

AcademiCast Transcript
Texas Tech University
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Holdsworth: This is AcademiCast—Texas Tech University’s podcast series from the Office of the Provost. I’m Meredith Holdsworth, and I’ll be covering the top academic and research stories on campus. Later in the program, Provost Bob Smith will spotlight Integrated Scholar Bruce Clarke. First, the news...

Texas Tech has a new leader! The university introduced Duane Nellis as its president. Nellis comes to Texas Tech from the University of Idaho. And, he explains why he’s eager to be a Red Raider.

Nellis: Great campus. We have great faculty, great staff, great infrastructure. And my vision for the university is to take it to that most prominent level, to be one of the preeminent national comprehensive research universities. And I think Tech clearly has that in its future.

Holdsworth: In addition to leveraging the university as a top-tier research institution, Nellis intends to expand student enrollment, strengthen the athletics program, and encourage partnerships with the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center. Nellis will begin his duties as president in June. He succeeds Interim President Lawrence Schovanec, who took over the office following Guy Bailey’s resignation in the fall.

Turning to other news...

The university welcomes a third National Academy member to its faculty! Chau-Chyun Chen was appointed as the Jack Maddox Distinguished Engineering Chair in Sustainable Energy. Chen has been a member of the National Academy since 2005, when he was elected for his work in molecular thermodynamics and process modeling technology. Before coming to Texas Tech, Chen was vice president of technology at AspenTech, a company that he co-founded.

One of Texas Tech’s professors has been appointed to a national committee on food safety. Professor Guy Loneragan is an expert in food safety and public health, as well as a Texas Tech Integrated Scholar. He will serve as a member of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods. As part of his responsibilities, Loneragan will advise federal agencies that are working to ensure the safety of domestic and imported foods.

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Integrated Scholars dedicate themselves to a course of lifelong learning. Their emphasis on teaching, research and service helps to promote scholarly engagement. And in doing

so, Integrated Scholars advance Texas Tech's role in educating, serving and inspiring others to pursue a path of lifelong learning. In this edition of AcademiCast, Provost Bob Smith spotlights Integrated Scholar Bruce Clarke.

Smith: Literature and its interconnections with science are central to the academic work of Professor Bruce Clarke. He has spent more than two decades researching and teaching about this emerging area of literature, crafting his findings into scholarly articles as well as lectures. Clarke says his interest in his academic specialty has been sustained all these years because of continuous scientific advancement.

Clarke: Just thinking about literature from the beginning, I mean just take it back to mythology and classical literature and all the way on up the long and wonderful tradition of literature, even though it's got a leading edge where it keeps growing and changing itself. But to do literature and science, you could still go back to classical literature and look at the way they perceive the world and bring a modern understanding of how the world works to a re-examination or a new appreciation of how their belief systems operated given the assumptions they made about the world and so it's very open ended and I like that. That's attractive to me, it keeps me, you know, interested to see what's going to happen at the next turn.

Smith: Professor Clarke's commitment to the nexus of literature and science recently brought to Texas Tech the Earth, Life and System Symposium—dedicated in honor of the late Professor Lynn Margulis, whose scholarship on cell biology shaped the study of evolution and made a deep impression on Clarke. Eventually, Margulis and Clarke struck up a friendship, so in recent years she served to inspire his scholarship.

Clarke: She was a pugnacious, opinionated forceful defiant, maverick in the world of science and she had brilliant theories. ... So in recent years, she's been not just a kind of distant inspiration but someone I actually got to know and become friends with. So she was an active inspiration and someone who would nudge me with ideas and say why don't you think about this or that, you know? So, that's been a really kind of a great thrill for me in recent years—when you get to actually meet your heroes and email them.

Smith: Clarke's service to his field and to the university have likewise been great. He has been president of the Society for Literature and Science and is interim chair of the English Department in the College of Arts and Sciences, in addition to appointments on administrative committees and serving as an editor of *INTERTEXTS: a Journal of Comparative and Theoretical Reflection*, which is published by TTU Press. Although he balances responsibilities in teaching, research, and service, Clarke says junior faculty should concentrate first on being excellent teachers and producing quality scholarship.

Clarke: Don't be overanxious to put more on your plate than you can really fit when what you really need to be doing is teaching your classes thoroughly and successfully

and getting those nice evaluations. And that takes time; you've got to put the time where it's really, properly applied. Do brilliant teaching and then generate and get out the scholarship and try to have it add up.

Smith: The great Irish playwright, George Bernard Shaw noted, and I quote, "The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them." Bruce Clarke has made opportunities to integrate literature and science in all he does. And, all that he has done has helped him craft an exemplary life as an Integrated Scholar. In fact, prior to his career in academia, Clarke was a founding member of the pop band Sha Na Na during his days as an undergraduate at Columbia University. Yet he left the limelight behind, electing to read literature and challenge himself intellectually. In time he developed his academic specialty of literature and science. Aside from his recognition as an Integrated Scholar, Clarke was named a Paul Whitfield Horn Professor in 2011. Only time will tell what other achievements Bruce Clarke might attain.

Thanks for listening! I'm Bob Smith.

Holdsworth: Thanks, Dr. Smith!

AcademiCast would also like to recognize Michael Shewmaker for earning a Stegner Fellowship at Stanford University. Shewmaker is doctoral student in poetry at Texas Tech. And thanks to the fellowship, Shewmaker will be able to practice his craft and work on his dissertation through Stanford's Creative Writing Program.

That concludes this edition of AcademiCast. If you would like to learn more about the stories featured here, please visit our website at academicast.ttu.edu. Join us again as we spotlight the top academic and research news from Texas Tech University, as well as profile our new Students of Integrated Scholarship.