Welcome to the inaugural issue of Academic Affairs Highlights in which we shed the spotlight on the achievements of our students, faculty, and staff and recognize just a small fraction of the contributions that are made day in and day out to support the growth of our thriving campus community.

Congratulations to all our faculty and staff recruiters! Our enrollment efforts are reaping results. The enrollment report for the fall 2023 term shows an overall headcount of 6,062 (+2%) with a FTE of 5,536. There are 1,529 (+16%) new freshman and 315 transfers. CSET has seen the largest increase in enrollment at +7%. The first-time freshman retention rate stands at 72%. The School of Education has the largest retention rate at 76%.

Recruitment plans for new faculty positions are underway to meet the growing enrollment and increased demand for new sections and courses. Our efforts to streamline the recruitment process aim to facilitate and expedite the hiring of the most qualified candidates for the available faculty positions.

With 5,010 students taking at least one online class, our flexible course delivery formats are attracting more students and helping accommodate diverse student needs, especially those of non-traditional students.

I hope you enjoy perusing this issue and find it inspiring. I would love to hear your thoughts and highlight more of your accomplishments.
From the School of Business

Faculty Research Activities


- Dr. Sidika Nihal Colakoglu presented a paper titled “Shift(ing) Work: Let's Talk About Changing Professionalism in the Post-Pandemic Workplace” at the Academy of Management Annual Conference.

- Dr. V. Reddy Dondeti presented a paper titled “Optimization Techniques for Solving a Project Leader Assignment Problem Involving a Hierarchical Expertise Requirement Structure and Fixed Time Constraints” at the International Academy of Business and Economics Conference.

- Dr. Omer Gokus presented a paper titled “Grand Strategy Choices for the Firms from the Perspective of the Fukuyama and Huntington Conceptualizations” at the International Association of Applied Business Research Conference on Business, Economics, Finance, and Accounting.


Student Activities

- School of Business students participated in The Money4Life Leadership Summit, October 8-10, 2023, in Charlotte, NC. The program included the following presentations: “Millionaire Mindset,” “What it Takes to be a Strong Leader,” and “Code Switching: How to Adapt to Corporate Culture and Remain Your Authentic Self.”

- Nine selected students started attending data analytics workshops held at the School of Business and will receive a stipend provided by a grant from Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC). These workshops are held for one hour, once a week, for the months of October and November.
From the College of Science, Engineering & Technology

- **Dr. Messaoud Bahoura**, Professor of Engineering and Director of the [Center for Materials Research](#), submitted a research paper titled “Study of Dielectric Properties in Stacked High-k Dielectric MOSCAP Devices” to the *Springer Journal of Materials Science, Materials in Electronics*.

- **Kelsea A. Yarbrough**, a Ph.D. candidate at the Center for Materials Research and a [CREST CREAM](#) scholar, advisor **Dr. Messaoud Bahoura**, successfully defended her dissertation on September 9, 2023. The title of her dissertation was “Single Layer & Superlattice Approach of Transparent Conducting Oxide-Based Channel Materials for Thin Film Transistor Applications.” Dr. Yarbrough published eight peer-reviewed journal articles and presented her research at over a dozen national and international conferences where she won multiple awards. Dr. Yarbrough accepted a leadership position with Northrup Grumman.

- **Sondai Riddick**, a chemistry undergraduate student and [CREST CREAM](#) scholar, advisor **Dr. Messaoud Bahoura**, presented her research titled “Fabrication and Optimization of Iron Pyrite (FeS2) Cathodes for Lithium-Ion Batteries” as a poster at the ACS FALL 2023, Harnessing the Power of Data, San Francisco, CA & Hybrid, August 13-17, 2023. Ms. Riddick was also supported to present her work at the NOBCCChE's 50th Annual Meeting, September 11-14, 2023, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

- **Chevel Samuels**, a chemistry undergraduate student and [CREST CREAM](#) scholar, advisor **Dr. Messaoud Bahoura**, submitted her research titled “Optimization of the Fabrication of Pyrite Cathode Through the Sulfurization of Steel Spacers” to the 2024 Emerging Researchers National (ERN) Conference in STEM, in Washington, D.C., on March 14-16th, 2024.

- **Ayodeji Aderin**, an engineering undergraduate student and [CREST CREAM](#) scholar, advisor **Dr. Messaoud Bahoura**, submitted his research titled “Gallium Doped Zinc Oxide (GZO) Films for Defroster Applications” to the 2024 Emerging Researchers National (ERN) Conference in STEM, in Washington, D.C., on March 14-16th, 2024.

