

Dear Colleagues,

As I come up on the end of the first year of my time here at Southeast, I wanted to reach out and thank you. For the welcome I received, for the hard work you do, and in the midst of a global crisis, for the personal sacrifices you made, and the grit and determination you showed, to make sure our students received the quality education we have promised them.

This year has certainly been challenging, but it has also been rewarding, and I hope it has been for you also. I am grateful for the service you have given and proud of the excellence I have seen in your teaching, scholarship and service. I am excited that we have welcomed two new deans and a vice provost to our community, Nathan Bullock as Dean of Extended Studies, Joe Pujol as Dean of the College of Education, Health, and Human Studies, after serving as interim dean and Doug Koch as Vice Provost. Additionally, I say thank you to Hamner Hill for his service as Interim Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and welcome to Melissa Odegard-Koester as the incoming Interim Dean. This year, we also received news that the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reaffirmed our accreditation for 10 years, as well as had discipline-specific re-accreditations in three other areas.

In this extraordinary time, there are challenges to face that are still ahead of us in academic affairs. Strategic decisions to achieve our shared goal of sustainability will have to be accelerated to meet this new reality--where we are now, and not where we wish we would have been in ordinary times. As we collaboratively assess our academic priorities, and as we pursue other efforts, there will be difficult trade-offs and likely unanticipated developments. But I am confident that, as you did this Spring, you will once again rise to meet the challenge, with good will, empathy and strength of character. And through the tests we face in this uncommon season, there will also come innovation, vision and a more tightly knit community.

I am extremely proud of all of you in academic affairs and I see you as partners in our quest to educate and serve our students as they forge ahead in their pursuit of academic success.

You *are* Southeast!

At the beginning of this year, I told you that my door was always open and that remains true. Your experiences are important to me and I am always eager and willing to listen and most importantly learn from you.

I hope you continue to have a wonderful summer and I look forward to seeing you again in the fall. I am proud to be counted among you at Southeast Missouri State University. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Provost.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David L. Cook".



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Provost

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