



During the last several months as I began the process of bringing my time as dean to closure, I kept coming back to one word—gratitude. I am profoundly grateful to all of you for the contributions that have made the Dietrich School and the College of General Studies a better place for our students, faculty, and staff, even during the very difficult challenges brought on by the COVID-19

pandemic.

In the last Dietrich School Bulletin of my time as dean, I want to recognize some of the signature achievements in the main priorities that guided my administration. Each was made possible by the generosity, imagination, and collective efforts of many staff and faculty.

Enhancing the Undergraduate Educational Experience

- In the academic year 2021, the Office of Undergraduate Research created the First Approaches to Research course. Piloted during the pandemic, this course teaches students about the diverse forms of research and creative activity at Pitt and the skills they need to apply for research positions.
- The TRIO Student Support Services program was refunded for 2020-2025, bringing \$2.3 million into the school to continue supporting low-income, first-generation students at Pitt. This award brings the program to its 50th year of continuous funding.
- Study Lab was born in 2019, replacing the idea of remedial learning with a center where all students can learn to learn better. Students responded with enthusiasm—a 160% increase in those using academic coaching and a 52% increase in those using tutoring. Over 1,000 students now come to Study Lab every term.
- First-Year Programs rolled out a new curriculum in Fall 2022 with a focus on DEI issues in FP classes.

- Through the leadership of Associate Dean John Twynning and then-Executive Director of Undergraduate Studies Jessica Hatherill, Dietrich School and College of General Studies Student Awards were launched in 2022 to recognize outstanding seniors in the areas of scholarship, perseverance, and service.
- CGS launched a team of instructional designers to provide more hands-on support to faculty developing on-line courses.
- A new Transfer Tool now provides prospective students the chance to understand how their prior courses transfer and how they will work within their intended major before applying to Pitt.
- The Dietrich School launched a major gift fundraising initiative, The Big DIG, in October 2019 with the support and leadership of its Board of Visitors. Surpassing its original goal of \$16.5 million and a stretch goal of \$20 million, it has raised \$27.2 million (as of 3/3/23), including \$7.2 million in scholarship support, \$4.7 million for undergraduate research, \$7.5 million in graduate student support, \$6.8 million in faculty support, and over \$1 million in unrestricted support. This initiative will conclude on June 30, 2023, and be celebrated at Homecoming 2023. This is in addition to the very successful fundraising efforts for departments, initiative, and programs across the Dietrich School and CGS.

Creating a More Diverse and Inclusive Environment

- Multi-day Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training has been offered exclusively for faculty and staff in the Dietrich School and CGS since 2019, and over 270 faculty and staff have participated across 15 sessions.
- A staff hiring initiative was launched in 2021 to centralize hiring through core committees composed of current staff trained in best hiring practices, including mitigating bias. To date, the committees have hired 78 new staff.
- Based on a Diversity review in 2018, the Dietrich School embarked on a plan to help all departments develop their own Diversity Plans, with a particular focus on faculty hiring and retention, graduate admissions, and the creation of a departmental climate

to support those activities. At this time, 75% of the school's departments have created diversity committees.

- Created workshops on Best Practices in Faculty Hiring.
- The DS Faculty Diversity Committee engaged in a process in the 2021-22 academic year to update the Faculty Mentoring Handbook. In addition to general updates, an effort was made to ensure that the handbook more clearly addressed the needs of the appointment stream faculty and to advise mentors and mentees on how to approach cross-cultural mentoring.

Advancing Teaching and Research Excellence

- In 2022, under Associate Dean Adam Leibovich's leadership, the School's faculty voted to change our Lecturers' titles as follows: Lecturer I became Teaching Assistant Professor; Lecturer II became Teaching Associate Professor; and Senior Lecturer became Teaching Professor.
- As of last month, we've hired 93 TTS faculty and 148 AS teaching faculty (and counting!). More than 35% of our TTS faculty hires are Hispanic or Black/African American.
- Associate Dean Kay Brummond held annual flipped workshops describing promotion and tenure processes for Assistant to Associate Professor and for faculty promotion from Teaching Associate Professor to Teaching Professor. She also held Q&A sessions for faculty considering promotion from Associate to Full Professor.
- Developed and launched an onboarding program for new and new-to-role faculty in Fall 2021 to help orient, socialize, and facilitate networking and faculty development.
- Secured funding to make key equipment purchases for several natural sciences departments as well as the Peterson Institute for NanoScience and Engineering (PINSE) and the Shared Research Support Services (SRSS) unit.

Promoting Innovation in Graduate Education

- Launched the first PhD program in the Department of Africana Studies.
- Humanities Engage was created to foster change in how arts and humanities departments, faculty, and doctoral students envisage the broader importance of

humanities PhDs and the societal impact of humanistic training.

- Grad Expo and Three-Minute Thesis events were combined in March 2023, providing graduate students with an opportunity to share their research and win awards.
- Associate Dean Jon Woon began monthly brown bag sessions with Directors of Graduate Studies to provide updates and promote information sharing.
- We are in the process of reconfiguring the Hot Metal Bridge Program, including appointing a steering committee to help expand program participation, develop a summer institute, create a virtual onboarding program, and provide more professional development opportunities for participating students.
- DSAS graduate programs moved to a holistic admissions process, including test optional applications to better assess each prospective student's experiences with academic achievement.
- Graduate Studies launched the Dietrich School's Award for Excellence in Graduate Mentoring.

These achievements are monumental, each reflecting weeks, months, and years of effort from countless faculty and staff members across our departments, divisions, and units. And each of them—and the many, many others I haven't mentioned here—has contributed toward making the Dietrich School and the College of General Studies more welcoming, more successful, and more prepared for the next stage of growth and evolution that will come with a new Dean, a new Provost, and our new Chancellor-elect, Joan T.A. Gabel.

It has been the honor of a lifetime to serve as the Bettye J. and Ralph E. Bailey Dean of the Dietrich School and CGS, and I will always be thankful for the chance we've had to work together and the work that we've done. As I prepare to step away from this job and toward other opportunities, I wish you all a safe and healthy summer and a productive and positive new academic year.