



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST
AND SENIOR VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

August 26, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: University Community

FROM: Winston Langley, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Personnel Appointments in the Division of Academic Affairs

Good day to all. I trust that you are as excited as I am about the beginning of a new academic year – and as busy with your preparations. I am writing to inform you about several important personnel changes in the Division of Academic Affairs that will be effective at the beginning of the fall 2009 semester.

Richard Antonak, Vice Provost for Research, will be leaving UMass Boston after five years of service to the university. Under his leadership, the campus developed a research vision statement and research strategic plan, identified eight interdisciplinary research clusters, developed and opened the Venture Development Center, and received substantially increased amounts of external funding for research. These are but a few of his accomplishments. I invite you to join me in thanking Vice Provost Antonak for his valuable service to UMass Boston, and to wish him well in his next endeavors.

Professor Zong-Guo Xia will return to the campus as vice provost for research and strategic initiatives. Professor Xia earned a Ph.D. in earth and environmental sciences from the CUNY Graduate Center. He has taught at several colleges and universities, including UMass Boston from 1993 – 2003. Professor Xia has held a variety of academic administrative positions, including vice president for information technology at Lehman College, and associate provost for graduate studies at UMass Dartmouth. He is an accomplished teacher/scholar who has expertise in the areas of computer cartography, remote sensing, digital image processing, spatial database systems, environmental modeling, and geographic information systems. As vice provost for research and strategic initiatives, his primary responsibilities will include leading the university's research agenda and collaborating with the deans to help promote the strengthening of graduate education.

Professor Oscar Gutierrez will assume the position of associate dean for graduate programs in the College of Management. Professor Gutierrez was appointed associate provost in 2007 and has served effectively in that role. One of his primary areas of responsibility has been faculty personnel matters. He provided wise guidance to faculty members, department chairs, deans, and me. He also developed innovative approaches to help us conduct our work more effectively. For example, he designed and has been implementing a system for electronic submission of annual



faculty reports. Professor Gutierrez will continue to work with me on that initiative and on several other projects as well.

Professor Rajini Srikanth will join my staff as associate provost for faculty affairs. Professor Srikanth holds a Ph.D. in English from the State University of New York at Buffalo. Her teaching experience includes appointments at several secondary schools and colleges. Professor Srikanth joined the UMass Boston faculty in 1998 as a member of the Department of English. She is a nationally recognized scholar who has published extensively in the areas of critical theory and multicultural literature, with particular expertise in South Asian American Studies. Currently, she is director of the UMass Boston Honors program, a position that she will continue to hold after she assumes her new responsibilities. As associate provost for faculty affairs, Professor Srikanth will assist me with matters related to faculty development and faculty personnel activities. For example, she will work with other members of the campus community to develop faculty orientation and mentoring programs, and will coordinate efforts necessary to ensure efficient administration of faculty reviews.

Associate Provost Peter Langer, who has most recently been responsible for assisting me with matters related to undergraduate education, will now focus his attention on academic assessment and planning. He will coordinate internal campus assessment efforts, e.g., Academic Quality Assessment and Development reviews, as well as assessment activities required by external agencies, such as the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Dr. Langer earned a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Chicago. He has held many administrative positions at UMass Boston, including director of general education development, founding director of the university advising center, interim dean of the Graduate College of Education, and director of institutional research.

Professor Maura Mast will serve as associate vice-provost for undergraduate studies. In this capacity she will oversee the Undergraduate Studies Office, including the undergraduate general education curriculum and the Writing Proficiency Office. Dr. Mast is an associate professor of mathematics who earned a Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research interest is in the area of differential geometry. She has coordinated and taught the quantitative reasoning course here at UMass Boston and is active in national organizations devoted to mathematics teaching, and women in mathematics.

These individuals will, I am sure, provide able support to me and to the campus community.

Please call on them if you have questions or require assistance with any matters related to their areas of responsibility.