

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Joseph H. Dreisbach, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

DATE: October 10, 2017

RE: Academic Affairs Report for October 2017

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**1. Updates and comments from the Interim Provost:**

- a. Open Houses on October 22 and November 5. I offer my most sincere appreciation for those who engage prospective students and their parents throughout the year. On these Open House Sundays, you take time away from your personal schedules and your families so to meet with our visitors in a way that has proven most effective in drawing students to the University. Thank you for doing that!
- b. Proposals to Discontinue Select Programs. During the annual report process, I discussed with a number of chairpersons the likelihood that the University administration would propose certain majors for discontinuation – “sunsetting” in higher education jargon. Ten degree programs, 5 undergraduate and 5 graduate programs, along with some certificate programs were so identified.

To my knowledge this is the first time the administration has taken this type of action. Many are asking why the action is being taken, how the programs were selected, and how the process will happen.

Why? Although the University’s financial status is very sound, and much stronger than many, the operating budgets of the University have been flat for some years. These facts have been communicated to the University in a variety of venues through the CRR updates. Discontinuing a small academic program will not provide the financial resources to increase the operating budgets. That is not the purpose. Rather, the proposals for program discontinuation are presented in an attempt to refocus resources, human and financial, into programs that have potential to attract students to the University of Scranton.

Selection criteria? The programs that are proposed for discontinuation have, to various degrees, histories of very low enrollment – both recruiting numbers and graduation numbers. There appears to be little prospect that the programs will attract students in strong numbers. More importantly, the discontinuation proposals are being made in programs where, if in fact discontinuation happens, no individual faculty member will have their position at risk. In fact, in every case there are very strong opportunities for faculty to focus on major programs of study that could be developed to be more attractive to larger number of applicants.

The Process? In every case, the policies and processes outlined in the Discontinuance of an Academic Program Policy (#5-0506 10 February 2006) will be followed carefully. This policy was developed so to ensure that the principles of shared governance will be incorporated into these processes.

I include below my memorandum to the chairpersons of programs that have been proposed for discontinuation:

Regular review and action on academic program offerings must be integral in the functions of institutions of higher education. The University's administration has always encouraged new program development. More recently, there has been a more explicit call for program faculty to examine how their programs can be developed to become more distinctive. The institution has not been very active in systematically reviewing for program discontinuation.

Although the overall financial status of the University is very sound, its operating budget has been flat for some years. In context, one must realize that most institutions of higher learning find themselves in similar situations, and in many cases, ones that are quite serious. Nevertheless, these developing budget realities require that the University accept the responsibility of reviewing more carefully its assortment of program offerings. In addition to investment in new and existing programs as noted above, that responsibility includes identifying programs that should be discontinued so to make these reinvestments. This communication is intended to inform you of programs within your department that are being proposed for discontinuation.

I emphasize that **no faculty member will lose employment** with The University of Scranton as a result of the program discontinuation proposals that are being presented here. I realize that the monetary savings from discontinuing a particular academic program will be very modest and in some cases nil. Nevertheless, reallocating savings to invest in other academic programs, both new and existing programs, at a time when operating budgets of the University are flat and even decreasing, has become increasingly important. Even more noteworthy is the opportunity for talented faculty to refocus on other academic roles within their disciplines so to enhance new and existing programs that have the history or potential of attracting students.

In some cases certain faculty committed much professional effort into developing and offering these programs. Please know that the proposal to discontinue a particular academic program is in no way a reflection of this faculty effort or commitment. The proposal to discontinue a program is based, primarily, on low enrollments and the inability of the program to attract students to The University of Scranton.

- c. Status of EPII. Little information on the resource requirements to implement the Senate motion on EPII (EPO and EPD) have come forth from the Implementation Committee. I gathered some very general information from many chairpersons during the annual report process. More recently, I have engaged the deans with the hope of obtaining information that is more specific. This has been very difficult work

but I will have some type of “guestimate” within another week or two. At this point it is clear that resources will be required, and they will be significant.

