

ON THE REMARKABLE DEANSHIP OF TERRY PAPILLON
GUERRY GARTH
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH
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Good afternoon everyone, and thank you for taking time out of a busy finals week to celebrate Dean Terry Papillon's long and extraordinary service to the university.

Terry L. Papillon—Terry Logan Papillon—graduated *cum laude* and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa, from St. Olaf's College, with a Bachelor of Arts in Classical Languages under the tutelage of Jim May. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, where he studied under four giants in the field: Peter Smith, Ken Reckford, Cecil Wooten, and the great George Kennedy.

After brief stints in the upper-Midwest, Terry taught at Virginia Tech for 22 years, where he established an award-winning reputation as an outstanding teacher, a caring and concerned advisor, and a superb scholar of international acclaim. His books on Demosthenes and Isocrates helped re-imagine the place of rhetoric and oratory in ancient liberal education and remain the definitive works in the field. Terry also served as Director of Virginia Tech's University Honors Program for six years before becoming Dean of the College here at Sewanee in 2014.

Terry's extraordinary leadership as Dean here includes a list of accomplishments nearly too long to list. Nearly too long.

In his nine years as our Dean, Terry:

- Hired over 36% of the current faculty and in so doing diversified our faculty in significant ways.
- Tenured 44 members of the current faculty and promoted 16 to full professor.
- He led a robust expansion and revision of the curriculum, including:
 - The creation of four new majors in Neuroscience, Women's & Gender Studies, Finance, and Creative Writing and . . .
 - Five new minors, Dance, Italian, Rhetoric, Southern Appalachian Studies, and Chinese.
 - Terry also oversaw the creation of a new certificate in Civic and Global Engagement,
 - A new General Education learning objective, Encountering Perspectives: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and . . .
 - led the conversation about decolonizing the curriculum.
- With Terry's vision, the Office of the Dean of the College also changed in important ways:

- He hired a dynamic staff that has somehow managed to accommodate the all-too-numerous requests for meetings and the unprecedented work flow.
- He reconceived the associate dean position (held by Elizabeth Skomp and then Betsy Sandlin) to focus more fully on diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as faculty development and improvement.
- Terry also initiated and oversaw the development of recruitment and retention programs for faculty of color and, as a result, we have finally begun to diversify the faculty in significant ways.
- Dean Papillon recognized, however, that to more fully embrace the opportunities and requirements of a twenty-first century liberal education, more was needed. Accordingly,
 - To internationalize our efforts, he created the Office of Global Citizenship
 - To enhance the communication abilities of all students in an increasingly truculent world, he created the Center for Speaking and Listening. And . . .
 - To deepen and extend our search for a more sustainable future, he created the Sewanee Integrated Program in the Environment and a new position, Assistant Dean for the Environment.
- All of this work, he knew, would require a revitalized faculty and so Terry put forward an ambitious plan for faculty development and enrichment. This plan included . . .
 - The revival of the Center for Teaching . . .
 - Programs for onboarding new faculty, including a year-long faculty orientation program . . .
 - Programs for new department and program chairs . . .
 - Increased support for research and faculty development . . .
 - A crucial revision and clarification of the tenure and promotion guidelines, and
 - He worked with faculty to develop a post-tenure review process that is now in place.
- And he has accomplished all of this while continuing to publish scholarship in his field.

All of this and more is true. And it is an extraordinary record of achievement. But in a larger sense, it doesn't even begin to suggest Dean Papillon's deepest and most profound influences on those of us—staff, students, and faculty—who live and work in the college.

Terry has quietly and subtly taught us many lessons about how to work in community, how to maintain a commitment to ethical and truthful speech when others do not, and what it means to be both human and humane in a job that exists at all times between the Scylla (SKY-La) and Charybdis (Ka-rib-dis) of academic life, the faculty and the administration. The Strait of Messina has nothing on us.

Caught in that place, Terry taught us first how to be generous. He has given generously of his time, his considerable intellectual powers, the deep well of his emotional strength, and his abiding commitment to the life and health of our academic community. Generosity, intellectual and otherwise, is a large part of Terry's legacy.

Terry also taught us the importance of forgiveness and the potential of giving others second chances. We all make mistakes and some of us—I'm speaking from experience here—make colossal blunders. What is different about Terry is that he regularly sees the mistakes of others as learning opportunities and is quick both to guide and to offer that all-important second chance.

Terry taught us about integrity, of being true to oneself and one's principles even in the most difficult situations. He showed us the importance not only of taking responsibility for one's words and actions but also of being willing to change one's mind and to do so publicly and sincerely.

Terry taught us the importance of gratitude, of giving thanks and credit where thanks and credit are due. When Melody and I completed the university's five-year Quality Enhancement Plan, "Learning to Speak, Speaking to Learn," work central to our reaccreditation, Terry was the first and only person to thank us publicly for our work and I will be forever grateful for that.

Terry taught us the importance of disagreeing with others, of using the active voice in a world that all too often prefers the passive, of questioning the powers that be, of offering a dissenting view even when that view is not welcome. Terry understands well what the Greeks called "*Parrhesia*," "fearless speech," and the centrality of such speech in good decision-making. Hearing the other's point of view is another large part of Terry's legacy.

And Terry taught us something about common decency. I have on several occasions watched Terry mentor, coach, and encourage those of us who—when Terry wasn't within earshot—had been his most vitriolic critics. I learned in those instances what it means to be decent when others are not.

It is all together fitting and proper, then, that Terry is returning to the classroom. As should be evident from all that I have said, Terry is, in the end, a teacher born. The classroom is his true home and I will end by reminding my Dean and my friend of a passage in Robert Bolt's "A Man for All Seasons." Early on Sir Thomas More is attempting to steer the young Richard Rich away from the grubbiness of politics and into a more noble profession. He tells Rich,

"You should teach. You would be a good teacher."

Scornfully, Rich asks, "And if I were, who would know it?"

More replies, "You. Your students. God. Not a bad public, that."

You. Your students. God.

It is in the end, my friend, the only public that matters.

Terry, thank you. Thank you for all you have done and all you have given us.

And finally, I have been asked to announce that the university has already received commitments for two lead gifts for a portrait of Dean Papillon. Since it looks like we will soon have a portrait of Terry watching over us, and as we have him here in the flesh now, let's now hear from Terry Papillon.