



August 10, 2020

## Provost's Report to the Faculty

I am happy to extend a warm welcome to members of the faculty returning to the University for the Fall 2020 semester and the 2020 Faculty Convocation. The Faculty Development and Improvement of Instruction Committee under the leadership of Dr. Meredith Rowe has been working hard for several months to plan an event abbreviated in length but not in quality.

### **Delivery Mode and Classrooms in the Residential Program**

The University will be operating under extraordinary and unprecedented conditions this semester. Our goal is to provide the most engaging and academically enriching educational experience to our students possible while taking appropriate measures to ensure the safety of both students and employees. To that end, it will be necessary to follow a set of guidelines related to course modality to ensure consistency and continuity of instruction across the curriculum.

1. Mode of delivery (i.e., face to face, hybrid or online) for the campus program has been set for all courses and recorded on the course schedule. (Hybrid courses include a Z in the course number, online courses include an O.) A change of mode requires Provost approval. For the Fall Semester, the hybrid mode is only available to courses with an enrollment of 10 or more students since physical distancing is easily accomplished in low-enrollment courses.
2. Because a University decision to shift to a fully remote mode of delivery remains a possibility, faculty must have a contingency plan in place for remote instruction through the remainder of the semester.
3. A small number of international students who are unable to re-enter the country for reasons related to the pandemic are still revising their schedules. Faculty members may at their discretion include these students in a face to face or hybrid course without requiring physical attendance, using electronic means to provide instruction. The Advising Center will contact faculty if a student requests this modification.
4. Students in any class, face to face or hybrid, who must isolate or be quarantined, are expected keep up with their class if their symptoms allow. A small number of international students who are returning to the US will have to quarantine for a few days before they can join their face to face classes. Faculty should use electronic means (i.e., Zoom or Blackboard) to continue to engage these students without attendance penalty. Exceptions require Provost approval.
5. It will require an additional effort to maintain appropriate attendance records this semester. For reasons of contract tracing, it will be necessary to maintain up-to-date and accurate attendance records for all students attending a physical classroom space. At the same time, the online attendance policy (i.e., participation equals attendance) will apply to students who relate to a class through electronic means. All faculty are expected to make use of the *Qwickly* app in Blackboard to maintain attendance records.
6. If a faculty member must isolate or be quarantined and symptoms allow, the class may be delivered remotely for the duration of the quarantine period.

### **Professional Development Funding**

The reductions that were introduced to professional development funding for the 2019-20 fiscal year remain in effect for the 2020-21 year with one exception. These amounts are reflected in the current Faculty Handbook. An invitation to make a presentation at a

professional conference will be considered sufficient justification to receive additional funding up to 2018-19 amounts. (Professional development amounts were reduced by 50% for the 2019-20 year.) Questions may be addressed to the appropriate Associate Provost.

### **Assessment Day**

As part of Gardner-Webb University's on-going commitment to student learning, we will once again recognize the Thursday following Faculty Convocation (August 13<sup>th</sup>) as an Assessment Day. Assessment Day is a campus-wide opportunity for faculty to meet together as Schools and Departments to focus on the assessment of student learning and related topics. (If a School or Department needs to schedule an alternate date for Assessment Day, please notify the appropriate Associate Provost.)

How the day is actually used is entirely up to each School and Department, depending on what the most pressing needs are. Possible activities include

- Review and evaluation of student learning outcomes for particular majors or programs
- Review of the ALA (formerly PIR) or the GELO2 for particular majors, programs or Gen Ed contributions
- Establishing plans for the assessment of particular SLO's for the upcoming academic year
- Review of assessment data from previous year and consideration of resulting program changes
- Review of general education learning goals or SLO's in which the School or Department is particularly invested

### **Changes in Academic Nomenclature**

The University has introduced new nomenclature to distinguish its online programs from its face to face programs.

***Gardner-Webb Online*** is the outward-facing, marketing designation for graduate and undergraduate programs that can be completed partially or completely online. It is prominently featured on the website and within recruiting materials.

***Gardner-Webb Online*** stands in contrast to Gardner-Webb University ***Campus Programs***.

***Campus Programs*** is the externally used term to designate those graduate and undergraduate programs that are delivered predominantly face to face.

The university is retaining the term **Degree Completion Program**, both as a marketing descriptor and as an internal designation, to distinguish this program from the Traditional Undergraduate Program. The two programs have separate general education requirements, a different set of majors, slightly divergent academic policies, and serve two broadly different populations. The name "Degree Completion Program" also communicates the important fact that the program cannot be completed without transferring in courses from another institution. It is not designed to provide a comprehensive baccalaureate program.

The Academic Catalog will continue to maintain a separate section for the Degree Completion Program. The full name of the program will be **Gardner-Webb Online: Degree Completion Program**, although for internal use, Degree Completion Program will be the usual way of referring to the program. The former designation of **GOAL: Global Opportunities for Adult Learners** has been retired. Graduate programs will continue to be organized in the catalog by schools and departments, even though some are part of Gardner-Webb Online and others are Campus Programs.

The name of the faculty council designated to oversee the Degree Completion curriculum will be the Degree Completion Council. The abbreviation used on the academic calendar will be GWUO, an easily recognizable acronym for prospective students. Graduate programs within Gardner-Webb Online have their own abbreviations.

### **2020-21 Catalog and Faculty Handbook**

The 2020 Faculty Handbook has been posted to the University's website. Click the menu button in the upper right-hand corner of the home page, click "I am...(an employee)," and scroll down to the Human Resources section to see a link to the Handbook. Or simply search for "Faculty Handbook" from the home page.

