

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

December 17, 2020

Michael Soto of Trinity University in Texas will be Point Park University's next Provost

PITTSBURGH, PA – Michael Soto, Ph.D., has been selected as Point Park University's next Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs after an exhaustive, nationwide search.

Soto is currently Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs: Student Academic Issues and Retention, at Trinity University in San Antonio. He also is a professor of English.

"Michael has a clear sense of where higher education is going now that the pandemic has accelerated the pace of change," said Paul Hennigan, President of Point Park University, who will retire after the spring 2021 semester. "He will work well with a new president and an existing strong group of academic leaders at Point Park to forge a new vision and strategic plan for Point Park."

Soto grew up on the Texas-Mexico border and returned to South Texas after pursuing his studies at Harvard University and Stanford University. He is the author of six books and numerous articles on 20th century American literature and cultural history. His research and the courses that he teaches begin with the premise that a full understanding of our rich and diverse cultures -- literary and otherwise -- best informs contemporary American studies. He is presently working on a study of the urban/suburban divide in U.S. intellectual and cultural history.

In his Associate Vice President role at Trinity University, Soto is responsible for enhancing the student academic experience and offering strategies to improve student retention. In this capacity, he develops, manages and assesses the University's comprehensive action plan to improve the retention of undergraduate students. He coordinates first-year student academic advising and adviser training; the Reading TUgether common reading program; the work of the Academic Honor Council and the Academic Honor Code; academic programs for New Student Orientation; Honors Awards Convocation, and the work of the major scholarships and fellowships committee. Soto receives student complaints regarding academic issues, including grade appeals and exceptions to academic policy.

"My career speaks volumes about the transformational impact of higher education," Soto said. "I've been privileged to mature from a first-generation college student to a scholar of American literature and a university administrator, and I look forward to providing similar, life-transforming opportunities to Point Park University students. I'm excited to make Point Park and Downtown Pittsburgh my next intellectual home."

Soto is expected to take on his new role in June. He replaces John H. Pearson, Ph.D., who came to Point Park in June 2016 and made the decision to retire after the spring 2021 semester.

Contact: Lou Corsaro
Point Park University
lcorsaro@pointpark.edu
704.860.6186

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Point Park University, immersed in the heart of Downtown Pittsburgh, focuses on student success through innovative experiential learning opportunities. Point Park enrolls approximately 4,000 students in over 100 undergraduate, master's and doctoral programs offered through its Conservatory of Performing Arts, Rowland School of Business, and schools of Arts and Sciences, Communication, and Education. The University's alumni and students represent all 50 states and 34 countries around the world. Visit PointPark.edu to learn more.