

# A message to faculty and staff from Richard Muma, Provost and Acting President

Dear colleagues:

Welcome to the spring semester and, for those who were away, welcome back to campus. As events often remind us, the greatest constant is change. In that spirit, here are recent university developments and some to be expected this semester:

President Bardo is still recovering from lung surgeries in November and December. Several of us who visit him regularly have seen improvements in recent weeks. At Dr. Bardo's request, I am serving as acting president during his recovery, while continuing as Provost. I am happy to help out in this way.



**Rick Muma**

The directions I've received from Dr. Bardo and the Board of Regents are to continue working with the President's Executive Team, deans and all of you to keep the university moving forward in his absence.

[Read full story](#)

Here are some notable items as the semester begins:

**Student referendum:** This week you'll begin to see a lot of activity around the student referendum to support improvements for academic facilities. You can [learn more about it here](#).

**College leadership:** Dennis Livesay, former Graduate dean, has assumed his new responsibilities as dean of the College of Engineering. Our thanks to Steven Skinner, who served as interim engineering dean, and Kerry Wilks, who is serving as interim dean of the Graduate School. Searches are underway for deans of the Graduate School and the Barton School of Business, to succeed Anand Desai, who is retiring this summer.

**Strategic plan:** Meetings are starting up again to continue the evaluation of our current strategic plan and to determine whether improvements or changes are needed. Kaye Monk-Morgan is leading this effort. If you want to find out how you can participate, go to [Activation Team](#).

**Enrollment and retention:** Focus will continue on our strategic enrollment plan, with new goals being added (international education, returning adults and graduate enrollment management) along with a tool kit to help you implement goals and strategies appropriate to your area. Carolyn Shaw is leading this effort, and more information can be found at [SEM Plan](#).

**Construction:** A new exterior entrance and learning-and-collaboration space are being added to Cohen Honors College in Shocker Hall. The expanded east side of campus has five buildings under construction, or soon to be under construction, this semester: The Suites residence hall, YMCA/Student Wellness Center, NIAR Crash Lab, Partnership Building 3 and Hyatt Place Hotel. The construction north of Wilkins Stadium is a landscaped drainage area to help contain a 100-year rainfall.

I wish all of you the best for a great semester. I look forward to seeing you around campus.

Rick