- **Five Chemistry professors**, **Dr. Suely Black**, **Dr. Carl Bonner**, **Dr. Tanya David**, **Dr. Aliecia McClain**, and **Dr. George Miller**, and nine NSU undergraduate and graduate students traveled to New Orleans to present their research results, judge poster presentations, and represent Norfolk State University during the 50th anniversary celebration of [NOBCChE](#). In the picture, they are joined by NSU NoVEL Consortium collaborators from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and by NoVEL participating students from Virginia State University.

- **Jill Comess**, DHSc, MS, RDN, Food Science and Nutrition Program Director and Instructor with Norfolk State University’s undergraduate Food Science and Nutrition Program Concentration and Department of Nursing and Allied Health had an article published in the July 2023 Journal of *Topics in Clinical Nutrition* titled “Introduction to the Gut Microbiome and Its Impact on Health and Disease.”
From the Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work

The School is proud to announce the reaffirmation of accreditation of the BSW and MSW Programs by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The program faculty prepared self-study documents, and a site visit was conducted in February 2023 with students, administrators, faculty, advisory board members, and constituents. The next accreditation review cycle will take place in June 2030. To find out more, visit CSWE’s website: BOA Decisions | CSWE.

Social Work faculty were featured presenters at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting on October 26-29 in Atlanta, Georgia. The following faculty contributed to panel or poster presentations:

- Dr. Colita Fairfax, “Anti-Blackness and the Black Intellectual Genealogical Praxis Tradition”
- Dr. Kirsten Ericksen and Dr. Breshell Jackson-Nevels, “Overcoming Imposter Syndrome for Women of Color in University: A Holistic Student Success” (E-Poster)
- Dr. Insoo Chung, Dr. Dianne Davis-Wagner, Dr. Kirsten S. Ericksen, Gardenella Green, and Dr. Breshell Jackson Nevels, “An HBCU Examination: Flourishing and Psychological Well-Being of College Students During a Pandemic” (E-Poster)
- Dr. Stephenie Howard, “Faculty Review Process: Recommendations for Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Faculty of Color”

Drs. Alston, Riddick, and Vaughan-Eden also participated on councils and attended conference sessions.

Dr. Sandra Williamson-Ashe presented on “Othermothering to Belongingness for HBCU College Student Success” at the Black Doctoral Network on October 19-21 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Marilyn Lewis and Dr. Liyun Wu published a new book STEM-H for Mental Health Clinicians (Oxford University Press).

Student/Alumni Spotlights

Ms. Helen Merriweather, a second year MSW Student, is the inaugural John G. Hatcher Fellow, in the School of Social Work. Ms. Merriweather will receive a $2500 award and her research will focus on re-entry and recidivism rates in the City of Portsmouth, VA. This award honors and celebrates the life work of Mr. John G. Hatcher, Jr., who faithfully served the city of Portsmouth through his altruistic work for 48 years as the Executive Director of Wesley Community Service Center.

Mr. Shaka Smith, a second year MSW Student, participated in a student panel during the National Association of Social Workers Pioneers Event in Washington, DC, on October 14, 2023.

Dr. Yvonne Elder Chase, a graduate of NSU’s Social Work Doctoral Program, was installed as president of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world.
From the College of Liberal Arts

Faculty, staff, and students in the Department of Mass Communications & Journalism have created a YouTube channel to promote the accomplishments of the department. The following videos highlight some of MCJR’s accomplishments during the Fall semester:

- October 2023 News & Notes
- September 2023 News & Notes
- MCJR Homecoming
- New MCJR promotional video
- You can also find more of MCJR’s accomplishments by following them on Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/mcjrnsu) and Twitter (https://twitter.com/mcjrnsu).

Dr. Désiré Baloubi, Professor in the Department of English & Foreign Languages, contributed a book chapter titled “Language Policy in Benin and Rights to Education in Local Mother Tongues” in the forthcoming book The Palgrave Handbook of Language Policies in Africa, edited by Esther Mukewa Lisanza. Dr. Baloubi also delivered a keynote address titled “Sharing My Research Experience: From Topic Selection to Results” at the Graduate Studies Colloquium, November 2-3, at the University of Abomey-Calavi, Benin, online. The colloquium central theme was “Principles and Ethics of Research in Letters and Human Sciences: Need for a Re-examination of Methodologies.” Additionally, Dr. Baloubi earned a certificate after successfully completing a seven-week online course in Global Diplomacy: The United Nations in the World from SOAS University of London on November 5, 2023.

