



## **President's Message: Farewells and beginnings**

Posted: Thursday, May 17, 2018 Posted: 9:42:08 AM CT

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I'm glad I had the opportunity to be with many of you recently at year-end faculty and Unclassified Professional assemblies and at graduation ceremonies. That is truly a special day for the graduates, their families and friends, and the university.

Higher education has its own seasons and significant change often comes in May and June. We say farewell to students and colleagues who have been important to us and congratulate others assuming new responsibilities.

As we turn toward summer, here are some final observations before this newsletter returns in August.

**First generation students:** [WSU's national recognition as a Social Mobility Innovator](#) is a great tribute to the work many of you have been involved in to make this a university that values inclusion and recognizes the importance of providing financial, academic and social bridges to success for first generation students

We can all be proud that the university's past, present and future are tied together by our primary role as the portal to a better life for generations of hardworking people.

**Recognition by the Kansas Hispanic Educational and Development Foundation:** In addition to national recognition of WSU's work with first generation students, we also received important recognition regarding our efforts to attract, educate and graduate Hispanic students from our state. This is an important and growing population and I am very proud of everyone who has stepped up to welcome these students to campus. Thank you!

**Meetings with faculty and staff:** I appreciated the opportunities the past several weeks to be a part of open meetings of Unclassified Professionals, faculty and the combined senates. I also greatly enjoyed hosting members of the newly elected Student Senate at a dinner at the President's Residence and look forward to working with them as we continue to work to enhance the quality of student life.

In conversations with all of these groups, I was struck by the importance of sustainability in everything that we do. We need to make decisions that will sustain our physical, intellectual, social, emotional and economic environments while assuring that all portions of the surrounding community of Wichita and southcentral Kansas advance as well.

**New provost:** Rick Muma may have seemed the unsurprising choice, but thanks to an excellent search process led by Werner Golling and Betty-Smith Campbell, the whole campus got a chance to hear from three highly capable candidates to head the university's largest division.

Homegrown chief academic officers are a relative rarity these days, so we are fortunate to be able to turn to someone with Rick's deep WSU experience and commitment to lead us during these unsettled times in higher education. I want to thank everyone who took part in this critical decision.

**"Shock the World" campaign:** I'm very pleased that the WSU Foundation staff and volunteers have made such great progress on the largest fundraising campaign in the university's history. Generations of students will benefit from the scholarships, facilities and programs supported by these contributions. If you have the ability and willingness to contribute, either now or through an estate gift, you can learn more here, <https://foundation.wichita.edu/areasToSupport.html>

**Aug. 17 faculty / staff gathering:** As has become our annual custom, we will gather all available faculty and staff the Friday afternoon before fall semester begins to talk about the year ahead and catch up on summer happenings. Please save 3-5 p.m. on your calendar that day.

**Senior Toast and Commencement:** Teri Hall and the Student Affairs staff brought us a new event that promises to become a tradition, a pre-graduation Toast to the graduating seniors (see photo above).

It was a beautiful afternoon and a rousing success, with well over a thousand students and guests present for the Champagne toast celebrating the graduates. And here's a toast to you, too, the staff and faculty of Wichita State. I appreciate all you do for our students, our colleagues and me.

*If you have thoughts over the summer, I'll be checking my email regularly. Please write to me, [president@wichita.edu](mailto:president@wichita.edu).*

