TO: University Senate
FROM: Dennis N. Assanis, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
DATE: February 4, 2013

REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

SBU TASK FORCE ON MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCS) UPDATE

Recent developments in technology for digital education and the rampant emergence of massive open online courses (MOOCs) are creating the perception of a game-changing, disruptive educational approach that has the potential to transform both access to education as well as the methods we use to teach our own students and the world. While many of the AAUs have jumped on the MOOCs bandwagon within the past six months, and others are actively considering their strategy, many open issues remain. In particular, MOOC business models differ (profit vs. non-profit, contracts signed with institutions vs. individual professors) and range from institutional-level (eg., edX) to entrepreneurial-driven activities (e.g., Coursera and Udacity). The approaches for issuing MOOC-based credentials also vary from issuing none to granting certificates of completion, badges, and even University transfer credits based on assessment of learning.

In order to best position Stony Brook University to take advantage of the MOOCs educational approach, I have charged a joint Provostial-Senate ad-hoc task force to consider the broad spectrum of issues related to MOOCs technology, requisite investment, quality assurance, branding, credentialing, policy and impact on current academic offerings. This committee has been asked to provide me with actionable recommendations to formulate our long-term institutional strategy, as well as some specific short-term pursuits we should undertake.

A MOOCS Taskforce website, located at www.stonybrook.edu/onlinelearning, has been developed so that all members of the Stony Brook University community (you have to use your NetID to sign in) can access more information on MOOCS resources and news, as well as on members of the task force and its subcommittees. There is also an online MOOC feedback form, and I encourage the University community to provide feedback and suggestions to the task force.

I also invite you to attend one of the Town Hall Meetings to discuss Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), scheduled as follows:

**East Campus** (Refreshments will be served)

Monday, 2/11/13 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:50 p.m.

HSC Lecture Hall 6 on Level 3
STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY SEARCH FOR DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Office of the Provost will soon be initiating a search for the Dean of the Graduate School. The Graduate School of Stony Brook University is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence, a diverse and productive academic community, and ethical conduct in research and scholarship. The Graduate School administers and supports 44 doctoral programs, serving 2300 students and 50 master’s programs with over 1800 students. Stony Brook is among the leading public research universities in the Northeast, with a large and growing graduate population and a strong tradition of excellence in doctoral education across the Arts & Sciences, Engineering, Marine Sciences, Biomedical and Health Sciences.

The Dean is the chief administrative and academic leader for graduate education at Stony Brook University, with responsibility for all academic graduate programs and strategic initiatives. The Dean provides support, oversight, and advocacy for graduate education at Stony Brook University. He/she has responsibility for graduate admissions and records, program development, program evaluation, and strategic leadership for graduate education at Stony Brook University and among our national peers. Because graduate education is distributed across many academic departments within the Colleges and Schools, a successful Dean must work collaboratively with College Deans and other academic leaders to achieve efficiency and excellence. The Graduate Dean reports to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and participates as part of the University’s senior management team.

SUNY FACULTY DIVERSITY PROGRAM AWARDS

The first round of the 2013-2014 Faculty Diversity Program yielded an impressive pool of candidates. External reviewers made up of senior faculty from throughout SUNY were asked to submit an evaluation on each of the candidates. All reviewers are accomplished faculty members in the same discipline as the FDP candidates they have been asked to evaluate. I am pleased to announce that Provost Lavallee has approved the following awards for Stony Brook University, which represents two out of three Faculty Diversity Program Awards granted SUNY-wide for this first call: Dr. Glenda Trujillo, Assistant Professor of Pathology and Dr. Courtney Martin, Assistant Professor of Art History.

DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

On Friday, February 1, 2013, we hosted our inaugural speaker for Stony Brook University’s new Distinguished Lecture Series in Science and Engineering. This lecture series, which is jointly sponsored by the Provost and the Vice President for Research, is intended to bring the best and the brightest in the fields of science and engineering, other than our own faculty of course, to Stony Brook. Our speaker, Dr. Leslie Valiant, is the T. Jefferson Coolidge Professor of Computer Science and Applied Mathematics in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at Harvard University, where he has taught since 1982. Professor Valiant is a distinguished
theoretical computer scientist and applied mathematician. His work on complexity theory goes back to 1986, when he co-authored “Proof of the Valiant-Vazirabi Theorem.” Since then, he has done a series of ground-breaking work on computational learning theory and ultra-fast algorithms. Recently, Dr. Valiant has become interested in computational neuroscience. Thus, the connection between the learning by machines and biological systems. Dr. Valiant is a recipient of the 2010 A. M. Turing Award, a Fellow of the Royal Society, and a member of the National Academy of Sciences. Stony Brook is currently building up its programs in computational science, as exemplified by the Institute for Advanced Computational Science that was founded last year with a sizable private endowment. It is, therefore, with great and timely interest that we were privileged to have Professor Valiant speak on: “Biological Evolution as a Form of Learning.”

