Academic Affairs
News & Reflections

From the Acting Provost's Desk

Dear Colleagues:

The brutally cold temperatures that brought the semester in have certainly not curtailed the boundless level of activity on our campus! We are soon to break ground for the Tom Apodaca Science Building (March 2nd); we are in the midst of recognizing Black History Month; and faculty, staff and students are hard at work completing projects, assessing programs, conducting research and much more.

It's I Love WCU Month and what better way to support our students than to make a contribution toward their success. This newsletter cannot list the myriad ways I Love WCU, but I can show one way with my donation to our campaign. In the words of Maxie Wright Duke, one of our graduates from 1948, "my life has been better, and I am a better person because of WCTC (Western Carolina Teacher's College) where [I] laughed, loved, and lived."

In an effort to assess the effectiveness of the Office of the Provost, a campus-wide survey was conducted by the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness in the fall of 2017. The survey requested feedback on areas for which the Office of the Provost is responsible, as well as general feedback on procedures and operations. The response rate was low at 14%, however, through a review of the survey results by the Provost's Office staff, we plan to address a number of areas identified. This spring, I will be hosting a Provost's Faculty and Staff Luncheon at Biltmore Park, scheduling a drop-in opportunity for faculty to meet with the Provost's Executive Council and we will continually review and seek improvement on methods of communication. We appreciate the feedback and wish you all a successful semester!

Warm regards,

Carol Burton

Acting Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Chancellor's Search

WCU has begun the search for a new Chancellor and the search committee welcomes input from our university community. The forums hosted by the search committee have not been well attended and to date we have received online feedback from 56 faculty, 65 staff, and 76 students. Please visit the search website and provide your feedback on the key characteristics you would like to see in our next chief executive officer: chancellorsearch.wcu.edu.

Thank you!

2018-19 Campus Theme

I am pleased to announce our upcoming 2018-2019 campus theme...Defining America.

A campus poll last fall identified two broad areas for our interdisciplinary theme for the 2018-19 academic year and Defining America was selected through a process of refinement. Lane Perry, Director of the Center for Service Learning, will be overseeing the campus theme. He will be creating a committee during the current semester to discuss and define the theme, as well as to plan its implementation. This theme serves as a moment to take pause, explore, and to learn about America "from sea to shining sea." In the meantime, please participate in the remaining current theme events including the Cherokee Cultural Tour on Tuesday, February 27th from 4-6pm in the UC Grand Room. (https://www.wcu.edu/learn/academic-enrichment/campus-theme/)

Joseph Erb (Cherokee), *Petition*
acrylic on canvas, 24"x36"

EBCI Basketball Appreciation Night

from the Director of the Cherokee Center

Western Carolina University celebrated the continued partnership with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians by hosting tribal leadership and community members at the men's basketball game against Samford on February 3rd. All EBCI members were asked to stand and be recognized along with the Cherokee Royalty Little Miss, Junior Miss and Teen Miss Cherokee Ambassadors and Principal Chief Richard Sneed.

The game had approximately 300 EBCI members in attendance and all were equally excited to see a community friend and WCU basketball player, Jason McMillian take the court.

Sky Sampson, director of the WCU Cherokee Center, said "It was a good day to be indigenous and we were so excited to host so many of our native youth, in hopes that they will remember their experience here and want to attend WCU one day."

Updates from Undergraduate Studies

from the Office of Undergraduate Studies

Campus Theme - Signature Events

The 2017-2018 campus theme is Cherokee: Community. Culture. Connections. Signature events are continuing this semester to highlight Cherokee connections to the region and the university. We encourage you to join us for the Cherokee Tour on February 27, 2018 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm in the UC Grandroom. The Cherokee Tour will include hands-on activities focusing on Cherokee language, philosophy, and worldview; tribal sovereignty and self-determination; creative expression; and cultural competency.

For a list of other signature events or to find out more information on our campus theme, please visit: go.wcu.edu/campustheme

Mountain Heritage Center Welcomes Loran Berg

A new member of the Mountain Heritage Center's staff joined our team on January 16, 2018--Mr. Loran Berg, who moved to Cullowhee from Bismarck, North Dakota. Loran will now lend his expertise in museum collections and exhibits to his new position as Collections Manager for the MHC. Berg holds an MA in Historic Administration and possesses a wealth of experience working with institutions such as the State Historical Society of North Dakota, Maryhill Museum of Art, and Museum of Northern Arizona. In his third week on the job, Loran and MHC director Pam Meister attended a North Carolina Humanities Council workshop in Mount Pleasant, NC to plan for the MHC's upcoming hosting of the Smithsonian Institution's exhibit, "The Way We Worked," which will be on view in the Center's Hunter Library gallery from September 25 through November 7, 2018.

