

Academic Affairs

News & Reflections

From the Provost's Desk

I love the start of a new academic year, and the stunning eclipse that coincided with our first day of classes made our Fall 2017 opening all the more memorable! The beauty and symbolism of this infrequent astronomic phenomenon captured our collective positive attention in ways few events do. It was a powerful way to take stock of new beginnings and the cycles of our universe. I am certain the eclipse captured the imagination of our new students (1,980 first year, 736 transfer and 580 graduate), as well as our other returning students, wherever they were... 11,034 strong overall. I found myself marveling at the spectacle with the 3,500 staff, faculty, and students in the middle of campus at the fountain.

I can already feel the beginnings of the fall season and with that the excitement of learning and teaching that fills our daily lives. Concurrently, we are revising our 2020 strategic plan and I encourage you to participate in the process to help reshape our university (details within this newsletter). I also urge you to share your ideas with your faculty or staff senate representative and my office, and to be involved in the campus discussion around the effectiveness of our institution. As in previous years, I will be distributing my regular Faculty Senate report to you via email following senate meetings. You can also see the latest report here: https://www.wcu.edu/discover/leadership/faculty-senate/faculty-senate-agendas-and-minutes/2017_2018meetingmaterialsminutes.aspx.

I hope you will join me in celebrating the establishment of WCU's overarching areas of distinction (Cultural and Environmental Immersion; Service and Outreach; and Experience-based Learning). Visit the following link to view the full descriptions <http://www.wcu.edu/learn/office-of-the-provost/index.aspx>. The work that we do collectively and individually is preparing our students for life beyond WCU and our professional, social, and cultural communities will reap the benefits.

Provost on the Ground

Department of Geosciences and Natural Resources	Sept. 1
Alumni Board Meeting	Sept. 9
Conference on Undergraduate Regional Engagement	
WCU vs. Davidson	
LIFE@WCU Cullowhee First Fall Season	Sept. 12
DegreePlus Kick-Off	
Board of Trustees Orientation	Sept. 13
LIFE@WCU Biltmore Park First Fall Session	Sept. 14
Employee Appreciation Day	
Brown Hall Grand Opening	
Board of Trustees	Sept. 14 & 15
CEAP Strategic Planning Day	Sept. 15
Chancellor's Leadership Council	Sept. 18
Chancellor's List Events	Sept. 19
Coulter Faculty Commons	Sept. 21
Board of Governors Campus Visit	
Graduate School Open House	
Office of Student Success Training	Sept. 22
Leadership Academy	
Legacy Pinning Ceremony	Sept. 23
WCU vs. Samford	

Finally, my thoughts continue to be with the residents of our country and the Caribbean who suffered through Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and now Maria; the outpouring of support and help, including from members of our very own community, has demonstrated the importance of community and unity, themes that I hope will continue to inspire and motivate WCU this year.

Best Wishes for the Fall Semester!

Sincerely,

Alison Morrison-Shetlar
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Department of Chemistry & Physics	Sept. 25
Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice	Sept. 27
International Programs & Services	
Hire Attire Fashion Show	
Catamount Gap Study Abroad Student Luncheon	Sept. 28
Hunter Library Special Collections Grand Opening	

Curriculog Training Sessions

We will have several Curriculog training sessions in the near future for those who utilize our curriculum management system to create new programs/courses, make program/course changes, or review curriculum proposals.

These training sessions will give you an opportunity to learn hands-on how to:

- enter a proposal in Curriculog
- run an impact report
- create a meeting agenda
- record decisions as a reviewer

At these sessions we will provide an overview of available resources, present the overall Curriculog program structure, review the style guide, and highlight the new proposal form options. The sessions will be beneficial to both new users and seasoned users alike.

Please reserve your seat in one of the sessions! Contact Suzanne Melton, Curriculog Administrator x3016

Dates available:

- October 3, 20:30-4:00 pm
- October 27, 10:00-11:30 am
- November 14, 2:30-4:00 pm
- December 8, 10:00-11:30 am

Mountain Heritage Center Presents Cherokee Craft Exhibit

from the Office of Undergraduate Studies

In honor of the 2017-18 campus theme, Cherokee: Connection. Culture. Community, the Mountain Heritage Center is pleased to announce a new exhibit by the Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual, Inc. Founded in 1946 in Cherokee, North Carolina, Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual, Inc., is the oldest Native American artists' cooperative in the U.S. The legendary artistry, design and durability of Cherokee crafts is known and admired throughout the world, and Qualla has played a key role in keeping those traditions alive while encouraging experimentation and innovation.

This exhibition, developed with funding from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation, tells the story of Qualla's founding and development through text and objects, plus large-format photos, artwork and videos featuring many of the cooperative's artist- members.