On Friday, February 15, 2013, at 4:00 p.m. in the Wang Center Theater, we will feature a lecture, entitled “Catalysis: Green Chemicals and Materials” by Nobel Prize-Winner Robert H. Grubbs. Robert Howard Grubbs was awarded the 2005 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his pioneering work in metathesis. Grubbs is the Atkins Professor of Chemistry at the California Institute of Technology, where he has been a faculty member since 1978. A member of the National Academy of Sciences, a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Society of Chemistry, he has more than 500 publications and 115 patents based on his research.

On Friday, March 8, 2013 at 2:30 p.m. in the Wang Center Theater, we will host a lecture by Jitendra Malik, entitled “The Three R's of Computer Vision: Recognition, Reconstruction and Reorganization.” Jitendra Malik is the Arthur J. Chick Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at the University of California at Berkeley. His research group has worked on many different topics in computer vision, computational modeling of human vision, computer graphics and the analysis of biological images, resulting in more than 150 research papers and 30 Ph.D. dissertations. Several well-known concepts and algorithms arose in this research, such as anisotropic diffusion, normalized cuts, high dynamic range imaging, and shape contexts. According to Google Scholar, seven of his papers have received more than a thousand citations each, and he is one of ISI's Highly Cited Researchers in Engineering.

On Wednesday, May 8, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. (location tbd), we will feature a talk by Joseph DeSimone. Joseph DeSimone is the Chancellor's Eminent Professor of Chemistry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the William R. Kenan, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Chemical Engineering at North Carolina State University and of Chemistry at UNC. DeSimone, an innovative polymer chemist, has made breakthrough contributions in green chemistry, fluoropolymer synthesis, colloid science, and nano-biomaterials. He pioneered supercritical CO2-based polymerization reactions and the self-assembly of molecules in compressible media and has shown the benefit of novel fluoro-elastomers for soft lithographic applications, including the synthesis of shape-controlled nano-biomaterials. DeSimone has published more than 290 scientific articles and has 130 issued patents in his name, with over 80 patents pending. He is a member of both the National Academy of Sciences (2012) and the National Academy of Engineering (2005). DeSimone is also a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (2005) and has received more than 50 major awards and recognitions.
FEBRUARY 2013 PROVOST’S LECTURE SERIES

On Thursday, February 21, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. in the Wang Center Theater, we will feature a lecture by Dr. Deborah Willis on “The Black Body and the Lens.” Deborah Willis is the Chair of the Department of Photography and Imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. She was a 2005 Guggenheim Fellow and Fletcher Fellow, and a 2000 MacArthur Fellow. Dr. Willis’ talk will address the black body in photography, print, video, and as presented in exhibition spaces. Central to her discussion will be a focus on how the display of the black body affects how we see and interpret the world. Using a selection of photographs by Hank Willis Thomas, Carrie Mae Weems, Bruce Davidson, Gordon Parks, Lorna Simpson, Mickalene Thomas, among others, she will consider the construction of beauty and style, gendered images, and race in pop culture. In doing so, she hopes to engage in a discussion with the student body about ways in which our contemporary understanding of art, history, and culture is constructed and informed by public displays in museums, text, and the global landscape. This event is co-sponsored with the College of Arts and Sciences, the Humanities Institute, the Art Department, the Africana Studies Department, and the European Languages, Cultural Analysis and Theory Department.

2012-2013 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE CHANCELLOR’S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN CLASSIFIED SERVICE

I am pleased to announce the 2012-2013 call for nominations for the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service, established by SUNY to give system-wide recognition for superior performance and extraordinary achievement by employees in the Classified Service. Nominations may be submitted by a supervisor, co-worker or other member of the campus community. Please visit http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/provost/awards.shtml for award guidelines and the nomination form. The nominee for this award must meet all of the eligibility requirements; the nominator must complete the nomination form and write a narrative statement (less than 500 words) in support of the nominee. Both the nomination form and the narrative statement must be emailed as attachments in Microsoft Word format to Regina Funaro in the Provost’s Office at regina.funaro@stonybrook.edu no later than February 15, 2013. Employees selected for this award receive a personal certificate of recognition and a Chancellor's Excellence Medallion.