



FROM THE PROVOST

October 8, 2021

Good morning, Colleagues,

I am pleased to report that campus, city, and state-wide COVID-19 case trends continue to decrease. In fact, Vice President Hallenbeck reported earlier this week there were no students in quarantine housing, only about two dozen reported positive student cases, and approximately 50 students exposed. This decrease in transmission is directly related to our continued push to vaccinate the campus community, contact tracing, the availability of the Pfizer booster, and testing to identify areas of potential spread. Please accept our thanks for your continuing attention to your own personal health, as well as helping to ensure the health and safety of colleagues.

Last week I shared the Spring 2022 recommendations from the Pandemic/Endemic Planning (PEP) Task Force, and unit administrators are actively working with faculty to identify needed modifications to the Spring 2022 schedule. President Shrum and I fully support the PEP recommendations, and I continue to encourage the deans to provide flexibility and empower their department/school heads to work with faculty to develop mutually agreeable solutions that address COVID-19 related concerns not accommodated by the EO process.

Finally, as the academic leadership continues to consider how best to support and respond to the needs of the faculty and, after continued discussion with the Faculty Council Officers, I am moving forward with the formation of an ***Equity Working Group***. This advisory group will be smaller than the “University Task Force for Open Dialogue” initially referenced in weekly Updates earlier in the semester, and will focus on equity issues facing our faculty, particularly those areas of concern reported through the Faculty Council’s recent survey. The working group will have representation from tenure track and non-tenure track faculty, so if you have an interest in serving, please send a brief statement of interest to provost@okstate.edu no later than the close of business on Friday, October 15.

In closing, it is only because of the significant efforts from all members of the OSU community that we have not veered from our priorities to provide high-quality instruction, maintain active research programs, deliver extension and outreach activities, and maximize in-person instruction for our students. Please know your commitment is recognized and appreciated by all members of the OSU leadership team.

Best regards,

Jeanette

Jeanette M. Mendez
Interim Provost and Senior Vice President