TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: WeiDong Zhu, Ph.D.
Provost/SVPAA

DATE: November 6, 2026

SUBJECT: Provost Report for November 13, 2026

1. KSOM Dean Search

I am pleased to announce that Jess Boronico, Ph.D. has been named Dean of the Kania School of Management effective January 4, 2027. Since 2022, Dr. Boronico has served as dean of the School of Business at Southern Connecticut State University, where he has led successful initiatives focused on academic development, accreditation and community engagement while overseeing strategic planning efforts and a substantial increase in enrollment. I wish to thank the Search Committee headed by Dean Castellanos for their efforts.

2. Fall Open Houses

I was able to attend the reimagined Open Houses on October 25 and November 8 and enjoyed the enthusiasm from the campus community and from the prospective students and their families. I extend my sincere appreciation to those faculty and staff who sacrificed a portion of the Sundays to support the Open House events.

3. Graduate Program Committee

I will be joining the Graduate Program Committee (GPC) as the Chair of the Committee to further support the work of the committee. There are no changes to the current membership of the committee, but an assessment of the membership will be carried out towards the end of the academic year.

4. Changes to Graduate Assistant Program

An announcement was sent out to Gradate Program Directors announcing the financial analysis and policy changes for AY 2027-2028 Graduate Assistant Program. The University plans to communicate the changes in advance to allow current and prospective graduate assistants sufficient time to consider their options. The updated agreements will be made available through SharePoint for the GPC, with the application process opening shortly thereafter.

5. Voluntary Window Plan Information Sessions

The Provost and Human Resources Offices held two Information Sessions designed to help Eligible Full-Time Faculty understand the Voluntary Window Plan that was announced on October 15. The Information Sessions were scheduled for Thursday, October 29 and Thursday, November 12.

6. Faculty Access to Sedona Systems Scholarship Software

The Provost's Office has purchased University-wide access to Sedonaweb ("Sedona" in short), a scholarship and scholarly activity tracking system that the Kania School of Management already uses. With Sedona, faculty would keep their own teaching, research, and service records up to date. The system could then generate CVs and public profiles as one desires, and supply data for accreditation and annual reports to department chairs. The goal is one accurate record of faculty work, so faculty receive fewer duplicate requests for the same information. Setting up of the system and training will be in order soon. We have discussed the proposal with Faculty Senate leadership.

7. Curriculum

Curriculum Updates: Approved by the Provost

NewCourses:
PHIL 432 -Free Will, Science, & Self
PS 410 - Global Democracy Seminar
LS 101 Intro to Legal Studies
Course Revision:
Renaming Business Honors OIM 351-K to OIM 252-K
Program Revisions & Changes:
OIM-351-ECO-FIN-IB
Business Administration BS
Kinesiology Grid Statement

8. Division Updates

Faculty Development

Intersession Grants 2027

The Faculty Development Board awarded the following Intersession Grants:

Collin Brice, Ph.D.	*Hearing the Whole Person: How Younger and Older Adults Process Gender in Speech.*
Art Catino, Ph.D.	*A Transition-Metal-Free Approach to the Synthesis of Tetraarylmethanes*
Sara Chan, Ph.D.	*Caregiver Burden: What Can Care Ethics' Communitarian Ideal Learn from Confucian Societies*
Michael Crowell, PT, DSc	*Psychological Predictors of Early Postoperative Pain Trajectories Following Shoulder Stabilization Surgery*
Caral Enriquez, PT, DPT, Ph.D.	*Mapping the Evidence for Pain Neuroscience Education in Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain: Implications for Clinical Practice and Precision Rehabilitation Research*
Shuhua Fan, Ph.D.	*Language and Empire: Francis Knight and the Introduction of Chinese. Language Instruction into*