Dr. Jennifer Malia, Professor in the Department of English & Foreign Languages, published two children’s books: Nick and the Brick Builder Challenge (Book 1: The Infinity Rainbow Club) and Violet and the Jurassic Land Exhibit (Book 2: The Infinity Rainbow Club), both illustrated by Peter Francis and published by Beaming Books in September and October, 2023, respectively.

Dr. Christina Pinkston, Associate Professor in the Department of English & Foreign Languages, was featured in an article titled “Dr. Pinkston’s Passion for Teaching” in the NSU Spartan Echo (Fall 2023). To read the article on page 10 of the Spartan Echo, click here.

From the School of Graduate Studies & Research

Dr. Desi S. Hacker was appointed to the Membership Committee of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools, a regional organization for graduate schools that serves over 200 institutions whose purpose is to support these institutions and address issues impacting education and research.

- Four graduate students were selected as GEM Fellows: Bernard Boston, Anwar Elias, Mark Swift, and Ashleigh Wilson. The GEM Fellowship Program’s mission is “to enhance the value of the nation’s human capital by increasing the participation of underrepresented groups at the master’s and doctoral level in engineering and science.” The program also “provides access to top Engineering and Science firms and focuses on opportunities for students to enter industry at the graduate level in areas of research and development, product development and other high level technical careers.” Pictured on the left is Bernard Boston and pictured on the right is Mark Swift.
From the Robert C. Nusbaum Honors College

- Sa'Miya McGowan, class of 2027 political science major, was awarded the Public Children Services Association of Ohio Leader of Tomorrow.

- Amaiya Griffin, class of 2027 business major, was awarded a TMCF scholarship for $10,000.

- Nina Collymore, class of 24 business major, is the current Student Government Association Vice-President.

- Nia Grant, class of 2024 elementary education major, was awarded the esteemed Dr. Freddye T. Davy Humanitarian & Service Award at the National Association for African American Honors Programs Conference in Baton Rouge, LA.

- Maqoi Hubbard, class of 2024 elementary education major, and Nia Grant, president of the RCNHC Student Association, attended and presented an oral presentation on literacy loss in Virginia at the National Association for African American Honors Programs Conference in Baton Rouge, LA.

- Jordan D. Moody, class of 2024 history education major, was selected as the White House Initiatives 2023-2024 HBCU Scholar. Watch an interview with Mr. Moody here.

- Jordan D. Moody, president of NSU’s Panhellenic Council, attended and served as a premiere student moderator at the National Collegiate Honors Council conference in Chicago, IL.

- Jennifer Mitchell, class of 2024 fine arts major, served as a mural artist showcased at the MacArthur Center in Norfolk.

- Ta’Nijah Taylor, class of 2024 psychology major, presented with RCN Honors College Senior Faculty Fellow Dr. Erica Russell at the HBCU Faculty Development Network Conference in Houston, TX.

- Mrs. Kiara Hacker, Academic & Professional Enrichment Coordinator in RCNHC, completed an ACUE Credential: Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Online Learning Environment. Mrs. Hacker was also nominated as an honorary member for the Golden Key International Honour Society. She will be inducted November 2023.

- The November 18, 2023, home football game shares the honor to be RCNHC Football game day. Newly appointed RCN Honors College Senior Fellows will be recognized as honorary game day coaches: Dr. Leonard Brown, VP for Student Affairs; Dr. Andrea Neal, AVP for Academic Engagement; Dr. Erica Russell, Associate Professor of Psychology; Dr. Ronald White, Assistant Professor, Spartan TEACH, School of Education; Dr. Ernestine A. W. Duncan, Professor of Psychology & Faculty Ombuds; Dr. Dmitri Gaston, Community Fellow; Mrs. Michelle Ellis Young, CEO, YWCA-SHR, Community Fellow; and Dr. James Savage, alum.

- The RCNHC is an official Toys for Tots site as part of its community service efforts, November 8–December 8, 2023. Unwrapped new toys may be dropped off to their suite, Brown Hall 236.
From the Office of Academic Effectiveness

♦ The Office of Academic Effectiveness guided the approval of two new degree programs, Master of Health Informatics and Master of Public Health, both approved by SCHEV and SACSCOC. For more information on accreditation, click here.

♦ The Office of Academic Effectiveness conducted two workshops, “Are we Singing from the Same Tune: Is this a Substantive Change” and “Integrating Feedback to Facilitate Improvement in Planning & Assessment.”

♦ The Office of Academic Effectiveness sponsored A Spoken Word Event: "Word Up" on October 5, 2023, moderated by Lateef Gibson and featured The GYEXP, Milani Asia, and others.

