



Message to Faculty

5-8-2020

5:22 p.m. and 5:32 p.m.

Sent from Provost Alvarez to faculty from Provost's email box

Dear colleagues,

As we bring this semester to a close, I wanted to share with you appreciation, some information and updates, and my best wishes for the coming months.

I am so deeply thankful to all of you for your kindnesses, large and small, and your creativity and nimbleness in responding to this crisis. This is a community that is so focused on the needs of our students, especially the most vulnerable; I have been so impressed by the willingness of faculty and staff to go above and beyond. Much of that work may be unseen: the late hours, the unforeseen shifts in plans, the extended pep talks with bewildered students, and so much more. Know that this work is appreciated and important.

### **Course Evaluations**

I want to remind everyone that, as we have said before, compassion is the watchword for this semester. Just as we are showing compassion for our students, many of whom are finding it challenging to focus on their studies with their routines and certainties upended, we will be understanding in assessing the work of our faculty. Teaching during a pandemic has presented countless challenges; student evaluations for this semester will be read for lessons learned (and kudos for successes). We do understand that some students may vent their frustrations (unfairly) in evaluations. What is more important is our response—the lessons we can draw. So let us all—those being evaluated and those interpreting those evaluation—approach this with humility, an open heart, and always, a desire to better serve our students.

### **Promotion & Tenure**

I wanted to share with all of you some changes to tenure and promotion timelines which apply to faculty currently on the tenure-track. Given the cancellation and postponement of academic conferences, the financial stresses on academic publishers which are leading to publication cutbacks and delays, and the difficulties and complications of conducting so many types of research, OLLU will offer to faculty the option to delay review for tenure and promotion by one year for any faculty member currently on the tenure-track. Faculty who have not yet undergone a mid-point review may delay the mid-point review, which will also delay their promotion and tenure review by one year.

### **Virtual Teaching Showcase—May 12 & 13**

We are looking forward to a lively Virtual Teaching Showcase next week featuring some great presenters and timely and useful topics as you plan upcoming classes. All information regarding the 2020 OLLU Virtual Teaching Showcase, which will be held on Tuesday, May 12 & Wednesday, May 13, 9:00am-12:20pm, can be found on the [CTE SharePoint site](#). Here you will find information regarding the presenters and their presentations as well as the WebEx links through which you will register. We will also be sending out a calendar invite with WebEx links on Monday.

### **Using Data from Gray Associates**

Don't forget that on May 14, from 1-2pm, we will host a [session](#) for faculty who are interested in learning how to mine the Gray Associates data for leads to garner ideas for program updates and additions. The tool that Gray developed for us has been updated and is now much easier to use. This will be an opportunity to get up to speed on what it can do for you.

### **Planning for the Fall semester**

Deans, directors, chairs and program heads are busy charting out plans for the fall semester. We are planning for a gradual (and very careful) reopening of campus over the summer. The details and dates for each phase of the summer reopening will be announced as they are established. For the fall—and the return to face-to-face instruction—we will be looking at classroom requirements to maintain social distancing, hybrid options, and more. I appreciate your cooperation and collaboration with these academic leaders over the summer months as they make plans—and explore contingencies depending on the course of the pandemic. I thank you in advance for your patience and flexibility. There are so many dimensions to consider in all of this and so many unknowns, but rest assured that as decisions are made, we will keep you abreast of them.

Lastly, I sincerely hope that each of you—even those who are set to begin teaching a new term tomorrow or in the coming weeks—can find some time during the summer months to take a break, recharge, and enjoy your family and friends. I still haven't had a chance to meet too many of you. I would love to know more about your backstory, your work, and your ideas for making OLLU (even) better. While my schedule will no doubt continue to be much busier than I wish, I want to encourage you to reach out to Leticia Antu ([lantu@ollusa.edu](mailto:lantu@ollusa.edu)) to set up a meeting to chat.

With best wishes,  
Lourdes

Lourdes Maria Alvarez  
Provost and VPAA  
Our Lady of the Lake University