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Messages from the Provost

Georgia Southern University

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August 10, 2020: Faculty Research and Scholarship

Dear Colleagues,

I want to take a moment to welcome you back and to address the challenging research landscape that we will continue to negotiate in the months ahead.

Let’s start by acknowledging the good news. Despite all of the headwinds, your efforts and expertise resulted in the university receiving 144 sponsored awards totaling more than $10 million during the past year. These awards represent an increase of nearly sixty-seven percent over the previous year.

Equally telling, since we all went into lockdown on March 13, you have submitted 95 grant proposals that were completed in the midst of the disruptive circumstances wrought by the pandemic. And I know that there are more proposals in the pipeline. Books and articles are being submitted and published, data continues to be collected and analyzed, and new research partnerships are being formed. By any appreciable measure, we have not slackened our pace despite the additional hurdles. Well done. It is easy to lose sight of victories in stressful times, but I wanted to make sure that we recognized these significant accomplishments.

That said, it is not going to get any easier in the year ahead. Like so much else in the world at the moment, the challenges of research are being felt by everyone across the campuses, but they are manifesting themselves disproportionately and in differing forms. For those of you returning to a laboratory or field site, you’ll find your normal safety protocols augmented by additional COVID-19 requirements. Our faculty involved in Human Subjects research have faced particular challenges and have demonstrated considerable dexterity in maintaining their projects. We continue to work closely with the Deans and our institutional partners in devising a plan for the safe restart of face-to-face research in accordance with the advice of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For many of you, the most debilitating feature has been the inability to travel to conduct your research. Of course, we cannot speculate as to when this will change, but please know that we are aware of the severe impact that it is having on your research and that, when the opportunities resume, we will make a sincere effort to support your needs.

Along with our colleagues across the nation, we begin the fall term with a great deal on our plates and an unsettling amount of uncertainty. Yet I know from experience that many of you will be extraordinary and will not let a global pandemic deter you from pursuing your research, scholarship, and creative activity.

As you continue to push forward with your scholarship, the Office of Research is here to help. We have been fortunate to have two new members join our ranks during the past months: Dr. Laura Regassa returned from her tenure at the National Science Foundation in March and has been working earnestly to enhance our grant and professional development capacity; and Keith Strigaro joined us as Communications Director in April. He has already developed a new communications plan, which we will be implementing this fall. I am also pleased to announce that Dr. Asli Aslan has agreed to serve another year as our Research Fellow and will coordinate our strategic initiatives. Please don't hesitate to contact us at (912) 478-0719 or research@georgiasouthern.edu to discuss how we can support your research activities. And feel free to contact me directly if I can be of any help.

Congratulations again on all the fine work you are doing. I hope all of you stay safe and well. Best wishes on the start of a new semester.

Sincerely,

Chris

Dr. Christopher Curtis

Vice Provost for Research and Scholarship

Last updated: 8/18/2021