♦ The Office of Academic Effectiveness co-sponsored the hosting of author Ta-Nehisi Coates at the Wilder Center on Oct. 19, 2023. Coates is author of the #1 New York Times bestseller Between the World and Me and winner of the 2015 National Book Award for Nonfiction. Another of his works, The Beautiful Struggle, is being used as the NSU Common Reader for all first-year and transfer students, and as a tool for implementing the University’s Quality Enhancement Plan. The event was covered by WTKR (News Channel 3).

♦ Dr. Shantya Plater presented on substantive changes at the SACSCOC Annual Meeting.

From the Office of Testing Services

♦ Testing Services successfully completed the first SCHEV audit of the University’s credit-by-examination program, completing the project in advance of the July 31, 2023 deadline. On May 25, 2023, the Director was notified by the SCHEV Senior Associate for Assessment Policy & Analysis that in accordance with Virginia Code §23.1-906 and the Virginia Public Higher Education Policy on Course Credit for AP, Cambridge, CLEP, and IB, the NSU audit report was reviewed and found to be “complete and fully compliant with Code and SCHEV policy.”

♦ Testing Services re-launched its marketing campaign to Hampton Roads high schools in October. Staff presented information on Modern State’s NSU FastStart and Freshman Year for Free programs to nineteen Norfolk Public Schools career readiness and guidance counselors and all Portsmouth Public Schools guidance counselors. The primary purpose of the presentations was to market these free resources to secondary school students who would like to get advanced college course credits from NSU, which would allow students to save time and cost in obtaining their college degree.

From the Office of Extended Learning

♦ Live Chat is here. Blackboard support can be done by submitting a ticket, email, phone, and chat. However, the best way to reach the OEL Team is by Live Chat. With a few clicks, you can interact with a member of the OEL Team from anywhere with any device.

♦ Blackboard’s Ultra Course View is available. Please consider using the Ultra Course View. Dr. D’Nita Andrews-Graham, Dr. Audrey Douglas-Cook, Ms. Lee Grandison, Dr. Valencia Ingram, Dr. Dorothy L.R. Jones, Dr. Robin Marable, Dr. Erica Russell, Mrs. Josephine Stanley-Brown, Dr. Felisa Smith, and Dr. AnnCatherine Sullivan are currently teaching with the Ultra Course View. Participation is optional until Fall Semester 2024. Here are some features of Ultra Course View:
  • Get automatic updates actions required.
  • See one streaming content area with a modern look.
  • Hold conversations between you and your students for items in your course.
  • Set accommodations per student that apply to all assessments.
From the Office of Academic Engagement

- **Retention/Graduation Initiative:** During the spring of 2023, academic advisors in the [Dr. Patricia Lynch Stith Student Success Center](#) collaborated in a retention/graduation initiative in an effort to retain and graduate students who had 3-12 hours left to complete graduation requirements. Through the collective efforts of the Student Success Center academic advisors and staff, and with the University covering all costs for this initiative, 65 students attended summer classes to complete graduation requirements. As a result, 54 additional students will be conferred degrees during the December 2023 Commencement Ceremony. The initiative was a great success and had a positive impact on the retention and graduation rate. The initiative will continue during the 2024 spring term.

- **STEM’s First Professional Academic Advisor:** In collaboration with the School of Science, Engineering and Technology, the [Dr. Patricia Lynch Stith Student Success Center](#) has hired its first STEM Professional Academic Advisor to assist with the development, coordination, and implementation of Student Support Services for students majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The advisor will undertake the assignment in phases, servicing junior and senior STEM students majoring in Biology, Health Services Management, Physics, and Mathematics. Using proactive advising techniques with the goal of promoting student success, the advisor will provide area programs with activities to increase retention rates, course completion rates, and graduation rates for program participants.

- **My’Chael Willis** has been elected to the leadership position of Historically Black Colleges & Universities within [NACADA](#) (The Global Community for Academic Advising). Being elected to this leadership position is not only a fine tribute by one’s peers but is also a recognition of significant professional contributions to and excellence in the field of academic advising. Ms. Willis was also selected as a member of the Emerging Leaders Class of 2022-2024. The Emerging Leaders Program provides a structured platform that aims to build an inclusive and sustainable community of strong NACADA leaders.

- **Student Success** is implementing the [Mentor Collective](#) platform, an impact driven mentoring platform that drives connections and engagement, in collaboration with other areas that offer mentoring, such as RCN Honors College and the Undergraduate Research and Mentorship program. This program provides insightful analytics and training to provide more streamlined and robust mentoring experiences for all NSU students.

