Dear Faculty and Staff:

As a large and complex institution it is important that we keep the university community informed about the broad range of activities that make this an exciting time at Texas Tech. This is particularly important when there are so many new initiatives and priorities whose success requires the input and participation of faculty and staff. Although we already receive many announcements and emails, I would like to begin the practice of issuing a monthly communication focused on academic matters. The intent of these messages will be to share news about university wide activities and initiatives that you may not get through your departmental or college announcements.

In this first letter I want to focus on changes to the Provost’s web site that represent efforts to improve communication about some strategic university initiatives. Three current priorities at Texas Tech are: 1) increasing student retention and graduation rates, and more generally student success; 2) promoting international enrollment and engagement; and 3) increasing the quality and number of online courses and programs offered to our residential students as well as students at regional sites. On the Provost web site we have created a new heading, ‘Current Initiatives,’ with links to:

- TTU Worldwide eLearning
- Student Success Initiative
- International Initiatives

On these pages you’ll find, for example, a chronology of the activity related to these initiatives, membership rosters of committees that provide leadership and input, and studies or reports that inform these initiatives. In the case of Worldwide eLearning, application forms for requesting resources to support faculty involvement are accessible. In addition to these web pages, there is also information on the ‘TTU Center for Humanities.’ This site chronicles the work launched this fall by the university-wide committee charged with making recommendations for the organization of a center with the mission of advancing the humanities at TTU.

I’d also like to bring to your attention another new feature, ‘Reports to the President’ listed under the link ‘Provost Communications.’ We have a monthly practice to collect newsworthy achievements from the colleges and other units that report to the Provost Office and submit this information to the President. Starting with this October’s report, we will post this information on our site so that the broader university community is aware of the items that are featured in the report.
And while you’re browsing the Provost web site, I hope you’ll review the latest edition of the 2013-2014 Strategic Report. In addition to revisions made in our key strategies and challenges, we’ve modified reporting of performance data related to our strategic priorities, especially in creative activity, publications and citations reported under Strategic Priority 3. This year’s edition also contains new information about our performance in areas monitored by the Association of American Universities and the National Science Foundation.

I hope you’ll find these web pages a useful resource about academic activity on our campus. Please send me your suggestions for improvements, not only for our web site, but also for ways that we can improve communication with the staff and faculty at Texas Tech.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Schovanec
Provost and Senior Vice President

xc: President Duane Nellis