

Provost Report to Faculty Senate May 3, 2021

I have just a few brief updates for today. As all of you know, this is my last report to the Faculty Senate. During my time at ECU, it has been my great fortune to have Dr. Sara Zeigler as a friend and colleague, and she will be formally stepping into this role on July 1 of this year. Through her leadership on the Covid Task Force, and as we've worked more closely during the transition period over the past few months, I have come to appreciate her talents and insights even more than I have during our long time serving together in various capacities. I can't imagine Academic Affairs to be in better hands.

I'm also very pleased to formally announce that Dr. Ryan Baggett has been appointed Dean of the Graduate School. I've also known Ryan for a long time. I admire his work ethic and his leadership and organizational skills. But more than that, I admire his integrity and dedication to ECU. I know that the Graduate School will continue to thrive under his leadership.

Our College Dean searches for the College of Business and the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences are well underway and candidate reviews will begin soon for both searches. The search for the Dean of the College of Justice, Safety and Military Science is proceeding as well. Please look for forthcoming announcements on candidates and interview schedules. Although the timing isn't optimal, I hope that you and your faculty colleagues will participate in the on-campus interviews for our candidates.

My congratulations to the newest ECU Foundation Professors: Dr. Myra Beth Bundy from the Department of Psychology, and Dr. Jennifer Spock from the Department of History, Philosophy and Religious Studies. Both have long and distinguished careers here, and both exemplify what it means to be a faculty member at ECU. I'm pleased that they will be added to the impressive list of faculty who have earned the distinction of being a Foundation Professor.

As we look forward to Fall 21 and beyond, all of us need to be fully cognizant of the pressures on higher education and how they will affect our institution. ECU will need to rely on the creativity, innovation, and intellectual vitality of the faculty more than ever. There will be differences of opinion on how the University responds to the challenges ahead. There is no doubt that some of our responses will require changes through added efficiencies and a careful reflection on the viability of our program offerings that will not be welcomed by all. But if we've learned anything from the pandemic it is that our faculty are resilient and responsive. It is my sincere hope that all of us will continue working toward the "One Eastern" to overcome the challenges that lie ahead.

Finally, it has been my extreme privilege and pleasure to work with so many distinguished faculty throughout my career at ECU. ECU is a special place. We do amazing things for our students, and we should take pride in this every day. As we enter the summer, I hope all of you

will find joy in family and friends, take time to relax and refresh, and be ready to return this fall to an open campus with students in classrooms, eager to benefit from your knowledge, your dedication, and your commitment to the success of our students.

My heartfelt gratitude to all of you for making ECU all that it is.

My very best wishes.

Jerry