The University's 2020-21 Academic Catalog will go live on the University's website August 15.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The beginning of the new academic year is always a good opportunity to review some of the policies that tend to generate the most inquiries.

#### *Class Locations*

Class locations for all campus sites are assigned through the Registrar's Office. Faculty may not relocate their class to a different room, even if the room appears to be available, without contacting the appropriate Associate Provost and the Registrar's office. For safety and compliance reasons, it is critical that the Registrar's Office has an accurate record of meeting locations for all courses.

#### *Accessibility Statements*

Faculty are reminded that any paper or electronic brochure that invites public participation to an event (e.g., event brochures, registration forms, flyers, etc.) must include a statement on accessibility (i.e., auxiliary aids). Detailed instructions are available in the Standard Operating Procedures Manual which can be found through WebbConnect (go to HR/Policies and Forms/Policies and Procedures Manuals/Standard Operating Procedures Manual).

#### *Reimbursement Policy*

The policy on reimbursement for eligible expenses is located in the SOP Manual and in the Personnel Policy Manual, both accessible through WebbConnect. In order to comply with auditing requirements, the following rules apply:

- Requests for reimbursement must be submitted no more than 60 days after the expense
- Tips will only be reimbursed up to 20% of expense
- Receipts for meals must be itemized; credit card receipts alone are not acceptable
- Meal totals will only be reimbursed up to \$30/day

- Alcoholic beverages are excluded from reimbursement
- The rate of mileage reimbursement is 32¢/mile

#### *Electronic Office Equipment*

Faculty are reminded that the purchase of major electronic equipment, particularly computers, printers and projectors, should always be coordinated through the office of Technology Services, located in the east wing of HAPY Hall. This is true even if the Department or School is providing the funding for the purchase. See the Technology Services web page for a list of additional items that require (and those that do not require) approval by Technology Services before purchase.

#### *Safety Training*

All employees (whether faculty or staff) who supervise other employees have obligations under federal codes related to safety. All employees, regardless of supervisory status, are required by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to complete regularly mandated safety training, which at Gardner-Webb is conducted online. Here is the relevant passage from our current SOP Manual:

The Office of Environmental and Occupational Services (EOS) will assist Specialty Department Managers in completing job hazard assessments for all positions within the department and ensure that all personal protective equipment is issued to the employee. The Office of EOS will assign all training based on the job hazard assessment. The Office of EOS will also assign safety training for all positions that do not require specialty training.

Department Managers, Department Chairs, and Deans are responsible for compliance and recordkeeping of training for employees in their area. Vice Presidents and Associate Provosts have overall responsibility for the administration and compliance of the training program for their areas of responsibility. All training records must be maintained in the electronic database provided by EOS.

The completion of required training is considered part of one's job responsibilities. Therefore, employees are expected to comply with all safety regulations and training as outlined by Gardner-Webb University and the Office of Environmental and Occupational Services. Failure to comply with safety regulations and training may result in disciplinary actions up to and including discharge.

Faculty and most members of the staff are also required under Department of Education rules to complete regular training on Title IX issues related to harassment and sexual misconduct. Because of federal mandates, compliance with both Title IX and safety training is considered a condition of employment.

#### *Video Captioning*

All educational institutions are required by federal mandate to ensure that video content utilized in class or required for assignments is accessible to students with disabilities, including deafness. Consequently, all videos, both for seated and online courses must provide video captioning. It is incumbent upon faculty to select videos that provide this feature. If a critical video is not available with captioning, there are services available that

can provide captioning to a video. Currently, the only funds available for this process must be appropriated through a school- or department-operating budget. The Director of Digital Learning can provide information on the most efficient solutions for video-captioning.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Leslie  
Provost & Executive Vice President

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### **Faculty Recognition**

All University Faculty (both permanent and adjunct) are invited to submit recent accomplishments. Please format submissions in advance. Guidelines for formatting submissions are viewable on the web:

<https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=336EE5B630B29095!2935&app=Word&authkey=!AP6V6iVmeIfkf5w>

### **Pam Dennis, Ph.D** **Dean of the Library**

Dr. Dennis and Mariah Case (GA and MDiv student) collaborated on a presentation at the Virtual NCLive Conference on May 20 that combined their interests in musicology and divinity with the digitization and online publication of one of the University Archives' collections. The presentation was titled "Digitizing a Hymnal Collection: What is Involved and Why is it Important?"

### **Holly Mabry, MLIS** **Digital Scholarship & User Experience Librarian**

Holly Mabry and Library Graduate Assistant Mariah Case collaborated on a presentation at the Metrolina Library Association annual conference on June 11<sup>th</sup> titled "#Throwback Thursday: Using Social Media to Promote Student Engagement with University Archival Materials." This presentation was based on the successful feedback we have received through the library's weekly social media posts with University Archives resources.

### **Nicole Waters, DNP** **Associate Provost College of Health Sciences, Assoc. Prof. of Nursing**

Dr. Waters has been accepted in the 2020 BRIDGES Academic Leadership for Women program at UNC-Chapel Hill. BRIDGES is an inclusive professional development program for women in higher education who seek to gain or strengthen their academic leadership capabilities. It is designed to help women identify, understand, and build their leadership roles in the academy. Dr. Waters will join 35 women from varied higher education institutions across North Carolina, to comprise this year's class.