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To: [ProvostNotes](#)
Subject: Provost's Notes: 3/28/2022
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Good afternoon!

Just a few updates this week:

MOMATYC Teaching Excellence Award: Our very own Melissa Wittmer, mathematics instructor, has been selected as this year's recipient of the Missouri Mathematical Association of Two Year Colleges' *Teaching Excellence Award*. Melissa will also be nominated for the national association's Teaching Excellence Award. Melissa is an exceptional teacher, and now the whole state knows it! Please join me in congratulating Melissa on this well-deserved honor.

Faculty Senate Nominations: OTC's faculty senate president, Kristy Conner, sent an email earlier today calling for nominations for faculty senators. I urge you to consider serving as a senator or nominating a colleague who you feel would be a good representative. Please [send your nominations](#) by Monday, April 4.

OTC Cares – Student Perspective: I love listening to students' voices and gaining a deeper understanding for how what we do matters to them. Recently, Dr. Matt Hudson, Dean of Career, Technical & Community Development, shared one of his students' responses to a simple prompt: *So...how are you doing? Be honest. How are you doing so far this semester, in this class, in other classes? Physically? Emotionally? How is your motivation? You do not have to reveal anything private, but I genuinely want to know how you are doing.*

Here is how the student responded:

How am I doing? I would have to say that I'm doing a lot better this semester than I did last semester. Last semester kind of threw me a tumble, and this semester I've been able to really get back on my feet and kind of honestly do more than I expected having that kind of fall down. Honestly, it really did help me pick back up to a higher point I think than I was before, and I'm really glad for that. I did end up switching my major so that was a huge kind of let down for me 'cause I wanted to do something for so long and then just kind of didn't work out. But, after starting to take these classes and realizing what I can do, I realize so much more is out there than just that one job I wanted to be getting. I think taking these classes especially. Each of the ones that dive deep into more of self-discovery really, really help tremendously to navigate through these courses and through your life as you're taking them. I think a lot of the instructors forget that sometimes we're going through stuff, but all of my instructors this semester have been just overwhelmingly nice and understanding, and they care. They seem like they really do care, and that also helps me when it comes to thinking about how I'm doing. I'm like, oh well, I have a lot of people that are behind me that care, and obviously that helps a lot to have that support, which is another thing that I feel like I have this semester versus not having last semester. So that is good, and overall I'm doing a lot better than I was. I wouldn't say I'm doing great 'cause I still have those falls, but I am

going to get to a great place and I know it's going to come soon and I'm super excited to see where life will take me after finishing each of these courses and getting my degree. I'm super excited and I can't wait to see what life has in store for me!

When I read this, it made me feel really, really good. A few things stood out, the first being that Matt cared enough to ask the question. But beyond that I noted:

- This student's instructors are communicating that they care, and the message is being received loud and clear.
- She feels that she has a support system.
- She is optimistic about her future.

All of those feelings are directly tied to her experiences here at OTC. It reminded me that just because our students don't often tell us what an important role we play in their lives, it doesn't mean the feelings aren't there.

Have a great week!

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