From: MCGRADY, TRACY M.
To: ProvostNotes
Subject: Provost"s Notes: 9/13/2021
Date: Monday, September 13, 2021 8:04:53 AM

Good morning!

I hope all of you enjoyed your weekend. Even though it was warm, it's starting to feel more and more like fall, and I am here for it. Adding to that vibe is the return of Fall Student Picnics at every OTC location this week. It will be nice to see our students enjoying themselves at these events again.

A few announcements:

CoxHealth Virtual Visits – A reminder that anyone located in Missouri, including OTC students, can access free virtual visits through CoxHealth. These visits can be for COVID symptoms or for any other non-emergent medical concern. Please share this information with your students.

Student Learning Experience Task Force – The Student Learning Experience Task Force (formerly referred to as the *Teaching & Learning Task Force*), is launching later this week with its first meeting. The name change is to help us highlight and focus on the purpose, which is *identifying how to improve the student learning experience at OTC*. This work is aligned to the four pillars of a culture of caring: Student-centered, proactive, holistic, and data-informed. This task force will use holistic and data-informed practices to critically examine OTC's current culture of teaching and learning, the institutional environment, college processes, and the factors influencing each of those. The intended outcome is to validate current practices that are working well and recommend changes that will result in a more effective student learning experience. There will be many opportunities for all faculty to engage with this work, and I encourage you to do so. Many thanks to the task force and its steering committee, Angie Miller, Megan Weaver, and Julie Coltharp.

As we further dig in to our commitment to put our students first, it's important to remember the role of respect in that thinking. Andrew Crocker, Political Science instructor, shared something on his personal Facebook page last week that struck a chord with me. He has given me permission to share his post here. Andrew wrote:

> *In the past 10 months, I've had former students of mine:*
>
> - *Administer my COVID vaccine*
> - *Repair my A/C unit*
> - *Clean my teeth at the dentist*
>
> *I never once understood the shade we throw at our younger generations, as if we didn't have our own foibles coming up. And I understand it less and less every year.*

I've reflected on this idea a lot over the last few years. I don't know about you, but as a young adult, I certainly did my share of stupid things, academically and otherwise. My first semester transcript serves as a permanent reminder of just how badly I messed things up; at the same time, that first semester transcript serves as a very poor indicator of my abilities and the success I would eventually come to have in life. Had my professors at SMSU (yes, I'm that old) written me off in that first semester because of my poor academic habits, I'm not quite sure what would have happened. Fortunately, that wasn't the case. It took me some time, a lot of mistakes, and a little maturity for me to get myself together. I'm glad I was given the space to learn lessons and not do everything just perfectly. I'm also grateful for those along the way who showed me grace and offered their guidance.

Some students in our classes today appear to be a complete mess, but they will likely emerge as good citizens, competent professionals, and just overall decent human beings. Maybe not today, but someday. But they need our respect, our patience, and our guidance to get there. That's what putting students first really means.

Have a great week.

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D
Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802
417.447.8152