- d. A new concept for the 2019-20 academic calendar. I will be providing to the senates, through the University Governance Council, a concept for a 2019-20 academic calendar that greatly reduces the January intersession. The concept is not a proposal for a new calendar, but rather a call for vetting of this new concept. Removing the January session, which has been in place for over 40 years, is a very significant step which requires broad and complete vetting by the University community. The new calendar concept is developed to address the issue of overlapping terms that could lead to federal financial aid compliance issues. The new calendar concept would eliminate that potential. The formal 2019-20 calendar proposal, whatever form that will be, will be presented in spring 2018.
- e. Student Retention/Completion Group. Ms. Julie Ferguson and Dr. Sunil Ahuja have agreed to co-chair a group to examine University issues related to student retention and completion. The group will also recommend on actions, immediate and longer term that could be employed to enhance student retention and completion. Deans were asked to select a faculty member from each of their colleges. A representative from the Faculty Senate has also been requested to serve.
- f. New Program Development.  
Neuroscience (MS). The program implementation team is being gathered to prepare for the launch of the program when it obtains Senate recommendation. The program is being developed in collaboration with the Geisinger Community Medical College.  
Physician Assistant. Scott Massey, Ph.D., PA-C, Director and Professor, Physician Assistant Program, from Central Michigan University is serving as the consultant for development of a potential PA program at the UofS. On Tuesday, 10 October, he met with a number of administrators and faculty to discuss the processes, opportunities and challenges of moving forward to implementing a PA program.

## **2. Rank and Tenure:**

A public meeting to inform faculty of the rank and tenure policies and procedures was held on Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Twenty faculty have applied for tenure and/or promotion for the 2017-18 reviews. Six are applying promotion to full professor, ten for associate professor, three for tenure, and one for tenure and promotion and associate.

## **3. Faculty Handbook Updates:**

The Faculty Handbook Committee, the Faculty Personnel Committee and the faculty and Board of Trustees have approved the following changes to the Faculty Handbook.

- (a) Professor Emeritus (7.0 B) – the proposed language clarifies that faculty with Emeritus status may continue to use their University email account.
- (b) Proper Use of Faculty Status – Extramural Utterances (5.2) – the proposed language states that the University subscribes to the American Association of

University Professors' *Committee A Statement on Extramural Utterances*, which states as a controlling principle that "a faculty member's expression of opinion as a citizen cannot constitute grounds for dismissal unless it clearly demonstrates the faculty member's unfitness to serve."

#### **4. Office of Research and Sponsored Programs:**

- Faculty/Student Research: ORSP has announced the availability of funding to promote high-quality faculty-mentored experiences in research and scholarship for undergraduate students. ORSP will be hosting a Faculty/Student Research Fair on October 16<sup>th</sup> to provide an opportunity for faculty and students interested in conducting research to connect.
- Grant Writing Initiative: ORSP is eager to assist faculty in the achievement of their research goals. This includes supporting our faculty in their efforts to write effective grant proposals seeking extramural support for research activities. Awards in the amount of \$1,500 will provide selected University of Scranton faculty with monetary support to incentivize the development of external grant proposals. A stipend of \$750 will be paid for grant development during Intersession 2018 or Summer 2018, and an additional \$750 stipend will be provided to awardees upon submission of the completed proposal to ORSP.

Because this program seeks to facilitate the generation of proposals for extramural support, it is essential that the awards yield their proposed outcomes - one or more submitted grant proposals. Recipients of funding will be expected to submit a copy of the completed grant proposal to ORSP by the end of the regular academic semester subsequent to the period in which support was received. For example, the deadline for support received for Intersession 2018 is the end of the Spring 2018 semester.

Grant Writing Workshop/Funding Agency Travel Awards: ORSP is offering funding to support faculty who are interested in attending a grant writing workshop or visiting a funding agency in AY2018. The specific event must be approved by ORSP as one that will assist faculty in identifying funding streams, writing successful grant proposals, or in re-writing a previously rejected proposal. Interested faculty members must complete a pre-approval application prior to travel. If the application is approved, travel costs (including registration fees) will be reimbursed up to \$2000.

Recipients of these travel funds will be expected to submit a brief report (2 page maximum) describing the experience and knowledge gained. This will assist ORSP in maintaining a dialog with the faculty member concerning next steps in their quest for funding.

#### **5. Planning & Institutional Effectiveness:**

Metrics & Progress Reporting: There is already significant progress on the Middle States Self Study. This includes:

- successfully submitted the Design for Self-Study as part of a lively and inspiring

- spring visit by our Middle States Liaison, Dr. Ellie Fogarty;
- partnered with the Jesuit Center to conduct a summer workshop that further incorporates Ignatian discernment into the work of our Self-study; and
- recruited more than 50 faculty, staff, and students from across the campus community to serve on eight Working Groups.

During the next phase, the Working Groups will conduct research, gather evidence and analyze the results to produce the substantive reports necessary to demonstrate that the University meets Middle States' accreditation standards. As our Design notes, this Self-Study will be a transparent one, so we will bring these reports to the campus for comment and review.

