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Subject: Welcome Back!
Date: Thursday, August 17, 2023 9:33:00 AM
Attachments: [image002.png](#)



MONTANA
STATE UNIVERSITY

Office of the Provost

Dear MSU Faculty,

Welcome back to the start of a new academic year! Excitement is in the air as we welcome a new crop of eager undergraduate and graduate students, and welcome back what may be a record number of returning students to campus.

Thank you for your positive engagement with students and staff as you pursue excellence in scholarship and serve the greater good of communities. I'm continually impressed with the collegiality that our faculty have when interacting with MSU colleagues. MSU has that unique combination of qualities that makes it such a special place to work, and you contribute to those qualities every day. Thank you.

You can welcome the new class of students even before classes start through several opportunities. You can volunteer with [Move-In Days](#) on Aug. 19-21. You can assist with academic advising Aug. 21-22. Furthermore, I hope you will plan to attend MSU's [First Year Student Convocation](#) on Aug. 22, with best-selling author **Stephanie Land** as this year's Convocation speaker. Tickets are free (though there is a service charge if you order online).

As you prepare for the first week of classes, I encourage you to review the useful, regularly updated resources available on the [Center for Faculty Excellence](#) website. Subjects include:

- tips for [your first day of class](#),
- recommended [syllabus](#) content and sample language,
- best practices for [organizing Brightspace](#) (D2L) content,
- how to create successful [active learning](#) environments, and more.

I especially call your attention to a **new resource** that provides guidance and tips on [handling generative artificial intelligence](#) (AI) technology in your courses.

I encourage you to set course expectations and policies around student use of generative AI in your classes. At a minimum, you can make it clear at the start of the semester and in your syllabus whether the use of generative AI is permitted, how students are to cite their use of AI when content or components of course assignments were AI generated, and how students arrived at that content.

Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT are moving into the mainstream, thus I encourage you to familiarize yourself with the tool and to learn from and share experiences with peers in your discipline. We will offer a variety of opportunities and workshops to learn about and engage in this subject throughout the academic year, but you don't want to wait to begin addressing the use of AI in your classes.

Lastly, I draw your attention to a large and growing marque event for students during Welcome Week, [Catapalooza](#), Friday, Aug. 25, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. During this event, 350 campus and community groups will set up tables and tents in the core of campus in a fair-like atmosphere to interact with students. It is a high-energy event that helps to build a campus community culture. If you have a class that meets on Friday, please:

- Meet your class(es) as scheduled.
- Anticipate more activity than usual in the center of campus.
- Expect students may take longer to transition between classes.
- Encourage students to participate in Catapalooza, but not during class time, please.

This Fall is going to be an exciting semester with an assortment of special events planned as well as several initiatives to help our students persist in college and attain their degrees. Let's work together to help students succeed in class and in life by making ourselves available, listening to what students have to say and being responsive when they reach out. Together, we can make a difference in the life of each student.

I wish you a wonderful start to a new semester and a new academic year.

Best regards,



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