

**Winthrop University
Faculty Conference
September 29, 2023**

Provost's Report

We've arrived at the end of September and the completion of the sixth week of classes. Interim grading is underway and many good things are happening in our academic enterprise. We continue to increase our enrollment and are doing better in our efforts at retention. Our official Fall 2023 enrollment numbers will be recorded on Monday, October 2.

Joseph Miller, VP for Enrollment Management and Marketing, and his team have done good work in attracting and enrolling students. He reports that as of Wednesday we are holding at 867 new **Freshmen (22% increase** over last year), 268 new **Transfers (17% increase** over last year), and 2,289 **returning undergraduates (a 90% return rate** of continuing students from Spring '23). In addition, our **Fall '22 Freshmen cohort retention is 73% (the best Retention Rate since the Fall 2017 Freshmen cohort).**

In addition, things are looking good for freshmen applications for Fall 2024. Applications are up 51% over this time last year and completed applications are up 127% over this time last year.

So much of this is due to the good work and dedication of the Winthrop faculty and staff. Thank you so much for the work you do every day!

Sabbaticals

We will once again entertain applications for sabbatical leave for the 2024-25 academic year. Full-time tenured faculty at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor may apply for leave for a full academic year at half pay or one semester at full pay. Completed applications that have been approved by chairs and deans are due to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than November 1. College deans will communicate deadlines for their review. Check the full policy and procedures for sabbaticals in our [Policy Repository](#)

New Program Development

New academic programs are being developed all across campus, beginning this fall with the rollout of **NetAPT** (Network for Alternative Preparation in Teaching) in the College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences. This is a competency-based, alternative certification program aimed to support beginning classroom teachers. The first cohort will begin October 1, 2023 with rolling admission on the first of each month thereafter.

In the College of Arts & Sciences, our participation has begun in a \$20 Million NSF Grant led by Clemson to advance AI-enabled medical devices and to train an AI-ready workforce. Chemistry has launched a degree track in Health and Chemical Sciences this fall, and Biology had the first student enroll in our partnership with the Carolinas College of Health Sciences for a BS in BIOL/MLS option.

Other programs are being developed for Fall 2024: an online Bachelor of Social Work, a Bachelor of Criminal Justice, a Bachelor in Web Development, a Bachelor of Design in Game Design, as well as some retooling of programs and new minors and concentrations.

Finally, departments are working on other new programs for subsequent years that are in various stages of proposal and development.

ACUE – the QEP – and Career Readiness

Our ACUE (Association of College and University Educators) fall course is well underway. If all faculty participants persist in finishing, we will have a total of 100 completers. In just two years, that is half-way toward our five-year goal of 200 completers. Don't let up now.

Twelve departments have already earned the \$500 Career Readiness Impact Grant by having three or more department faculty completers.

All departments in the College of Education, Sport, and Human Sciences and the College of Business Administration have earned these grants.

The *Flight Ready* spirit has clearly caught on. Thank you for your dedication to and focus on our students!

General Education

It is somewhat safe to say that our Strategic Planning process will indicate a need to take a look at our General Education program. Please know that there have been no recommendations yet. Nevertheless, I spoke with the Academic Council last Friday and indicated that we should be proactive and begin to have some conversations about the pros and cons of our current program and how we might go about improving it. This is in the early stages of discussion about how we might engage in this in the best and most productive way.

Stay tuned.

As always, I am so grateful for the work you do each and every day and stand in awe of both your expertise and your team spirit. I am honored to fill this role as Dean of the Faculty in Academic Affairs.

Peter