

Campus News and Updates November 3, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

It is good to be back! My two weeks away on vacation at the Delaware coast were relaxing and rejuvenating ... just what I needed! But I appreciate getting back into the swing of things at work.

You might notice that I have changed the title for my email, and the focus will change as there is less and less to communicate related to the COVID-19 pandemic. I plan to continue to include COVID-19 updates as necessary, but for the most part I'll be using my emails to provide you with campus news and important reminders and updates. I hope you continue to find them helpful.

COVID-19 Updates

The University partnered again with Walgreens to bring COVID-19 and flu vaccines to campus today. COVID-19 vaccine boosters were available, too (people who work in education settings are eligible six months after their second shot, or two months after the one-shot J&J vaccine). If you didn't have a chance to go today, look for announcements of future clinics.

Other University News

Open Staff Meeting: An open staff meeting was held last week in Convocation Hall. Those who attended heard a review of the recent Board of Regents meeting from Vice-Chancellor Brigety. Employees will also receive a written report on the Regents' meeting. Along with the introduction of new employees, there were also reports on the strategic planning process and from the School of Theology, Student Success, College Admission, and University Relations. And pre-submitted questions were answered.

DEI Office and Initiatives Update

Sibby Anderson-Thompkins has been conducting a listening tour since her arrival in September as vice provost for diversity, equity, and inclusion. She has heard about some of the challenges, opportunities, and aspirations you have for enhancing Sewanee's culture and climate, and our sense of belonging and community. More of you will have the chance to connect with Sibby in the coming weeks. As she establishes a [DEI Office](#) here, the roles and responsibilities of two staff members have been expanded. Rachel Fredericks has been appointed as the permanent director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs. She will manage programs and services that support access and enhance the success of diverse students. Sylvia Gray is now the senior director of equity, equal opportunity, and Title IX, and will have oversight of training and awareness efforts related to all forms of harassment and prohibited discrimination as well as the coordination of prompt and equitable investigations and resolution of related complaints. Sylvia

and others will aim to foster a campus environment that is free from inequity, discrimination, and harassment.

Vice-Chancellor Brigety provided an email update on the DEI initiatives he announced last September. Read the [original announcement](#) as well as the [12-month update](#) sent to campus yesterday.

Strategic Planning

The strategic planning process continues its work around four pillars: 1) elevating diversity, equity, and inclusion; 2) improving student success; 3) curriculum renewal and innovation; and 4) economic development and Domain stewardship. The subcommittees that are focusing on these pillars welcome your input at this early stage in the process.

The strategic planning committee will host two forums—one for students, and the other for faculty and staff—to discuss the subcommittees' work and to listen to your reflections. The forum for students will be held at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 16, and the forum for faculty and staff will be at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 17. Both forums will be online with discussion rooms for each subcommittee. Details on how to join the discussion will follow.

In addition, you can communicate directly with members of the subcommittees:

- Diversity, equity and inclusion: Sibby Anderson-Thompkins and Chris McDonough (co-chairs); Peter Gray, Jim Turrell, Vicki Sells, Husnain Fateh Ahmad, Rachel Fredericks, Nicky Hamilton, Deborah M. Jackson, Betsy Sandlin, Erica Rozolsky, Lauren Goodpaster, and Jessica Welch (members).
- Student success: Lisa Stephenson and Katie McGhee (co-chairs); Erica Howard, Chris Shelley, Allie Dent, Mark Webb, Cassie Meyer, Doug Drinen, Alan Ramirez, and Kim Heitzenrater (members).
- Curriculum renewal and innovation: Terry Papillon and Catherine Cavagnaro (co-chairs); Nick Roberts, Mishoe Brennecke, Ruth Sanchez, David Colbert, Elise Kikis, Amy Patterson, Deborah McGrath, Matthew Rudd, and Kate Reed (members).
- Economic development and Domain management: David Shipps and Jon Evans (co-chairs); Jay Fisher, Mike Harber, Julia Gatta, Iyassu Kebede, Amy Turner, Brad Sturgill, Myles Elledge, Kristen Cecala (members).

Sincerely,

Nancy