

Veronique Tran, Ph.D., hired as new Vice President of Instruction

Visionary servant leader brings 15 years of experience and strong STEM background to role

BAYTOWN, TX — Lee College has named Dr. Veronique V. Tran, a visionary higher education professional with more than 15 years of leadership experience at public and private institutions, as its new Vice President of Instruction. Following a unanimous vote of approval in May from the Lee College Board of Regents, Tran's appointment to the position will be effective June 1.

Tran comes to Lee College from Lone Star College – University Park in northwest Houston, where she currently serves as founding dean of the Division of Math and Sciences. In that role, she has successfully led the division through a period of record 32-percent campus enrollment growth largely attributed to strategic expansion of hybrid, online, tele-learning and dual-credit offerings. She led the instructional team that designed the 50,000-square-foot Center for Science and Innovation that will open this fall, and has received the Ignite! Innovation Award, Chancellor's Faculty Technology Innovation Teaching Grant and numerous Campus Technology Advisory Council Grants. She also regularly presents at conferences on topics such as data analytics, technology tools, faculty engagement and transformational change.

Known as a servant leader who supports faculty and staff and encourages them to continually innovate and enhance the quality of their teaching and programs, Tran has held key leadership positions in academic and faculty affairs at Rice University and the University of Houston. She has developed and led campus-wide initiatives to enhance student success and applied her accreditation expertise as a change management consultant for several institutions. Further, she has implemented various high-impact practices, such as helping faculty integrate inquiry-based learning in the curriculum and mentor undergraduate researchers.

Tran also has interest in service learning and civic engagement, global learning, promoting study abroad and supporting international students. She formalized international articulation agreements between universities in Vietnam and UH for programs in Business and Hotel and Restaurant Management, and co-developed a program that promotes cross-cultural understanding among college students. She has served on national review panels for the Boren and Gilman study abroad scholarships and the National Science Foundation. A longtime advocate for women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) who is frequently invited to speak and host outreach activities for middle- and high-school students, Tran enjoys integrating the arts into STEM. As a former engineer and biomedical researcher, she brings technical expertise in STEM fields to the Vice President of Instruction position – especially in the oil and gas and health industries.

“We are pleased to welcome Dr. Tran to Lee College and look forward to advancing our 83-year legacy of educational excellence and high-quality teaching and learning under her leadership as Vice President of Instruction,” said Pres. Dr. Dennis Brown. “Throughout her career in higher education, Dr. Tran has shown great skill in devising and implementing effective strategies that will strengthen academic resources and truly address the needs of students and communities we serve. I am confident in her

commitment and ability to help Lee College fulfill the institutional goals outlined in the Vision 2022 Strategic Plan, particularly in preparing and empowering current and future generations of students to successfully navigate their futures.

“I also thank DeDe Griffith for stepping up to take on the responsibilities of the Vice President of Instruction position in an interim capacity while the national search was conducted,” Brown said.

After immigrating with her family to the United States at the end of the Vietnam War through the refugee program, Tran and her sister became the first in their family to graduate from high school and attend college. She began her collegiate journey at North Harris Community College before continuing on to UH, and worked four years as an upstream facilities engineer for Shell Western Exploration & Production, Inc., upon receiving her bachelor’s degree in Chemical Engineering in 1991. Tran then attended graduate school at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas and the University of Texas at Arlington, where she earned a doctorate in Biomedical Engineering in 2002 and pursued research interests that included development of a bio-artificial pancreas for Type 1 diabetes treatment and biodegradable polymers for drug delivery. She completed postdoctoral studies at Yale University and returned to her alma mater in 2004 to help build the Biomedical Engineering program at UH. She subsequently took on leadership roles at Rice University and UH, serving as director of the Quality Enhancement Plan, founding coordinator of the Tier One Scholars Program and adviser for nationally competitive study abroad scholarships before becoming a founding dean at Lone Star College – University Park. She now resides in League City with her husband, Tim, and their two teenage sons.

“During my visit to Lee College, I felt a kindred spirit with faculty and staff who share my passion for serving students,” Tran said. “I look forward to collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to expand our dual-credit and academic transfer course offerings. I am most excited about partnering with local school districts, universities, community organizations and industries in the Gulf Coast region to open new opportunities for our students. I envision our students engaging in enriching freshman and sophomore experiences that will open doors and help them find their path, whether it be joining the workforce or pursuing advanced degrees.”