

# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## Dr. Mohamed Abdelrahman Starts as New VPAA

Dr. Mohamed Abdelrahman joined Arkansas Tech as the new Vice President for Academic Affairs on June 1. Dr. Abdelrahman previously served as the associate vice president for research and graduate studies at Texas A&M Kingsville. Please see page 2 for a message from the new VPAA.

## August Commencement

The August commencement Ceremony will be held on Saturday, August 6 at 10:00A in Tucker Coliseum. All full-time faculty teaching one or both of the summer terms and returning for fall, 2016 are expected to attend graduation. Should you have extenuating circumstances that prevent your participation in the ceremony please contact your dean.

## Interim Dean, College of Business

Dr. Jeff Robertson, dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences, has agreed to serve as interim dean for the College of Business starting July 1. The search for a permanent dean will begin this summer with an anticipated hire date in January 2017.

## New TIAA Plan Options

TIAA members will soon be permitted to take loans from their retirement contributions. Starting July 1, up to \$25,000 may be withdrawn from mandatory contributions and up to \$50,000 may be withdrawn from elective contributions. Hardship withdrawals are also available under certain circumstances. For questions about TIAA withdrawals or other retirement issues please contact Human Resources at 968-0396.

## The VPAA Wants to Hear from You!

The Academic Affairs website now includes an opportunity to submit ideas, thoughts and suggestions directly to the Associate Vice President or Vice President for Academic Affairs. The comments are submitted anonymously, although there is an option to enter identifying information if desired. Submissions are only accessible and will only be read by Dr. Mohamed Abdelrahman and Dr. David Underwood. The comment box can be found by clicking on the "We want to hear from you!" link at <http://www.atu.edu/academics/index.php>.

## Points of Interest

- ◆ Full time faculty and academic staff contracts are due to Academic Affairs by July 15. Summer II contracts will be distributed in mid July.
- ◆ The General Faculty Meeting and the Fall Professional Development Day will be on Wednesday, August 17. More details will be shared as they are available.
- ◆ The 2015 Academic Accomplishments booklets have been distributed to the departments. The booklet may also be picked up in the Administration Building room 200 or viewed online at <http://www.atu.edu/academics/facultyaccomplishments.php>.
- ◆ The President's Office is hosting an ice cream social on Tuesday, July 5 from 3:30P-4:30P in Chamber's Cafeteria. All faculty and staff are welcome to attend.

## Dates to Remember:

- **Holiday, July 4.**
- **Summer second session begins, July 5.**
- **Ice cream social, July 5.**
- **Last day to officially drop course with full reduction, July 6.**
- **Last day to officially drop course with 80% reduction, July 11.**
- **Full time faculty and academic staff contracts due July 15.**
- **Last day to drop course with a "W", August 1.**
- **Second term ends, August 5.**
- **Graduation, August 6.**
- **General Faculty Meeting and Professional Development Day, August 17.**

• Phone: 968-0319 • Fax: 968-0644 • Email: [academicaaffairs@atu.edu](mailto:academicaaffairs@atu.edu)

• Website: <http://www.atu.edu/academics/facultyresources.php>

### Summer Research Grant Program

In spring 2016, Academic Affairs announced a new summer grant program funded by external sources. Faculty members were asked to submit a grant proposal outlining their research project and to identify their prospective funding agencies. Ten faculty members were chosen to participate in the program based on their proposal's potential for securing external funding and development of a sustainable research program. Below is a list of participating faculty and their prospective targeted external grant agencies.

- ◇ Dr. David Blanks, Professor of History, John Templeton Foundation
- ◇ Dr. Peter Chen, Assistant Professor of Emergency Management, NSF-MMS
- ◇ Dr. Charlie Gagen, Professor of Fisheries Science, NSF-REU
- ◇ Dr. Mariusz Gajewski, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research
- ◇ Dr. Christopher Housenick, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Bill and Melinda Gates Postsecondary Success Grant
- ◇ Dr. Julie Mikles-Schluterman, Associate Professor of Sociology, United Engineering Foundation Grant
- ◇ Dr. Catherine Nichols, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, Office of English Language Acquisition
- ◇ Dr. Jason Warnick, Associate Professor of Psychology, Department of Education, Title III
- ◇ Dr. Rebecca Wiewel, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, NSF-SBE

### Message from Dr. Abdelrahman

Dear Colleagues,

I began my journey here at Arkansas Tech on June 1, 2016, and my first month has been filled with excitement and joy as I have visited with many of the faculty, staff, and students on campus this summer. The smiles, warm welcome, and professional support my family and I have received have made our transition a smooth and exciting one.

As the fall semester quickly approaches, I eagerly look forward to welcoming back our faculty and returning students to the new academic year. I also look forward to all of us, as the campus community, celebrating with and providing support to the new freshman class as they take a significant step on the road to professional success. College education has been and will continue to be the most consistent way to improve the lives of individuals and the socio-economics of entire regions. Arkansas Tech is a fine example of an academic institution where students receive quality education while being well-cared for and treated as family.

I am excited about the opportunities that we can harness as we work together to help our students succeed. Many innovative ideas were captured through the strategic planning process and the university is taking steps towards implementing many of these under the umbrella of the strategic plan. However, I invite you to please send me your ideas, thoughts and comments through the [academic affairs website](#) for I believe ideas are the fuel that thrusts institutions forward.

Regards,

Mohamed Abdelrahman

