



Did The Role & Experience of a Faculty Member Change Over The Years?

I started my career as a faculty member in January of 1997 at Tennessee Technological University, a comprehensive institution that serves a rural area in middle Tennessee. I stepped into the classroom right out of graduate school with no formal training in teaching or advising. I do not recall having dedicated resources available for preparing me to be in the classroom. There was informal mentoring of my colleagues and the department chair, and the feedback I received from the students through a very detailed "Student Evaluation" process. I hope that the introduction of the Center for Teaching and Learning at CSU Pueblo, the Faculty Academy, and the faculty development grants available through the Provost's Office provide our faculty with pathways to enhanced preparation that relates to effective teaching and advising. Still, I am sure there is more that we can do in that regard.

My department, at the time, had a very active advisory board comprised of alumni who came from all over the country. They were supportive and eager to share how they felt about the changes we needed to make to our curriculum. Although change has always been a difficult endeavor,

adapting the curriculum to students and market needs was one of my favorite things to do. Along with colleagues from various departments, I applied for grants from federal agencies to support curricular innovations and experiential learning activities. At CSU Pueblo, we have successfully attracted funding to support similar endeavors in several academic areas.

Recruiting and marketing our department and our innovations to the public was most successful through programs aimed at K-12 students and in-service and pre-service teachers. One such program was "Research Experience for Teachers" that provided immersive research experience for teachers over the summer. Afterward, teachers created learning modules to take back to their students during the academic year. Nowadays, social media provides venues for marketing and recruiting, but I believe the most impactful ways still require personal interactions with K-12 and community college students and teachers.

Many similarities still exist between my own experience as a faculty member and my view of the role faculty members play at this point. However, higher education has changed a great deal over the past 20 years with increased competition, reduced state funding and more emphasis on the student experience and student success. As you reflect on your journey as a faculty member, do you believe the role of a faculty member has changed over the past few decades? Please feel free to share your thoughts with us at ProvostOffice@CSUPueblo.edu!

-Mohamed Abdelrahman

Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

FACULTY RECOGNITION

Michael Wakefield, a professor of Management in the Hasan School of Business organized the Pueblo Economic Forum, which was cosponsored by US Bank. Held on Oct. 15, the Pueblo Economic Forum focused on the economic recovery of



the city following the pandemic. Wakefield joined Nick Sly, Denver Branch executive at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City as the keynote speakers for the event.

Wakefield is also the Director of the Thomas V. Healy Center for Economics and Business Research Services. He presented research conducted by students: Dante Bartolo, Nicole Buttram, Matthew Cain, Brooklyn Micheli, Meredith Moose, Zachary Maguire, Lorenzo Trujillo and Monica Hernandez-Comparan. These students surveyed local businesses and found a way to help make a positive economic forecast for the future, based on current trends and demographics. They also researched what employers are looking for in employees including a better work ethic and soft skills. It also focused on how Pueblo's lower cost of living and continued growth through migration pose an opportunity for growth for employers. "The optimism expressed in this year's business sentiment survey reflects the resilience and strength of Pueblo residents," Wakefield said. "While we recognize we have some challenges to work through as a community, the attitudes expressed by business owners and community leaders demonstrate there is a commitment to improving Pueblo. It is especially gratifying to have the work conducted by student Healy Fellows, recognized at the event."

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

CSU Pueblo alum Jose Vigil published his first peer-reviewed article. This article, "Functional Restoration Following Global Cerebral Ischemia in Juvenile Mice Following Inhibition of Transient Receptor Potential M2

(TRPM2) ION Channels, was released on Oct. 6." Vigil graduated with his Bachelors from CSU Pueblo in 2016 and his Masters in 2019. He is now a Ph.D. student at the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Campus. A neuroscience researcher, Vigil's paper and current research focuses on the regeneration of brain function, specifically following periods of oxygen deprivation, including strokes. Vigil's research shows that blocking a certain molecule receptor can help restore brain function in stroke victims. Vigil's love of research developed at CSU Pueblo when he was an undergraduate student working with Jeff Smith, while majoring in Cellular Microbiology. "One of the main things that was stressed in the program was the scientific method, which was really helpful to me in designing experiments and writing grants," Vigil said. Thanks to his time at CSU Pueblo and his love of research, Vigil hopes to continue his research and achieve a career in academia once he accomplishes his Ph.D. "Initially, I went to CSU Pueblo because it was local," Vigil said. "As I progressed I realized how interesting research was and how little we knew about the brain." Vigil continues to conduct research on the cerebellum and hopes to have a second article published in the near future.



EVENTS

11/3: Testing Center Open House (11 a.m.)

11/10: Distinguished University Professor Webinar with Dr. Alegria Ribadeneira
(5:30-7:30 p.m.) Zoom Link: <https://csupueblo.zoom.us/j/99010024616>

11/18: Math Day

PROVOST'S OPEN OFFICE HOURS

11/3: CHASS / 3-4pm / **GCB 110**

12/7: STEM / 9:30-10:30am / **CHEM 104**



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