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ISU Special Announcement

Friday, May 12, 2017

Dean named for College of Arts and Sciences



Indiana State University officials have named an accomplished -- and locally known -- educator and leader to serve as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Christopher Olsen has been a member of the Indiana State faculty since 1999 and has served as chair of the history department from 2002 to 2016, when he was selected as interim dean of the college.

Olsen has published and presented numerous academic articles, books and book chapters, served on an array of panels and provided invaluable institutional service at State and for his discipline.

"We're so fortunate to have Chris as the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. He has more than 15 years' experience in higher ed leadership and university service," said Mike Licari, provost and vice president of academic affairs at Indiana State. "And after nearly 20 years at Indiana State, he's proven his commitment to the university and to Terre Haute."

The university's second-oldest, largest and most academically diverse college, Arts and Sciences employs 370 faculty members, including 177 tenured or tenure-track faculty. More than 3,800 students are enrolled majors in the college, including about 500 students in graduate programs.

"I'm honored to have the chance to help lead the College of Arts and Sciences and very grateful to my CAS colleagues who encouraged and supported me -- and of course to Provost Licari and President Bradley for their confidence in me," Olsen said.

"I've been proud to be at ISU and in the college since 1999, getting to know and work with so many students, the great staff and the world-class scholars and teachers who make up the faculty. They are amazing. It's also great to be in Terre Haute, which we've called home for close to 20 years."

Among Olsen's responsibilities in higher education have been curriculum development, revision and assessment; distance education curriculum development, teaching and assessment; faculty hiring, development and evaluation; graduate education; student advising; multi-disciplinary programs; community engagement and experiential learning; state regulations and external relationships; alumni relations and fundraising.

As interim dean, Olsen led the integration of the Center for Genomic Advocacy and master's of genetic counseling into the college; selection of a new chairperson for multidisciplinary studies; planning of the sesquicentennial dinner and celebration for the college; and completion of new viewbook publication for the college.

"As a faculty member and chair of history, Chris has long been recognized as a leader with a strong commitment to students," said Mark Green, associate vice president of academic affairs. "During this past year, as the interim dean of the college, he demonstrated his ability to lead and address the concerns of students across the entire college. We are excited to have Chris as the new dean of the College of Arts and Sciences."

Olsen earned a Ph.D. in U.S. history from the University of Florida, a master's in U.S. history from the University of Nebraska and a bachelor's in history from North Dakota State University.

The College of Arts and Sciences provides a majority of foundational studies classes (general education) for all undergraduate majors, including those taught in professional areas. The college includes the following departments: art and design, biology, chemistry and physics, communication, criminology and criminal justice, earth and environmental systems, economics, English, history/African and African-American studies, languages, literatures and linguistics, mathematics and computer science, multidisciplinary studies, School of Music, political science, psychology and theater.

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