Three town hall discussions were scheduled for September and October in order to give the campus community a chance to provide direct input on specific standards. Lastly, faculty and staff are being encouraged to take part in surveys this fall that will contribute to the Self-study:

- (September) AJCU consortium survey on mission, to which we have added a set of unique self-study reflection questions;
- (October) Survey by the Planning & Institutional Effectiveness Office about the University's [Strategic Plan](#).

#### **6. Office of Educational Assessment:**

Accomplishments to date for the 2017-18 Academic Year: On August 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, OEA and the Office of Planning & Institutional Effectiveness co-hosted a workshop for the President's Council on integrating assessment into all of the Middle States standards. We also hosted a workshop for Department Chairs and Program Directors on planning for assessment that afternoon.

Dr. Claudine Keenan, Dean of the School of Education at Stockton University and regional accreditation visitor, conducted both sessions.

OEA has completed its assessment of assessment, which involves using a rubric to score the Program Assessment Reports submitted to the Deans in June. This year, we shall provide feedback to all programs that submitted reports. Heretofore, programs could request feedback voluntarily.

Goals for the 2017-18 Academic Year: First, OEA will work closely with the Middle States Steering Committee and working groups on collecting evidence for the self-study. With the guidance of the Assessment Advisory Committee (AAC), OEA will continue to implement the Comprehensive Plan for Assessment. According to the plan, CAS programs will submit assessment plans in October for the next three-year assessment cycle. With these plans, we shall collect evidence on how programs “closed the loop” based on the last three-year cycle.

One of our major goals for the 17-18 academic year will be to focus on assessment of the GE Curriculum, as well as the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). An assessment

of FYDT will began on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Dr. Amy Simolo, Faculty Development Specialist in CTLE, will partner with OEA to hold a norming session for faculty involved in the assessment. In addition, there are several requests for the Provost's Assessment Scholars to conduct projects to assess the ILOs.

## **7. Study Abroad:**

Statistics: This year 266 students passed through our study abroad application software. For the year, we have had about a 30% increase in the number of students who studied abroad. Of the 266 students, 64% of them took part in the University of Scranton faculty-led travel courses during the intersession and summer. In the intersession, there were 77 students in faculty-led programs and 91 in the summer. To maintain and increase these kinds of numbers, we will have to create a completely new way of doing faculty-led programs if we lose the intersession.

While some might think that the shorter programs are less effective in global learning, one of the myths that we need to dispel is that longer is automatically better. A well-run, short program with structured reflection during the experience can be much more effective than simply going over to a host university and taking courses there without a great deal of structure for reflecting on the local culture. As the faculty-led policy is being developed, we also need to think through how we can facilitate and encourage new faculty to develop travel courses to serve our student's needs.

Accompaniment: With the beginning of the fall semester, we have officially inaugurated a World Affairs/Study Abroad Club. The main goal of this club is to continue to accompany students who have studied abroad to help them process the various experiences they have had. The Study Abroad office hopes that this club will encourage the students to grow in their global understanding and their commitment to global citizenship. The club will be closely associated with the World Affairs segment in the Schemel Forum. We also plan to sponsor and co-sponsor events on global issues.

The Bolivia Site: This past summer, the University initiated a pilot site for our own overseas program. Ten students spent 6 weeks in Cochabamba, Bolivia. They received 9 credits of Spanish and 3 credits of TRS. The program included excursion trips to 17<sup>th</sup> century Jesuit missions on the border with Brazil and Paraguay, a trip to La Paz and Lake Titicaca to visit the ruins of a pre-Colombian civilization, and a trek up to 16,000 feet on Mt. Tunari to participate in the rituals of the Andean New Year. The students also volunteered during an afternoon at either a home for abused girls or in the children's ward of the local hospital. All students were in home stays, where they were speaking Spanish. The vision is to further develop this site and to open it up to receive students from other Jesuit and neighboring institutions.

## **8. International Students:**

We have 12 regular degree seeking students from 10 countries. Two are undergraduate students and 10 graduate students. Currently 12 undergraduate exchange students from 5 countries and 5 exchange visitors from 5 different counties are on campus.

## 9. Center for Career Development:

- The annual Career Expo was held in late September. One hundred and four (104) companies registered to attend.
- Career Development and the Jane Kopas Women's Center launched the *Royal Threads* initiative, which is a professional clothing lending/giving program for students. Faculty and staff have kindly contributed to the effort by donating professional attire.
- *Scranton Connections*, in collaboration with University Advancement, will provide an opportunity for students to connect to alumni, chosen by major, industry, geography, interests and/or campus activities. The platform, CampusTap, is currently being customized and the program will be launched in late fall to a small beta group. The full launch is projected for January 2018. This initiative received a strategic plan funding grant by the University and would not have been realized without this financial support.

