

Colleagues,

Throughout 2017-18 we've been implementing a number of new systems designed to simplify and improve various processes for faculty, academic advisors, students, and academic leaders. Implementation efforts are moving along, so I wanted to share with you a few notes about what's coming this summer and fall.

- **Department Scheduling, Academic Catalog and Curriculum Management**

The process by which faculty and department/college staff create and edit their sections of the academic catalog and each semester's schedule of classes will be greatly simplified by new software from CourseLeaf. This is a long-overdue move to a contemporary system that is fully tied to Banner but much easier to work in. We'll also use CourseLeaf to store, manage, and display our Academic Catalog, making it easier to search for policies, programs, and degree requirements. Additionally, CourseLeaf will help move our curriculum approval processes (for new courses and programs, in all academic units) to an entirely electronic – and much less rigid – workflow. And, approved curriculum changes made in CourseLeaf will automatically update corresponding data on program, department, and University-level web pages (which will be tied to the Catalog in CourseLeaf), ensuring much-needed consistency of information across SLU's web presence.

- **Advising and Degree Auditing**

Faculty, advisors, and students have long yearned for an accurate, comprehensive, and customizable degree auditing system for all SLU programs. The new DegreeWorks system will be just that, allowing students and advisors to quickly and accurately discern the impact of various academic decisions (such as course selections and changes of major) on their academic progress toward timely graduation. An automated degree evaluation will ease workloads in the academic units simplify the verification of graduation eligibility. The system will also streamline the articulation of transfer courses according to faculty-established equivalencies.

- **Support of Student Success**

Our commitment to students' success is rooted in our ability to marshal the efforts faculty, academic advisors, counselors, and other support professionals along with predictive analytics and real-time behavioral data. Sharing pertinent information among University resources, and more proactively communicating with students, are vital – especially for students at risk either academically or personally. New software in use next fall will help SLU advance a “Coordinated Care Network” approach to this work. It will allow us to reach students on their terms; facilitate scheduling with advisors, counselors, and others; and share critical data on student performance and behaviors that our teams of professionals can use to best help students in real-time.

- **Academic Program Data Sharing**

We have heard the call from chairs, deans, and other senior leaders for more granular – and more transparent – data regarding academic program enrollment, program expenses, costs per credit hour, course completion rates, grade distributions, etc. We've heard the call for such data to be readily available across multiple years, and able to be quickly filtered by various faculty, student, or other attributes. And we've heard the call for more comparative, benchmark data from other institutions. So this spring we're implementing Academic Performance Solutions (APS), in partnership with the Education Advisory Board (EAB). It's a suite of software and dashboard applications designed to address those long-expressed calls for

better, more transparent data. And it's greatly enhanced by access to benchmark data from EAB's extensive consortium of clients, including some of SLU's peer and competitor institutions across the nation. Our rollout and testing of the APS system will begin later this spring; we hope to make it available to deans and, eventually, department chairs in the coming academic year.

- **Grant and Contract Database and Reporting**

The Office of the Vice President for Research is implementing InfoEd Systems, a replacement for our eRS system that serves as a database for all grant-funded faculty scholarly activity. InfoEd is used by many of the leading research universities in the United States, including Northwestern and Yale; Washington University is also in the process of implementing InfoEd. The software is cloud-based, works well across platforms (including phones and tablets). It automatically populates standard data and can format and send applications directly to federal agencies, streamlining applications and award management. The implementation is underway and should be complete around July 1, 2018.

Ultimately, we want faculty, advisors, and students focused not on administrivia and outdated technologies, but on teaching, learning, research, and scholarship. It's our hope that these system improvements contribute to a more simple, yet more effective, work environment.

Sincerely,

Nancy Brickhouse, Ph.D.
Provost