	U.S. Higher Education, with Harvard as a Case Study
Taewan Kim, Ph.D.	*The Interplay of Formal and Informal Institutions on Entrepreneurial Re-entry*
Charles Kulick, Ph.D.	*Prediction of Capelin Schooling: Learning Heterogeneous Collective Motion*
Jinqing Liu, Ph.D.	*From Strategy Repertoire to Strategy Space: The Development of Prospective Teachers' Creative Mathematical Thinking*
Farshad Merrikh-Bayat, Ph.D.	*Optimal Trajectory Compression for Data-Driven Predictive Control*
Dave Sannino, Ph.D.	*Piloting the impact of microbiota and dietary thiamine on the infectivity of thiaminase I producing bacteria*
Yuzo Yanagitsuru, Ph.D	*Characterization of sexually dimorphic growth and its relationship to life history of sablefish (Anoplopoma fimbria)*

Sabbaticals

The Faculty Research Committee approved the following sabbaticals for 2027-2028 AY.

Fall 2027	Spring 2028	Academic Yr
Sean Brennan	Madeline Gangnes	Peter Andresen
Brian Conniff	Megan Heeder	Colleen Farry-Intersession 27 & Summer 28
John Deak	Ozgur Isil	Spencer Galen
Deb Fethman	Cyrus Olsen	Anne Royer
Antoinette Glover	Jessica Nolan	
Andrew LaZella	Brian Snee	
David Salerno		
Mary Troy		
Jennifer Vasquez		
Jennifer Whittaker		

Graduate Academic & Student Services

- Graduate Assistant applications for the 2027-2028 academic year are planned to open around mid-November. Information sessions are planned for current and prospective students.

Center for Teaching Excellence

- **Explorance Blue Update**
  Course evaluations are now underway for regular-schedule courses for Fall 2026. They will open for the H2 subterm courses on November 22 and the N2 subterm

courses on November 23. There are some important reminders for faculty as we adapt this new course evaluation tool.

- **Opting in:** Although course evaluations are optional for most faculty this semester, those who are required to participate (including faculty specialists, first-year faculty, and adjunct faculty) must still opt in. For future semesters, we are exploring ways to automate the opt-in process for those required to participate. However, this functionality is not yet available for Fall 2026 courses.
- **Selecting course objectives**: Faculty should avoid selecting the same objective at both the Essential and Important levels. Although the Faculty Senate recently voted to eliminate these distinctions, evaluations for the current semester were launched before that decision. Therefore, this guidance applies only to the current semester.
- **Completing the setup process:** Even if faculty do not wish to select objectives or add custom questions, they must still click **Submit** to complete this step to be able to launch their evaluations.
- **Understanding the difference between opting in and launching:** Opting in indicates a faculty member's intention to participate, while launching confirms that all required setup steps have been completed. Both actions are necessary this semester for participating faculty. During mandatory evaluation semesters, neither action will be required.

- **Past CTE Events**

  Objective Setting Office Hours: September 28 and October 6, 12:15 – 1:00

  These office hour sessions provided time for faculty members to stop in via Teams or in-person to ask questions about the setup of the new course evaluation tool.

  Introduction to Explorance Blue, October 8, 11:30 – 12:00

  This session introduced faculty to our new course evaluation tool. Our Explorance Blue partners provided an overview of the platform and a firsthand look at its features and functionality. Faculty had the opportunity to learn what to expect from the new course evaluation experience and had an opportunity to ask questions as we prepare for the transition to Blue. Nine faculty members joined us online. [1 CAS, 7 LCHS, 1 KSOM] The recording is available on the CTE Course Evaluation Website page.

  Tech Fix Tuesdays resumed on October 20 at 12:15

  Tech Fix Tuesdays are a relaxed, open Teams Meeting session where we troubleshoot, tweak, and upgrade your digital teaching materials with accessibility in mind, or address your Teams or ed tech tool questions. Join us on the third Tuesday of the month using this Teams meeting link.

  Explorance Blue Update for CAS Deans Conference

  We joined the CAS Deans Conference on October 27 to provide a brief overview of the key reminders for faculty using Explorance Blue for the first

time. Please reach out to the CTE if you would like to request programming for your college or department.

CTE Community on Viva Engage

We continue to provide regular updates about Brightspace, Course Evaluations, and other educational technology tools, as well as information about upcoming events at the CTE, on our community on Viva Engage. Consider joining the community to receive notifications when updates are posted.

