



## Office of **Academic Affairs**

Dear Faculty,

Welcome back to campus for the fall 2024 semester. This is the beginning of my second year on campus. I learned and experienced more in my first year than I might ever have imagined, and I expect and look forward to learning even more about the aspirations, hopes, and goals of our community this coming year as well. Last year, everyone came together and focused on increasing student enrollments, with outstanding results. As we begin the new academic year, I am confident and optimistic that we will build on our past successes and create an even better SUNY New Paltz, focused as always on our core mission.

As I have come to learn and appreciate, the mission of SUNY New Paltz is two-fold: To provide an excellent education to our students that prepares them for lifelong learning and success, and to be a clear value to the citizens of New York and beyond. These two goals reinforce each other when we realize our graduates are our most valuable contribution to the wider world. I believe every one of us contributes to this mission in one way or another, and, even when we disagree, the mission can always bring us together. This is my own belief, but it is also a topic that has come up in conversations and interactions I've had across campus since I arrived last year and particularly since the events of last May. My understanding of how we understand our mission evolves on an almost daily basis as I learn more about our shared values and goals. I see so many ways to uplift and support our two primary pillars and, as provost, I want to create new opportunities for everyone to learn, develop, and explore. This is, after all, the overarching mission of Academic Affairs.

This year, I am focused on building opportunities for all of us to interact with each other to build a more common understanding of how each of us contributes to the mission of SUNY New Paltz. What is each of us doing? Why do we think it is important? What can we learn from each other? This is a community-wide discussion that I hope to enable and expand with significant resources and support. The ideas and proposals to address these sorts of questions must come from you. In fact, some of this has already started spontaneously, and I know that there are faculty, staff, and students who are brimming with ideas.

I will give more details, including the specific nature of the support I plan to provide, in my first report to the Faculty Senate on September 4. I'll also be providing a way to

communicate your ideas and to ask for support. It is my firm belief that we must build this common understanding together. It is a big job, and everyone has a role to play. I have no doubt that we are up to the challenge.

With classes having begun today, I'd like to ask you to please remember a few important dates.

Convocation - August 27 including BBQ for all

Full Faculty Meeting and Reception - September 6

Enrollment Census due date - September 27

A particular note on the Enrollment Census. The Census allows us to know early in the semester if there are students who are registered for but not attending classes. When we have this information, we contact students, and if their absence is intentional, they are removed from classes early enough that they avoid financial penalties. In the review of last semester's Enrollment Census, six students were not reported as absent in spite of never having attended classes. While we can forgive money owed to New Paltz, those six students ended up owing from a few hundred dollars to more than ten thousand dollars for government financial aid that was received and spent. For example, one student lived in the dormitories all semester. These students are now having to pay back all of this owed money. Please fill out the Enrollment Census accurately and on time. It can, in fact, make a very big difference for individual students.

At SUNY New Paltz, we very much value the diversity of our campus. One way we demonstrate respect for that diversity is in how we acknowledge and make accommodations for our various traditions and religious beliefs. As a new academic year begins, I would like to remind everyone of our policy regarding religious observances. To quote the [Undergraduate Catalog](#):

Throughout the academic year, many students and faculty will need to miss class or reschedule assignments, exams, practices, or other school commitments in order to observe religious holidays that fall on class or work days.

Students who will be taking time to observe these holidays should communicate with faculty, coaches, etc. as soon as possible regarding absences for religious observations and be prepared to discuss plans for making up missed work. Faculty will continue to respect the needs of our students and, in compliance with the New York State Education Law (Section 224-a), honor students' requests for such rescheduling and collaborate with them to determine a path to make up missed work.

Faculty who plan to observe religious holidays on scheduled work days should communicate with their department chair and arrange for make-up sessions or alternative content delivery in order to preserve instructional time.

Please note that this policy applies to all religious holidays, whether noted or not on the academic calendar.

Additionally, please read below for information that most of you probably know but still will be useful to many.

## **Guidance and Resources**

### **Academic Affairs Information and Resources**

[New Student Profile](#)

[Academic Policies, including Academic Integrity](#)

[Undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) catalogs

Fall 2024 [syllabus requirements and template](#)

Fall 2024 [academic calendar](#)

Fall 2024 [final exams calendar](#)

[Faculty Handbook](#) (last update in April 2024)

[Faculty Development Center](#) (FDC)

[Office of the Provost](#)

[Sojourner Truth Library](#)

[National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity](#) (NCFDD) - Click [here](#) to claim your own membership: select New Paltz, then Activate my Membership, and complete the form using your New Paltz email address

Information on Academic Freedom ([SUNY](#) and [AAUP](#))

### **Brightspace and Online Course Resources**

Please make yourself familiar with the [six teaching modalities](#) recognized at New Paltz and be sure to align your practices with the modality definitions for the courses you are teaching

New Paltz uses [Brightspace](#) (DLE). Brightspace can be helpful in fully seated classes as a means of distributing course syllabi, handouts, and as a way of maintaining your gradebook. It is the expected platform for any courses with remote learning elements. Brightspace [training and certification](#) is available to all faculty through the Brightspace portal; certification is required for faculty teaching online.

Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) [Portal](#)

[OIT Training and Events](#)

## **Student Resources**

[Center for Student Success \(CSS\)](#)  
[Office of Academic Advising \(OAA\)](#)  
[Center for Business Advising](#)  
[Educational Opportunity Program \(EOP\)](#)  
[Scholars' Mentorship Program \(SMP\)](#)  
[AMP and CSTEP Community \(AC2\)](#)  
[Office of Veteran & Military Services \(OVMS\)](#)  
[Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#)  
[Psychological Counseling Center \(PCC\)](#)  
[Student Health Center \(SHC\)](#)  
[Title IX Coordinator \(Sexual Assault, Violence and Harassment\)](#)  
[Bias Response and Reporting and Support](#)  
[Student Affairs](#)

Thanks very much for taking the time to read this memo. I look forward to speaking with more of you at the first meeting of the Faculty Senate on September 4 and at events throughout the fall and academic year. I hope we all have a great semester.

Sincerely,

**William McClure**

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs