



KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND SENIOR
VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Provost's Updates

This has been an exciting year at Kennesaw State University as we work together to further enhance student success and to achieve our goal of becoming among the nation's best R2 universities.

It is hard to believe that I am approaching the one-year mark as provost of KSU, but I look back on the year and realize that we have made so much progress. To help welcome our largest freshman class this semester, we added advisors and nearly 100 new faculty members. Additionally, we welcomed four new deans to the academic leadership team – Ivan Pulinkala (College of the Arts), Shawn Long (College of Humanities and Social Sciences), Ian Ferguson (Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering and Engineering Technology) and Tim Blumentritt (College of Professional Education), and successfully hosted committee members from our accrediting body, SACSCOC.

And since we are not slowing down, I will periodically be sharing news with you from the Office of Academic Affairs. I hope you find these updates helpful and informative.

As always, I welcome your feedback, and I appreciate your collaboration and dedication to helping our students succeed.

Dean of the College of Architecture and Construction Management

As we announced earlier this semester and following an extensive search, [Dr. Andrew Payne](#) has accepted the position of dean of the College of Architecture and Construction Management, effective Jan. 1, 2020. I am pleased that he will lend his leadership and experience to the college.



Two Dean Searches

Two committees are well underway in the search for new deans for the College of Science and Mathematics (chaired by Dean Ivan Pulinkala) and the Michael J. Coles College of Business (chaired by Dean Cindy Reed). Applications for these two positions will continue to be accepted through mid-December. Once our search committees select finalist candidates, campus community members will be invited to attend presentations and Q&A sessions with each candidate sometime in late January and/or early February. We will have more to share soon.

New Strategies for Supporting Research

In support of our mission of becoming one of the premier R2 universities in the nation, my office and the Office of Research have launched a new task force dedicated to finding new ways to support faculty and student research practices on campus. The task force will use a human-centered design approach, which emphasizes understanding the experiences of the stakeholders (in this case, students, faculty, and staff) engaged in any given process. Human-centered design highlights that the people actually performing the tasks in different steps of a process can work collaboratively to identify underlying problems and solve them, so as to improve the experiences of all involved. This is a critical initiative, and I am excited to share some details of their work.

The task force, headed up by Susan Smith, professor of biology and an accomplished Kennesaw State researcher, will initially address three significant barriers impacting research productivity: hiring, student access, and procurement. Three teams within the task force will address these opportunity areas.

- **Procurement:** How can we streamline the processes for purchasing the materials needed for faculty and students to perform their research?
- **Hiring:** How can we help faculty and administrators hire the people they need to assist in research processes?
- **Student access:** What operational processes must be in place to ensure that students have access to the equipment, space, and continued services they need to be successful?



The success of this task force will set a precedent for a fundamental change in decision making, and will impact all areas of the University, not just research. I am confident that this initiative will produce a more effective R2 university, and that our students, faculty, and staff will benefit from the results for many years to come.

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

As part of our reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, every ten years the University must submit and execute a five-year Quality Enhancement Plan. Our plan – *It's About Engagement* – is now underway.

The plan ensures that all of our students have access to hands-on, active learning opportunities in the areas of Internships, Undergraduate Research, and Service-Learning. We know that students who access these types of engaged experiences are more likely to be successful in their lives. Each college is working to provide engaged learning opportunities, led by our deans and chairs, working closely with our faculty to recognize, improve, and promote student involvement in the three engagement areas.

In support of this initiative, and to provide regular updates about our progress in implementing the *It's About Engagement* plan, the University has launched a new website: engagement.kennesaw.edu. I encourage you to keep informed about the work we are all doing to improve our student experience and to help every student get engaged.



Momentum Approach

The University System of Georgia has recently expanded the critical “Momentum Year” initiative to “[Momentum Approach](#).” This change acknowledges higher education’s need to help students maintain their momentum beyond their first year and throughout their entire experience in college.

In line with this strategy, I am pleased to share that KSU has successfully implemented new academic focus areas, increased emphasis on the connection between academic and career planning, initiated the reintroduction of academic program maps to assist students as they track their degree progress, and increased academic support to keep students on track in our most challenging courses. We are also planning multiple workshops and academic events for

students, like our recent “Find Your Major” fair, where students met with faculty and advisors from throughout the university to explore study opportunities and discover new interest areas. We’re also exploring new interactive technologies to help students get the information they need when it will benefit them most.

The Momentum Approach initiative affects all of our students and necessitates the support of each and every faculty and staff member. I sincerely appreciate all of your hard work as we seek new ways to improve our programs and ensure our students have every opportunity to be successful.

Sincerely,
Kat Schwaig
Provost and Sr. VPAA

