



**PACIFICA**  
GRADUATE INSTITUTE

**Institutional Updates**  
**Interim Appointment, Dr. Lorraine Devos-Comby, Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs**

January 19, 2023



Dear Pacifica Colleagues:

I am delighted to share that, effective February 1, 2023, Dr. Loraine Devos-Comby, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Learning, will be stepping into the role of Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs while we prepare to conduct a national search to select a permanent appointment to that position. On behalf of the Pacifica community, let me extend sincere appreciation to Dr. Peter M. Rojcewicz for his service as Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

over the previous three years. In the coming weeks, I will share details of Dr. Peter's continued contributions to the Pacifica community.

Dr. Devos-Comby joined Pacifica Graduate Institute in 2022 with a tremendous track record of leadership in educational research, institutional effectiveness in higher education, and deep expertise in shared governance, mentorship, and continuous process improvement. Dr. Devos-Comby was drawn to Pacifica for its strong sense of community and for the opportunity to greatly impact students and faculty and work with programs at a deep level. Pacifica has offered her the perfect ground for a hands-on and collaborative approach to institutional and academic improvement, providing autonomy and opportunities to work closely with faculty and staff on decision-making. Moreover, depth psychology through Jungian practice seduced her with its holistic and humanistic approach to therapy and personal development and the complexities of modern-world issues.

Since joining the Office of the Provost at Pacifica Graduate Institute, Dr. Devos-Comby has contributed to preparing and participating in the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) Interim Report and review panel while supporting faculty and the executive leadership team with program reviews, reports, and data analysis to support decision-making. Dr. Devos-Comby is admired for her collegiality, her openness to the ideas of others, her ability to bring people together to solve a challenge, her knack for setting others at ease, her sensitivity to faculty concerns, her focus on student achievement, and her work ethic. Her servant leadership style has earned her the respect and trust of her teams and executive leadership at prior institutions and now at Pacifica. Her actions are guided by what is best for the learner community and the institution.

Before Pacifica, she served for almost ten years in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at the University of Arizona Global Campus (formerly Ashford University). As a member of the President's Office, she acquired a strong background in collaborative work with academic leaders, including the Provost, Deans, and Program Chairs of the four Colleges. She also heavily contributed to improving academic effectiveness. She has experience developing and improving processes, notably establishing a process supporting faculty pilot research, collaborating with chairs and the Registrar's office on class size management, and, with Deans, improving the faculty review process. Additionally, she played an oversight role in program review, was active in accreditation efforts, and participated and presented at the American Association of Colleges and Universities Summer Institute on Teaching Best Practices focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. As a member of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council of the University of Arizona Global Campus, she led the development of faculty, staff, and student climate surveys. She also directed a study to identify inequalities stemming from an ethnocentric curriculum. This triggered the systematic review of all courses to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in the curriculum and reduce students' inequalities. In response to the COVID pandemic, she promptly pivoted her team to remote work and continued to serve the institution at large in the same capacity. Moreover, she developed a university-wide needs assessment, which guided the Executive Leadership's response to the health crisis.

Before joining the University of Arizona, Dr. Devos-Comby served as an investigator on several federally funded research grants at the University of Lausanne, Yale University, and San Diego State University. Early in her career, she taught Social Psychology as a lecturer at Yale University. Later, as an Adjunct Faculty at San Diego State University, she mentored doctoral students and served on several doctoral dissertation committees. While working for the Minority Research Infrastructure Program funded by the National Institute of Mental Health at San Diego State University, she advised junior faculty of underrepresented backgrounds on research projects.

Dr. Devos-Comby earned her Ph.D. in Social Sciences from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland. She received the University's Doctoral Dissertation Excellence Award for her dissertation in social psychology, which articulated how social norms guide thought processes and evaluative responses. She has published 15 peer-reviewed articles and seven book contributions in social psychology processes, health behavior and beliefs, and the interplay between the public and private spheres. More recently, her conference

presentations demonstrate an understanding of adult learners and their needs for educational innovations.

Pacifica's unique learning environment of academic excellence and our work greatly influence our learners' dreams, visions, and achievements. I am deeply grateful to Dr. Devos-Comby for accepting this role essential to achieving those objectives. I ask that you offer her your support and assistance as she helps us all to move Pacifica forward, with additional communications around her transition forthcoming, especially to those who work closely with the Offices of the Provost and Institutional Effectiveness and Learning. Finally, I want to thank the executive and faculty leadership team members for sharing their insight over the past few months regarding this critical leadership role.

Please join me in wishing Dr. Devos-Comby the best in this important position.

With appreciation to all and best wishes for staying healthy, safe, and motivated,

**Dr. Leonie H. Mattison, Ed.D., MBA**

*President and CEO*



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