Center for Career and Professional Development - Career Networking event and upcoming events

On Tuesday, February 6th, the Center for Career and Professional Development and the Center for Service Learning hosted the semi-annual Catamount Career and Networking Day event in the Ramsey Center. Over the course of the day, more than 700 students had the opportunity to network with over 150 employers to discuss full-time jobs, seasonal job openings, internships, graduate schools, and volunteer and service opportunities.

In addition to exploring career and service opportunities with employers and community organizations, students were also able to have a professional "headshot" photo taken by members of WCU's chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America. At this event, they took over 130 photos that students can use in places such as their LinkedIn profile.

The Catamount Career and Networking Day is held twice during the school year, once in the fall and once in the spring. The next one will be held on Wednesday, October 3, 2018. To see a full listing of all Center for Career and Professional Development events please visit our calendar page: http://bit.ly/2sno8nR

Center for Service Learning - Faculty Institute on Community Engagement

Thirteen tenured or tenure-track faculty members representing seven colleges across campus embarked on a new faculty development opportunity called the Faculty Institute on Community Engagement (FICE). FICE seeks to provide faculty with professional development experiences focused on developing deeper understanding and mutually beneficial applications of community engagement opportunities.

The FICE retreat started on February 2nd with a Deans' panel addressing the question, "What is the value in community engagement to your college and faculty?" This was followed by a moderated community partner panel and a facilitated service-project on Friday evening. On Saturday, a day long workshop with international service-learning scholar Patti Clayton focused on curriculum development and engaged research.

February 12-14 the entire FICE cohort attended the CEI/PACE conference to learn about civic/community engagement in myriad forms. The FICE continues with three follow-up sessions focused on community engaged teaching and learning over the remainder of the spring semester.

This institute is a collaborative effort between The Center for Service Learning and Associate Professor Beth Wall-Bassett who has received a faculty fellowship from NC Campus Compact for the 2017-2018 academic year to assist with the development of FICE.

Western Carolina University | Faculty Institute on Community Engagement

Updates on 2018 Summer Session

from the Office of Student Success

Preparations are underway for the 2018 Summer Session term, and there are some exciting updates to share with the WCU community.

This year, the US Department of Education has made summer Pell Grants available, which will make summer school more affordable for eligible students. Year-round Pell allows students to receive up to 150% of their regular grant award over an academic year, allowing them to take advantage of summer classes and finish on or ahead of schedule.

WCU is also pleased to offer several categories of scholarship assistance during the 2018 Summer term. With the support of the offices of the Chancellor, Provost, and Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance, the campus will begin a summer completion program that provides up to 4 credit hours of tuition funding for students who can graduate by the end of the second summer session, students who did not meet satisfactory academic progress, and students enrolled in specific courses that are often barriers to degree completion. There are need-based and non-need-based funds available; only need-based awards may be applied to fee costs.

Funds will be distributed by the Office of Student Accounts in consultation with the Registrar and Undergraduate Advising. Funding is available to all students in these categories regardless of residency status or career level. We will market this initiative to students and have conversations with faculty, department heads and advisors about how they can be supportive.

