



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA.
Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost

February 23, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that, pending final approval by the OU Board of Regents, Sarah Ellis will be our next Vice Provost for Faculty. Dr. Ellis came to the University of Oklahoma in 2003 and began a tenure track position the following year. As the Kenneth and Bernadine Russell Professor Chair in Music Theory in the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts, she has served the School of Music in a number of capacities over the years, and was named its Associate Director in 2017. Throughout her time at OU, Dr. Ellis has also demonstrated a strong record of leadership at the university level and broad experience working with faculty and administration, and we are excited to welcome her to this new role.

Please join me in offering our sincerest thanks to Dr. Lori Snyder for serving as our Interim Vice Provost for Faculty, providing steady leadership during this transition period. We are also grateful to the members of our search committee for their diligent participation in the internal search process, which attracted 12 highly qualified applicants. The search committee – made up of seven members representing faculty, staff, and students – interviewed six semifinalists, ultimately selecting three finalists. The search solicited feedback from all Provost's Office constituencies, Norman campus college deans, and members of the executive team.

Dr. Ellis is well known for her extensive experience working with faculty across campus. She served as the Chair of the Faculty Senate in 2017-18, when the university was conducting its first presidential search in more than 20 years, and she was a member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for three years before becoming Chair. She also served as Co-Chair of the President's Academic Program Budget Advisory Committee in 2018-19, when the committee was tasked with assessing academic budget revisions in the context of the university's ongoing comprehensive budget review. She continued in this capacity in 2019-20, leading the committee in drafting a strategic framework for the Norman campus, which would become its [*Lead On, University Strategic Plan*](#).

As a faculty member at OU, Dr. Ellis has taught a wide variety of courses, including three levels of the undergraduate theory sequence and graduate seminars in musical semiotics, music and meaning, the structures of Western Art music, the music of Dmitri Shostakovich, and music by female composers. Her research focuses on critical theory and its applications to understanding music. In addition to her numerous journal articles, book chapters, and reviews, she is the author of *Composing the Modern Subject: Four String Quartets by Dmitri Shostakovich*.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music and a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from the University of Colorado at Boulder. She studied music theory in graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin, where she earned her Ph.D. in 2003.

Our campus, our faculty, and our university administration have been incredibly fortunate to have been the beneficiaries of Dr. Ellis' leadership and insight over the years. I have no doubt she will continue to do great things in her role as Vice Provost for Faculty.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Sarah Ellis on her new position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "André-Denis Wright". The signature is stylized with a large initial 'A' and 'W'.

André-Denis G. Wright, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President and Provost (Norman campus)
University of Oklahoma