"Qualla Arts & Crafts: Tradition and Innovation," will be on view in the Mountain Heritage Center's second floor gallery in Hunter Library, Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm. The Center provides tours, hands-on activities, and custom-designed programs for WCU classes. For more information, contact Education Associate Peter Koch, pkoch@email.wcu.edu.



White Oak baskets: A selection of white oak baskets show the evolution of forms over time while retaining traditional materials, dyes and patterns. Photo courtesy of the Mountain Heritage Center, WCU.

2020 Strategic Plan Update

from the Office of Undergraduate Studies



As you are aware, our university is conducting a mid-cycle review and update of our 2020 Strategic Plan. As part of our efforts to assess our current priorities and adapt to our evolving context, we invite you to participate in the process in one of several ways.

- 1) We encourage you to review the current 2020 strategic plan in advance of your attendance or submission of feedback. To review the current plan, access the following link: <http://www.wcu.edu/discover/about/wcu-2020-plan/2020-vision-focusing-our-future-wcu-strategic-plan/index.aspx>. Thanks to those who have already provided their thoughts.
- 2) Submit your feedback on our current plan, future initiatives, or thoughts about our process online at the following link: <http://www.wcu.edu/discover/about/wcu-2020-plan/2020-plan-update/plan-update-input-form.aspx>
- 3) Attend any of the following town hall meetings:
 - A. Wednesday, September 20th at 11:15a-12:15p [HHS, Room 204]
 - B. Thursday, September 21st at 4:00 – 5:30p at Biltmore Park [Room 345]
 - C. Tuesday, October 10th at 9:30-10:30a [Blue Ridge Conference Room A]
 - D. Tuesday, October 17th at 6:30-7:30p [Jackson County Public Library Community Room]
- 4) Submit an email to any member of the Strategic Plan 2.0 Committee (members are listed at this link: <http://www.wcu.edu/discover/about/wcu-2020-plan/2020-plan-update/index.aspx>).

In addition to the opportunities available above, members of the Strategic Plan 2.0 Committee will also meet with various groups to receive their targeted input, e.g., Alumni Board, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government Association, WCU Foundation Board, etc.

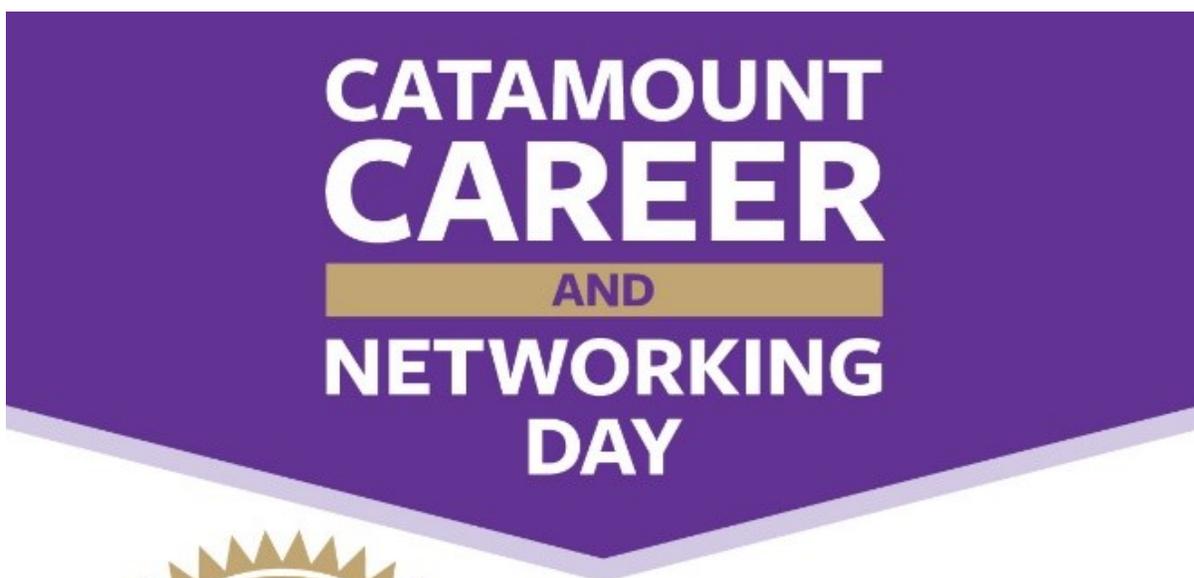
Thank you in advance for your participation in helping to shape our university's future.