Updates from the Chief Diversity Officer

from the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer

- The College Democrats and College Republicans have scheduled a debate for Wednesday, February 28th from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the UC Catamount Room. The event will be moderated by Ricardo Nazario Colón, WCU's Chief Diversity Officer. For additional information contact Zack Daniels at wzdaniels1@catamout.wcu.edu or Benjamin Snedegar at blsnedegar1@catamount.wcu.edu
- Currently, the Fine Art Museum has an exhibition on view of Willie Cole's prints. Willie Cole's work has been the subject of several one-person museum exhibitions: Montclair Art Museum (2006), University of Wyoming Art Museum (2006), the Tampa Museum of Art (2004), Miami Art Museum (2001), Bronx Museum of the Arts (2001) and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1998). Cole's art is very powerful, both visually and in concept, and we plan to bring him to campus to give a talk about his work on April 12, 2018. If you are interested in supporting Willie Cole's visit, please contact Carolyn Grosch at cgrosch@email.wcu.edu
- The second annual Hats-Off-to-Women Luncheon will once again bring together Senior Level Administrators and young scholars at Western Carolina University on March 13th. The program will be a roundtable event, fancy hat and all. We tip our hats to the women who have paved the way and to our scholars in the making, who are paving the way today! Topics such as the road to success, giving back, work ethic, leadership and mastery of content will be discussed. This year's keynote speaker is Chief Joyce Dugan, the first and only woman to become chief for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The goal for this program will be to allow our young scholars to see models of success in women and to give our scholars marching orders for success. This is an invitation only event sponsored by the Intercultural Affairs Department and the Chief Diversity Officer. For additional information please email Tacquice Davis at tawiggan@email.wcu.edu or diversity@wcu.edu
- The latest installment of the award winning Diversity Dialogues will debut in March. If you are not familiar with our Diversity Dialogue series please visit the site at https://www.wcu.edu/discover/diversity/index.aspx

Education Advisory Board- access to higher education research

WCU is a member of the Education Advisory Board (EAB), a national company that provides best practices and conducts studies on higher education. Specific emphases in select forums (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Facilities) are available. Anyone employed at WCU may create an account and search the database of articles related to those areas by going to eab.com and entering your WCU email address. There are currently 132 WCU accounts, and 1,282 recorded visits to the site with more than 446 downloaded reports from WCU users last year. Please contact Lowell Davis (lkdavis@wcu.edu), our point of contact for the Academic Affairs Forum, if you would like more information on using EAB resources.

Community and Economic Engagement and Innovation Updates

from the Executive Director of Community and Economic Engagement and Innovation

Dr. Arthur Salido is busy promoting the great things that WCU is doing across the region. One important event that is coming next fall is the LEAD Outdoor Economy conference, which will take place in the Ramsey Center on October 5, 2018. In addition to showcasing the ways that WCU supports the outdoor industry, the conference will involve a keynote address by David Knight, NC's new Outdoor Industry Recruitment Director. The conference will also involve a Sharktank-like pitch event where entrepreneurs can seek investment for their outdoor industry-related business ideas.

Arthur's recent activities include:

- Serving on the UNC system Economic Transformation Council
- Serving on the UNC system Engagement Council
- Speaking engagements at regional venues like rotary clubs, county board meetings, or various organization events
- Attending events that can expand WCU's network with the region including: area chambers of commerce meetings, business and company events, economic development meetings, conferences, and trade shows
- Promoting WCU's engagement activities and resources to the region and developing partnership opportunities
- Meeting with program directors across all colleges to learn about engagement activities and future goals

Updates from Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

from the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness

SACSCOC Accreditation Reaffirmation Update

In a letter communication dated January 12, 2018, WCU received notification of reaffirmed accreditation, with the next reaffirmation taking place in 2027. SACSCOC also requested a Monitoring Report due September 7, 2018. The Monitoring Report will address the visiting committee recommendations applicable to the following standards of the Principles of Accreditation, including four institutional effectiveness standards, Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 (Institutional effectiveness: educational programs); Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.2 (Institutional effectiveness: administrative support services); Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.3 (Institutional effectiveness: academic and student support services); and Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.4 (Institutional effectiveness: research). The University Institutional Effectiveness Council, under leadership of Tim Metz, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, is leading the effort to respond to the recommendations for standards. Improved unit-level reporting of the results of outcomes assessment is needed, and several training workshops are offered throughout the Spring semester. To learn more about workshop offerings and to register, visit https://wcu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eWiVPyKnIlV8d9j.

2018 WCU Assessment & Improvement Symposium

The 2018 Assessment and Improvement Symposium featuring the James Madison University Center for Assessment & Research Studies took place February 5–6. Video recordings of selected sessions will be made available very soon, and will be accessible via the Assessment and Program Review page of the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness webpage (https://www.wcu.edu/learn/office-of-the-provost/oipe/).

Spring Semester Census and Fall Enrollment

Our census data for enrolled student headcount this semester is 10,224 (compared with 10,099 spring 2017), which is always slightly lower than the preceding fall headcount census. Our target first time full time freshman for fall 2018 is 2020-2030 (compared with 1980 enrolled last fall). There are corresponding targets for graduate, distance, and other enrollment populations, too.

