

# From Laurel's Desk – Winter 2017

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It has been just over three months since I arrived back at Seneca. I have to say, there are days when it feels as if I never left and others when it feels like everything is new. Everyone has been welcoming and very patient as I learn new systems, structures, processes and, most important, establish and re-establish relationships.

One of my priorities is to provide more channels for communication within the academic division and between the academic division and all of the other departments that make us Seneca. The Academic Newsletter is one such vehicle. Although designed for faculty – I asked all contributors to think about how their submission could be used by faculty to inform their important work of teaching students – it is our hope that staff and administrators will enjoy it as well.



Academic College Council will begin meeting again this month. Our first meeting will consist of two interactive sessions: identification of priority issues to inform new policy development, policy revision, processes or procedures, and an integrated strategic planning and academic planning session. We will use the outcome of the first session to draft our work plan for the rest of the year. This will involve setting up working groups and timelines for the groups to bring recommendations back to Council for discussion and endorsement.

We have a number of committees and councils operating within the academic division. Each of these committees will be “tethered” to Academic College Council in a manner to promote two-way exchange of information and ideas. An update from Academic College Council will be a regular feature of the Academic Newsletter. We will also feature a profile on each of the committees or councils and updates from working groups.

Building on the work that David began last spring, we are establishing a regular forum for program coordinators to network and share promising practices and to identify cross-school and Faculty issues of policy, procedure and process. We will establish an annual schedule of meetings based on feedback from the coordinators. This group will also be connected to

Academic College Council for coordination purposes.

I would like to encourage your participation in the integrated Strategic and Academic Planning sessions scheduled throughout January and into early February. Please see the [Academic Plan Update](#) article in this newsletter for additional ways you can provide feedback on the academic plan.

One of our traditions at Seneca is our Faculty Development Days. Our next event, *Teaching & Learning with Technology Day*, is scheduled for Monday, February 27th at Markham Campus. These days provide a tremendous opportunity to meet new people, share experiences and learn. I do hope you will be able to attend.

I have very much enjoyed coming out to program and school events and meetings, and will continue to do so as the opportunities present themselves. It is a good way for me to hear directly from groups on matters of importance and to share information from a divisional, institutional, and system academic perspective.

Finally, let me thank you for the professional and caring manner you demonstrate every day as you challenge and support our students to achieve their educational goals. We all have stories of teachers, professors and staff who made a difference in our lives as learners, professionals and individuals. Every day, we have the opportunity to be that story. Your work with students defines Seneca and their experiences at Seneca define them.

All the best for 2017 and for a very successful semester!

Laurel

*Photo credit: Jordann Rae, second semester student in the Independent Digital Photography Program*

View the [Winter 2017 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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