Welcome to the second issue of our AA e-newsletter. Attached please find Deans' Council minutes from our September 19, 2018 meeting. Please send items for future newsletters to provostwsu@weber.edu. You’ll be able to find archived editions of this newsletter on the Provost’s website under Resources: Faculty & Staff or by clicking here.

Presidential Teaching Excellence Award

The Presidential Teaching Excellence Award is meant to recognize faculty members who are outstanding teachers. Teaching excellence, which may be manifest in various ways, brings significant and important results for students and their success.

Up to twelve Presidential Teaching Excellence Awards may be given each year to tenure-track, non-tenure track, instructor and adjunct faculty members. Recipients receive a $5,000 cash award (less benefits and withholding taxes) or $5,000 in unrestricted support (any equipment purchased as support becomes the property of WSU).

Nominations can be submitted between October 1 and November 15.

For more information and/or to make a nomination, go to https://www.weber.edu/academicaffairs/presidential-teaching-excellence.html

Nontraditional Student Center Information

Our nontraditional students (over 25, spouse or committed partner, divorced, widowed and/or a parent) have many responsibilities outside of Weber State, and often have challenges that arise interfering in their academic studies. The Nontraditional Student Center is a supportive place where students can learn through shared experiences, receive guidance from an advisor to navigate campus resources and policies, and receive support from a Peer Mentor to develop test taking, note taking, and studying strategies. In addition, the center offers an Hourly Childcare Center, computer Lab, kitchen, lockers, and study lounge. Faculty and staff refer to the center when a student is in academic crisis and needs support in making next step decisions to get back on track. Schedule appointments or visit the center.

Course Materials for Spring 2019

As of October 18, WSU’s Bookstore has received 50% of the Spring book adoptions that were due on October 1st. As a reference point, the Bookstore was at 75% last year at this time—so we are a little behind schedule. Our objective is to be at 90% by the end of the month.

Based on the feedback shared with the Bookstore from academic units, I’ve directed our Textbook team to double the number of course materials (textbooks) we order. This new number will be our base; we will make any added adjustments to meet the needs of the students and faculty members.

For those professors who have been repeatedly frustrated with us, we are making special accommodations to order additional materials for their courses this semester. Doing so will give the data we need to better understand the problem. Statistically, we’ve been consistent with the national trend that about 30 percent of students purchase their course materials from the college bookstore.
By ordering double the number of textbooks/materials and addressing courses where we've repeatedly under-ordered, we should solve most of the issues we've created for faculty and students.

Pilot with LinkedIn Learning

This academic year, all WSU faculty and staff have free access to thousands of courses via LinkedIn Learning. How to find the courses? Go to WSU's portal and type in LinkedIn Learning. You'll find a menu with a wide range of opportunities.

According to Ty Naylor in IT, 695 faculty and staff and 275 students have taken 2,009 courses and viewed 19,050 videos as of October. The pilot will conclude on May 30, 2019.

Federal Grants Give Support to Weber State Programs

Thanks to the efforts of tireless faculty and staff, Weber State has received nearly $3.5 million in federal grants recently to help students succeed in a variety of disciplines.

The largest grant, $2.18 million, from the Department of Education will support Wildcat Scholars. Associate provost Eric Amsel worked with many on campus to create a program for “dev-dev” students, those students who arrive at Weber State needing pre-college courses in both English and math. Nearly 56 percent of dev-dev students drop out their first year. Wildcat Scholars not only helps them with core competencies, but it also helps students learn how to learn.

An additional $165,000 from the Department of Education will be used to enhance business-language education in foreign languages, including supporting the new bachelor of arts in Spanish translation.

Two National Science Foundation (NSF) grants of $970,000 will help efforts to increase recruitment, retention and graduation of students studying physical sciences, which includes chemistry, geosciences, mathematics, physics, computer science and engineering.

Attachment 1