Colleagues,

Coming back to campus after 18 months away feels like something of a brand new start, and therefore as good a time as any to begin with a new Academic Affairs newsletter. We promise that the word “pivot” will not be in any issue ever, other than this sentence. We hope to use this monthly forum to share important information and to highlight the incredible work of our faculty and staff.

In this issue we introduce our two new Associate Provosts, highlight recent grantees & FACET fellows, and provide a policy update on our Faculty Hiring Outreach Plan.

Best wishes for a successful start of the academic year—I very much look forward to seeing you on campus.

Go Tigers!

Sincerely,
Melanie Perreault
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
MEET THE NEW ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE
FROM MORTGAGES TO BUILDING CONTRACTS

Professor Matthew Chambers has joined the Office of the Provost as the Associate Provost for Administration and Finance. As a trained economist, Matt believes his research background helps him understand the complexities that go into forecasting the future financial needs of TU. In fact, Matt has shifted his focus from researching residential mortgages to examining academic building contracts.

Part of Professor Chamber’s portfolio for the Office of the Provost includes providing oversight on the completion of the Science Complex, the construction of the College of Health Professions building, as well as the renovation of Smith Hall.

Ensuring these academic facilities open their doors contributes to TU’s overall strategy of obtaining R2 status by increasing classroom and research spaces. Professor Chambers is also monitoring the budgetary support needed to expand research-based graduate degrees awarded by TU.

Professor Chambers looks forward to further settling into his Associate Provost position and since arriving back on campus, he has enjoyed experiencing the life and energy that comes with the return of students.

"I enjoy experiencing the life and energy that comes with the return of students to campus."
"Interdisciplinary work allowed me to think outside my scientific box."

MEET THE NEW ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

THE ROLE OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY AND PRACTICABILITY IN TU'S CURRICULUM

Organic chemistry Professor Clare Muhoro has joined the Office of the Provost as Associate Provost for Academic Affairs. In this role, Professor Muhoro is focused on leading curriculum development at TU including implementing the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan and collaborating with Student Affairs in coordinating student success initiatives.

She also oversees the Office of Undergraduate Research, the Office of Competitive Fellowships and Awards, TU’s satellite locations, and closely collaborates with the Offices and Assessment and Accreditation and Compliance.

Professor Muhoro emphasizes the importance of building interdisciplinarity and practicality into TU’s curriculum. While doing fieldwork on how molecules react to the presence of metals with TU students in Ecuador, Mexico, and Kenya, Professor Muhoro experienced first hand the intertwining of geography, sociology, and chemistry in producing important policy work. She believes her own research was strengthened through interdisciplinary projects that produced practical policy suggestions. She intends to focus on these themes while expanding TU’s research profile in obtaining R2 status including developing new degree-granting programs.
FACULTY AWARD HIGHLIGHTS

RECENT Awardees*
*PRIOR TO 6/30/21

Jan Baum, College of Business & Economics, was awarded a grant from University System of Maryland for "Maryland Open Source Textbook Initiative".

Michael O'Leary, Mathematics, and his Co-PIs Alexei Kolesnikov and Lindsey-Kay Lauderdale, were awarded a grant from the National Science Foundation for their work on "Recruiting, Educating, and Graduating a Diverse Community of Mathematicians Through Mentoring, Peer Support, and Undergraduate Research."

Another trio of faculty from Special Education were awarded grants. Greg Knollman received an award from the MD Department of Education for his work "Incorporating a Person Centered Approach to Teacher Education with Support from Students & Families Across the Life Span" and Rachel Hammer Billman and her Co-PI, Kandace Marie Hoppin, were awarded a grant from the MD Center for Computing Education for their work, "InSpECT: Including Special Education in Computational Thinking."

Jillian Fry, Department of Health Sciences, awarded a grant from US Department of Education for "Reducing Resource Use at the Seafood-Energy-Water Nexus: Focus on Efficient Production and Waste Reduction."

Marcio Siwi, History, was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for his work "Making the Modern and Cultured City: Art, Architecture, and Urbanism in São Paulo and New York (1940-1960)."

"With $14.7 million awarded, FY21 was a great year for sponsored research at TU."

-Nancy Dufau,
Assistant Vice President of Sponsored Programs and Research

Interested in learning more about TU's New Faculty? Or perhaps curious to know whose recently been Promoted, Tenured, or awarded Permanent Status? Find more info @ towson.edu/provost

POLICY
UPDATES
HIRING A NEW FACULTY MEMBER?

BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING A FACULTY OUTREACH HIRING PLAN ON TU'S FORM REPOSITORY
FACET Corner

The FACET Faculty Mentoring Fellows, Jennifer Potter and Barry Margulies, are working hard to understand the mentoring practices already in place in departments and colleges, and to offer mentoring best practices and advice to individual faculty, chairs, and/or departments. They welcome discussing how to:

- find the mentoring you need
- be a good mentor
- building a formal mentoring program
  [or, alternatively, how to formalize informal mentoring practices]

Through one-on-one meetings and/or informal observations of your class, FACET Teaching Fellows, Kristin Frank and Cody Sandifer, are TU faculty here to help you improve your teaching practice. They welcome discussing:

- ways to improve student engagement in your classes and
- ways to modify instructional techniques for in-person and online instruction

As FACET Research Fellow, Kelly Elkins will work with you on any of the following activities:

- Research Plan and Methods Development
- Professional Writing Support
- Proposal Review
- Journal/Book Editor: Roles and Best Practices for new editors

As FACET Emerging Technology Fellow, Ryan Murray, will collaborate with faculty to help:

- design creative, project-based assessments using technology available to you and your students
- devise effective software and workflow options for multimedia use in your lectures and classroom
- explore solutions for viewing virtual reality content in your classes to inspire discussions and writing

Have someone in mind to be TU’s Commencement Speaker & Receive an Honorary Degree? Let us know! commencement@towson.edu
Tell us a little bit about your current research interests and projects.

My research returns to the history of Hebron examined in my second book, A Young Palestinian’s Diary, 1941-1945: The Life of Sami ‘Amr (UPT, 2009). Hebron and its surrounding villages and refugee camps came under Jordanian rule after the 1948 Palestine War. Palestinians became citizens of Jordan, but also were registered as refugees by the new United Nations Relief and Works Agency. As in most refugee crises, Palestinians sought to return to their homes now on the other side of the UN-sponsored Jordan-Israel armistice line. While the armistice was monitored by the Jordan-Israel Mixed Armistice Commission, a UN General Assembly resolution had called for Palestinians’ right to return to their homes. My work focuses on the legal, political, and social history of Jordan’s criminal code, which, by the end of 1951, began to enact new statutes under which Palestinians were arrested when they crossed the border.

What is one thing about TU that you would like to share with your fellow faculty members?

Under my leadership and drawing on the great range of campus specializations, the History Department launched a new minor in Human Rights & History (HRH) in Fall 2019. The President’s priority of working with community partners gives the HRH minor a strong foundation to continually reach out to human rights-related organizations in the area.

Registering for the HRH minor soon after it launched, Taryn Painter (Class of 2022) completed an internship with United Stateless in her Junior year, which led her to pursue an Honors thesis with History Professor Ben Zajicek on statelessness resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Taryn embodies the History Department’s aspirations for the Human Rights & History minor: students gaining a deep connection between their academic learning and professional opportunities within a framework of human rights.

"THE HRH MINOR HAS HELPED ME CONTEXTUALIZE AND UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE WORLD’S MOST PRESSING HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES TODAY" - TARYN PAINTER