



## **Dear Students, Alumni and Friends,**

It is my pleasure to write this introduction to our inaugural University Studies Program newsletter. Our University Studies faculty, academic advisors, and students are achieving great outcomes in every aspect of student and professional success. These collective efforts are generating significant increases in graduates, undergraduate majors, courses taught on-campus and on-line, student engagement experiences and faculty research and teaching. For example, undergraduate majors in University Studies increased 17 percent over the last year and combined on-line and on-campus enrollments in our courses grew 80 percent over the last three years. And, degrees awarded in University Studies increased 17 percent over last year.

In addition to achieving growth in student access, University Studies students are achieving as campus and community leaders and as undergraduate researchers. Students specializing in the Human Resources Development concentration in University Studies are members of the Tech Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). Membership allows student members access to the many benefits provided by the professional SHRM community. These benefits include participation in networking events, internship opportunities, and scholarship programs. Last year, the Tech SHRM organization received the National SHRM 2016-2017 Outstanding Student Chapter and the Overall Student Organization of the Year awards. Several students answered the call to serve the hurricane relief efforts this fall as volunteers and as members of the military reserves. Our on-line program options made it possible for these students to remain in school and continue to make progress toward their degrees while also serving in their communities.

Our students are also making significant contributions as researchers. Several students will present their research projects at this year's annual conference of the Association for Interdisciplinary Studies in Baltimore, MD. Our University Studies faculty have also achieved well in teaching, research, and service. This year, Dr. James Childers earned the SRHM-CP credential, which is the highest SRHM designation. Additionally, faculty members Dr. Gail Bentley and Mrs. Raynie Gibbs serve as co-faculty coordinators of the Texas Tech Society for Interdisciplinary Studies leading our students in the development and application of their interdisciplinary education. Our faculty also publish textbooks and competitively selected research in their respective fields.

As you can see by these highlights, building on a foundation of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills and by making connections between diverse sources knowledge and real-world experiences, the students, faculty, and staff of University Studies are having a significant impact on their communities locally and nationally. University Studies is a vibrant academic program of diverse faculty and students where we strive to offer a broad range of opportunities including professional and leadership development events, engaging learning experiences and versatile pedagogies accomplished through innovative on-line and on-campus approaches. On behalf of our University Studies faculty, staff, and students, I thank you for your support of University Studies.

*Sincerely,*



***Dr. Patrick Hughes***