



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

Greetings,

You may have noticed that this message does not bear the subject line “Covid-19 Update.” Instead, it is a return to my monthly message to staff and faculty where I’ll update the community on strategic initiatives, celebrate our achievements, and offer reflections on the state of higher education and its impact on Lewis. Of course, things *have* changed utterly, and just about everything we do in the coming months will be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

And as I’ve mentioned in my recent messages, I’m inspired by the response I’ve seen from students, staff, and faculty to this crisis. Your response speaks to our creativity, resilience, and compassion as a community, and to the strength of our academic mission and our Catholic and Lasallian traditions. I’ve seen countless examples of members of the Lewis community reaching out and supporting students and colleagues in remarkable ways, helping them to feel comfortable, cared for, and understood. In that work, and in our support for each other during this transition, we can see so clearly what it means to work together and in association.

In this spirit, our community continue ( c) 5w 1 3-7TJ0.002 Tc 0 Tw (D) 3r 2 (. )4 ( Ter)14 (es)1. 7(a)2. 7 )JT(B)2. 5i)2. 8xb)2 (y different Lasallian institutions—both universities and elementary and secondary schools from all parts of the world—live out the charism of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. I have been reflecting both on the history of the Brothers, as well as the history of Lewis, and I am struck by how often our educational institutions have faced significant challenges brought on by political, economic or cultural change, and how the Brothers have found ways to adapt to the signs of the times and emerge with renewed strength and purpose.

This message is intended to focus on only one aspect of our strength and purpose, an element that reaches deep into the Lasallian tradition and to the core of our work as a university: the classroom. What makes Lewis unique, in my view, is what the Lasallian tradition suggests about our craft as teachers. As you know, De La Salle was creative, controversial, and entrepreneurial, an innovator who changed the way schools are run and the way students are taught. It is really his model of restless experimentation, and his drive to adapt to the needs of communities impacted by poverty, that feels to me so prescient, and so relevant to our work during this crisis.

What makes a Lasallian university classroom special? This is, of course, a question for our entire community to answer together. One part of that community conversation is centered around the great work of the Faculty Center. The Faculty Center and Faculty Development have done excellent work in recent years to build a community of professionals and to provide high quality support. With this message I'm announcing a new task force on Lasallian Pedagogy, led in collaboration among Drs. Bill Chura, Anne Rapp and Kurt Schackmuth. This task force will build on the great work that has come before and lead a conversation about how our approach to teaching and learning can be further inspired and informed by Lasallian pedagogy.

To get the conversation started, I'd like to posit three general areas of distinctiveness that constitute a unique Lasallian pedagogy: inclusion, practice, and innovation.

**b** . Diversity is an institutional imperative; inclusion is a pedagogical imperative. De La Salle famously said that students "need good teachers, like visible angels," and his radical vision of kindness and respect for students guides all of our work. A commitment to inclusion means we create spaces for belonging in our classrooms, spaces where students feel they are recognized by the instructor as a whole person with unique characteristics.

Thriving Lasallian classrooms invite and value contributions from all members of the classroom community, and Lasalli22.004 Tftzemc Ltoadk22.000o wh ctdwTd(fam)4.9 (o)e l to oghzed lia, andh cuniot p to frnruha

simply adapted these ideas and techniques to the needs of the students in his schools and combined