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Letter from the Interim RVCAA

Since my arrival in December, I have been getting to know the leadership, faculty, staff and students and learning about the wealth of initiatives that are ongoing here. Academic Affairs includes three academic colleges (the College of Arts and Sciences, the Kate Tiedemann College of Business, and the College of Education), the Nelson Poynter Library, the Academic Advising Center, the Office of Graduate Studies, the Debbie Nye Sembler Student Success Center, the Bishop Center for Ethical Leadership, the Center for Civic Engagement, the Office of Records and Registration, Campus Computing, the Office of Institutional Research, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the Office of Research, and Global Initiatives.



All of these offices are working to move our USFSP vision and mission forward. At the beginning of this academic year, Dr. Martin Tadlock worked with the Deans and the administration to produce a five-year Master Academic Plan (MAP) that supports the USFSP Strategic Plan. The Deans Council subsequently decided to focus on the following priorities for this academic year:

- Increase Campus Diversity
- Increase external recognition of distinctive identity
- Create affordable international opportunities for students
- Become the partner of choice for education, business, non-profits, and governmental entities in Pinellas County
- Develop academic programming sensitive to the needs of regional businesses, governmental and non-profit agencies, and academic institutions

Additionally, the Council acknowledged these ongoing priorities:

- Review and enhance student success indicators
- Maintain USFSP as an affordable option
- Review, maintain and enhance the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning
- Promote system-wide retention and achievement

This spring, I begin publishing this monthly newsletter to highlight the collective accomplishments of the Colleges and Offices that report to me, and communicate to the larger USFSP community the ongoing work that is directly supporting our MAP. This edition combines accomplishments during the fall semester, and each month will bring a more

concise group of updates intended to demonstrate how the various offices, colleges, departments or units within Academic Affairs are moving the needle forward on our collective priorities. Thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,
Dr. Olufunke Fontenot

Kate Tiedemann College of Business (KTCOB)

The MBA program has been ranked by U.S. News and World report as 30th best Online MBA program in the Nation. It is ranked the 3rd best in Florida behind University of Florida and Florida State University.

Additionally, over the past 5 years, the KTCOB's highly credentialed faculty have published 130 journal articles and their articles received more than 7,500 citations.

In more recent news, the KTCOB will be unveiling their new Wealth Management Center during a ceremony that will take place on March 1 at 11:30 a.m. at Lynn Pippenger Hall. The entire USFSP community is invited to come to the reception.

College of Arts and Sciences (CAS)

CAS faculty demonstrated a strong year of publications and conference presentations, including launch of the *Salt Creek Journal* by Tom Hallock, colleagues and students.

Additionally, CAS received \$2.1 million in external funding so far this year from notable agencies including: the National Institute for Health, the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency.

A documentary on Early Spanish Florida aired for two weeks on PBS. Congratulations to Dr. Michael Francis for helping to re-write a history that has gone unnoticed for too long.

CAS is launching the following new academic programs:

1. BA - Forensic Studies and Justice - launched in Fall 2017
2. MS - Conservation Biology - launched Fall 2017
3. BS - Computational and Applied Mathematics (in collaboration with KTCOB) - anticipated launch Fall 2018
4. BA - Sustainability Studies (in collaboration with KTCOB) - anticipated Fall 2018
5. Pre-Proposals underway for a BS Environmental Chemistry
6. BGS - Online Bachelors in General Studies for returning adult learners who already hold an Associates Degree.

College of Education (COE)

In the Fall 2017 semester, COE welcomed Dr. Allyson Watson as its new Dean. This semester, COE is embarking on an exciting new journey as they transform Coquina Hall to include a state-of-the-art STEM and Innovation lab. This interactive lab will be a showcase for the college and a key resource for the community and schools. Dr. Sandra Jackson has been named as the new lab director. The College received scholarship funds from Duke Energy to support future teachers in science and mathematics.

COE is active in research. Through publications and grants, the college has applied for \$2.1 million in grant funding.

- To date, Dr. Alex Brice has been awarded a \$360,000 grant for his work on speech and communication disorders.
- Dr. Bill Heller and Mr. Harris Ambush lead the way with a Juvenile Welfare Board grant which totals \$325,000 per year over a three year period.
- Over \$2.8 million in grants have been awarded to the College of Education overall.

