACCAS) has met multiple times and is beginning to set up extended work of the committee. To date, the committee has assessed the PLOs from multiple departments including Political Science, Philosophy, Chemistry, Military Science, Biology, Psychology, Communications, Computer Science, History, and Math/Mathematical Science. Feedback is shared with the department heads for use in future departmental meetings, program review, impact reports, and other assessment measures. The committee is continuing to create resources for the departments which will include templates, informational videos, and awareness to other assessment resources at the University level. Once the PLOs of all the departments are assessed, the plan is to ask the programs to present their PLOs to their peers during a committee hosted peer/peer PLO discussion. The Curriculum Committee for CAS (CCCAS) has met multiple times and is now moving forward with new course proposals that will be required to complete program GRIDS for the new roll out of the ICC in 2028. The committee is prioritizing the courses required for the high school articulation agreements and has already sent a number of them to the CCC. Six new courses have moved from the CCCAS to the FSCC for final approval. The committee continues to work with chairs and Program Directors in the formation of their GRIDS, and CAS has shared both a general GRID template as well as the English ICC GRID as examples for faculty from all colleges to use when creating their ICC GRID conversions.
- The Education department has now completed their Pennsylvania Department of Education recertification of all programs. This was a Herculean lift, and we are deeply grateful to their faculty led by Dr. Maria Oreshkina for their work on this endeavor over the last two years. Programs that were recertified are as follows: 7-12 Post-Baccalaureate Master's Degree in English, Citizenship, Biology, Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, General Science, 7-12 Undergraduate Bachelor's Degree in English, Citizenship, Biology, Physics, Mathematics; PreK-4 Undergraduate Degree; Special Education PreK-12 Post-Baccalaureate Master's Degree; and Spanish PK-12 Undergraduate Degree.
- Dean Barry has gathered faculty across the university who are editors, associate editors, and assistant editors of journals. A brownbag will be set up to share best practices in these roles.
- Faculty have provided feedback on a revised CAS Mission to be in alignment with the new university mission statement. Additionally, a CAS Values and Vision statements were also drafted and feedback was given. Revisions will occur and be shared in the coming weeks. Meanwhile, a draft CAS Strategic Plan will be sent to all faculty and staff with listening sessions scheduled and a feedback form in March.
- The release time for scholarship policy is in the process of revision and was shared with all CAS faculty. At the February Dean's Conference, the dean clarified her goals for the revision and a dialogue ensued with department chairs taking the conversation back to their departments. The dean asked for prompt feedback from said meetings to inform a revision of the draft document to bring forth during the March Dean's Conference.
- Faculty nominations were solicited for a CAS Dean's Faculty Advisory Board. The board consists of Dr. Yamile Silva (WLC), Fr. John Levko (MATH), Dr. Christine Zakzewski (PHYS/EG), and Attorney Jason Shrive (CJ/CYBER/SC). The group will gather monthly during the academic year to provide additional input to the dean on assorted projects.

- Great things happening in CAS:
 - Thanks to Dr. Rob Waldeck and neuroscience faculty colleagues, the NEPA Brain Bee for local high school youth was another successful event this past February.
 - Thanks to Dr. Yamile Silva and Dr. Amy Kuiken for their work to have World Language Day for local high school youth on March 5th.
 - Thanks to Dr. Sean Brennan and the history faculty and students for hosting a successful regional National History Day event on 2/28/26. The national event will also be hosted here later this spring.
 - John C. Norcross, Ph.D., ABPP, distinguished professor of psychology at The University of Scranton, ranks among the top 0.05% of scholars worldwide for his career contributions, according to the analytics platform ScholarGPS.
 - Drs. Christie Karpiak and Carolyn Barry were quoted in an article about psychology courses in prison education in a recent APA Monitor article: <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2026/03/prison-psychology-education-programs>
 - Dr. Kukkai Hozumi (Research Scientist in Dr. Nathaniel Frissell's group) was awarded a grant from the Office of Naval Research for \$599,981 over the next 3 years

