

## Provost Perspectives

A newsletter from the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs



Happy New Year, and welcome back! I hope you all enjoyed time to rest and recharge during the holiday weeks and feel refreshed and ready as you return to campus.

As we start the spring semester, we have much to look forward to, as well as significant work to do. Later this month the 2025 Utah legislative session will begin, and we anticipate it will have an impact on Utah public higher education. We're already preparing for the session and making sure our campus community is represented well during all relevant discussions.

We anticipate ongoing discussions about general education courses and the importance of this content to each student's educational experience. We are working to help people understand how a general education curriculum provides foundational depth and breadth to all majors. We have heard from future employers that they need employees who can mesh technical proficiency with broader understanding of the world. By developing critical thinking, communication skills, awareness of cultures and the arts, and ethical reasoning in our general education courses, we are helping prepare students to not only fill job roles, but also to thrive in them, adapt to the situations and challenges they face and lead change in the future.

At the U, we focus on helping students succeed, because we know successful students will find meaning through lifelong learning and contribute as engaged employees in their careers, as well as in their communities and in society. That's why we are actively engaged in many projects to improve student success while acting as careful stewards of funds we receive from the state.

As we dive into these projects in the coming months, I'm confident we can find new ways to achieve our goals of improving student success, delivering high-quality academic programs and pursuing excellence in our scholarly endeavors all while showing respect and support for each other.

I look forward to working with you in these efforts, and I appreciate your consistent dedication to our students and this university. Together, we will make 2025 a banner year for the U.

— Mitzi M. Montoya



### Paul R. Kohn Named New Senior Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment and Student Success

**Dr. Paul R. Kohn**, currently Vice Provost for Enrollment Management at the Georgia Institute of Technology, has accepted an offer to become the University of Utah's first Senior Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment and Student Success.

Kohn has more than two decades of experience in higher education administration, specifically in enrollment management and student success, including serving in a variety of roles at both Georgia Tech and the University of Arizona.

During his 14 years as Vice Provost for Enrollment Management at Georgia Tech, he has led initiatives that have resulted in a quintupling of applications, record-setting first-year and transfer class sizes and increasing nonresident enrollment to 40%. His responsibilities have included overseeing undergraduate admissions, financial aid, the registrar's office, summer session and enrollment marketing.

In this new position at the U, Kohn will have direct responsibility to integrate undergraduate, graduate, professional and online education enrollment and student success strategies across the university. He will be charged with exploring traditional and online program opportunities for new revenue, including national and international markets, and developing a strategic direction that fully incorporates the principles of net tuition revenue.

Kohn will begin serving in his new role at the U on March 17. We look forward to welcoming him to campus and to working with him.

### U Announces Plan to Share Services across Four Academic Units

Four University of Utah colleges will **share some administrative services** starting in the 2025-26 academic year, according to an announcement Jan. 2 from President Randall and Provost Montoya.

The U's College of Science, College of Humanities, College of Social and Behavioral Science and the School for Cultural and Social Transformation, collectively referred to as the Colleges and Schools of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS), will share some services under the model. The decision comes after months of research, planning and receiving feedback.

"It is important to emphasize that these colleges will not be merged," said the announcement email sent to faculty and staff in the four academic units. "Each college will maintain its autonomy, with deans continuing to lead their academic units, set strategic visions, oversee curriculum management and manage faculty-related responsibilities such as appointments, promotions and tenure processes."

Provost Montoya's office has launched an internal search for a vice provost and senior dean (VP/SD) to serve as senior academic officer of the LAS units, with the aim of appointing the new leader by the end of February. According to the **position description**, the VP/SD will be responsible to the president and provost "for the strategic advancement and management of the LAS academic units."

"Once appointed, the vice provost and senior dean will work closely with faculty, staff and department leadership to design a process for planning and implementing shared services," the announcement said. "Their work will be guided by the findings from the data collection process conducted this fall, as well as continued feedback from faculty and staff."

