

Extracted from email sent on 30 November 2016

Since the announcement that I will move to the University of Louisiana System Presidency in January, I have sought advice and input from a number of faculty, staff, alumni, Leadership Team members, and other stakeholders about how best to ensure our university continues to progress. As I have long maintained, often in the face of healthy skepticism, the occupant of the president's office receives far more credit than he is due for the university's advances. The president can articulate a vision, and with a lot of help, implement a structure, establish systems, and foster a culture conducive to realizing that vision. The innovation, creativity, and work that achieve the vision come from you.

Marcia Hardy and Roni Biscoe continue to lead our strategic planning team toward completion of the multi-year framework. This document, together with our refined approach to budgeting, will be a roadmap that guides the university. They are real. They are actionable. In addition, one factor of this transition that will minimize disruption and help with continuity: my move is simply one step up on our reporting structure. I am not leaving our chain of command.

As we move forward, I want to let you know about three recommendations I have made to our Board of Supervisors:

Marcus Jones' title will change to Executive Vice President as he assumes responsibility for the business and other internal operations of the university. VP of Business Affairs Carl Jones will report to Marcus.

Vickie Gentry, who has done a fabulous job as Chief Academic Officer, will assume the role of Provost. Her appointment to this position on an interim basis for calendar year 2017 will ensure strong leadership while providing our faculty, department heads, and deans continued ownership of our academic mission.

Chris Maggio will maintain his role as Vice President of the Student Experience and serve as Acting President until the ULS board selects a permanent president. Chris has been a valuable member of the Leadership Team. He will work closely with our Advancement and External Affairs teams to keep our external stakeholders energized as the Board of Supervisors finalizes and executes the search process for the new president.

Of course, these recommendations are subject to approval by the board.

I realize change can be stressful, and I greatly appreciate your patience and understanding during this transition.

Best,  
Jim