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**To:** [ProvostNotes](#)  
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**Attachments:** [Red Alert Active Threat Drill .msg](#)

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Good morning!

It may be April Fools' Day, but it ain't no joke that there's a lot happening at OTC as the semester winds down. Here are a few updates:

**Red Alert Drill:** On **Thursday morning, April 4, OTC will conduct a red alert drill.** You should have received an email about this from College Director of Safety and Security, Mark Schindler, on Friday; if you somehow missed it, I've attached it here. I understand the disruption this may cause to your workday, most importantly your classes; however, these types of drills are extremely important so we can be prepared to keep ourselves and our students safe in case of an emergency. Please read the email, watch the video, discuss with your students, and **actively participate**. If you have any questions, please direct them to Safety and Security. A big thank you to Mark Schindler and our Safety and Security team for designing and organizing this drill.

**Committee Service Survey:** If you have not already, please complete the [College Engagement and Service Opportunities survey](#) that Dr. Higdon sent out a few weeks ago. As you know, participation on college committees is part of many a job description here at OTC – and probably yours! Shared governance only works when employees participate. The deadline for the survey is **Friday, April 5.**

**Year-Round Registration:** The preliminary results are in...**our students like the option of registering for a full academic year of courses!** Overall, first day enrollment activity for Spring 2025 was higher than expected. According to our friends in the Research office, under the old system when students registered for the spring semester in October, we typically had over 25% of our total enrollment activity occur on the first day of registration; this year, we had over 10% of what will likely be our total enrollment activity for Spring occur on the first day of registration last week. In fact, on Friday, we even had our first waitlisted class for Spring 2025! This has been a big shift in how we do business at OTC, and I want to thank everyone – especially the department chairs, program directors, and others who build academic schedules – for all their hard work. Our Research office will continue to learn more about enrollment patterns and retention as the registration cycle continues, and I'll pass those along as we get updates.

**Commencement Student Speaker:** We were honored to have 11 students apply to be our student commencement speaker this year, which is far more than usual. It was a tough choice, but the pool was narrowed to four finalists. Last week, a small group of us served as

judges and heard from each of the finalists. What a tough decision! We had four truly excellent students describe their difficult journeys and what OTC has meant to them and their families. It was a poignant reminder of how lucky we are to work at OTC. It is sometimes easy to lose perspective by focusing on the annoying coworker, decisions we don't agree with, or what to include on this or that agenda. If we aren't intentional about our thoughts, we can find ourselves preoccupied with such trivial things. And although those trivial things do impact our work, sitting in that room listening to students talk about what a lifeline OTC has been – how they found belonging, how they found safety, and how they found hope – jolted me back to a place of such deep gratitude. I can't imagine any more important work than ours. Thanks to all of you for being a part of those students' – and *all* our students' – stories.

Have a great week!

**Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D**

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