## SEM Check-In: This year's progress

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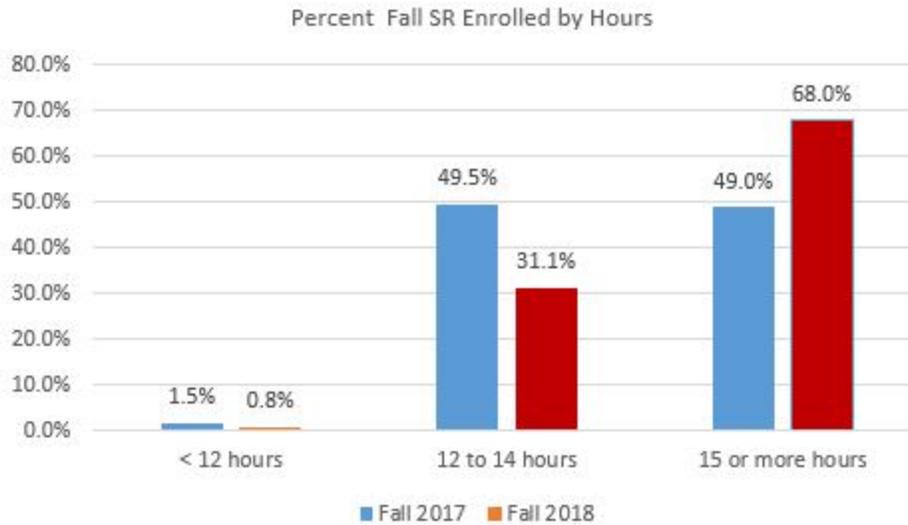
*In conjunction with the University's Strategic Planning process, WSU has developed a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan for growth over the next three years. To stay informed on the progress toward our goals, each month we will provide the status of one of the goals and provide information for you to assist us in moving the goal forward.*

This month we will shift our focus from what we accomplished last fall in relation to our SEM goals to the upcoming fall highlighting current enrollment trends among new graduating high school seniors and new transfer students, as well as efforts under way to encourage returning students.

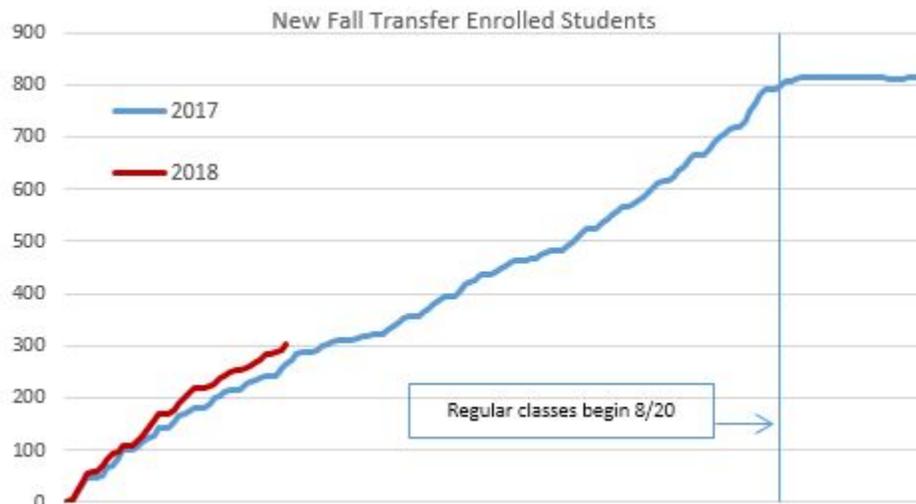
Fall registration for high school seniors began in early March; internally we refer to these students as SR. As of mid-May, we were up more than 90 new SRs over last year at this same time, an increase of more than 12 percent. This increase in enrollment reflects the increases we have seen over last year in the number of SR admits as part of our SR recruitment efforts.



While SRs normally enroll full-time (12 or more hours), studies have shown that enrollment at 15 or more hours leads to shorter time-to-degree completion and reduced overall degree cost. Accordingly, as part of our SEM initiatives, last fall we began encouraging SRs to enroll in 15 or more hours and have continued that initiative for fall 2018. As of mid-May, we have more than a 50 percent increase of SR students in 15 or more hours, with 68 percent of fall 2018 SRs in 15 or more hours compared to 31.1 percent last fall at this time.



Last fall we added a new SEM goal: “Increase enrollment of new fall transfers by 30 students yearly through fall 2020.” This year we have expanded our recruitment of transfer students including the addition of the online Transfer Gateway where prospective transfer students can see how their transfer coursework may apply to a WSU degree. The Gateway also allows them to connect with our new dedicated transfer specialist. As of mid-May, new transfer student enrollment was up more than 14 percent over last fall at this time, already exceeding the goal for fall 2018.



