

Subject: Personal Message from Chancellor Gallo

Dear Falcon Community,

I hope your summer has been a time of rejuvenation. For me, it has been a time of deep reflection, and I write today to tell you that I have made the difficult decision to retire.

My plan since arriving at UW-River Falls always has been to culminate my 30+ year career in higher education with the fulfilling experience of being your chancellor. Over the past weeks and months, I have thought a great deal about you and our students, as well as the important, long-term work that lies ahead for the university. It became clear that the timing was right for me, my family, and the campus, to make this change now. My last day will be September 6.

Being your chancellor has meant a great deal to me. I have appreciated dialoguing and exchanging ideas with you since I joined campus as well as educating the public about our university's enormous value to the city of River Falls, the region, and Wisconsin.

In our three years together, we accomplished so much more than one would have imagined in that time period, such as navigating through the end of the pandemic; launching the construction of the Science and Technology Innovation Center; crafting our strategic plan, academic plan, and strategic enrollment management plan; refreshing our brand and website; opening the state-of-the-art Wuethrich Family/Grassland Dairy Center of Excellence; breaking fundraising records; creating new organizational structures; launching new programs; and working hard on legislative advocacy that has benefitted UW-River Falls like receiving more of the Minnesota tuition reciprocity funds.

We also have faced challenges in this brief time. I am exceedingly proud of how the campus is diligently working to eliminate the structural deficit and the progress we have made to-date toward that goal. Most importantly, throughout all of this, we have continued fulfilling our mission, educating and graduating thousands of students who are advancing their careers and making a positive impact in the world. My engagement with our students has been the highlight of my work at UW-River Falls.

I have the utmost respect for and confidence in all of you who have chosen to dedicate your talents to the university. We also have numerous friends and alumni who support and advocate tirelessly for UW-River Falls. Thank you to everyone who has supported me and this great university. I will cherish memories of my time here, and it is so true that "Once a Falcon, always a Falcon!"

UW President Rothman has been understanding and supportive of my retirement plans. To keep the university's momentum going, he has selected Michael V. Martin, Ph.D. as interim chancellor. I have known Mike since I was an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota in the College of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences, when he was their dean. We became colleagues again at the University of

Florida. Mike went on to be president of New Mexico State University, chancellor of Louisiana State University, chancellor of Colorado State University, and most recently president of the regional public university, Florida Gulf Coast University. More information will be forthcoming soon from President Rothman's team on Mike's appointment. In the weeks ahead, I plan to introduce Mike to the campus and to our community partners.

After September 6, my partner and I will be moving back to Florida and spending more time with family, including our mothers who are 89 and 90. I also hope to travel, write, and volunteer – activities for which I have had limited time in recent years. Until then, I look forward to seeing many of you in person on campus this month and during Opening Week as we work to ensure a smooth transition. Thank you all for your ongoing commitment and Falcon pride.

With gratitude,

Maria Gallo, Ph.D.
Chancellor