



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA®
Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost

February 8, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

At the University of Oklahoma, our commitment to the student experience lies at the core of all our endeavors. Student success is a central focus of our “Lead On, University” Strategic Plan, and today I write to share upcoming changes designed to enhance how we support students in their academic journey.

At their March meeting, the OU Board of Regents will consider a proposal to reorganize University College. All current operations will continue under the Provost’s Office in a newly created Academic Success Center. Supporting our students as they make the transition into college and build a foundation for their educational pursuits will remain the highest priority of this new model. If approved, this change would go into effect July 1, 2024.

Leading this new unit would be Lillian Miller, who would serve as Associate Provost over the Academic Success Center. She is currently Assistant Dean of University College and has devoted her career to working with new students. In the coming months, she and University College Interim Dean Dr. Ken Petersen will work hand in hand to ensure a smooth transition, in anticipation of her new role beginning July 1. Dr. Petersen has provided exceptional oversight of University College since his appointment last May, and we are deeply appreciative of his dedication.

The biggest and most exciting change for the Fall 2024 semester is that all first-year students will enter the college of their declared majors directly – a departure from the current practice of University College serving as their academic home. Students who are still exploring majors will enter OU under a program managed by the Provost’s Office.

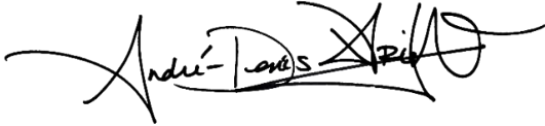
Allowing students who are ready to immediately pursue their intended major has several distinct advantages for a more fulfilling college experience. Early declaration provides opportunities for mentorship, networking, and engagement, as students can more quickly form connections with faculty and peers who share similar interests. We’ve also seen that peer universities that place their first-year students in colleges observe improved retention and graduation rates – a key goal of our Strategic Plan.

This past November, a first-year advising task force was created to assess whether first-year advising should continue under the Provost’s Office or move to the colleges. The task force will continue to meet over the next two months, and I have asked they submit a report of their

recommendations before the middle of March, with the intent to implement recommendations in Fall 2025. We will keep you apprised of any significant changes as necessary.

We are confident these changes will create an even more supportive environment for students to navigate their college years with purpose and confidence, positioning them for success in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "André-Denis Wright". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "A" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

André-Denis G. Wright
Senior Vice President and Provost