

Winthrop University Faculty Conference
20 August 2021
2:00 p.m., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

REPORT FROM THE PROVOST

1. **Welcome back! I never thought I would be excited to announce a mask mandate, but I hope you share with me the excitement of being able to add this extra layer of protection to our classroom and campus interactions. ALC has partnered with Student Affairs and other colleagues through the COVID planning team, a smaller group than we had last year, to identify key guidance for this year as well as a standard syllabus statement. With the new masking guidance, the Dean of Students Office has updated the Reach, Respond, and Refer guidance for faculty student masking compliance, which you can find on their website at this link: <https://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/student-life/COVID19FacultyTips.pdf>. It says:**

- **REACH**

Prior to the start of fall semester, faculty should proactively contact the students enrolled in their class (via Blind Carbon Copy (BCC)) to inform them that the campus requirement is for “students to wear face masks in all buildings”. If the student is UNABLE to wear a mask, they should notify the faculty member immediately and not report to the class until an appropriate plan is in place for them to safely participate in class.

- **RESPOND**

If a student responds that they are unable to wear a face mask, the faculty should inquire if the student is able to wear an alternate face covering, including the use of a scarf or other loose face covering; or as a *last* option, the use of a face shield, but only if classroom spacing allows appropriate distance.

If the reason they are unable to wear a face covering is related to a disability, religious belief, or condition (medical, psychological, et. al.), the faculty member will provide direction to advising support staff to identify whether other online options exist to meet the student’s learning needs.

- **REFER**

If the reason they are unable to wear a face covering is related to a disability or condition (medical, psychological, et. al.), the faculty member may refer the student to the Office of Accessibility to begin the interactive process, as stated on the syllabus, to assess if additional classroom accommodations are needed.

If a student arrives to class without a mask and informs the faculty member that they are unable to wear a mask, the student needs to leave the class and the faculty member can follow up with the student via email for steps 2-3 (above).

2. [Dean of Students – Student Life website](#) is also where to find the [Report an Incident link](#) in the left nav menu under “Related Links.” These Reports go to our Maxient system, which includes Care Alerts for students who may be exhibiting signs that they need mental wellness supports.

3. Thank you to all who attended the Kick-Off on Monday of this year’s Symposium Series, Transforming the Winthrop Experience. Colleagues in Academic and Student Affairs teamed up to discuss student success and wellness strategies, which start with our own success and wellness strategies as the people on the front lines serving students. We have uploaded the materials to the Center for Professional Excellence website at this link: <https://www.winthrop.edu/thecepe/symposium-series.aspx>. We will post additional events in the Symposium Series to the CPE website as well.

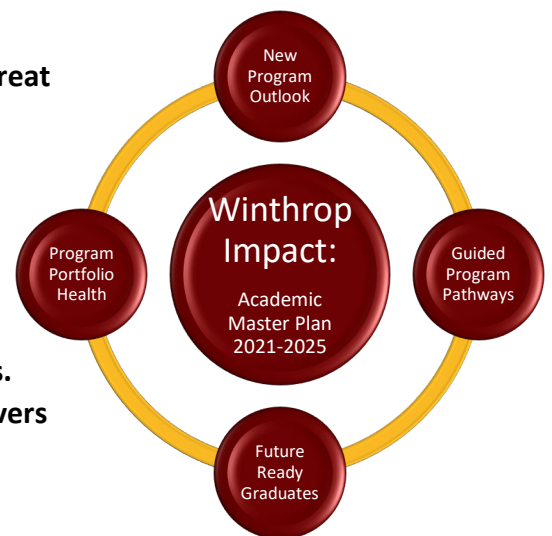
4. Our Student Affairs colleagues asked that I also remind faculty and Academic Affairs staff that our [internship and experiential learning waiver](#) is still required for students to complete this year. If you have questions, please contact Tiffany Alexander at alexandert@winthrop.edu and see the [Center for Career Development and Internships website](#) for more information.

5. Please join me in welcoming our newest faculty! We hired three new faculty in the College of Business Administration – welcome Kyle, Hannah, and Ryan – and a new metadata and catalogue faculty librarian in Dacus – welcome Tracy! You can review their profiles on the [Academic Affairs website](#).

6. **Other staffing changes in Academic Affairs:**
 - **Noreen Gaubatz is now serving as Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness**, overseeing our new Director of Institutional Research – Steffaney Cohen, as well as the whole Decision Support team, the Office of Assessment, and serving as our SACSCOC Liaison. Please join me in welcoming her to this new role – which restructures previous positions and recognizes her vital role in overseeing university accreditation, reporting, and assessment functions. The Director of Assessment position is now vacant and being restructured to a lower-level position.
 - Effective September 1, the office of **Business Intelligence and Data Management** will report to Tim Druke as part of Curriculum and Program Support which includes Records and Registration and Academic Space and Scheduling. We are currently holding the Director of BIDM, and Coordinator for Academic Space and Scheduling positions vacant while we review job duties across the offices. In the meantime, **Kara Traverse will oversee course scheduling** for Spring 2022 and last-minute changes for Fall 2021, **John Kroft is handling space reservations for the academic spaces** and **Elbony Fleming will be the contact for data requests**.
 - **Jane Eckert** will be moving to the **WOOL** staff in her role as **Blackboard technician**.