Catamount Career & Networking Day anticipates over 100 employers and 30 non-profit organizations

On Wednesday, October 4, the semi-annual Catamount Career and Networking Day returns to the Ramsey Center from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm. The Center for Career and Professional Development (CCPD) has received confirmation from over 100 employers who are planning to attend so that they can meet WCU students to talk about full and part-time employment, as well as internships. This year, CCPD is partnering with the Center for Service Learning to present a “Service and Non-Profit Concourse” where students can meet with representatives of 30 non-profit organizations to learn about volunteer and service opportunities.

WCU Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) will be on hand to take photos that can be used as a ‘head shot’ for your LinkedIn profile.

There is something at the event for students of all levels and majors, so students should bring their resumes and learn about amazing opportunities with employers in our region and across the Southeast. We provide shuttles from the UC to the Ramsey Center during the event. Prospective employers also really appreciate meeting with WCU faculty and staff to discuss our programming and opportunities for collaboration. We hope to see you there.



OCT. 4

RAMSEY CENTER

11:00 AM – 3:00 PM



Chancellor's Classroom Renovation Fund projects

from the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

Recently completed projects supported with the Chancellor's Strategic Classroom renovation fund (CSCRF) include four classrooms in Forsyth. With the updated student computer requirement requiring every student to have a laptop computer, there is greater interest in classrooms able to support use of student laptops in class. Consequently, the Space Management Committee is working on a multi-year conversion of both existing electronic classrooms (classrooms with fixed desktop computers) and some general use classrooms to "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) status. Using the FY2016-17 CSCRF, and in partnership with the College of Business, four classrooms in the Forsyth building were renovated during the Spring and Summer. Forsyth 313, formerly a fixed pc computer lab, and Forsyth 214 and 216, previously general use classrooms, were converted to BYOD classrooms. The Division of IT featured these spaces in their August 28 DoIT News piece, <http://doitnews.wcu.edu/2017/08/forsyth-classroom-update/>, which provides detailed information on the room features, and information for instructional support.

Forsyth 213, a general use classroom, was also renovated to increase seat capacity by adding a second entry (rooms with a single entry are limited to a capacity of 49, regardless of the size of the room), and to replace furniture and instructional technology.

Over \$330,000 was invested in the renovation of these classrooms. Currently, the Space Management Committee, in collaboration with the Academic Space Advisory Board, Information Technology, and Facilities Management are working to identify classroom renovation projects for the current year. At the top of the list is continued replacement of the beloved blue-chaired desks in classrooms around campus. There are nearly 1400 of these blue-chaired desks remaining on campus.

Update

from the Executive Director of Community and Economic Engagement and Innovation

Dr. Arthur Salido works with communities and organizations across the western NC region to find partnership opportunities for WCU. Part of this work depends on creating personal and professional networks, serving on boards, and attending meetings to become aware of regional initiatives. Some of his recent activities include:

- Obtaining external funding for faculty to perform economic development and workforce development research
- Collaborating with academic departments to support their engagement goals
- Identifying internship opportunities for students and consulting opportunities for faculty
- Developing LEAD conferences around regionally-important business sectors like outdoor gear design
- Promoting WCU resources like our Millennial Initiative, NC Promise, the new science building, DegreePlus, Homebase, and the Rapid Center
- Working with economic developers and regional leaders to find ways that WCU can be involved in catalyzing home-grown entrepreneurial activity and new business recruitment
- Connecting WCU with regional charities, ministries, and service organizations
- Coordinating and communicating campus engagement activities within WCU and to the region

If you have ideas for partnerships with our community, region, and state, please contact Dr. Salido at salido@wcu.edu.

Advising Center Update

from the Office of Student Success

Fall semester is underway, and the Advising Center is busier than ever. Professional advisors are completing initial meetings with all of our new Catamounts. Next, the Advising Center will be meeting with students who had poor 5th-week grades reported. These meetings will further encourage students to become connected with the appropriate offices and resources to aid in their success at WCU. Once 5th-week grade meetings are over, advisors will begin meeting with undecided students regarding Spring registration.

Faculty Advising

The Faculty Advising Manual has been updated and is available for faculty and staff on the Advising Center's website. (<https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/facultyadvising-guide17.pdf>) This guide will also be distributed as professional advisors meet with their assigned departments over the next few weeks.

Advising Day

Advising Day is around the corner (October 31st). Once again, the Advising Center will provide training sessions for faculty to assist in the success of our Catamounts. Look for an email in your inbox for trainings regarding GradesFirst calendar integration, scheduling appointment campaigns, issuing student alerts, understanding a degree evaluation, Fostering Undergraduate Student Success, and academic standing. These presentations are short (30-minutes) and topic specific.

GradesFirst

Appointment Summaries in GradesFirst are now automatically available for students to view. When you meet with your scheduled advising appointments for Spring 2018, your advisees will be able to view the report you created from that interaction. This a great way to make comments about registration for the upcoming term. Your students will be able to access these notes within GradesFirst. The option to make "Notes" (not Appointment Summaries) viewable to students within GradesFirst is still an option for the creator of the note.