## 10. Curriculum:

After consulting with Dr. Marx the following dates were sent to the faculty regarding the deadlines for submitting curriculum proposals. The dates allow the reviewing bodies' sufficient time to review and approve curriculum proposals for the inclusion in the 2018-2019 catalogs.

- New Programs by December 15, 2017
- Major Program Changes by February 12, 2018
- Course Changes by February 19, 2018
- Any remaining small editorial changes by March 26, 2018

The following curriculum proposals have been approved by the Provost.

<b>New Courses:</b>	<b>Date Posted</b>
COMM 131X: Life...Backwards	4/12/17
CJ 311: GIS for Public Safety	4/12/17
COMM 121X: Mythology in the Media	4/24/17
INTD 212: The Loyola Experience	11/10/16
COMM 295: Intercultural Communication: Ireland	3/22/17
CJ 101: Foundations for Criminal Justice Professionals	4/12/17

### **Course Changes:**

WRTG 105, 106, 107: College Writing I, II and Composition	11/10/16
HIST 327: The African Experience in Latin America	5/11/17
ENTR 362: Business Foundations for Entrepreneurs	4/5/17
ENTR 363: Applied Business Foundations for Entrepreneurs	4/5/17
ENTR 372: The Entrepreneurial Mindset	4/5/17
ENTR 373: Business Creativity and Innovation	4/5/17
ENTR 374: Entrepreneurial Resource Acquisition & Mgt.	4/5/17
ENTR 375: Family Run Business	4/5/17
ENTR 477: The Entrepreneurial Business Plan	4/5/17
ENTR 478: Social Entrepreneurship	4/5/17
FIN 251: Introduction to Finance	4/12/17

## 11. College Updates:

### *College of Arts and Sciences*

- The Department of Physics/EE recently received a very positive preliminary report from the ABET Engineering Accreditation Commission on our Computer Engineering and Electrical Engineering program. The team quickly recognized the culture of student-centered learning, and the commitment of faculty to this way of engaging student in the Physics/EE department, and throughout the University.

### *Panuska College of Professional Studies*

- The Education Department is hosting a site visit of its accrediting body CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) in October. The teacher education programs will be audited based on a new set of standards. The preparation for the visit included launching a few important innovations in the department. First, we established a data-driven quality assurance system, which includes reporting results of external and internal assessments of candidates to the Education Department faculty, establishing trends, and making programmatic changes based on our candidates' performance. In September we held our Annual Assessment Day to report the summary of candidates' performance for 2015-16 and 2016-17 academic years.
- The Education Department designed and completed an Alumni Survey to examine current job placements of our graduates, to tap into their satisfaction with the University of Scranton Teacher Education program, and to study the impact of our program completers on quality of education received by their P-12 students. The department conducted two stages of the survey, a pilot stage, which targeted 450 alumni and received responses from 136; and a main stage, which targeted 136 alumni and received responses from 52 respondents. The results of the survey are analyzed and were presented at Assessment Day.
- Exercise Science and Community Health Education students are taking part in the Health Matters Community Based Learning project. This project is a health education program that serves adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities served by Saint Joseph's Center.

### *Kania School of Management:*

- Profs. Regan and Marcy paper titled "The Doctorally-qualified Accounting Faculty Shortage and the Demand for Non-traditional Doctoral Programs" was accepted for presentation at the 2017 AAA Annual meeting that was held in August.

### *Weinberg Memorial Library:*

- In partnership with the Department of Nursing, the Weinberg Memorial Library now hosts the University of Scranton Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Scholarly Projects Collection (<http://www.scranton.edu/library/dnp>). Scholarly project papers and posters prepared by graduating DNP students are preserved in the



Library's digital repository, and the results of their work will be freely available to a global audience.

- The Heritage Room will be hosting an exhibit "Scranton and World War I." The exhibit is a cooperative effort with the Lackawanna Historical Society. The exhibit is being mounted in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Historical Association annual conference which will be held at the Radisson October 12 through October 14. The conference opening reception, will be held on Thursday, October 12 in the Heritage Room. Special Collections Librarian, Michael Knies, is serving on the conference local arrangements committee and is part of a panel presentation for the opening reception.
- Weinberg Library Special Collections recently digitized nine volumes of early student records, dating from 1904 to 1955. The earliest material includes class reading assignments and grade books. We also digitized a volume of World War II campus newsletters, which are often consulted for alumni genealogical research. Finally, 26 volumes of penmanship periodicals, 1884-1938, from the Zaner-Bloser Penmanship Collection were digitized and will be added to our online collections. The Zaner-Bloser Collection is our most popular online collection.