

# Provost Perspectives

A newsletter from the  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs



As we all know, in academic year 2024-2025 our post-tenure review process changed due to recent [state legislation](#). A faculty committee worked on [University Regulation 6-321](#) throughout summer 2024 to comply with state law and identify additional changes beneficial to the university community. Policy changes were enacted through a shared governance process that included feedback from faculty, department chairs, deans and members of Academic Senate. Once the policy was approved, each department, school and college worked hard to update their processes and clarify their guidance documents. This spring, academic units across the university engaged in approximately 150 thoughtful and rigorous Tenured Faculty Reviews (TFRs).

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge a few things about this experience. The process of updating our TFRs was—and continues to be—challenging. Making these adjustments to our process took many hours of human labor across many groups in our community: faculty, staff, administrators and members of Academic Senate. It required debate, compromise and self-reflection on the part of all of us, and I know the work is not done. Each unit is now in the process of updating their TFR Statements with the help of the Office for Faculty. The [Senate Faculty Review Advisory Committee](#) will work extremely hard in the fall to review and approve as many of these TFR Statements as possible. Next spring, each academic unit will once again need to refine its processes to implement the revised documents. I want to thank all of you for the hard work you have and will put into this project.

I also recognize that the TFR process can cause anxiety and stress for all participants, which can make the significant workload involved more difficult. I appreciate your patience and perseverance as we have made these changes and pushed through this year’s process.

For me, this process has highlighted amazing faculty work and achievements, something we need to share more intentionally. This is the first year that the SVPs have been required to participate in the TFR process. While reading over 100 files over the past few months, I was struck by the tremendously impactful work so many of our faculty members engage in day after day. I realized that I want to celebrate, acknowledge and express my pride in our faculty’s work. The tremendous breadth and depth of the impact that University of Utah faculty make is remarkable. So, starting in the next Provost Perspectives newsletter and continuing regularly throughout the upcoming academic year, I will share some of the achievements from faculty who had a TFR in spring 2025.

I wish I had the space to recognize every one of our fabulous faculty members. Please know that for every faculty member I highlight in Provost Perspectives, there are dozens more showing up for our students, for our communities and for the pursuit of knowledge that changes the world. You have my gratitude, respect and appreciation. Thank you!

— Mitzi M. Montoya

## Randy McCrillis Begins Role as Interim AVP for University Connected Learning

University of Utah Senior International Officer Randy McCrillis has accepted an offer to serve as interim Associate Vice President for [University Connected Learning](#) (UCL).

Dr. McCrillis started serving in this new position on June 16, reporting to Paul Kohn, Senior Vice Provost for Strategic Enrollment and Student Success. Dr. McCrillis will continue serving in his position with the [Office for Global Engagement](#) (OGE) as he takes on these new responsibilities.

As Senior International Officer, he provides leadership for the OGE and oversees the Office of International Student and Scholar Services and the Learning Abroad Office. He previously served as the Dean of Students at the Utah Asia Campus in South Korea for eight years, growing the student population from 230 to over 700 students.

Deborah Keyek-Franssen, who has been serving as Associate Vice President and Dean for UCL for the last five years, is leaving her role at the university effective June 30. Senior Vice Provost Kohn will work with Provost Mitzi Montoya to determine a plan for future UCL leadership.

## Student Success

### Not All Programs Cost the Same—Here’s Why That Matters

When we talk about college costs, we often think about tuition—but the actual cost of delivering a course varies widely across disciplines. A new explainer breaks down why some programs are more expensive to offer than others and how universities manage those differences while maintaining academic quality.

It also introduces how Mission-Aligned Planning (MAP) is helping the U make thoughtful, data-informed decisions about academic investments. From evaluating class sizes to balancing graduate program costs and supporting mission-critical fields, MAP equips academic leaders with the tools to plan more strategically and transparently.

[Read the full post](#) on the MAP site.

Read more

## Research Excellence

### Researchers Discover Connection Between Sleep Procrastination and Personality

Steven Carlson, a doctoral candidate in psychology, and U Psychology Professor Paula Williams recently contributed to a new study that found that young adults who deliberately put off going to sleep—a habit known as bedtime procrastination—typically also demonstrate specific personality traits, including depressive tendencies.