Weinberg Memorial Library

- New Subscription Request Form
 - The Library has published a required form for requesting new recurring expense library resources (e.g., databases and journals). The Dean of the Library asks that the form—New Library Subscription Request Form—be submitted to his office (either via email or campus mail) in as complete a manner as possible. The form was endorsed by the Library Advisory Committee with no audible dissent on 2/24/2026.
 - The form is located on the Library's homepage, under About the Library, then Policies and Forms. A direct link is here: <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/about/policies/index.shtml>
- MISO Survey
 - Thank you to all faculty who participated in the MISO Survey. The data, once received by the Dean's office, will inform planning efforts to enhance the Library's services, spaces, and resources.
- Electronic Resources Management Subcommittee
 - The Electronic Resources Management Subcommittee is forming to review a selection of resources in Spring 2026. The committee will be guided by a data report and is charged with submitting recommendations to the Dean of the Library before the end of the Spring 2026 semester.
 - The Dean's decisions based on the Fall 2025 subcommittee's recommendations are available here: <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/libadcomm/libadvdocs.shtml>
- Affordable Learning Grants
 - The Library is accepting applications for Affordable Learning Grants, which aim to reduce the financial burden on students by replacing costly course materials with no-cost or low-cost alternatives, including appropriately licensed Library resources.

- Proposals for Fall 2026 and Intersession 2027 courses are due **April 24**. Up to four grants of \$1,000 will be awarded in this cycle. For more information, please visit: <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/infolit/oer-grants.shtml>
- Memorial Service for Charles Kratz
 - A Memorial Service for Charles Kratz, Dean Emeritus of the Library and Information Fluency, will be held in the Charles Kratz Scranton Heritage Room on Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. Charles's family warmly welcomes faculty to attend.
 - There will be an opportunity for individuals to share remarks and memories. Those wishing to speak are asked to contact Dean George Aulisio by email so that he may plan accordingly.
- Environmental Art Show
 - Call for Art: The 2026 Environmental Art Show theme is *Nature Reimagined*. Submissions are open to students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Digital submissions are due April 2, 2026.
 - Submission link: https://form.jotform.com/wml_admin/environmental-art-show
 - Exhibit Dates: April 13–22, 2026, Charles Kratz Heritage Room, 5th Floor.
- IDEA Center
 - The inaugural IDEA Center IDEA Center Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, March 12. The committee is composed of faculty and staff. A student representative request has been made to Student Government as well.
 - IDEA Center Recent Events
 - Wyoming Seminary 7th grade field trip to the IDEA Center
 - NEPA Pan African Coalition afterschool program field trip to the IDEA Center
 - IDEA Center hosted CEEPS – Campaign School
 - 3/3/26 - Hosting information sessions to promote the Environmental Art Show, Nature Reimagined
 - IDEA Center Upcoming Events
 - 3/10/26 - Hosting information and work sessions to promote the Environmental Art Show, Nature Reimagined
 - 3/13/26 - Hosting an educational event for the SMART Program through the Center for Social Justice
 - 3/17/26 - Hosting an event for the Student Life department
 - 3/19-3/20 - Hosting Old Forge School District field trips
 - 3/24/26 - Hosting a Rotary Club networking event
 - 3/26/26 - Educational programming for students from the United Neighborhood Center
 - 3/28/26 - Traveling to the NEPA Girls STEM Competition with student volunteers (volunteers welcome on ROYALSYNC)
 - 4/13/26 - Educational programming for students in the SOAR program with the NEIU 19
 - 4/14/26 - Educational programming for students in the STRIVE program with the NEIU 19
 - 4/16/26 - Presenting at the Communications Symposium
- Hope Horn Art Gallery
 - The Hope Horn Art Gallery has published a new art catalog: *The Anthracite Coal Industry of Northeastern Pennsylvania: Selected Prints, Drawings, and Watercolors* from

The Stanislaus Collection, 1933–1946, co-authored by Richard Stanislaus G'98, Chester Kulesa, Peter Hoffer, and Darlene Miller-Lanning, Ph.D. Copies are available at the Hope Horn Art Gallery, Hyland Hall, 4th Floor.