Promotions to Full Professor

from the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Each year, the Chancellor hosts a reception and dinner to honor those faculty promoted to Full Professor. These outstanding individuals join the ranks of WCU faculty who demonstrate sustained superior teaching, scholarship, and service. On February 21, 2018, Acting Chancellor Morrison-Shetlar celebrates the 2017/18 Professors:

- Travis Bennett, School of Music
- Catherine Carter, English
- Russell Curtis, Human Services
- Teri Domagalski, Economics, Management, and Project Management
- David Hudson, Physical Therapy (Distinguished Professor)
- Alvin Malesky, Psychology
- William Richmond, Accounting, Finance, Information Systems, and Business Law
- John Sherlock, Human Services
- Shannon Thompson, School of Music
- Bill Yang, Engineering + Technology
- Tracy Zontek, School of Health Sciences

Congratulations to our newest Full Professors!

Emeritus Faculty

Emeritus faculty status is awarded to honor retired faculty who have had a distinguished professional career and made significant contributions to Western Carolina University. Our newest Emeritus faculty are:

- Marsha Baker, English
- Timothy Carstens, Content Organization and Management
- David Claxton, School of Teaching and Learning
- Peg Connelly, School of Health Sciences
- Francis Hawley, Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Maurice Phipps, Human Services
- Frank Prochaska, Chemistry and Physics
- David Trigg, School of Health Sciences

Department Head Workshop

from the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

On January 4th and 5th, WCU hosted a workshop for Academic Department Heads at our Biltmore Park instructional site. The interactive workshop titled, "Communication, Consensus, and Challenging Conversations," brought together nearly 60 department heads from 15 different UNC and SOCON schools. This collaboration between the Office of the Provost, Coulter Faculty Commons, and Educational Outreach represents expanding efforts to provide meaningful professional development opportunities for Department Heads, not only from WCU, but also from our sister institutions. We are grateful to the SOCON and UNC System offices for their sponsorship of this inaugural event.

Here is what a few of our own had to say about their experience:

"The opportunity to construct strategies for addressing faculty needs with leaders from departments and universities different from my own, opened up a perspective of how unique yet similar we are to one another. I appreciated hearing from others how they navigated difficult situations and I came away with some new ideas." – Phyllis Robertson, Human Services, WCU

"The seminar presented a great approach to understanding and guiding successful teams." – Hugh Jack, Engineering and Technology, WCU

"I found the workshop very helpful in planning for difficult situations likely to arise with faculty and administrators. Our discussions and role-playing exercises were great." – Christopher Hoyt, Philosophy and Religion, WCU

"The exercises forced me to engage both sides of my brain, and occasionally even at the same time."- Jeff Lawson, Mathematics & Computer Science, WCU

Distinguished Professor Spotlight

Edward Lopez, PhD

BB&T Distinguished Professor of Capitalism

Dr. Edward J. López is Professor of Economics, BB&T Distinguished Professor of Capitalism, and Director of the Center for the Study of Free Enterprise at WCU. He lives in Buncombe County with his wife, Dr. Jamie Haseley López, and their two young children Ivana and Lorenzo.

When I was 10 years old, my Dad came home one summer day with his pickup truck full of watermelons. I had been begging my Dad for a new bike. "Help me carry these melons to the street corner," he said. "You can sell them for two dollars apiece, and you can keep the money, or you can use it to buy that bike you want." For three days I sat in the Texas heat, talking with strangers and learning life's lessons, one watermelon at a time.

When I was 12 years old, I started going with my Mom selling household products door-to-door. That was a job that took a lot of practice. I had to practice my product demonstrations, practice my opening pitch and my poker face, and most of all I had to practice my response to rejection. "Enthusiasm!" my Mom would say after every unsuccessful knock. "Let's just keep our enthusiasm!" It wasn't easy, but every eight doors or so came a new sale, a welcome boost—and a celebration.

People learn life's lessons in all different ways and experiences. As a boy my parents taught me that hard work pays off. It sometimes pays with accomplishment, lots of times with failure, and occasionally with dessert. And no matter what, there's always another door to knock on.

Here at Western I try to serve our students by living up to those values. My teaching philosophy is grounded in the belief that education is an individual lifelong pursuit and responsibility. There is always another book to read, another message to write, another conversation to have. Education is all this opportunity, and all this responsibility. Through my professorship, I try to open students to new possibilities, help them create unknown opportunities, and motivate them to work hard. You want the bike? That's great! Here's a way you can get it. And please, start today. Don't wait. Because life is short.