- **Upcoming CTE Events**

  Objective Setting Office Hours: Thursday, November 12, Thursday, November 19, and Tuesday, November 24, at 11:30 – 12:30

  These office hour sessions provide time for faculty members to stop in via Teams or in person to ask questions about the setup of the new course evaluation tool.

  The Journey, Not the GenAI: Designing Assignments that Make Thinking Visible with Microsoft Assignments

  - What if we focused not just on the final assignment product but on the process students use to get there? In this hands-on workshop, faculty will explore how Microsoft Assignments and Class Notebook can make students' processes more visible, from initial brainstorming and drafting to revision and reflection. Participants will learn practical strategies for using the Microsoft integration in Brightspace to monitor assignment progress, provide formative feedback, and support student ownership in the age of generative AI.
  - Join the session on November 12, 2026, in the CTE Conference Room, LSC 591, from 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM. We will also provide a Teams link for those who want to attend remotely.
  - **Please register for the workshop on the My Scranton site, using the Employee CTE Events Card. The event is listed under Brightspace (D2L) Workshops.**

- **Outcomes Tool in Brightspace**

  We will soon be opening the Learning Outcomes tool in Brightspace. Using Learning Outcomes provides an alternative way to evaluate proficiency in skills and mastery of concepts. We hope that using this tool will allow us to more easily assess student progress toward meeting the ICC SLOs or other defined learning criteria at the university. If you currently use the legacy tool, Competencies, you can continue to use it. You just would not want to activate Learning Outcomes in the same course as you are using Competencies. Please reach out to the CTE if you are interested in learning more about using the Learning Outcomes tool in your course.

- **A Reminder to Download Historical Course Evaluation Reports**

  The historical data from the previous course evaluation system cannot be transferred to our new tool, Blue. Faculty who would like copies for their records should go to MyScranton and select the "Historical Course Evaluation Record" link on the Faculty Course Evaluation card. This will allow you to download reports from previous evaluations for your files. See instructions for downloading these records here.

Office of Global Education

Fall 2026 Study Abroad

- In the Fall 2026 semester, we have eight students studying abroad on semester programs. The students' host university sites include Madrid (5 students); Barcelona (1); Cork (1); and Prague (1).

Intersession & Spring 2027 Study Abroad

- Faculty-Led Study Abroad (FLSA) courses planned in Intersession 2027 include:
  - Brazil - HAD 595: South American Health Systems led by Dr. Steven Szydlowski – 7 students
  - Ireland - BLDR 384 (special topic): Global Leadership: Ireland led by Stephen Whittaker and Ashley Stampone – 13 students
  - South Africa – BIOL 296 Tropical Ecology – led by Dr. Gary Kwiecinski and Dr. Marc Seid: 11 students
  - Egypt –TRS 339 - Eastern Christian Spirituality – led by Dr. Michael Azar – 7 students
  - Belize - OT 380: Level I, Clinical I – Pediatrics led by Dr. Stephanie DeNaples and Dr. Laura Zagacki (numbers not yet confirmed)
  - Several faculty-led courses that were tentatively planned will not go abroad due to low student numbers. (Ireland - NURS 496 Healthcare Systems and Nursing Practice Abroad); (France - PS 384: Migration & Citizenship in Europe); and (Dominican Republic - OT 480: Level I, Clinical III- Physical Rehabilitation)

- 75 students submitted applications to study abroad in Intersession 2027 on a program hosted by one of our study abroad partner institutions. This includes 29 students for Ireland; 33 students for Italy; 4 for Japan; 4 for Czech Republic; 3 for France; 1 for Ghana, and 1 for Australia.

- 31 students submitted applications to study abroad in Spring 2027 at one of our study abroad partner institutions. This includes 11 for Italy; 8 for Spain; 4 for Ireland; 3 for Australia; 2 for multi-destination Europe; 1 for the UK; 1 for South Korea, and 1 for Denmark.

