

I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable semester break. I would like to take this opportunity to update you on several ongoing initiatives from the Office of the Provost.

After reviewing survey results from the Colleges of Engineering and Law, we are moving forward with negotiations to convert their interim deans into permanent deans in lieu of conducting national searches. We have also distributed a survey to the faculty in the College of Medicine and Life Sciences regarding their interim dean. I should note that Dean Mark Merrick will complete his five-year appointment at the end of June 2025, so we also surveying faculty from the College of Health and Human Services before renewing his appointment. We are also including faculty from the College of Nursing in this survey as Dr. Merrick has been serving as their Acting Dean for the past 6 months and would be their permanent dean after the merger.

Members of the committee tasked with reviewing low enrolled programs and investment proposals will be invited to participate shortly. I will share the membership of this committee with the deans and Faculty Senate leadership once it has been finalized. Thomas Atwood, Dean of the University Libraries, has graciously agreed to chair this committee. As this committee begins its review of low enrolled program, a template for investment proposals will be distributed for the committee to review after they complete their review of low enrolled programs.

2025-2026 workload forms have been released and are due to deans by February 14th and to the Provost Office by February 28th. We have reverted to a PDF version of the form for circulation and review that will then be uploaded to our Dynamic Forms system. A template for course re-development proposals from faculty will shortly be added to the workload website. Proposals approved by chairs and deans are also due to the Provost Office by February 28th.

Implementation of the centralized advising structure is ongoing. Advisors have been officially centralized this week into their new Advisor 1 or Advisor 2 positions. Emily Shinaver from University College, Whitney Valencia from the Neff College of Business and Innovation, and Stella Vay from the College of Arts and Letters have been identified as Advising Managers that will report to Adam

Hintz, our University Advising Administrator. Each Advising Manager will oversee groups of advisors from various colleges. I believe President Van Hoy has invited Angela Paprocki and her colleagues to attend an upcoming Senate meeting to provide an update on their progress.

At the Academic Leadership Team (ALT) meeting this past Friday, Malaika Bell provided a short presentation on a new University-wide Belonging Committee comprised of inclusion officers from academic and non-academic units. She also presented on the sense of community climate survey that will be released shortly. I believe President Van Hoy has also invited Malaika to present this information at an upcoming Senate meeting. Malaika also wanted to remind everyone of the upcoming MLK Unity Day Celebration that will be held online this Monday January 20th at 10 am. Please visit the www.utoledo.edu/mlk website for details if you wish to participate in this event.

We also discussed SB 104, the so-called “Bathroom Bill”, that was signed by Governor DeWine toward the end of November 2025 and will go into effect on February 25, 2025. As a reminder, this bill contains language that requires individuals to use multiple occupancy restrooms that correspond to the sex that they were assigned at birth. Although UToledo and other public institutions of higher education in Ohio are still working on the implementation of this new law, we recognize that this new law will impact members of our campus community.

It should be noted that this law only applies to multiple-occupancy restrooms. The University has numerous single-occupancy restrooms across Main Campus and Health Science Campus. Some of these restrooms are currently labeled as single occupancy or gender neutral. Others are labeled as men’s or women’s restrooms for compliance with requirements regarding the number of gendered restrooms we must make available to our campus community. We are organizing a complete list of all single occupancy restroom locations and will create a public website sharing this information before the bill takes effect.

Finally, I received a question regarding the change in our Spring 2025 academic calendar. Following the transition from 16 to 15-week semesters 8 years ago, we moved the starting date of the Spring semester from the Monday before the MLK

Day holiday to the day after this holiday. This was done to provide a longer semester break to accommodate a Fall – Spring intersession term. The intersession term was discontinued after a few tries, so we decided to move the starting date of the Spring semester back to the Monday before the MLK Day holiday for the foreseeable future.