My Mom and Dad are now 80 and 90 years old, respectively. We sometimes hear stories about a person at an advanced age being asked, "What would you have done differently?" We all know how these stories go. No one ever says "I wish I had spent more time at the office." Fair enough, I say. Life is good—let's savor it, celebrate, and have fun. In fact, on the wall in my campus office hangs a framed black-and-white photo of Groucho Marx, grinning with a cigar in his mouth and an upside down derby on his head. This is a statement not to take the job too seriously.

But hey, let's not sell hard work too short either. Do you know when people do say that they wish they had worked harder? Athletes after a season when they didn't play their best. Students at the end of a semester when they didn't get their grade. Faculty after a class that wasn't prepped well. And parents after a hard day, or week (or month!) with their kids. So I keep knocking on doors, and I keep trying to teach our students to do the same, one Catamount at a time.

Staff Spotlight

Zara Shick

Executive Assistant, College of Education and Allied Professions

Zara Shick is the Executive Assistant for the College of Education and Allied Professions. She earned her B.S. in Hospitality and Tourism in 2010, and her MAEd. in Higher Education Student Affairs in 2016.

Zara has recently taken up crocheting, and she enjoys spending time with her family. Zara is big on DIY home improvement projects and she volunteers at her daughter's school. She's also a registered Girl Scout (serving as a Brownie Troop leader).

Zara's favorite quote is from Jaleel White, “You should never be afraid to be yourself.” This quote reminds Zara that we should embrace our differences and be true to ourselves. Zara says, "It would be boring if everyone was the same. The differences are what helps us learn from each other and grow."

Faculty Spotlight

Adam Groh

Assistant Professor, Percussion

Dr. Adam Groh is Assistant Professor of Percussion. He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Percussion Performance from the University of Texas at Austin, and his Master of Music in Percussion Performance from Florida State University; additionally, he earned a Bachelor in Music from Truman State University.

Adam is in his first year as Assistant Professor of Percussion, and he oversees the Percussion Studio in the School of Music. Adam teaches lessons to percussion majors, directs the Percussion Ensemble, and teaches the Percussion Methods class for Music Education students.

He also maintains a full schedule of professional engagements, playing with the Asheville Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, and Brevard Philharmonic, as well as solo concerts, recitals, and other performance opportunities. More information on his external endeavors can be found at www.adamgroh.com.

Adam and his wife are parents to their two and half year-old son, and they have another baby on the way (due anytime)! Two more members of their family are their two dogs that Adam loves spending as much time as possible with. In his free time, Adam enjoys being outside hiking or riding his bike, reading, following the St. Louis Cardinals, and eating great tacos and barbecue.

Adam's favorite quote is from Albus Dumbledore, "Of course it is happening inside your head, Harry, but why on earth should that mean it is not real?"

Student Spotlight

Tuyen Tram

Undergraduate Student, Double major- Interior Design and Computer Information Systems

Tuyen Tram is an undergraduate student pursuing a double major in Interior Design and Computer Information Systems. She has earned a minor in Art with a Graphic Design concentration, and a minor in Business Administration.

Tuyen is currently employed at WCU Printing and Mailing Services as the Engraving Assistant and Environmental and Graphic Design Artist. She assists the department with the operation of a laser-engraving device used to etch computers, awards, and cut materials to be used in displays or templates. She also assists in providing detailed measurement files of areas on campus where the department will be installing graphics or display items.

Tuyen enjoys traveling and trying new foods. She also enjoys watching movies. Tuyen is fluent in 3 languages: English, Vietnamese, and Teochew (Chinese Dialect). She has interests in software development engineering, 3D modeling, and architecture. She loves to create and design things with her hands.

Tuyen's favorite quote is from an unknown artist, “Set a goal so big that you can’t achieve it until you grow into the person who can!” This quote inspires Tuyen to look forward and plan for the future while trying to do the best she can to become who she wants to be.

Tuyen is highly regarded at WCU Print shop and was recently nominated for the Student worker of the year by her employer Tom Frazier. In regards to Tuyen, he noted, "We have seldom encountered a student with more energy, creativity, passion, and commitment to helping our department be the best we can be."

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