

***REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE***

TO: University Senate

FROM: Fotis Sotiropoulos, Interim Provost

DATE: Monday, October 5, 2020

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***Appointment of Rob Kukta as Acting Dean of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences***

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS) Senior Associate Dean for Education and Innovation Professor Rob Kukta has been appointed Acting Dean of CEAS, effective October 1. Dr. Kukta has been a key member of CEAS senior leadership for the last five years, playing a critical role in the educational and business operations of CEAS. He led the recent successful ABET accreditation of CEAS programs, as well as the development of the CEAS Strategic Plan. Dr. Kukta was also instrumental in increasing CEAS 4-year graduation rates to over 66%. He has worked closely with the College finance staff to enhance operational efficiency, develop robust predictive models, and balance conflicting constraints in a difficult fiscal environment. Dr. Kukta also oversaw the establishment of the Vertical Integrated Projects (VIP) program, which is now one of the largest among the 36 such programs around the world.

Dr. Kukta been a faculty member at Stony Brook for 21 years. He has consistently focused his efforts toward improving the educational and work environments for students, faculty, and staff. He is a dedicated teacher and mentor, and a passionate and visionary advocate for re-inventing the future of engineering education

***Winter and Spring Planning***

Winter and Spring planning builds on all of Stony Brook's efforts during the Fall semester. Below is a brief overview of plans for Winter and Spring. These plans are contingent on the ability of our campus, region and State to continue to flatten the curve, and are subject to change if the trajectory of cases takes a turn for the worse.

**Winter Term**

Most winter session classes will be offered online, as in years past with classes running from January 5 - 23. Some classes may be scheduled face-to-face. Winter course registration will begin on November 2.

**Spring Semester**

The start of Spring semester is delayed by one week, with the term beginning on February 1. Spring Break is eliminated to make up for this time. Spring course registration will begin on

November 2, and advising registration appointments will be available through November 20. Classes with enrollments above 45 students will automatically be delivered online. Generally, classes with enrollments less than 45 will be delivered face-to-face in large rooms to accommodate social distancing (unless other circumstances require online instruction). Some smaller classes may be delivered online or in a hybrid mode that blends face-to-face and online instruction.

### ***Online Writing Support for Faculty and Students***

Shyam Sharma, Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director in Writing and Rhetoric, has launched online writing groups to help faculty and students during the pandemic. The series for graduate students includes a writing group, writing workshops, and a boot camp. The writing group offers an environment for mutual support and accountability, based on work participants complete during the week and bring to Friday meetings. The boot camp requires students to come prepared to write during the entire four-hour block every Friday. The writing workshop is for students who wish to hone their writing skills before they join the boot camp. A virtual Faculty Writing Group was also created in collaboration with the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), the Graduate Writing Program, and the College of Arts and Sciences. All of these spaces are intended to foster a sense of community during this extended period of remote interaction.

### ***Fourth Town Hall for Social Justice Held on September 30***

The fourth virtual Town Hall Presentation for Social Justice was held on September 30. This was a joint event with the Center for Changing Systems of Power, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Office of the Chief Diversity Officer, and the Alumni Association. This session's topic was "Inclusive Pedagogy and the Engaged Classroom." Panelists discussed the "what, why, and how" of creating equitable learning spaces and opportunities for all students. Nicole Sampson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, moderated the event. The panel included:

- Dr. Judith Brown Clarke, Vice President of Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer
- Dr. Stella Tsirka, Professor, Renaissance School of Medicine
- Dr. Surita Bhatia, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
- Dr. R. Anna Hayward, Associate Professor, School of Social Welfare
- Dr. Charles L. Robbins, Executive Director, Center for Changing Systems of Power; Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Student Success; Dean of the Undergraduate Colleges

A final town hall in this series will be announced shortly. Recordings of the previous town halls can be found at [https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/cas/news/landing-pages/Town\\_Halls\\_for\\_Social\\_Justice.php](https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/cas/news/landing-pages/Town_Halls_for_Social_Justice.php).

### ***Stony Brook Libraries to Document University's Experience with COVID-19***

Stony Brook University Libraries has announced the development of "Documenting COVID-19: Stony Brook University Experiences," a new digital archive project established to collect, preserve and publish the institutional history of Stony Brook University during this

unprecedented moment in history. The Stony Brook University community is invited to contribute to the archive by submitting content or participating in an interview via a dedicated web page, <https://library.stonybrook.edu/special-library-initiatives/documenting-covid-19/>, from which the library project team will collect information, photos, videos, personal stories and other COVID-19 related information.

***Faculty Exhibition Launched Online October 1***

The Zuccaire Gallery presents an online Faculty Exhibition and features the work of Stony Brook University's world-renowned faculty artists. *Reckoning* showcases artwork created in 2020 that expresses a range of individual and collective experiences we are living through and the underlying conditions that have brought us to this crossroads. A related online student community forum, *Reckoning: Student Response Project*, will include artwork, poems and writings by Stony Brook University students from across campus and around the globe.