Welcome and welcome back to what is already an exciting new academic year at the Dietrich School. With the fall term fully underway, I want to alert you to some of the many exciting initiatives currently in progress in the Dean's Office and across the Dietrich School, as well as highlight a few important resources available to you.

First, however, I'd like to provide you with a few updates related to my priorities, starting with **Advancing Teaching and Research Excellence**.

We begin this academic year with 25 new tenure-stream and tenured faculty, 14 of whom are women and six of whom are underrepresented minorities. In addition, we've also welcomed 44 new faculty in the Lecturer ranks, 33 of whom are women and 11 of whom are underrepresented minorities.

We've created a Web page containing information about these new colleagues, and I encourage you to visit https://www.as.pitt.edu/welcome-new-dietrich-school-faculty and get to know the outstanding scholars who've recently joined our community. As you peruse their short bios, observing the breadth of their interests and experiences, you'll see that these individuals reflect our ongoing goal of becoming more collaborative and of better accommodating and encouraging knowledge, teaching, and research that spills across disciplinary lines.

Increasing our interdisciplinarity is both a challenge and an opportunity in the context of our school's current structure, separated as it is by boundaries that don't easily lend themselves to permeability. In the coming year, I'll be having ongoing discussions about how to create new and better structures for interdisciplinary programs, degrees, certificates, and research efforts and those discussions will begin with Dietrich School Council. Over the past year we've launched two exciting new majors that exemplify this spirit of intellectual cross-pollination—Digital Narrative and Interactive Design (DNID) and Computational Biology—and I look forward to discussing ways to make our school more accommodating of, and stimulating for, continued innovation and fluidity.

Another priority that we're making important progress on is **Enhancing the Undergraduate Educational Experience**. Recent data from SERU (Student Experience in the Research University) reflects positive gains in the quality of faculty instruction, preparing students for graduate or professional school, and whether students had been mentored by faculty in research or creative endeavors.

As you may know, we are on the verge of a significant population shift, with the number of college-bound high school graduates dropping dramatically. However, there is a less dramatic drop predicted for four-year elite college-bound high school graduates, and

it is this population that the University is seeking to focus its recruiting efforts on. This makes it more imperative than ever that we best position ourselves to compete for this pool of outstanding students. One goal I'd like us to focus on is making career-relevant skills legible and scaffolded in our undergraduate degree programs. For some of our departments, that will mean more clearly articulating your curricula and making it more visible on your Web sites and during conversations with your students. For others it will require more mindfulness when it comes to shaping and nurturing the competencies that employers are looking for in prospective hires in your disciplines. My team and I will be available to work with each of you to ensure that we're creating—and conveying information about—programs that best prepare our students for success in whatever endeavors they pursue.

Faculty and Staff Title IX Training
Our colleagues in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion have asked us to remind you that, throughout the year, the Title IX Office, which leads the University's efforts to educate, prevent, and respond to sexual misconduct, provides a number of trainings and programs for our community. Katie Pope, our Title IX coordinator, and her team educate all of our new students at orientation. This year, every one of our faculty and staff will participate in online sexual misconduct prevention education. Many of our students participated in the AAU Climate Survey on Sexual Assault Misconduct, and there will be additional information on the results of this survey when they are released later this fall.

All faculty and staff have a responsibility to report sexual misconduct. The short videos available here: https://www.titleix.pitt.edu/education-training/title-ix-5-minute-videos explain the reporting process and are a great reminder of our important role in advocating for members of our community. Visit the website titleix.pitt.edu to learn more about sexual misconduct policies and procedures. The online reporting form is available there as well.

The Title IX Office is available to all members of our community - students, faculty, and staff - to discuss concerns and provide resources related to gender-based discrimination and harassment. You can contact Katie Pope directly by emailing katiepope@pitt.edu.

Video Library
We are developing a library of short training videos to introduce staff, faculty, and chairs to topics that will help them in managing day to day operations. The library is located on our Sharepoint site, and is accessible via this link: https://pitt.sharepoint.com/sites/dsas/dean/chairs/Orientation%20Videos/Forms/AllItems.aspx?PageView=Shared&InitialTabId=Ribbon.WebPartPage&VisibilityContext=WSSWebPartPage
Some of the available topics include "Leading Effective Meetings," "University Account Structure and Account Types," and "Department Chair Dashboard."

New content will be added on an ongoing basis, so check back regularly. If there are topics that you would like us to cover, or topics that you would like to create a training video for, please contact Maureen Lazar, Director of Workforce Effectiveness, at lazarm@pitt.edu.

Staff Development and Mentoring

We recently posted a new and robust schedule of professional development programming online at https://www.as.pitt.edu/staff. The schedule includes topics such as Allies Network training and Bystander Intervention, and skills-based courses like Microsoft Outlook, Qualtrics, and Project Management.

We're also launching a new staff mentoring program called CONNECTED this term. Staff should watch their email for application information for this important networking and personal development opportunity.

Our Next Issue

The next issue of the Dietrich School Bulletin will focus on our diversity, equity, and inclusiveness efforts, including an update on the work of our Staff and Faculty Diversity Committees and our school-wide Diversity Task Force. Watch for it later this fall.