COE faculty are involved in national and international research and have been sought after to serve as keynote presenters and panelists:

- Dr. LaSonya Moore presented her research in London in December.
- Dr. Susan Bennett received the Office of Diversity Hispanic Leadership Award from USF Tampa, and Alumnus.
- Adjunct faculty, Sarah Carol received national recognition as special educator of the year.

COE is cultivating an inclusive partnership with Pinellas County Schools and working toward a collaborative program focusing on urban education.

Finally, the college is the recipient of the Sylvia de Armas de Fueyo scholarship endowed by Vivian Fueyo in memory of her Mother.

Nelson Poynter Memorial Library

The library strongly supports student learning and success:

1. In the 2016-2017 academic year, the Textbooks on Reserve program saved students \$64,000 based on circulation statistics.
2. In fall 2017, the Library and Student Government began providing free black and white printing to students and the new Student Technology Center opened.

With the help of Online Learning and Instructional Technology Services (OLITS), a total of 31 classes have received Quality Matters certification, the second highest number in the Florida State University System.

Additionally, librarians Tina Neville and Emerita Deb Henry won the 2018 Edward R. Swanson Best of LRTS Award for their article "Repositories at Master's Institutions: a Census and Analysis," recently published in Library Resources and Technical Services. The Edward R. Swanson Best of LRTS Award is given to the author(s) of the best paper published each year in the official journal of the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services.

Records and Registration

In 2017, USFSP welcomed Shari Schwartz as the new Registrar.

The office added Reference Materials on the Registrar's website on room scheduling and completed workflows, step-by-step instructions with visuals for curriculum and course requests.

In the fall, the office began investigating



current scheduling practices, which identified some obstacles to student success in course completion based on inefficient scheduling. The office is working on recommendations to improve scheduling to be implemented in 2019.

Academic Advising

In the Fall 2017, the Office of Academic Advising commissioned a study of its services, and is restructuring student service delivery to enhance students' academic engagement. As a result:

- All advising staff were trained in "Appreciative Advising"
- All advisors have been assigned student caseloads in Archivum for monitoring success and initiating outreach.
- Two new positions opened and Academic Success Coordinators are now working closely with advisors and all student service departments, to utilize various data sources and orchestrate various initiatives to circumvent student attrition or transfer.
- A cross-departmental committee has been formed to define academic advising at USFSP and establish clear and concise goals for this unit.

Several new initiatives have begun following to increase accessibility to students:

- Advisors are available in The Reef from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 pm one day per week, except during registration.
- Seven new ½ day walk-in advising times.

In the fall, advisors assisted 460 students during these walk-in periods which correlated with spikes in registration during those weeks.

Global Initiatives

USF St. Petersburg is bringing the world to campus and its students to the world. Hosting two Italian exchange students in fall 2017, USFSP Global Initiatives implemented a new student exchange agreement between the KTCOB Graduate Programs and the University of Udine in Italy. Developing international student exchange opportunities is an ongoing effort to expand affordable education abroad opportunities for USF St. Petersburg students and to internationalize the classroom.

Additionally, two separate delegations of Japanese researchers visited campus in the fall to meet with leadership and to learn about the details of USFSP's institutional performance metrics, data governance and accreditation practices. Hosting such international delegations exposes USFSP staff and faculty to our counterparts across the globe and to new ideas in higher education, as well as furthers a USFSP priority of enhancing international efforts on campus.

Academic Affairs Fellow

USFSP has its first Academic Affairs Fellow in Dr. Kathleen Gibson-Dee, an Instructor of Mathematics Education, and Quality Enhancement Program Director. She is forging a path for a fellows program to continue and shape future higher education leaders.

Last fall, under her lead, USFSP began ExLabs Bootcamp, a partnership with Gehant Consulting, Tech Data and other area industry partners. One-hundred percent of ExLabs graduates reported that this was a LIFE CHANGING or CAREER ENHANCING experience, and 79 percent found internships or jobs within six months of completing the program. There is no cost for students to apply or to participate, if selected. The program goal of ExLabs Boot Camp is to provide students from across all three colleges with impactful work force preparation, which includes professional and personal development. The integration of USFSP Career Services will expand and strengthen students' successful exploration of career pathways leading into the workforce. Through participation in the ExLabs Boot Camps, students will:

- Demonstrate competence in critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, leadership, design thinking, diversity and inclusion, and networking
- Practice skills required to be hired into positions in Tech companies
- Establish relationships with mentors
- Explore careers, and discover a pathway to positions in area businesses

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