

The Week: March 10 - 16, 2019

Course Registration for the Summer and Fall 2019 semesters opens this week (schedule attached). I again want to stress the importance of your involvement in assisting students in the advising and registration processes. You all have worked extremely hard over the past several years in the areas of recruitment and retention, and your efforts have created unprecedented momentum at our university. As you know, thoughtful academic advising and early registration are vital steps in the retention process, assist our students in reaching their academic goals in a timely manner, and are key components for university budget planning and stability. Thank you for the great job that you are doing in the classrooms and in providing quality services, such as academic advising and registration assistance, to our students.

While enjoying a Saturday afternoon filled with spring sports activities on campus, I was proud to have athletics director Greg Burke sharing impressive credentials of our student-athletes and teams to our supporters and visitors at football, tennis, baseball and softball. With nearly 400 young men and women competing for us in 14 NCAA Division I sports, it's wonderful to say that the Fall 2018 semester was the seventh consecutive for NSU Athletics to post a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Greg is the first to credit our faculty and staff for its impact on our Demon and Lady Demon competitors. Athletics has a long history of community service accomplishment, with student-athletes consistently doing over 4,000 hours annually. This academic year, they're on pace to hit the 5,000-hour milepost in a wide variety of activities that benefit our campus, our community and even our world.

There is a lot of buzz about the momentum in our spring sports. Coming off last June's NCAA Tournament excitement, the Demon baseball team just beat LSU to go with wins over ULM and Louisiana Tech. Lady Demon softball and Lady Demon tennis are leading the Southland Conference. Our always strong track and field program is celebrating our fourth NCAA Division I champion, Jasmyn Steels, who won the NCAA Indoor long jump title March 9 by besting competitors from Florida, Florida State and Texas A&M, among others. She is a 3.6 student in psychology and will be honored at a 2 o'clock reception Monday afternoon at the athletic fieldhouse.

My Week:

Monday morning, the Leadership Team met in the Henderson Conference Room. Afterwards, Dr. Dan McDonald and I met with a prospective student and her parents. Later, I spent time visiting with high school administrators who were on campus as part our annual Teacher Job Fair. I want to thank our School of Education faculty and our Career Placement staff for their preparation in hosting this event.

At noon, I had lunch with our College of Business and Technology faculty at Russell Hall. Monday afternoon, I had meetings with Greg Burke and later with Dr. Kim McAlister.

Tuesday morning, Dr. Greg Handel, Dr. Dan McDonald and I met with two prospective students and their parents. Afterwards, I attended a guest lecture by NSU alumnus Felton Payton, an executive in the aerospace industry.

At noon, I spent time at GradFest visiting with students as they made their final preparations for Spring commencement exercises.

Tuesday afternoon, Dr. Haley Taitano, Greg Burke and I met with NSU alumnus Craig Ryan who was on campus to endow a scholarship for our NSU Demon baseball program. Later, I joined thousands of baseball fans for pre-game tailgating activities prior to the NSU-LSU baseball game.

Tuesday evening, I watched our NSU Demon baseball team defeat the nationally ranked LSU Tiger baseball team at Brown-Stroud Field. It was such an historic win for our team and university, and the NSU and community support was amazing.

Wednesday morning, I joined state and community leaders at the Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts for the Groundbreaking Ceremonies for their new residence halls. The long-awaited LSMSA student housing facilities are slated to open in 2021. Afterwards, I attended a reception and luncheon related to the ceremonies.

Wednesday afternoon, Dr. Vickie Gentry and I met on several academic matters. Afterwards, the Strategic Planning Team met. The meeting included discussions on the Institutional Effectiveness planning calendar, the SACSCOC Dual Enrollment Policy and the 2018-19 Assessment Cycle Report assignments, and an after-action review of the Mid-Year Review Brief. Further discussions centered on whether to change the nature of the meeting from a task coordination, oversight theme to a strategic initiatives problem-solving seminar focused on the future. I again want to thank Frank Hall for his leadership in strategic planning and institutional effectiveness for our university.

Thursday morning, I met with Dawn Eubanks to review internal audit matters. Afterwards, I traveled to Shreveport for a lunch meeting with an NSU alumnus and donor.

That afternoon, I joined NSU Foundation staff and benefactors to announce the Boaz Squires Scholarship in Accounting and the Joe Robertson Scholarship in Criminal Justice. Afterwards, I attended the Advanced Manufacturing Open House at the Central Louisiana Technical Community College Natchitoches campus.

Thursday evening, Jennifer and I had dinner at the Columns Café located in the Family and Consumer Sciences Building. The café is student-run with seasonal, locally-sourced meals prepared in the culinary arts lab and provides students with experiential learning in the logistics and teamwork required to plan, prepare and serve a formal dinner.

Friday morning, Dr. Marcus Jones, Pat Jones and I met to review our operating budget. Afterwards, I stopped by the Friedman Student Union to visit with manufacturing partners, faculty and students at the 2nd Annual Engineering Technology Career and Internship Fair. Later, I spent time with Yonna Pasch and our NSU students who will be competing in the Miss Louisiana Pageant this summer.

Afterwards, I attended the NSU Theatre and Dance presentation of Dr. Seuss' "The Cat in the Hat". The dance production co-directed by Kirstin Riehl and Brett Garfinkel was another fabulous collaboration between our faculty and students. Later, Dr. Vickie Gentry, Dr. Darlene Williams, Barbara Prescott and I participated in a conference call with Dr. Nikki Clark, Executive Management Officer with the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs. Recently, the Louisiana Department of Veterans Affairs has partnered with Louisiana higher education institutions to provide a trained member who will assist veteran students. We discussed logistics and implementation steps with the partnership that will certainly enhance our already stellar veterans' services.

Friday afternoon, Dr. Greg Handel, Scott Burrell and I met with a prospective faculty member. Afterwards, Dr. Darlene Williams, Dr. Dana Clawson, Drake Owens and I had a very productive meeting with a potential partner about academic opportunities for their employees.

Friday evening, Jennifer and I hosted a reception at the President's Residence for prospective Louisiana Scholars' College students and their parents. Afterwards, I caught the last few innings of our baseball victory against the University of New Orleans.

Saturday, I joined faculty and staff for Scholars' College Preview Day. Through the course of the afternoon, I supported our student athletes at three different events. First, our tennis team defeated the University of Central Arkansas at the Jack Fisher Tennis Complex. Afterwards, our softball team shut down Abilene Christian University and finally our baseball team lost a close game against UNO.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

Fork 'em Demons,

Chris



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