



OFFICE OF THE
**Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs**
A&M-COMMERCE

Hello, Academic Affairs!

I hope this finds you doing well and ready for that last push to the end of the semester. I have no doubt that you are quite busy, so I'll jump right into a few updates:

- As you might remember from a previous email, we are in the process of revising our strategic plan. As this is a refresh, the five strategic priorities and goals will remain, including student preparedness, creating an inclusive community, elevating research, aligning our initiatives to support our urban-rural identity, and transforming operations. However, the focus areas under each of these will be updated to better express what these mean for our university at this time, with the mission of transforming lives. At this point, the Updating Committee has met and will soon begin to ask for input and feedback from across the institution. Please do your best to attend one of the open forums that will be scheduled; and if you are unable to join us, make sure to share your feedback through a survey that will be sent out shortly. It is your thoughts and ideas that are the key to ensuring a robust and meaningful strategic plan that helps A&M-Commerce to continue to thrive.

- I am pleased to share an opportunity for faculty to elevate their teaching practice through a program with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). A 25-week course on Effective Online Teaching will be available this fall, focusing on a series of research-based teaching practices shown to improve student outcomes in online courses. This program is professionally facilitated, will be delivered online with a cohort of your colleagues, and is organized by five major areas of practice:
 - Designing an effective course
 - Establishing a productive working environment
 - Using active learning strategies
 - Promoting higher-order thinking
 - Assessing to inform instruction and promote learning

Upon course completion, participants will earn a nationally recognized certificate in Effective College Instruction, the only college teaching credential endorsed by the American Council on Education (ACE).

An 8-week micro-credential, Fostering Cultural Belonging, will also be offered. This is a newly updated micro-credential course from ACUE that guides course-takers on how to prioritize equity and inclusion in their work with students and colleagues.

These two courses begin on August 28, and registration will open soon.

- Our faculty and staff-focused initiative, Investing in Us, has also been gaining momentum. As a reminder, this is a professional development program at no cost to A&M-Commerce faculty and staff through a series of credit-bearing, academic, master classes. Several courses offered through Investing in Us will launch this Fall 2023 semester, including Community & Us; Designing Us: I, II, and Administrators/Directors Section; and Fostering a Culture of Belonging & Us (ACUE based). Registration will open this summer. I encourage you to reach out to Dr. Carrie Klypchak at Carrie.Klypchak@tamuc.edu for more information or with any questions.
- Last month our university had the privilege of sending a group of our talented faculty to the 2023 Texas Women in Higher Education (TWHE) conference, an event that supports women in higher education by providing learning opportunities in leadership, communication, and professional growth. Thanks to the seven women who represented us so well: Dr. Marcella Smith, Lydia Carrascosa, Dr. Nicole Farris, Tanya Pearson, Dr. Sharon Ross, Brittney Yager, and Dr. Kamshia Childs.



- A big thank you to those who have signed up for my open-door meetings! And as a reminder, I will continue to have open times set aside on my schedule for the rest of the semester for anyone who would like to meet with me. No agenda is needed, and I'm

open to chatting about any topic. Please contact Cynthia Rhodes at Cynthia.Rhodes@tamuc.edu to schedule a 15-30 minute time. I would love to meet with you and learn more about your experience at our institution.

As we move toward beginning to wrap up the semester, I wish all of you smooth sailing and minimal stress. This campus wouldn't be what it is without you. Go Lions!

tvh

