



Office of Academic Affairs

September Newsletter 2023

Sabbatical Opportunities

We are announcing five available sabbatical opportunities. Attached to this email are the forms and guidance for applying for the sabbatical. The application should be accompanied by a description on the activities and the expected outcomes for the plan. Since the policy allows for semester long sabbaticals, they will be available for Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 as well as the entire 2024-25 Academic Year. Please note the eligibility requirements and the funding limitations described in the policies. If you have any questions regarding the process, please contact your dean's office. All applications received by the deadline will be reviewed and five will be awarded based on the merits of the proposals.

Academic Affairs Website Update

Academic Affairs is in the process of updating its website. It looks a bit different than the previous one so, please take some time and explore it. In particular, the Academic Resources page has information regarding the ULS competencies (ULS information: www.ulsystem.edu/faculty-staff/core-competencies) as well as the Phase II Strategic Planning documents that were posted this summer. We are currently working to add features such as student and faculty spotlights so expect new content in the weeks and months to come.

2023 Research Symposium

On October 23, the University will host the 2023 Research Symposium. Dr. Burt Ashworth is leading this effort and has been guiding this process very well. If your students wish to participate, more information can be found at www.ulm.edu/symposium. Please contact your dean's office regarding poster printing. We have some poster printers on campus but their functionality may be questionable. The deans' offices will have better information on what resources are available. We will ensure that every student that wants to present a poster will be able to have it printed.

New Degree Proposals

We have colleagues on campus working on new degree proposals for this academic year. New programs include a Bachelors of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership; Bachelors of Science in Disaster Readiness, Recovery, and Resilience; Bachelors of Science in Integrative Sciences and masters degrees in Software Design and Human Resources. The three-year academic plan for the University can be found on the Academic Affairs website along with the strategic planning documentation. That document should be viewed as fluid. As opportunities arise, new degree programs may be included while others may be modified, postponed, or removed.

Promotion Plan Update

One of the aspects of the strategic plan is the promotion process for Instructors. We are in the final stages of preparing the plan, which is the financial component. It is my intention to release the plan before the middle of October. It has gone through several iterations and we appreciate your patience with the process.

Academic Affairs Updates:

- Canvas training is ongoing for implementation in the Wintersession and the Spring semester. This is lead by the Professional Learning Center. Any questions regarding training should be directed to Dr. Allison Bailey.
- The search is ongoing for the Dean of Health Sciences. As of this morning, we have 14 applications. Dean Glenn Anderson is leading the search committee. The intent is to have the new dean in place in the Spring 2024 semester.
- The University is preparing for this 5th year review by SACSCOC. Allison Thompson, Director of the newly formed Office of Institutional Effectiveness, is leading that effort. More information about that process will be forthcoming as the semester ages.
- Discussions among programs are occurring regarding the use of artificial intelligence in the curriculum. We are monitoring those discussions as they will inform University protocols in the future.
- On September 25th, an academic summit was held between Louisiana Delta Community College and the University of Louisiana Monroe. Over 40 representatives from both institutions met to discuss articulation agreements, transfer protocols, and reinstatement of the Bridge program that would encompass concurrent enrollment, advising, and students moving between Delta Community College and ULM. Teams are currently working on next steps. We will keep the campus informed as opportunities develop.
- Academic Affairs is reviewing the recommendations from the strategic planning committees and is investigating items such as reducing class sizes, reducing overloads, improving recognition, policy revision, and improved processes. Opportunities will be communicated as they are realized this academic year. The office is also working with the Faculty Senate Handbook committee to revise the Handbook that has not been significantly updated since at least 2019.
- The Meauxmentum Year review and implementation is underway. More information about the Board of Regents' initiative can be found here: www.laregents.edu/meauxmentum. Allison Thompson and Sami Owens are managing the project on behalf of the University. An update on the work accomplished thus far should occur in late October.
- DegreeWorks implementation is continuing with its recent rollout. There have been some glitches identified by faculty, staff, and students. Until DegreeWorks is fully implemented, it will best to continue using traditional checksheets in addition to the DegreeWorks checksheets. When problems or errors are found, please report the problem to your deans' offices so it can be relayed to the Registrar's Office for correction. In many cases, there will be no problems and DegreeWorks will be relied upon for degree checkout verification. This conversion is an iterative process and will continue until most of the inconsistencies are worked out of the system. Communications will also be made with advisors and students regarding the DegreeWorks implementation. In cases where the curriculum is difficult to script properly in DegreeWorks, that may be an indication of high curricular complexity and the degree plan may warrant review. This website (<https://curricularanalytics.org/>) provides some insight on curricular design.