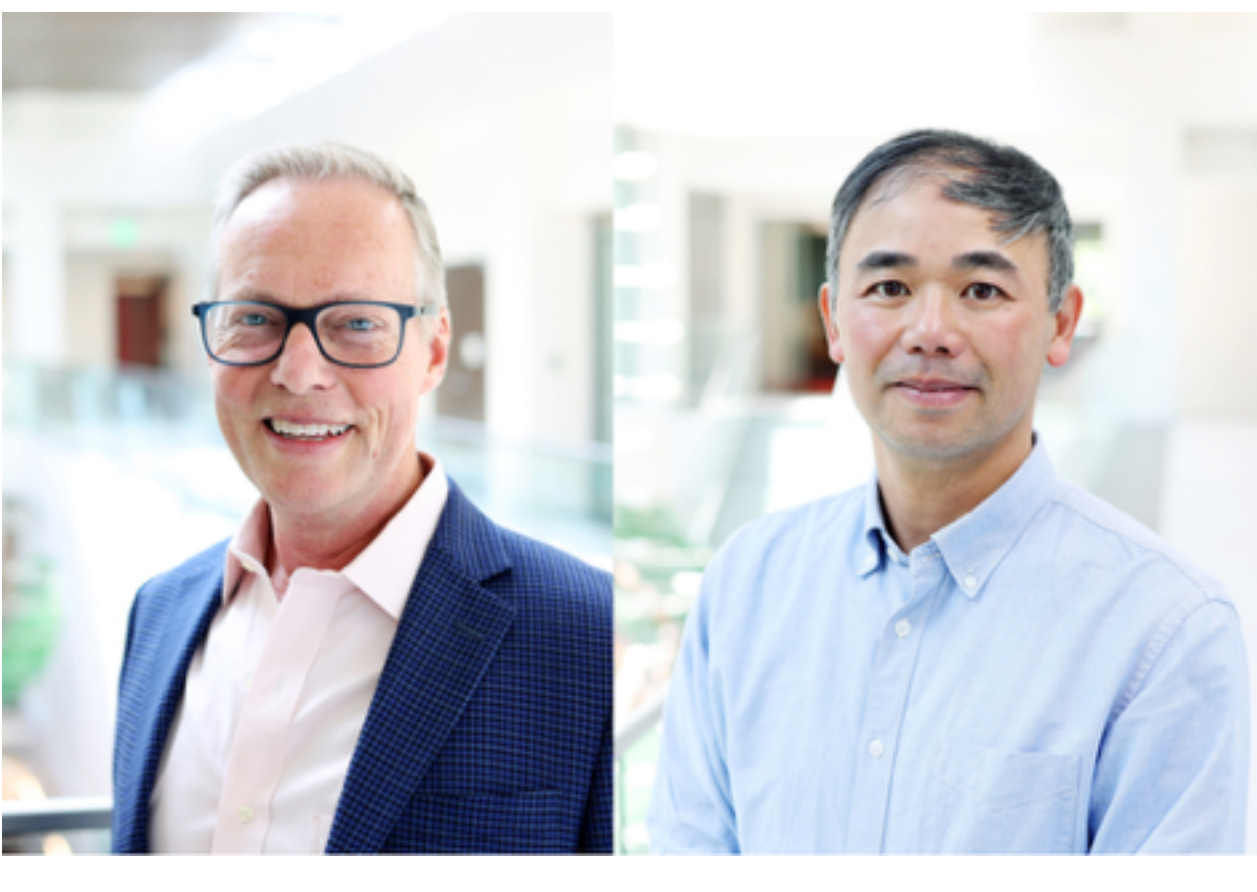
The study required 390 young adults with an average age of 24 to identify their chronotype (or their preferred sleeping patterns), complete questionnaires that assess specific personality traits and keep a sleep diary for two weeks. Results show that bedtime procrastination was associated with higher neuroticism and lower conscientiousness and extraversion in the young adults studied, according to [an @theU article](#). Carlson noted that these individuals also exhibited negative emotional tendencies often related to depression.

Carlson presented the findings on June 8 at the [SLEEP 2025](#) annual meeting in Seattle. According to Carlson, this study suggests that parents and health care providers could potentially address the issue of bedtime procrastination by helping young adults improve their emotional health.

Read the [research abstract](#) Carlson and Williams published in an online version of the journal *Sleep*.

Read more

## Celebrating U



### Leadership Changes Announced for Wilkes Center for Climate Science & Policy

The Wilkes Center for Climate Science & Policy at the University of Utah has appointed Fielding Norton as Managing Director and John Lin as Scientific Director. Norton will head the center’s overall strategy and operations, while Lin will manage its research initiatives and academic programs.

The new appointments come as founding director [William Anderegge plans to step down](#) on June 30 after three years of establishing the center as a national leader in climate research and collaboration, according to an [article from the College of Science](#).

In his new role, Norton hopes to expand the Wilkes Center’s capacity to support innovation in climate industries and build up communities’ climate resiliency. His background as a climate scientist and startup investor and advisor will help him directly address the ways climate change impacts people’s daily lives.

As Associate Director over the past three years, Lin has led innovative research projects on greenhouse gases and air pollution. His research focuses on greenhouse gas and air quality observations specifically in the Salt Lake area and the Uinta Basin, but he also determines carbon emissions from cities around the world.

The Wilkes Center connects rigorous climate research with practical solutions to address environmental and human health challenges. These new appointments will help the center further its goal to provide valuable and realistic support to the community as it faces climate-related issues.

Read more

### UtahPresents Joins Performing Arts Consortium

UtahPresents, the University of Utah’s performing arts presenter, recently joined the Major University Presenters (MUPs), a prestigious and exclusive group of only 22 university-affiliated performing arts centers and programs.

For more than 20 years, MUPs has helped its members facilitate collaborative opportunities, increase program recognition at local and national levels, take part in national research and connect with each other to share information about improving their programs. Through their community and resources, MUPs improves members’ capacities to build up the field of performing arts presenting, according to [a recent @theU article](#).

The invitation to join MUPs comes as UtahPresents celebrates 10 years of programming, having served nearly a million people through student matinees, public performances, masterclasses, community workshops, performance opportunities for young artists and more.

Read more about [UtahPresents](#) and [MUPs](#) on their websites.



### Current Ice Age Explored at Mysteries of the Ice Ages Exhibition

The Natural History Museum of Utah has opened a new exhibition called Mysteries of the Ice Ages, which explores ice on earth and highlights the ways lifeforms adapt and evolve as the planet moves through natural changes in temperature.

But the exhibition doesn’t just focus on past ice ages. It also explores the one we’re currently living through, according to [an NHMU article](#). Mathematicians and astronomers who track changes in the Earth’s orbit believe the planet should be cooling, but temperatures aren’t dropping as expected. Because of human impact, temperatures are rising—a trend that may have disastrous repercussions on many animal species that can’t adapt quickly to changing conditions.

The exhibition explores some simple, practical ways people can counter unnatural climate change and help the planet avoid disaster.

To learn more about the exhibition, visit the Natural History Museum of Utah’s [website](#).

## Share Your Ideas for Provost Perspectives

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