



Sam Houston State University

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Thank you!

Today is my first day as Interim Provost and VPAA, and I wanted to start the day off by expressing my gratitude for the outstanding, dedicated faculty at this University. It is a daunting task to lead during a pandemic, but that is exactly what you have been doing each and every day in your classrooms (whether face-to-face or virtual). Leadership is key, and effective leadership does not come from the top but rather from throughout the organization. We are all leaders. I am thankful for what you have done thus far, and I am asking for your help as we continue to navigate the challenges of this academic year.

The pandemic not only has impacted our Bearkat family, but also our families at home. In every position of leadership that I have had in higher education, I always state the priority that family comes first. That is even more true today. I commit to you that every decision that is made by the Provost's Office will consider not only the impact to our campus community, but also the impact on your family members at home. We want to keep you safe as well as the ones that you love. That is my commitment to you, and I ask that you make the same commitment within your departments and colleges.

Anne Gaillard is someone very familiar to the Bearkat family, and I have asked her to serve as Interim Vice Provost. Anne has been serving as Associate Dean of the College of Science and Technology. In that role, she has worked tirelessly this year to keep our laboratory classrooms safe. She is bringing that same expertise and dedication to the Provost's Office to work to support all of our colleges in maintaining safe and effective learning environments. She will begin her new assignment on December 15.

There will be two Faculty Administrative Fellows in the Provost's Office for 2021. Aneika Simmons, Professor of Management, will be developing a plan to provide support for our faculty experiencing burn out. I cannot think of a more worthwhile project. Faculty are working harder than ever before, and the Provost's Office will do everything that we can to support you. Danielle Boisvert, Associate Dean in the College of Criminal Justice, will be leading a student success project, and I am confident that you will see the results of her efforts in your classrooms. The Faculty Administrative Fellows program is one of many new programs that you will see this year from the Provost's Office to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion on this campus. Just as we need to expand voices from across campus in administrative positions, we must empower faculty to bring their full selves to campus each and every day. And it is the unique perspectives of our campus community that will help us not only meet current challenges, but thrive in the post-pandemic world.

In closing, I urge you to take time to reach out to your colleagues. I was recently reading an article in a higher education blog that reminded: "It's not about me, it's about us." You do not have to

bear the weight of the pandemic alone. Ask for help when you need it; provide help and support when you can. Communication is more important than ever before, and we will continue to look for ways to communicate effectively. Please email me directly at provost@shsu.edu with any suggestions, concerns, questions, or needs. The Provost's Office is here to support you.

Warmest regards,
Christopher Maynard, PhD
Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs