Message from the Dean

Embracing the Unexpected

As the days grow shorter and prompt us to reflect on the year now drawing to a close, it almost defies belief that so much has happened in the span of a few months. Here at the Gustavson School of Business, we continue to support our faculty and students through this chapter of online learning. The university has announced it will continue with a blend of face-to-face and distance learning through the spring term. This fall, we launched a virtual exchange program in partnership with Kozminski University in Warsaw, Poland, offering a new way to integrate direct international experience into the BCom program, while also aligning with public health guidelines (see p. 5).

This year had several other exciting developments for the school. We received approval to move forward with our new Master of Management offering, a pre-experience master’s degree that is truly the program for these times. In September, we launched our redesigned MBA in Sustainable Innovation. This transformational program prepares students to lead the changes they want to see in the world, through a business curriculum that equips them to respond to the wicked challenges facing society today.

This year also brought an anniversary: the school celebrated 30 years of educating business leaders and advancing meaningful management research. I am grateful for the resilience, community and spirit of innovation that has been so strongly cultivated over the years at the school, and which now enable us to adapt and embrace the challenges of the times.

For many of us in the business school family, it is impossible to speak of the school’s culture and not acknowledge the fundamental contributions made by Dr. Ali Dastmalchian over his many years of service. The school was deeply grieved to acknowledge his passing in August of this year. Ali, who built a thriving MBA program at the school and went on to act as dean from 2002-2012, was a venerable individual, a cornerstone of the school; his innumerable contributions live on in the hearts and actions of the many, many people he influenced.

As this year of unprecedented change nears its end, I reflect on what Gustavson has accomplished by pulling together and I am grateful to be part of such an institution. I wish all our readers remain healthy and well, and I hope you will stay in touch with us as we navigate these unprecedented times as a community.

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