- Conference on Confronting the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence
 - The Conference Co-Planners (George Aulio, Megan Heeder, and Dan Marenda) are pleased to share the draft schedule for the National Interdisciplinary Conference on *Confronting the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*. The near-final schedule can be found here: <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/ai/schedule.shtml>
 - All events will be open to University of Scranton faculty free of charge, except the Conference Dinner, which requires payment. If you would like to attend the Conference Dinner, please register here: <https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/ai/registration.shtml>
 - While we will welcome faculty, staff, and students to attend each of the papers. We kindly request that you RSVP for the papers you plan to attend by emailing AI-Ethics@scranton.edu. We want to ensure adequate seating in the classroom where papers will be delivered.

Curriculum Updates: Signed by the Provost

Program Change

Sports Management Concentration

Date Posted

5/6/25

Course Change

MGT 474: Managing Diversity

5/7/25

MGT 476: Sports Facilities Mgt

5/6/25

MGT 473: Sports Marketing

5/6/25

MGT 450: Sports Management

5/6/25

MGT 430: Sport Event Management

5/6/25

Kinesiology 380: Internship in Kinesiology

5/13/25

Graduate Academic and Student Services

- Graduate Assistant Information - Applications for graduate assistant positions are now open for the upcoming academic year. An information session was held in February, in addition to three prior sessions outlining assistantship responsibilities and expectations. While March 1 was the priority deadline, the application remains open. To date, 237 applications have been received. Allocations of positions will be provided to departments by each dean’s office.
- A graduate student social is being planned for later in April as part of our continued efforts to strengthen graduate student engagement and foster community.
- Technology Support for Online Faculty and Students - Early in the spring semester, faculty and students were informed of the Technology Support Center’s Help Desk hours. While 24/7 support is no longer offered for online faculty and students, the Help Desk continues to provide extended support throughout the week: Monday–Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Sunday from noon to 6:00 p.m., ensuring access to assistance during the times it is most frequently needed.

- Technology Consultants (TechCons) remain available to assist with any issues specific to Brightspace and can be contacted in the TechCon office at 570-941-5822. [Please check for availability](#). Weekend assistance is also available.
- Graduate Catalog - Responsibility for the Graduate Catalog has transitioned to the Registrar's Office. Future calls for revisions or updates will be distributed by Joe Redington rather than the Office of Graduate Academic and Student Services.

Center for Teaching Excellence

- Workshop Attendance - *Accessible by Design: Strategies for Documents, Media, and Brightspace Content* on February 24 and March 3. This workshop focused on helping instructors create accessible digital learning materials that comply with accessibility standards and support all students. It provided strategies for making documents, multimedia, and Brightspace content more accessible as a starting point for meeting WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards. It was offered in-person and online. Attendance: 11 [4 CAS, 3 LCHS, 3 Staff]. This workshop can be customized for departments to align with program priorities. Reach out to Mary Jane Murphy-Bowne at Ext. 4040 to arrange a department or program session.
- Tech Fix Tuesdays - Introducing *Tech Fix Tuesdays*. Tech Fix Tuesdays is a relaxed, drop-in support session designed to help instructors improve their digital teaching materials and troubleshoot educational technology challenges. During this open Microsoft Teams meeting, participants can ask questions, get help resolving accessibility issues, learn more about making course materials more accessible, using Microsoft Teams effectively, or exploring ways to make ed tech tools work better in their courses. The sessions provide a collaborative space to troubleshoot, tweak, and upgrade course materials with accessibility and inclusive design in mind. Faculty can bring specific questions, tools they are experimenting with, or teaching materials they would like help refining. When: Third Tuesday of every month, 11:30 AM – 12:15 PM [Participants can join using the Teams meeting link](#).
- Request a Department-Specific Teams Meeting Workshop before June - The June deadline for sunseting Zoom on campus is quickly approaching. To help departments proactively prepare for the transition to Teams Meetings before the spring semester wraps up, we are offering department-specific Teams transition workshops. Please contact Mary Jane at ext. 4040 to arrange for a session. [See the public document for updates and resources to help you make the move to Teams Meetings](#).
- Supporting Apporto Adoption - The CTE is partnering with IT Services to support the adoption of Apporto, a cloud-based platform that will replace the previously used virtual desktop system. This transition is expected to reduce costs while expanding available features for the university. We are also exploring ways to integrate access through Brightspace. The TechCons, many of whom used the previous system, are developing support guides for both students and faculty.
- Brightspace Online Exams with Accommodations - In compliance with the Faculty Handbook 33.0, there will no longer be spot checks for exams in Brightspace for students who need accommodations. Please ensure that all exam settings, such as availability dates, time limits, and Special Access overrides, are configured correctly. To assist with this process, please refer to the [Exam Checklist for Students with Accommodations](#).

