Subject: Task Force on Learning Environment

Creating and fostering an academic environment rooted in respect is an assumed tenet of a highly-ranked university. As the Provost and Chief Academic Officer of Georgia Tech, I am committed to creating a learning environment for our students that not only is conducive to academic success, but also teaches collegiality, civility, and respect. The results of the recent SGA sponsored student experience survey indicate that this commitment is not fully shared by all members of our community, and that troubles me.
To renew our collective commitment and identify avenues to improvement of the culture of civility and respect in our instructional environment, I am appointing a Task Force on the Learning Environment. Dr. Paul Goldbart, Dean of the College of Sciences, and Dr. Bill Wepfer, Chair of the Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering, have agreed to co-chair the task force. You have indicated interest in the task force and I am hereby appointing you as a member of the group.

The Task Force on the Learning Environment is charged to:

1. Analyze the results of the February 2015 SGA/IC student survey in order to assess the nature of academic culture at GT – identifying problems and opportunities.
2. Suggest strategies to increase civility and respect in our academic culture and foster faculty awareness of how to create a positive academic environment.
3. Identify current and suggest new policies, tools, and mechanisms available to school chairs for responding to issues.
4. Craft recommendations for consideration by the Provost, Vice Provosts, Deans, and Vice President for Student Affairs, to include:
   a. Education and awareness programming and/or activities;
   b. Best practices for addressing issues and situations that are counter to a respectful climate; and
   c. Identification of “low-hanging fruit” and quick-win solutions.

To initiate and frame your discussion, enclosed with this memo is a letter from several Georgia Tech students calling for action to improve the academic culture at Georgia Tech.

The Task Force will begin its work immediately with the goal of providing a preliminary report addressing the first two items above by August 31, 2015. The full and final report addressing all four items will be expected by November 30, 2015. During the month of December, a special meeting of the Vice Provosts, Deans, and Vice President for Student Affairs will be held for a TFLE report of the findings and recommendations.

The first TFLE meeting will be held on **Monday, May 18th from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. in College of Sciences Conference Room (2nd floor, Tech Tower)**. In addition, you are invited to attend a meeting of the Deans and Vice Provosts on **Wednesday, May 20th at 1:30 p.m. in the Poole Board Room (Wardlaw)**. At this meeting, Institute Communications will present the results of the student experience survey. If you need parking, other accommodations, or can’t attend these meeting, please contact Robbie Burr (robbie.burr@provost.gatech.edu).

This topic is possibly one of the most critical we will address as an academic community. The thoughtfulness, sensitivity, and value you will bring to the group’s work are appreciated. I look forward to continuing this discussion with you.