



# THIEL COLLEGE

Office of the President

Phone: 1 (800) 24-THIEL

[www.thiel.edu](http://www.thiel.edu)

---

TO: Campus Community

FROM: President Traverso

DATE: August 16, 2024

RE: Opening of the Fall Semester

The campus is coming alive as more undergraduates arrive for the fall semester. It's been a full summer with graduate programs, conferences hosting groups, and construction projects underway. I want to thank everyone who made the summer so successful, from the ITS staff who supported the upgrading of the campus Wi-Fi to the Enrollment Team (Admissions and Financial Aid) who, together with Athletics, recruited a terrific group of new students, to Facilities who take such good care for our physical plant, to the faculty and staff in the Excel program who welcomed students early to campus, and to everyone in our community who advanced the College over the summer months.

On Monday, we'll meet as a campus community to kick off the fall semester, and I look forward to seeing many of the members of our community who have been away from campus over the summer months. The retreat will be an opportunity to meet new faculty and staff and to recognize employees celebrating milestones in years of service. As shared earlier, Chairman of the Board, Rod Wilt, has volunteered to facilitate a series of fast-paced discussions of several strategic topics and activities. Using a format he developed for the Penn-Northwest Economic Summit, he will engage in conversations and ideas as we all learn more about programs and new ideas on campus.

## **Enrollment**

As we kick off the fall semester, I am pleased to report that we have had a good year recruiting new students to Thiel. Despite the disruption in the federal financial aid process, we were successful in attracting a strong group of new graduate and undergraduate students to Thiel. The number of new undergraduates will continue to shift as we move into the fall semester, but enrollment is currently above the budget assumptions, with 245 first-years; 30 new transfers, and 6 international students. With a substantially larger number of applications this past year, we were aiming to reach the enrollment goal (10 percent above the budget assumption), but delays in federal financial aid data as well as a more regionally diverse applicant pool resulted in deposits closer to the budget assumptions than enrollment goals. Still, in a challenging enrollment environment, we are pleased to be welcoming a solid number of undergraduates, all excited about going to college at Thiel.

Graduate enrollment both new and total is also above the budget assumptions, with 12 MBA; 34 new PA; and 18 new SLP students. Together with enrolled graduate students, these new students bring Thiel's total graduate enrollment to 112 against a budget assumption of 100. We will continue to set ambitious enrollment goals as we strive to attract an even larger number of new students to Thiel.

As we monitor the number of returning undergraduates, we see signs of another good retention year. I want to thank the Financial Clearance Working Group for supporting students and families as they make financial arrangements for the fall semester. Over 85 percent of undergraduates have been financially cleared as of August 14. This is transformative work compared to just four years ago when only 68 percent of undergraduates were financially cleared at approximately the same time in August 2020.

### **Academic Programs**

There is a lot of excitement about the launch of two new degrees: B.S. in Health Care Administration and B.A. in Media Communications. These new degree programs build on strengths in our academic programs and open new career opportunities for our students. Thiel's BS-Nursing program will graduate its first cohort of students in the coming academic year, and we are working through the challenge of Sharon Regional's re-organization. I want to express special thanks to Vice President Greg Butcher and Nicole Olshanski who directs Thiel's Nursing program for their diligence over the summer in finding a pathway forward with Nursing.

### **Campus Investments**

The renovations in the Spence Academic Center are well underway. These improvements will bring a fresh look to the main entrance, lobby and lower level, create a new simulation classroom for PA and Nursing, and provide a new suite of offices for the Nursing program. We were able to extend the improvements this summer to include a new doorway to the Langenheim Memorial Library as well. Work on these renovations will continue through the fall semester with traffic patterns somewhat disrupted until the project is completed. In the next phase of renovations, scheduled for summer 2025, we will create a new home for Business and Accounting on the first floor of the building. Funded generously by alumni and friends of the College and with the naming gift from Dan Spence, the renovation of the academic center is a strategic investment in the College.

In addition to the Spence Center, the College also received support to fund the replacement of the turf field and enhancements at the Stamm Track and Field Complex. These investments in our outdoor athletic facilities are important to the College's robust varsity programs as well as for the larger Greenville community who benefit from the use of these outstanding facilities.

Finally, I am pleased to report that the College successfully upgraded Wi-Fi across campus. Installing new equipment in and around buildings will improve instruction and the experience of students on campus. This improvement is part of a larger Technology Strategic Plan developed with the assistance of trustee, Maggie Norris, which will guide technology investments over the next three years.

### **Go Tomcats!**

I hope this update captures the sense of optimism and excitement there is as the fall semester begins. Thiel enjoys the support of a strong Board of Trustees and a network of alumni who believe in the College. All of us are stewards of this College. As we welcome new students and launch a new academic year, we have the opportunity to commit again to advance student learning and the life of the College.