New Provost – David Lee

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Two longtime fixtures in WKU’s Potter College of Arts and Letters are finding themselves in new roles at the university.

Amy Bingham talks to both the new Provost and the new Interim Dean of Potter College in this week’s View from the Hill.

Almost forty years to the day of starting as a history professor at WKU, Dr. David Lee stepped into the role of Provost—the highest academic administrator at a university. That meant the appointment of a new dean for a college that’s celebrating 50 years of existence.

Dr. David Lee \ Provost, V.P. for Academic Affairs

Dr. Larry Snyder \ Interim Dean, Potter College of Arts & Letters

 “In forty years I can’t exactly call it a meteoric rise. Never the less, it’s a tremendous opportunity.”

Dr. David Lee is still adjusting to his new role as University Provost after spending 23 years as the Dean of Potter College of Arts and letters.

 “I’m struck by how little contact I have with students. I’m in a building where no classes are held for the first time in my career and I don’t encounter students in the hallway.”

Lee has passed the torch to longtime Potter College Associate Dean Dr. Larry Snyder.

 “I’ve been assistant dean for twelve years so I’m pretty familiar with the dean’s office. Potter College has been my home since I got here in 1990.

The transitions come as Potter College marks 50 years since the Board of Regents voted to make it a college.

 “It took the name obviously Potter College for Young Ladies which is a small college established here on top of Vinegar Hill even before WKU was here.”

 “Every student that goes through this university, regardless of major, has to come through this college and I like to think we are at the heart of everything that happens around here and I’m proud of that.”

As for his goals for the future as Provost, Dr. Lee says they are virtually the same goals he had when he started his first day of teaching.

 “I think on our best day our focus is on student success. Success in terms of recruiting, having a successful experience and graduating in a timely fashion.”

Just before the start of the semester, Dr. Gordon Emslie announced he was stepping down as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, a position he held for five years. After a brief sabbatical, Emslie will return to teaching in the Ogden College of Science and Engineering.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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