Key decisions will include determining which services will be shared, which shared services might be prioritized for a pilot launch, what infrastructure and systems will support shared operations and how new organizational charts will take shape. Phased implementation of shared services is expected to start in the 2025-26 academic year.

Read more

### U Launches Center for Research on Race, Health Justice, and Public Policy

The U has announced the launch of a new **Center for Research on Race, Health Justice, and Public Policy**. This pioneering Center will be an incubator for creating cutting-edge solutions for significant racial, social and health disparities and public policy formation.

Led by Dr. Martell Teasley, the Center's multidisciplinary approach to research will organize its structures around three pillars: educational disparities, health equity, and justice/public policy. In organizing groups of faculty researchers within these areas, the Center's leadership team will collaborate with existing health equity centers on campus and other health and community-based organizations to achieve health justice measures.

Teasley is the associate provost for strategic academic initiatives, former interim provost and former dean of the U College of Social Work. His research primarily focuses on social work in school settings, particularly the vital role social work can play in advancing educational equity.

Though research centers addressing the confluence of racism and health are common on both coasts of the U.S., this is the only Center of its kind in the region, said Teasley, noting that he is eager to draw researchers together from Utah and surrounding states to benefit the Intermountain West.

"The center's focus on race and health justice is urgently needed in today's socio-political climate," Teasley said. "Racial disparities in health outcomes have become ever more pronounced in recent years. By emphasizing the role of race in shaping public health challenges and systematically analyzing policy impacts, this Center will facilitate the development of data-driven, equitable solutions that go beyond the traditional scope of health and policy research. This Center aims to bridge gaps not only in health outcomes but also in the structural barriers that disproportionately affect communities of color."

The Center will offer valuable educational resources, including lectures, webinars and publications. Scholars, healthcare professionals and community members interested in contributing to the Center's mission will also have opportunities for community engagement and collaboration with ongoing research projects.

Read more

## Celebrating U

### U Cuts Water Use by 55 Million Gallons with Landscaping Changes

A call by the 2022 Utah Legislature for state government facilities to decrease water use has led to changes at the U that have reduced its annual water consumption by 55 million gallons, according to a **recent article in the Daily Utah Chronicle**.

The 2022 Legislature passed H.B. 121, which requires state agencies to decrease water use by 25% by 2026, the article said. The U is on track to meet this goal by swapping Kentucky bluegrass for more drought-tolerant plants, upgrading irrigation systems, fixing leaks and installing waterwise fixtures in new buildings. Those actions have helped reduce water use on campus from 376 million gallons in 2020 to 321 million gallons in 2023, according to the U's sustainability office.

In the Chronicle article, Ali McKelvy, landscape architect at the U, said the university has created a landscape master plan that includes increased water sustainability on campus and incorporates water-wise landscaping to reduce unnecessary water use.

Read more

### Asia Campus Featured on 'Awesome Korea' YouTube Channel

An interview with Gregory C. Hill, Chief Administrative Officer and Dean of Faculty at the U's Asia Campus in Incheon, South Korea, has gained more than 150,000 views on the "Awesome Korea" YouTube channel.

The interview covers Hill's personal experiences in Korea as well as providing information about the UAC to a broad audience.

Check out the video [at this link](#).

Read more

### Webinar on Building Trust with Students Set for January 29

A free webinar on "Building Trust with Students and Other Constituencies: Strategies for University Leadership" will be offered by the Constructive Dialogue Institute at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 29.

The one-hour webinar will provide examples of how campus leaders have successfully built trust, as well as proven approaches for fostering and sustaining trust across diverse constituencies.

This webinar is designed for higher education leaders ready to create lasting change, including directors, deans, provosts, VPs of student affairs and faculty leaders.

For more information or to register, [click on this link](#).

### Share Your Ideas for Provost Perspectives

If you have an upcoming event or interesting idea you'd like to publicize in Provost Perspectives, please send it to Greg Kratz at [greg.kratz@utah.edu](mailto:greg.kratz@utah.edu).