New students are only part of the story. We must also retain students. To help remind students to re-enroll for the fall term, we have a mix of efforts spanning large-scale communication campaigns to one-on-one departmental callings. For example, the SEM group has identified important time periods related to contacting students who haven’t enrolled, such as those listed below:

- Blackboard Call Campaign – June 19
- College Advising Offices – July 9
- Blackboard Call Campaign – July 31
- College Advising Offices – Aug. 8

### **What can you do?**

While the above SEM contact efforts are made on a large scale, students respond best to outreach from campus areas and departments in which they are personally involved. We need each individual and unit to do their part - make calls, send emails, find personal and engaging ways to reach out to students who were enrolled in the spring 2018 semester but have not yet enrolled for fall 2018.

Retaining these students is a responsibility for each of us on this campus. If you need assistance with how you can help, contact Lisa Hansen at 978-7456 or [lisa.hansen@wichita.edu](mailto:lisa.hansen@wichita.edu).

# Diversity Update: Carrying momentum into next year

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Greetings!

Congratulations, Shocker Nation, on another successful school year. This year was full of exciting events and accomplishments that make all of us Shocker Proud.

From the establishment of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement to the largest first-time freshmen class enrolled in WSU history, this year was full of energy and excitement, and we look forward to carrying this momentum into the next year. I am humbled and honored to serve as the vice president of Diversity and Community Engagement.

As we strive to cultivate and build community partnerships, I would like to thank Kevin Harrison, community engagement coordinator, and the Kansas Hispanic Education and Development Foundation (KHEDF) for its service to students in the Shocker community.



Last week, the KHEDF awarded 41 scholarships to Hispanic students. Out of 41 scholarships, 21 scholarships were awarded to students planning to attend Shocker Nation in the fall, and four students will be attending WSU Tech. This is outstanding news, and we are grateful these students have chosen to make Wichita State their home away from home. WSU was also named winner of the KHEDF 2018 Making a Difference Award.

Thank you to KHEDF for such a wonderful Scholars and Recognition Dinner. Your scholarships have provided students not only dreams, but an opportunity to pursue higher education.

I am also thankful for partnerships with Art That Touches Your Heart, USD 259, Greater Wichita Ministerial Leadership, National Pan-Hellenic Council and many others. These partnerships have been and continue to be vital to the ongoing success of the university and are key to ensuring underrepresented voices are heard and recognized throughout the campus community.

Lastly, I would like to say congratulations to Deltha Q. Colvin, associate vice president for Student Affairs, special programs, on receiving the Urban League of Kansas Whitney M. Young

Leadership Award. For 50 years, Deltha has served Wichita State with distinction, and we applaud her for receiving this recognition.

*“It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”* Maya Angelou

**Dr. Marche Fleming-Randle**  
**Vice president, Diversity and Community Engagement**

# Grant of the Month: Composites research

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Waruna Seneviratne, senior research scientist and technical director of NIAR Composites and Structures, was awarded \$1.4 million from the Office of Naval Research.

The award will help fund a partnership with various government, industry and academic research units for collaborative research that has the potential to advance the understanding between the effects of defects and the functional performance of composite structures.

Because composites are made of several layers of fibers typically joined in varying directions, it can be difficult to determine how the material will perform over time and when damage is introduced.

Overly conservative assumptions are made for strength and fatigue life assessment without taking full advantage of the unique fatigue capabilities of composites. To design efficient composite structures and increase their use in the aerospace industry, engineers must gain a better understanding of the fundamentals of damage initiation and growth characteristics of composites.

The primary goal of this research is to develop a systematic approach, including the use of high-fidelity inspections techniques, such as X-ray computed tomography, for validating composite analysis methods to predict onset and damage propagation.

The research will also provide an opportunity for university researchers to develop advanced skills in conducting high-fidelity X-ray inspections and image reconstruction skills using advanced software packages.



# What I'm Reading: 'Why companies and universities should forge long-term collaborations'

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In the past decade, there has been an explosion in research deals between companies and universities. Companies have been reducing their spending on early stage research for three decades and are increasingly turning to universities to perform that role.

And faced with stingier government support of academic research and calls for them to contribute more to their local economies, universities have been more receptive.

Both sides have become much more interested in forging long-term, collaborative relationships. But are there challenges facing both sides that could get in the way?

[» Read more.](#)