- In its second cohort, the [Undergraduate Research and Mentorship Program](#) has made an impressive impact, engaging 40 participants equally comprised of faculty and students. Participating students actively collaborate on research projects with their dedicated faculty mentors and demonstrate their commitment through research presentations during the fall and spring semesters, with a culmination at NSU's upcoming spring 2024 RISE conference. Beyond research, the program places significant emphasis on career readiness, fostering a strong sense of community through co-curricular experiences for both faculty and students.

- The [NSU Writing Center](#) has been growing and expanding its services since its reopening in January 2019. From mid-August to mid-October of last year, the Center had 309 appointments and provided services to 1095 students through workshops and events. From mid-August to mid-October of this year, the Center had 501 appointments (62% increase from last year) and provided services to 1102 students.

- The [NSU Writing Center](#) continues to expand partnerships through a new pilot program with the Department of History and Interdisciplinary Studies and an up-and-coming pilot program with the School of Business and the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

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From the Office of Academic Engagement

♦ **Student Parent Initiative:** In 2022, the University entered into a two-year partnership with Generation Hope/Family to further enhance the inclusion efforts, particularly for student parents. Led by **Dr. Andrea Neal**, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Engagement, the NSU team has made significant progress. The first year of the partnership involved assessing where NSU stands, identifying needs, planning for initiatives, and working through Generation Hope’s key components, including culture, policy, data, and people. The second year will be dedicated to implementing the initiatives. One notable achievement was the hiring of a student fellow, **Rickitta Riddick**, who provides valuable support and voice for the challenges that student parents face at NSU. She will receive a $20,000 stipend from Generation Hope. Among other initiatives, NSU has added lactation spaces, worked to create a child-on-campus policy, created a student parent club called “The Village.”

From NSU’s Title III Office

♦ **Dr. Katrina B. Miller** was elected Vice-President of the National Association of HBCU Title III Administrators, Inc. She was installed for a two-year term (2023-2025) during the 2023 National HBCU Week Conference on September 26, 2023.

From the Lyman Beecher Brooks Library

**New Library Website Unveiled:** The Lyman Beecher Brooks Library unveiled a new website on October 13. The new website is the primary online access point for library resources and services for NSU students, faculty, and staff. The web address for the new website is [https://lbbl.nsu.edu/home](https://lbbl.nsu.edu/home).

The new website had been in development since last spring and was designed to address many of the concerns library users had expressed over the years about the former website. The new library website team's goals were to create a better organized, more accessible, and more engaging website. Therefore, the total number of webpages was significantly reduced, links to the most popular resources were given more prominence, and more colorful graphics were added to the website.

The library staff are planning more improvements on the website in the near future, such as providing access to more digitized papers and photos from the Harrison B. Wilson Archives and incorporating a new integrated library system to transform the users’ research experience. For comments, questions, or recommendations regarding the new website, please contact the library at 757-823-9153 or library@nsu.edu.
For Your Calendar

All Classes to be Taught Virtually Following Thanksgiving Break

♦ For Students: In an effort to ease the burden on our students and their families and minimize the spread of viruses during the busiest travel season of the year, all classes will be taught virtually following the Thanksgiving break. Classes will resume on Monday, November 27, in a virtual rather than in-person format. For the majority of classes, students will be able to complete their coursework and final assessments online. However, in exceptional cases due to the nature of the course or discipline where final exams cannot be conducted online, students may be required to return to campus to complete the exams in person. The move is part of NSU’s Culture of Care and is aimed at protecting the health of our community and reducing the financial hardship and stress associated with frequent travel to and from campus that students and their families face with the short turnaround between Thanksgiving break and the end-of-the-semester move-out. During that time, the campus will remain open and all services, such as the library, residence halls, and dining facilities, will be available for students who return to campus.

♦ For Faculty and Staff: The virtual return to campus after Thanksgiving applies to students only. It is not a telework arrangement for employees. After Thanksgiving break, campus will be open and all University operations will resume as normal. Department offices will be open, and all support services will be available for students who come back to campus. Faculty are expected to hold their regular office hours to provide academic support and advisement to students. Work on committees will continue as planned for the remainder of the semester. Faculty are requested to give their students instructions on how their classes will be managed (asynchronous, synchronous, etc.) and what students should do if they encounter any problems.

♦ The Office of Extended Learning will conduct a series of workshops to assist faculty in preparing for virtual learning after Thanksgiving. OEL staff are also available to conduct one-on-one sessions. For more information, click here or check the poster on the right.