

8-12-2015

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Public Affairs, Roger Williams University

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### Recommended Citation

Public Affairs, Roger Williams University, "New Associate Provost to Lead Student Academic Success, Teaching & Learning Centers" (2015). *Featured News Story*. 506.  
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# New Associate Provost to Lead Student Academic Success, Teaching & Learning Centers

With expertise in teaching, scholarship, experiential education and more, Robert E. Shea, Ph.D., will oversee a range of faculty development and student support efforts



August 12, 2015 | Public Affairs Staff

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – Roger Williams University has named educator Robert E. Shea, Ph.D., associate provost for the advancement of teaching and learning, a role in which he will lead the creation of a Center for Teaching and Learning, oversee the Center for Student Academic Success and Career Center, and provide support for academic programs that cross academic divisions.

Shea comes to Roger Williams from Bryant University in Smithfield, R.I., where he has worked since 2011 in the roles of assistant vice president for teaching and learning and director of faculty development. He had oversight for Bryant’s academic center for excellence, writing center, ESL programming, disability services, peer tutoring, undergraduate advising and more.

Shea began his new role on July 15. His appointment concludes a search initiated last winter and conducted by a search committee comprising faculty and administrators, co-chaired by Vice Provost Robert Cole and Assistant Professor of American Studies Laura D’Amore.

He says the University's work in creating a new position designed to provide high-touch support for students as well as quality professional development opportunities for faculty and staff interested him. The growing emphasis on experiential, project-based learning at Roger Williams was a major factor as well.

"I started as a faculty member in sociology at Pine Manor College integrating service learning and community-based experiences into my teaching," Shea says. "Experiential education is where my heart is – and it's really been my pathway into faculty development. Student and faculty engagement in the community is something that attracted me to RWU, and in less than two weeks, I'm already pleasantly surprised about how much of this work is going on here."

Shea brings a strong background in faculty development, assessment, community-based research and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Among a variety of responsibilities at RWU, he will work collaboratively with other departments on student retention strategies, provide leadership for pedagogical development of faculty and support the development of faculty learning communities, online resources for pedagogy, new faculty orientation and training.

He will also oversee interdisciplinary programs, including the honors program, and will be charged with reimagining the career services function of the University and coordinating it with other advising services.

Prior to his appointment at Bryant in 2011, Shea worked with faculty at the University of Rhode Island to increase student learning and success, serving the university in two capacities: as the director of the office of student learning, outcomes assessment and accreditation; and as the assistant director of the instructional development program.

Previously, Shea held the position of dean of the first-year experience at Pine Manor College in Chestnut Hill, Mass. He also served as the director of faculty and leadership curriculum development at PMC's center for inclusive leadership and social responsibility. In addition, he was an associate professor of sociology.

With a bachelor's degree in sociology earned in 1987 from Brown University, Shea holds both master's and doctoral degrees in sociology from the University of Virginia.