Fulbright U.S. Student Scholarship & Marshall Scholarships

- Two undergraduate students submitted applications for the 2027-28 Fulbright Awards. One is for Study/Research in Biochemistry in Ireland; and one is for a master's degree in Wild Animal Biology in the UK. The deadline for Fulbright applications for 2027-28 was October 6, 2026.
- One of the Fulbright applicants (the Ireland candidate) also submitted an application for the UK Marshall Scholarship to study for a master's degree at the University of Cambridge. The deadline for the Marshall was September 29, 2026.

International Student & Scholar Services

Global Insights Events

- Two Global Insights lunchtime events were held this term in the Rose Room in Brennan. About 50 students, faculty, and staff attended each presentation which highlighted the cultures of the presenters.
  - October 1 – United Arab Emirates – presented by an undergraduate student from United Arab Emirates
  - November 4 – France – presented by a Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant for French from France

New International Students and Scholars

This Fall, we welcomed 8 new international students and scholars, which include 3 new graduate students (Nepal, Pakistan, and India); 1 new undergraduate student (Saudi Arabia); 2 new exchange students (Taiwan); 2 new Fulbright Language Teaching Assistants (Mexico and France); and 1 new Chinese Language Instructor (Taiwan).

Continuing Students

51 international students who were enrolled at Scranton previously have returned to campus and are continuing their studies this Fall. They are from: Afghanistan (2); Bangladesh (1); China (1); Dominican Republic (2); El Salvador (1); India (30); Ireland (2); Mexico (1); Pakistan (2); Philippines (1); and Saudi Arabia (8).

OPT

We have a total of 200 students and scholars enrolled in Optional Practical Training who are undertaking work while on their F1 visa following graduation from Scranton

- 56 Regular OPT (Post-Completion OPT)
  - 43 Approved
  - 13 Pending
- 144 STEM Extension OPT
  - 66 Approved
  - 78 Pending

9. College and Library Updates

College of Arts and Science

- The inaugural CAS mentoring program launched. Just last week we collected feedback from mentors and mentees as to how it is going so far and all is well. The Physics and Engineering Department is recruiting for their own mentoring program for their students.
- The Communication Advisory Board and Industrial Advisory Board for Engineering will hold meetings this month wherein we discuss program ongoings with alumni or friends of the university with relevant professional experience and in turn learn how best to ensure our curriculum and co-curricular offerings will help our students be ready for their life post-graduation.

- Continued work on the ICC roll out will occur this fall through the CAS Curriculum Committee. The deadline to submit for all GRIDs for ICC conversion for programs is Nov. 6th.
- The following courses were approved by the CAS Curriculum Committee and then Dean's Conference:
    - 3 new courses (BIOL376, BIOL377, and T/RS343)
    - 3 program revisions (Cybercrime and Homeland Security, Legal Studies concentration and the Public Policy and Service minor)
    - 3 course revisions (DS201, INTD115, PSIO390)
    - 1 course deletion (PSYC140)
- The Assessment Committee for CAS (ACCAS) is continuing their work on PLO's for select departments, as well as providing additional input into forthcoming program reviews and impact reports. They will work together with the Associate Dean to put together an annual assessment report based on the annual report feedback which quantifies where each program is in the assessment of their PLOs within each program.
- All CAS academic departments are reviewing their course caps and providing their justifications when caps defer from norms to the Dean's Office by December 1st.
- CAS has program reviews underway this fall for History/International Studies (external review), Sociology and Criminal Justice (external review), Cybercrime and Homeland Security with M.S. in CIC, as well as Psychology. Also, the impact report for the Prison Education Program is also occurring this fall.
- As a result of the diligent documentation by the department chairs and program directors this past summer, the CAS Dean's Office was able to document that 119 pieces of scholarship were published by CAS faculty and 158 papers/posters were presented at peer-reviewed conferences during the 2025-2026 academic year. Additionally, 338 CAS students engaged in research in one or more forms, and 104 CAS students presented at the Celebration of Scholars and many others at regional, national or international scholarly conferences. Kudos to our faculty and students!
- Given the retirement of Dr. Rob Waldeck, a call for the next neuroscience program director occurred and has now concluded. Dr. Ashley Driver will serve in this role beginning August 2027.
- The CAS, KSOM, and LCHS deans announced to the Student Senate that Dean's List certificates are going digital effective this semester through MeritPages. Students will still be able to download a copy if desired. Messaging has gone out to students and professional/faculty advisors but we welcome all to continue to spread the word. The deans assured the students that money saved from this shift will go toward student programming.
- Applications for course release (known as FRAP in CAS) are due to the Dean's Office on **November 20th** and are prospective rather than retrospective this year and moving forward.