- **Kat Wilson** will start soon as our new **BIDM Analyst** providing key Interfolio and Qualtrics supports across campus.
- Plans for an **Acting Dean of Graduate Studies** will be announced soon.
- **There's so much excitement and electricity in Dinkins right now they blew a transformer!** Repairs may take a few weeks. We are relocating student support staff to vacant offices across campus. Please watch for announcements of temporary spaces coming soon!
- Vice Provost for Student Success and Dean of University College **Jamie Cooper** is overseeing transitions in University College. Please join him in welcoming **Tourgee Simpson as Assistant Dean for Academic Success**. Tourgee will be overseeing the Academic Success Center, University College Academic Advising, the First-Year Experience Office, and LEAP Program. **Tracy Patterson will serve this fall as Interim Director of the First-Year Experience**. Our **LEAP Coordinator position is currently vacant; please contact Jasmine Howze** with any questions.
- **Bettie Parsons Barger** has been selected by her peers and appointed by her Dean to serve as **Chair of the Education CORE department**. We wish Lindsay Yearta the best in her return to the K-12 classroom!
- **Joanna Harris** is now Director of Student Academic Services in the College of Ed.
- **Greg Oakes** will serve as interim chair of Philosophy and Religious Studies, and **Robert Prickett** will serve as interim chair of Interdisciplinary Studies, while those departments in the College of Art and Sciences weigh new structuring opportunities.
- **Stephanie Lawson** is now **Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Accreditation** in the College of Business Administration.
- **Vanessa Valdez** is now Director of Student Services in CBA.

7. **Academic Master Plan: Several teams of people made great strides over the last year to move us toward an Academic Master Plan that will see us through the coming years of enrollment volatility. I hope to have the plan ready for broader review and faculty inputs in the near future so that we can finalize and share with the Campus Master Plan team as their work commences, with the Board of Trustees in October, as well as with Presidential Candidates. Here is a snapshot again of the four main areas the plan covers and the teams responsible for each area:**



- **Program Portfolio Health**: Having a clear sense of overall program portfolio health remains a top priority. In AY2020-2021, we gathered and developed data on enrollment trends, student-credit hour production, faculty-to-student ratios, as well as cost indicators and revenues.

We have pulled all of this data together – and we continue to improve upon it – to inform decisions about which programs to **sustain, grow, transform, or eliminate**. Deans worked with Chairs to process the data and make initial recommendations. This work continues as we respond to increased reductions in enrollment. Making way for new program development requires that we remain good stewards of our overall program profile and its ongoing relevance. I said last year, Our Programs are our Power! Healthy programs respond to changes in our disciplines, our students, our regional economy, and the demands of citizenship. They are administered with efficiency and designed to support students through to completion.

- **New Program Outlook**: Faculty, chairs, and deans have worked together to identify key areas for innovation in new program development. The three focus areas identified after many conversations are: **Health, Design, and Innovation**. We have requested EAB feasibility studies on nursing and speech pathology programs. We will also be looking into other allied health opportunities and envisioning growth in professional doctoral programs. In Design, we are interested in exploring product and textile design, as well as building on our current momentum in learning design. Finally, we will explore **innovations in online modalities**, as well as the potential for **accelerated, lifelong, executive, and non-degree programming**.
- **Transfer Program Pathways**: A team of faculty, staff, and administrators from Winthrop University and York Technical College collaborated to develop **four meta-majors** (arts, language, and communication; business; society and politics; and STEM) and **twenty-eight program pathways**. This greatly exceeded our goal of ten new pathways in the first year! We continue to collaborate on policy revisions that will further streamline transfer pathways and to collaborate with Clinton College on potential new pathways as well. I can see this work paying off, as **we have had 60 more transfer students register since Tuesday**, which is a big deal in this enrollment environment. **So kudos to this team for their great work!**
 - **Future-ready graduates**: The fourth action area for the academic master plan will pull together the efforts of several teams working this year to improve upon our overall educational ecosystem. This will include the **QEP implementation team** and their work on strategies to improve career readiness; Academic Council and the general education curriculum and assessment teams as they **evaluate our ULCs and gen ed mission and outcomes**; and our **ad-hoc IT and Academic Affairs advisory committee** as they identify **improvements to our instructional technology infrastructure** and a plan for becoming a **laptop campus** in fall 2022.

8. **Tenure and Promotion Training date: please hold Friday, August 27, at 3 – 4 p.m. for our annual tenure and promotion training.** We will send more information on changes to this training session in the near future, but we plan to open the meeting to all faculty, not just committees, in an effort to improve communications and understanding across and between tenured and tenure-track faculty.

9. **Mission Statement Review:** I am excited to announce that President Hynd and I have been [charged by the Board of Trustees to lead a mission statement review process](#) this year. Aligning this activity to the work our new Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Marketing will be doing to improve our student search functions based on profile research that Carnegie Dartlet will conduct for us creates amazing opportunities for us to rekindle our mission, vision, and values at a literally pivotal moment in higher education. Jennifer Jordan has agreed to partner with me in leading a small team to move this initiative forward amongst the faculty; we plan to invite John Kroft as staff liaison to the Board and Erin Emiroglu as student liaison to join us in this effort to gather inputs from all campus constituents as we review Winthrop's current mission statement.

10. **Academic Affairs Goals for 2021-2022:** We have a big year ahead of us. Our goals in Academic Affairs this year are not finalized, but our initial discussion shows consensus on these focus areas. We welcome your feedback on our plan to:

- **Innovate to increase student success and wellness**
- **Innovate to increase the value of a Winthrop education at a lower cost**
- Plan and implement a successful **SACSCOC Reaffirmation visit March 21-24, 2022**
- **Support each other** through the ongoing pandemic

Have a great semester!