

Dear new PLU colleagues (with cc to your chairs and deans),

Although summer has only officially begun, planning for the opening of the 2022-2023 academic year is well underway. I am writing today to provide information regarding your orientation as a new member of the PLU faculty, as well as to share details about back-to-school activities to include on your calendar. Please note the university's expectation that faculty will participate in these events. If you are relocating, please plan on arriving in the region with ample time to give your full attention to these events.

If you have not already done so, please visit the [Getting Started at PLU](#) page for important information such as getting keys to your office and your PLU ID card.

COVID-19 Vaccine Policy

Demonstrating the same spirit of care for community that we have shown throughout the pandemic, all students, faculty and staff are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 for the 2022-2023 academic year. Please consult a calendar to ensure that you are fully vaccinated prior to your first in-person engagements for fall 2022, and no later than the first day of New Faculty Orientation on August 24. As part of the hiring process, new faculty can either bring their vaccine card to Human Resources on or before the first day of work or submit an exemption form for religious or medical reasons. Visit the [HR website](#) for the policy and exemption forms.

Syllabi Construction, Course Development, and Learning Management System

The university does not have a university-wide template for syllabi; rather, we advise faculty to construct syllabi that are learning-centered, engaging, and reflective of an instructor's teaching philosophy. The blog post "[Preparing a Learning-Focused Syllabus](#)" by Dr. Sara M. Fulmer (Teaching and Learning Assessment Specialist at Wellesley College) is an excellent introduction to this approach; Dr. Fulmer utilizes evidence to outline the benefits of a student-centered syllabus – sparking motivation, setting a firm foundation for engaged learning, building trust, etc. – and shares examples and strategies for achieving this aim.

To assist you, we do have examples of suggested syllabi statements about various policies (such as attendance, accommodating disabilities, grade disputes, and other matters) that reflect this student-centered approach which you may include in your syllabi. This list will be distributed

to all faculty in August. Because some units have additional recommended syllabi statements or course design expectations, I suggest that you also check in with your Dean or Chair regarding any unit-specific components.

I'd also like to bring to your attention two of our valued colleagues who may be able to assist you as you develop syllabi and design courses. PLU's Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs, Dr. Bridget Yaden (byaden@plu.edu), supports faculty development broadly at PLU. PLU's Dean of Inclusive Excellence, Dr. Jen Smith (smithjb@plu.edu), is our leader in supporting and developing faculty in the areas of equity and inclusion. Throughout the academic year, Jen offers various opportunities for faculty professional development, including the [Inclusive Pedagogy Seminar](#). Additionally, Bridget, Jen, and other colleagues have developed a host of workshops related to teaching during our pre-conference period (see below). Feel free to contact Bridget and/or Jen prior – and after – your arrival at PLU.

Our Learning Management System (LMS) is Sakai. The university will be upgrading Sakai to a new version in late August; training workshops on the latest version will be offered to all faculty. For now, please take a look at some of the resources available below to get you started:

- Getting Started with Sakai for Instructors: <https://kb.plu.edu/sakai-instructors>
- Teaching and Learning with Sakai: <https://www.plu.edu/faculty-resources/teaching/technology/sakai/>

Our students have become accustomed to Sakai as the repository for class information. Even if you don't plan to use it for any other reason, I encourage you to publish a Sakai page for each course as a place to hold your syllabus and gradebook, and as your mechanism for sharing announcements with students.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, August 24 and Thursday, August 25: New Faculty Orientation

The Office of the Provost partners with the Wild Hope Center for Vocation to formally welcome new colleagues to campus through our annual New Faculty Orientation (NFO). The Wild Hope Center promotes and provides a range of opportunities to engage with, discern, and live out vocation, including our vocation as faculty. In the weeks ahead, you'll hear more about NFO from our Wild Hope colleagues: Director Antonios Finitisis (Professor of Religion) and Associate Director Laree Winer.

New Faculty Orientation will take place on campus in the Anderson University Center, beginning on the morning of August 24 and concluding with a welcome luncheon for new faculty and their families the afternoon of August 25. This event focuses on successful beginnings at PLU, especially with regard to our educational mission and commitment to excellent teaching.

You can expect to hear from our Wild Hope colleagues in early August with additional schedule and registration details for New Faculty Orientation. The schedule will also be available on the [New Faculty Orientation webpage](#) later this summer. Please contact Laree Winer (winerll@plu.edu) with any questions regarding New Faculty Orientation or New Faculty Development Workshops (see information below).

Monday, August 29 and Tuesday, August 30: Pre-Conference Workshops [**OPTIONAL**]

In the days leading up to University Conference and Fall Faculty Conference, colleagues from across campus will offer workshops on various topics of interest to faculty and staff. Details will be available on the [Faculty Resources website](#) in August.

Wednesday, August 31 and Thursday, September 1: University Conference and Faculty Fall Conference

University Conference and Faculty Fall Conference are key opening events each academic year. Additional details and guidance regarding these events [will be available online later this summer](#). For now, please save both dates.

Tuesday, September 6: Opening Convocation and First Day of Classes

Opening Convocation is Tuesday, September 6 at 10 AM; faculty are expected to participate in this annual tradition, wearing their academic regalia. (Information about regalia rental will be available later in the summer). Classes for the Fall Term 2022 begin at 11:50 AM. Please mark this important date and draft your syllabi accordingly.

Friday, September 16: First Faculty Assembly Meeting

PLU's faculty governance system is a critically important part of how the university conducts business, and faculty governance is an integral part of PLU faculty life. During the academic year, faculty convene monthly for Faculty Assembly from 4 to 6 PM; the schedule of meetings for 2022-23 can be found [here](#). Chair of the Faculty Neal Yakelis (Professor of Chemistry) announced that Faculty Assembly will meet virtually for fall semester.

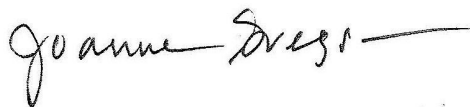
Consult with your chair or dean about expectations regarding your attendance at Faculty Assembly meetings. All faculty are welcome to attend, yet those on the tenure-track are required to do so while those on visiting or adjunct contracts are not.

New Faculty Development Workshops (ongoing throughout the academic year)

We take seriously the opportunity to welcome you into the university's distinctive educational mission, the faculty, and the larger university community. Thus, in addition to the initial two-day New Faculty Orientation, the Office of the Provost and Wild Hope Center for Vocation offer faculty development workshops on topics of interest to new faculty that are scheduled throughout the year (and into the second year for continuing visitors and tenure-track faculty). You will hear more about these events and opportunities during New Faculty Orientation and [information will be posted online.](#)

Please accept my best wishes as you prepare for the transition to Pacific Lutheran University and the Puget Sound region. If you have questions or concerns with which I might assist you, please contact me at provost@plu.edu. I look forward to seeing you in person soon!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanna Gregson" followed by a horizontal line.

Joanna Gregson, PhD
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

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Office of the Provost Staff can be reached via phone or email Monday - Friday 8:00 am - noon and 1:00 - 5:00 pm. Open office hours are Monday - Friday 9am - noon and 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

The most efficient way to obtain signatures from our office is through electronic documents sent via email for electronic signature. Documents requiring a wet ink signature can be dropped off during open office hours or sent in the mail.

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