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Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm, Dean of the College of Science

By: Elizabeth Grisham

In a previous newsletter, I shared our college is at the heart of Mason's R-1 research success; yet today, I want to highlight a department that led our College's overall credit hour growth for the fall semesters of 2019 and 2020.

Most departments at Mason are reporting growth during this challenging time for higher education in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. As of Friday, September 4, 2020, our college had an overall enrollment of 15,964 students, up 2.6% from last year. Credit hour enrollment has grown as well, up 4.7% from fall 2019 to fall 2020.

Credit hour growth for the fall 2020 semester:

- Chemistry, systems biology, and physics and astronomy as well.
- Science programs are bringing in many new students. Kudos also to our Computational and Data Science instructional growth and creative engagement.

The second biggest growth in the college's history and a leading contributor to the university's fall enrollment growth of 5.3% and an increase of over five thousand credit hours (7.2%) vs prior fall semester. This is a result of our commitment to support creative engagement and instructional excellence.

In the 2020 fall semester, our college generated $32 million for funded research. (This was even the answer to one of the ScienceConnect trivia questions.) Over the past year, we generated the largest share of Mason's research proposals receiving more than $2 million in awards.

In a previous newsletter (underpaid scientists: the case for diversity, equity, and inclusion in science), I expressed my thoughts about the importance of diversity and inclusion in higher education. As the number of credit hours and student enrollment increased this fall, Mason is at the forefront of creating an inclusive environment that celebrates and encourages diversity and inclusion in our academic community.

Let's face it. We are navigating uncharted waters. New leadership within a pandemic that upended our way of thinking, working, and living. This Fall, Mason's College of Science will work hard to ensure we continue to provide the best learning environment possible for our students. We will continue to adapt and think outside the box to ensure we provide our students the best possible learning experience.

The Mason Science Community will work diligently to provide a safe and healthy environment for our students and faculty. We are working hard to ensure that we continue to prioritize the health and safety of our community.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility as we navigate these times. I am confident that our commitment to excellence in education will continue to shine through these circumstances.

Thought Leadership

Mason President and Science Dean Announce Their Commitment to Supporting Mason Building Initiative

Mason President and Science Dean Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm today announced their commitment to supporting Mason Building Initiative and the Mason University Foundation.

"Mason is a leader in research and innovation. As we work to support the Mason Building Initiative, we will continue to prioritize the health and safety of our community," said President Gregory Washington. "We are committed to supporting the Mason University Foundation and their efforts to ensure the success of our students and faculty.

"Mason's mission is to provide a world-class educational experience that prepares our students for the global marketplace," said Dean Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm. "We are committed to supporting our students and faculty in their efforts to achieve excellence in research and education."