

Welcome Remarks for 11th Annual Faculty Convocation

September 10, 2017

John P. Pelissero, PhD, Provost

Welcome to the Faculty Convocation—now beginning its second decade and affirming a tradition of gathering to celebrate the faculty of Loyola University Chicago, who are the heart of our academic mission. Thank you for giving time on a beautiful Sunday afternoon to spend this time on campus with your colleagues and to help us welcome the new full-time faculty who joined us this year.

And allow me to add a special welcome to our colleagues from the Health Sciences Campus, who have rejoined us for this convocation. The program and the presence of the faculty from Medicine and Nursing enriches our gathering and signals that we are one University.

I'd like to share—very briefly--what is ahead for this academic year.

- We begin the year strong, with an enrollment of over 16,600 students, including
 - a new record of nearly 2,700 freshmen.
 - Arrupe College has an enrollment of 345 and just graduated its first class of about 102 associate degree candidates.
 - Diversity has increased in our new freshmen, new transfers, and new faculty.

We continue to focus our efforts on successful implementation of the key goals and priorities of Plan 2020. As we approach the half-way point in our strategic plan to *Build a More Just, Humane and Sustainable World*, we take pride in successes such as Arrupe College, faculty recruitment for mission, and our partnerships in the communities in which our campuses live. We will strengthen our efforts on strategies that will make us a better institution.

Throughout this year you will hear more about some of our strategic efforts. For example,

- how we will be using predictive analytics to improve student retention. We do not have a retention problem, but we want to increase retention by providing new outreach and engagement with students that will help them to persist and graduate on time.
- Another area of emphasis will be on institutional program review that will be spearheaded by our new Office of Institutional Effectiveness and designed to yield useful metrics and information to enhance and strengthen our academic programs.
- Promotion of new programs that will advance the research and scholarship of our faculty. The restructured Office of Research Services will be focused on how to strategically implement the Plan 2020 priority of producing Solutions for Complex Society Needs.

- And, at a time when our country is so polarized and leadership on national and international issues is questioned, we will begin planning for a new center of excellence on public service and responsible citizenship that will raise Loyola's collective voice to provide the intellectual perspective of faith and reason to national debates and the preparing of the next generation of extraordinary leaders for our governments.

I want to leave you today with my own personal goal, which is that by next year at this time, I can say that we leveraged the intellectual capital of our faculty, the hopes of our students, and the boundless energy and optimism of all who work here to make our University, our communities, and even our nation a little better.

Thank you for all that you do for our students and our university.