

Dr. Liz Frombgen, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College
Thiel College 2017-2022

Liz's energy and enthusiasm for life is one of the first things one notices about her and was certainly what endeared us to her when she came to our campus for her initial interview. Yet Dr. Frombgen has been a steady anchor in her position as VPAA and Dean of the College for the past five years. Over the course of her life, she has also made the transition from Political Science Professor to administrator, which is like traveling to another planet and re-inventing oneself.

Living through the myriad of meetings at Thiel College, whether they be with the Board of Trustees, administration, faculty, staff or students, she has left her mark at each level. To keep her grounded, Liz has remained devoted to meeting with us and enthusiastically sharing her love of research, assessment, and teaching practices with us. To be in her position is to be on a tightrope each day, being pulled in many different directions while maintaining stability and diplomacy. She tirelessly and confidently led the charge to add graduate courses and new undergraduate programs to the College, shepherding all of us through a pandemic with the motivational and often-quoted line of "Make it to May," meeting all of us where we happened to be at various times in our lives—some of us as newcomers, some of us in transition, some of us with life struggles and challenges of our own, always understanding that we were on this journey together and would, indeed, make it safely to the end of another academic year. Thank you also, Liz, for opening your home to us on many enjoyable occasions and welcoming us in your own inimitable way. Behind the scenes, she wrote countless reports and sent them to many constituents whom most of us cannot even imagine. They were required to be analytical, descriptive, well-written, metrics-driven, sometimes with charts and fancy graphics that would position Thiel College in a positive and successful light to Middle States Commissioners, Board members, and other accrediting bodies. We thank her for that gargantuan, unrecognized, yet vitally important, work.

Whether at a Board meeting, faculty meeting, sports event, honorary society induction ceremony, a conference, a classroom, a casual meal, in this administrative position, one is always "on"—watched, observed, and evaluated. It takes a person willing to navigate all situations to be the VPAA, and we congratulate Dr. Frombgen on her success in juggling these tasks with sprezzatura: grace under pressure.

Liz, we thank you for being the faithful lighthouse keeper of academic integrity each day of your time with us, and we wish you well in this next part of your life's journey. May this next transition be favorable to you and to Doug as you both begin a new chapter of what we hope will contain all the ingredients of a successful story: compelling characters, a mesmerizing plot, and, as the people in Kansas say, "Kansas is indispensable to the joy, the inspiration, and the improvement of the world." Kansas, your chances of realizing this quote have risen exponentially with the impending arrival of our VPAA and the next President of Southwestern College: President Liz Frombgen. All good fortune always!