The Leahy College of Health Sciences

- Updates from the Edward R. Leahy Jr. Clinic for the Uninsured
  The Edward R. Leahy Jr. Clinic for the Uninsured includes a free medical clinic that offers primary care services to the uninsured residents of Lackawanna County. The

clinic is operated through a partnership between Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine and The University of Scranton. University faculty and staff are invited to join our many University of Scranton students who volunteer in the Leahy Clinic.

- Tom Minora, MD, and Rajan Mulloth, MD, are New Co-medical Directors
  For Dr. Mulloth, the appointment is less a new beginning than a return to a place that has long held special meaning. He was among the clinic's earliest volunteer physicians when it opened in 2007, joining a small group of providers committed to caring for patients who otherwise had limited access to healthcare. Over the years, he spent Thursday afternoons at the clinic, working alongside students and fellow volunteers to provide care in an environment focused solely on patients' needs. An internal medicine physician, Dr. Mulloth brings decades of clinical experience to the role. He earned his medical degree from the University of Delhi in India, completed additional training in England, and came to the United States in 1994. Since 1996, he has practiced community-based internal medicine in northeastern Pennsylvania, building long-term relationships with patients and families across generations.

  Dr. Thomas L. Minora has practiced medicine in the Scranton area for more than 20 years. He received his medical degree from Universidad de Guadalajara and completed his residency at The Wright Center. Specializing in internal medicine and geriatrics, he focuses on chronic disease management, including Alzheimer's disease, hypertension and diabetes.
- The Leahy Clinic has received a $203,000 Community-Based Health Care Program Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Health
  The Community-Based Health Care Program Grant from the PA DOH provides funds for the Leahy Clinic to hire two part-time language translators who will provide English language translation services and will develop and implement a patient-centered *Language Access Plan*. The Language Access Plan will increase the Leahy Clinic's capacity for in-person translation by humans and will utilize translation technology tools as part of a comprehensive *Language Services Toolkit*.

  Expected population health outcomes included limited English proficiency (LEP) patient satisfaction with care, increased provider satisfaction with outcomes of LEP patient office visits, increase in the total number of patients and LEP patients provided services, and increased LEP patient compliance with screening recommendations.
- Upcoming Cultural CareFest on November 17, 2026
  Under the leadership of Dr. Krisy Elrod and Dr. Megan Whitbeck, Assistant Professors in the Counseling and Human Services Department, Cultural CareFest is scheduled for November 17, 2026. This interdisciplinary collaboration fosters cross-disciplinary dialogue and offers new professional insights on serving diverse populations in Scranton. Cultural CareFest exemplified the university's commitment to social justice education, advocacy, and nurturing a compassionate community dedicated to equitable care.

Kania School of Management

- On November 14th, the Kania School will be hosting Young Kania Day, a networking event for students. Students will have the opportunity to meet and engage with alumni. They expect 25 alumni to return to campus to offer their insight and expertise. Mr. Sean Hand, an experienced networker, relationship developer, author, and public speaker, will once again be the keynote speaker. He will discuss networking and relationship development tactics and strategies with students.
- Dr. Iordanis Petsas has been elected to the Board of Directors of the University of Macedonia (located in Northern Greece, with more than 15,800 students) for a four-year term (2026–2030). Dr. Petsas is honored to contribute to the university's strategic governance and institutional direction. You can find the official announcement of his appointment on the university's website here: The Board of Directors – University of Macedonia.