If you have any questions about advising, GradesFirst 2.0, or issuing an alert, please do not hesitate to contact the Advising Center. Contact information for professional advisors is located on the Advising Center's staff web page, which you can access at this link. (<http://www.wcu.edu/learn/academic-services/advising-center/advisingcenterstaffbios.aspx>)

Provost Fellow for Faculty Relations

from the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

For the past two years, Teri Domagalski has served as the Provost Fellow for Faculty Relations. The role of the Faculty Relations Fellow is to provide faculty and faculty administrators with a safe, informal place to discuss concerns, conflicts and questions that have the potential to impact one's work and professional well-being. In this role, Teri provides an impartial, independent and informal resource for university faculty, department heads, school directors, associate deans and deans who may want to discuss, problem solve, brainstorm, and seek clarification and assistance in matters related to their work lives.

The services offered by the Provost Fellow for Faculty Relations include serving as a sounding board and conflict coach; mediating disputes; researching, clarifying and disseminating information about university policies; collaborating with other campus offices to provide answers to questions; and reviewing correspondence for appropriateness.

This role seeks to cultivate positive faculty relations in other ways as well. The Provost Fellow was a member of the working group that reviewed the results of the COACHE faculty satisfaction survey. The working group was tasked to identify and act on areas needing attention. Because of the committee's work, the university has taken steps to provide newly hired faculty with information early on about available housing and childcare options in the region, is increasing efforts to provide different types of department head professional development opportunities, and is working to identify patterns or behaviors that may affect faculty satisfaction. As an example of the latter, Teri invites departing faculty to meet in person for exit interview conversations prior to their separation from Western in order to learn about their perceptions, reasons for leaving, and suggestions for improvement.

Teri believes that the existence of the Provost Fellow for Faculty Relations role signals Western's commitment to creating a culture of positive faculty relations. Faculty and faculty administrators are invited and encouraged to reach out for assistance at any time. Teri is available to assist at the Cullowhee campus and the Biltmore Park instructional site. You are welcome to contact her at tdomagalski@email.wcu.edu or 227-3589. You may also visit the Provost's website for more information and to review frequently asked questions about this service.

Staff Spotlight

Rebecca Scheidt

Administrative Support Associate, History



Rebecca Scheidt is the Administrative Support Associate for WCU's History Department.

She graduated from the University of Central Florida in 2003 with a master's degree in Liberal Studies with concentrations in Biological and Physical Sciences. She minored in Criminal Justice.

Rebecca is currently employed in the History Department, and was previously working as the Gifts Processor in the Development office. Before coming to Western, Rebecca worked in the Scholarship Office at Auburn University.

Rebecca enjoys the great outdoors of Western NC and particularly loves photography and hunting for gems and other interesting rocks. She really enjoys both video games and reading, as well as golf, watching football, and fishing.

Her favorite quote is, "The great man is he who does not lose his childlike heart." by Mencius. Rebecca likes to make a point of keeping a youthful mindset, and to not think of her age as anything else but a number.

Faculty Spotlight

Julie Brancale

Assistant Professor, Criminology & Criminal Justice



Julie Brancale is an assistant professor in our Criminology & Criminal Justice department. She earned her bachelors, masters, and doctorate degrees in criminology from Florida State University.

Julie enjoys running, hiking, swimming, reading, and spending time with her family.

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it." -Aristotle

This is her favorite quote and one that she shares with all of her students at the beginning of the semester. Julie believes it is important for all of us to respectfully listen to the beliefs and opinions of others, whether we share the same opinion or not.

Julie believes that listening to and thinking about ideas is fundamental to knowledge building.

Student Spotlight

Zachary Tallent

Undergraduate Student, Natural Resource Conservation and Management



Zachary Tallent is an undergraduate student here at Western Carolina University, who is studying Natural Resource Conservation and Management. He is a local student, having graduated from Franklin High School.

Zach is currently employed at Appalachian Ace Hardware, and is a bio-monitoring intern at Mainspring Conservation Trust, whose mission is to conserve the waters, forests, farms and heritage of the Upper Little Tennessee and Hiwassee River Valleys.

His hobbies include bass fishing (he serves as Vice President of the WCU Bass Fishing Club), duck hunting, and he is a huge fan of the Tennessee Volunteers football team.

Zach's favorite quote is "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication," by Leonardo DaVinci. He believes that this quote embodies all he is.

Most recently Zach was part of the team of young men from WCU's Bass Fishing Club who traveled to Texas to offer their support to Hurricane Harvey victims.

We are proud of this Catamount!

Want to include news in next month's issue?
Please send information to scmelton@wcu.edu