- Professional Video Captioning - With our license for Panopto, we have 1,000 hours of professional (human-created) captioning available yearly. Professional captioning is more reliable than auto-captioning. Any unused hours will expire in June, and we'd love to see this resource put to good use. Please consider requesting professional captioning for videos used across multiple years or courses, appearing on public-facing websites, or having long-term instructional or institutional importance. [To request professional captioning, please complete this form.](#)
- RUOnline Conference - The CTE team has been selected to present at the Rutgers Online Learning Conference held virtually on March 16th. Our topic is *Student Expertise in LMS Support & Online Learning*. In this session, we will highlight how the TechCon program at the U of S leverages student expertise to expand institutional support for educational technology use and online learning. The session will highlight practical considerations such as recruiting, job expectations, supervision, and workflow management. We are thrilled that Senior TechCon, Logan Kiernan, will be participating in the presentation to share the student perspective. We are also asking faculty to share stories about how TechCons have supported them. [If you have a good example, please share it here.](#) If you are interested in attending the conference, [you can still register here.](#)
- Join the CTE Community - [Consider joining the CTE Community on Viva Engage](#) to get notifications about upcoming workshops or timely ed tech updates. We would love to see this community grow to better serve the U of S.

Office of Student Support & Success

- The OSSS is now a CRLA (College Reading and Learning Association) certified Tutor Training Program. Becoming internationally certified requires 10 hours of training and 25 hours of direct instruction.
- OSSS Tutoring Services: Tutors have fully transitioned from a home-grown tutoring platform to the WC Online scheduler. The former scheduler linked a student to a tutor for the entire semester. With WC Online the student can book a tutor much faster, and tutor 1x time or select repeat sessions.
- 120 tutors are employed by the OSSS and have tutored 933 sessions in Spring 2026 so far. The OSSS tutors 40 subjects in 157 different courses. Writing Center: 16 Writing Center consultants met with 104 students holding 166 total consultations to date.
- Academic Coaching & Student Support: 133 academic coaching sessions have been held by OSSS graduate assistants to date.
- Students Receiving Academic Accommodations: 507 students received academic accommodations, 213 requests this 2025-26 year: 180 in Fall 2025, 33 Spring 2026 to date.
- Exams Proctored in OSSS: 400 exams were proctored in the OSSS, to date. Avg: 80/week. The OSSS struggles with space necessary to proctor these exams, often using our conference room and staff offices as testing space.
- Note-taking Accommodation: 191 note-takers are employed by the OSSS. 355 classes have note- and 181 students receive note-taking accommodations in one or more of their classes (175 in Fall 2024, 100 in Fall 2023). **There are 7 courses that remain unfulfilled for note-taking accommodations** – common causes are finding a student note taker interested + the hiring process through HR requiring I-9 documentation.