



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

Hello Academic Affairs!

As we come closer to taking time away for the holidays, I wanted to send an email to thank each of you for a wonderful first semester. I couldn't be happier to be a member of the Lion Family, and I have felt welcomed from that first, very hot day in July.

As you might expect, this was an extremely busy semester. I enjoyed attending department faculty meetings, and appreciated not only the depth of thoughtful insights that were shared, but the kindness that was shown to me. In addition to cheering on our student athletes at many events, I was also able to join in Academic and Student Affairs programming offered throughout the institution. I've met many students through SGA, and have enjoyed attending meetings of the Faculty Senate and Council of Department Heads, as well as my monthly scheduled meetings with the chairs of these groups. I am appreciative of the Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education and the Latino Staff and Faculty Association, as well as others that have shared their experiences and insights for moving our institution forward.

There's so much more to share about the semester; however, I'll stop here for now. My apologies to everyone for leaving many exciting and wonderful updates out of this email. (But it is a busy time of the year and I want to be sensitive to the many demands you each face!)

Curious about 2023? I'll share just a few things you can look for in the new semester:

- I am pleased to note that the Deans Council has been hard at work focusing on strategic hiring and budgeting, and we will be convening for a retreat in early January. Examples of topics on our agenda for the semester include addressing the division's priorities, increasing collaboration across colleges and university units, and building community.
- Dr. Dobbs will continue to lead student success initiatives, implementing centralized advising, rebuilding the first year experience and adding a second year one as well. Although still under development, he is continuing to identify cutting edge opportunities for promoting career readiness, approaches to supporting students within a holistic framework, and ways to offer meaningful student experiences. He is also exploring options for increasing the promotion and highlighting of undergraduate research.
- Dr. Dobbs has been, and continues to be focused on our university's reaffirmation. Our compliance certification is due September 2023, and our campus visit is scheduled for

March 2024. As a reminder, this is our chance to tell our institution's story, and I encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities to participate. We need your input and want your voice included!

- I am working on a plan for a comprehensive, inclusive approach to providing leadership opportunities and professional development to promote faculty success. I envision this including formal educational offerings, mentoring opportunities, and additional leadership experiences. I am interested in implementing a provost fellowship program and will continue to seek input and consider various approaches.
- Increasing communication efforts is on my "to do" 2023 list. I will be looking for opportunities to not only hear your feedback, but share updates with you as well. Starting January 10, I will be offering open door meetings on Tuesdays from 4-6pm. These "office hours" are for anyone who would like to meet with me, and the topic is open. Please contact the Provost Office to schedule a 15-30 minute time. Additional actions I plan to take include more frequent (and shorter) emails with updates, a more informative webpage for our office, and of course, as promised, I am happy to attend department meetings to share what I learned from my visits, framing identified themes within a solution focused context.

And, I want to make sure you can find us! Some of you might be aware that the second floor of the Administration Building is going through some renovations, and the Provost Office has been moved to the Nursing Building. You will find us on the third floor, Rooms 329-333. We most likely will be there through February, and will make sure to keep you updated.

- Increased communication and transparency will be at the forefront of the Provost Office, as well as the university leadership. For example, Vice President Tina Livingston and I will be attending various constituents' leadership groups and offering open forums to share a short presentation about the connection between our enrollments and budget, and what actions we can take. Watch for dates and times to be announced in early January. In addition, don't be surprised if you see the President and me walking around campus and stopping by offices and classrooms to say "hello." We are placing scheduled dates and times on our calendars so we get out of our offices and are free to connect with students, faculty and staff across the campus.

It has been almost six months since I joined the Lion Family, and I couldn't be more honored or excited to be here. Throughout the semester, it has been clear to me that the reasons I was attracted to Texas A&M University-Commerce continue to be embraced every day. The ability to transform lives—no one, truly no one, does it like us—and the caring, committed, outstanding, and humble faculty. I have seen firsthand the care for our students and the dedication of our faculty and staff. As we continue to be forward leaning, pushing to be innovative and doing things the Lion way, I am excited to see what else we can accomplish!

I hope with the winter break that each of you has the opportunity for relaxation, fun, and time with loved ones. Wishing you a wonderful end to your 2022, and an incredible new year!

Happy Holidays! And as always, go Lions!

tvh

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. V. H.", with a stylized flourish at the end.