



October 28, 2016

AST Appoints Acting Academic Dean

I am very pleased to tell you that Rev. Dr. Robert Fennell will be AST's Academic Dean in an acting capacity from January 1 to June 30, 2017. As Acting Academic Dean, Rob will be fully engaged in the role, providing strategic leadership to our academic programs and sharing in the overall leadership of the university as a member of the senior leadership team.

During the six-month period of Rob's appointment as Acting Academic Dean I will be conducting a review of the Dean's job description and compensation package. The position has not been reviewed since 2010, and it is time to bring it up to date.

Rob's experience and leadership qualities are an excellent fit for this role. In his previous roles as faculty and in congregational ministry, Rob has demonstrated outstanding administrative, planning and implementation skills. He has a strong commitment to AST, and puts a high priority on the quality of our student experience. Those who have had the pleasure of working closely with Rob know that he is collaborative and consultative, and balances that orientation with the ability to make and act on decisions.

Rob has taught at AST for the past ten years and is well-recognized for his dedication to academic excellence. He has been a leader and innovator in new models of teaching and learning, and in the development of new programs and pathways at AST.

In July and August 2017, Rob will be completing his planned sabbatical leave and taking vacation.

I am also pleased to tell you that from November 1 to December 31, 2016, Rev. Dr. David MacLachlan will be Interim Academic Dean. As a former Dean at AST, David has a deep understanding of this role and will be able to step into it quickly and effectively. I appreciate his willingness to serve in this interim capacity.

I want to express my gratitude to the Search Committee for their insights, wisdom and prayers on this important matter. The committee was made up of students, faculty and senior leadership team members, and together demonstrated the leadership we hope to model and enable at AST.

AST is blessed with visionary and collaborative academic leaders, with Rev. Dr. Rob Fennell and Rev. Dr. David MacLachlan as two obvious examples of this. Please join with me in expressing our congratulations and thanks to them both.

Rev. Neale Bennet
President

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