

Tadlock participates in Red Balloon Project

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TNE WRITER

Every day things are changing at NSU, and during this past summer one change that occurred was the Red Balloon Project.

At the summer AASCU provosts' meeting, an invitation to participate was given to Martin Tadlock, provost and vice president of Academic Affairs, by AASCU, and after consulting with President Betz, he agreed to participate.

"What we do with it at NSU is up to us as a collective whole," said Tadlock. "We have a small group of people organized to guide the process of gathering ideas and facilitating dialogue, but that is as far as we are at this point"

Tadlock said the Red Balloon Project is a national initiative housed within the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

"An organization representing over 420 state colleges and universities," said Tadlock. "The Red Balloon Project connects provosts from those institutions to generate ideas, share information, and work together to develop sustainable models for undergraduate education in the U.S."

Tadlock said the traditional university model that most of people are familiar with is not sustainable financially or conceptually for many reasons.

"First, the impact of technology on access to information, global social networking, and on the teaching and learning process has dramatically changed what our parents and grandparents experienced when they went to

school," said Tadlock. "Second, state support for higher education has continually waned, resulting in higher tuition and fee costs to students. Third, education is largely viewed as a commodity and a private good rather than as a public good as in the recent past."

Something that is convenient for NSU is the cost.

"Time invested by those who participate is the only cost right now," said Tadlock. "If ideas come forward that are accepted for implementation, there may be a cost to implement those ideas, at this early stage, but we just don't know what those might be."

There are some things that have been put in place directly stemming from the Red Balloon Project.

"We already have several projects underway that really meet part of the intent of the Red Balloon Project," said Tadlock.

Tadlock said a few projects that directly impact students are implementation of the Wimba Suite into Blackboard so that they can communicate point to multi-point with others; partnership with CIBT to implement a Global Learning Center on the Broken Arrow campus; creation of multiple international opportunities for students; creation of the College of Extended Learning at the Broken Arrow campus; implementation of a new NSU data system and student portal; adoption of an online tutoring service for students; creation of multiple service and community engagement opportunities for students; creation of a facilities plan and a larger investment in campus facilities.

"I believe that we are pulling together a wide array of



Martin Tadlock

transformative projects, generating and implementing creative ideas, and changing NSU in very positive ways," said Tadlock.

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