The Weinberg Memorial Library

Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) AI Ready Initiative

- The University continues coordinating its engagement with the Council of Independent Colleges' AI Ready initiative, which provides professional development and institutional resources to support the responsible integration of artificial intelligence into higher education. November's programming focuses on *Cheating, Authorship, and Academic Trust*. Additionally, CIC's partnership with Google for Education offers participating institutions access to AI credentialing opportunities through the Google AI for Education Accelerator. Planning is underway to determine how these opportunities can best support University faculty, staff, and students.

Confronting the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence Conference

- Planning continues for the University's second international interdisciplinary conference, *Confronting the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*, scheduled for April 29–May 1, 2027. The conference will build upon the success of the inaugural 2026 event, which welcomed more than 100 participants from 18 states and abroad. The submission deadline has been extended to November 18, 2026, and University of Scranton faculty from all academic disciplines are strongly encouraged to submit proposals. The conference provides an opportunity to share research, explore the ethical implications of emerging technologies, and engage in interdisciplinary dialogue with scholars and practitioners from across the country and internationally.

MISO Survey Results and Follow-Up

- The Weinberg Memorial Library finalized its review of the Spring 2026 MISO survey results and has responded to the open-ended feedback received from the University community. The open ended anonymous comments as well as the Library's replies are published and accessible from the following webpage: https://www.scranton.edu/academics/wml/about/assessment/index.shtml. The Library thanks the faculty, staff, and students who participated in the survey and provided valuable feedback.

IDEA Center

- Throughout October, the IDEA Center expanded its integration into academic programming and community engagement. The Center partnered with Occupational Therapy courses on 3D design and adaptive technologies and collaborated with business and communication courses on integrating emerging technologies into learning. The Center also hosted visiting deans from Jesuit institutions for a design challenge exploring campus belonging through the lens of *cura personalis*.
- Additionally, the IDEA Center welcomed 30 juniors and seniors from Scranton High School for an experiential learning visit incorporating entrepreneurship, engineering, and a campus tour. The Center continues developing partnerships with regional educational organizations and expanding K–12 STEM outreach opportunities.

Hope Horn Gallery

- The Hope Horn Gallery is presenting *Peter Hoffer: Reflections. Five Decades of Art* through November 20. The exhibition features works spanning five decades of the artist's career, including paintings, watercolors, drawings, prints, and collages. An artist lecture and reception were held on October 23.

Schemel Forum

- The Schemel Forum continues its fall programming with several events in November:
  - **November 6:** Victor Goines, founding director of the Juilliard Jazz Studies Program, presents *Jazz: From the Streets and Clubs to the Schools and Concert Halls*.
  - **November 12:** The Schemel Forum, in collaboration with the Friends of the Weinberg Memorial Library, presents *The Freedom to Read: A Screening and Panel Discussion of The Librarians*, featuring Susan Campbell Bartoletti, Kate Cummings, and Michele Legate.
  - **November 16:** Steven J. Scheinman, M.D., dean emeritus of Geisinger College of Health Sciences, presents *Why Do We Have the Worst Health Care Outcomes? A Consideration of the Social Determinants of Health*.

The Forum's evening course on Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*, taught by Professor Andrew LaZella, also continues through November 23.

Office of Student Support & Success

The OSSS Fall 2026 statistics through week 10:

- Tutoring: 90 tutors have been hired and 3000 sessions have been held.
- Writing Center: We introduced 5 new writing consultants this semester, with 15 consultants total. There have been over 365 writing sessions to date. The OSSS has hosted 26 workshops (huge increase!)
- There are 171 new ADA requests this semester so far – around 17% of incoming class. We have already proctored over 1000 exams.
- Disability Services: Approximately 590 students are actively registered with our office.

- We have hired over 140 Note takers in over 359 courses. In week 9/10, we are still seeking note takers for 25 courses. The OSSS has reached out to the students for interest in a work study position multiple times, and to faculty to understand if they provide supplemental materials that may fulfill the accommodation need.
- Gonzaga: There are 36 students accepted into the program. We have 26 so far working on a weekly basis with 80+ total sessions.
- 2 Pilot workshops were given to get students on Academic Probation into the OSSS for resources. 70 invited. 2 attended.
- Our 5 GA academic coaches have held 325 appointments to date.