**Senate Interview with Dr. Ieva Zake, Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Planning**

CC: Please tell me about your scholarly interests.

My scholarly interests have been evolving over time. I started out being interested in feminist theory and women's movements, mainly in the post-Communist contexts and emerging business organizations. My main topic was sexual harassment in the workplace and how women were not able to talk about or articulate it. They experienced it, but there was no language to address it. Then looking at the post-Communist reality as a whole, I became interested in nationalism and national identity as a driving force in politics. This led me to analyze nationalist ideas among émigrés who left the Baltic region as Communism was advancing after WWII and settled in the US and Western Europe. They became influential in the nationalist post-Communist political movements, and I was interested in their earlier political history as immigrants. That led me analyze the political activism and identity of those who are disconnected from the area that they speak on behalf of – their homeland. Currently I work in two areas - one is the relationship between the American political context and émigrés and so-called white ethnics in the period between the 1950s and 1990s. Specifically I'm looking now into how Gerald Ford either continued or redesigned Republican ethnic politics after Nixon. My second area that I work in now is looking at the Soviet policy in the 1970s and 80s toward Eastern and Central European émigrés. The Soviets looked for ways to use émigré communities for espionage and intelligence gathering. The Soviets spied on the émigrés as much as they tried to recruit these émigrés to be spies for the Soviet Union.

CC: What interested you in the position of Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Planning at TCNJ?

I think this is a fantastic job, and it's an amazing institution. I had heard a lot about TCNJ while working at Rowan. As I was reading the description of this, I noticed that it mentioned all the things that I really liked doing as an associate dean at Rowan. Now I would have an opportunity to do those things on an institutional level. Everything that I found gratifying in my job at Rowan was listed in TCNJ’s job posting and so I decided that I should apply. This was the only job that I applied for, and I'm just so amazed that I'm here. It worked out wonderfully. And I have to mention meeting you at the HERS Institute at Bryn Mawr. When I heard you talk about your institution and how things were shaping up here, it really impressed me as a place that's sincerely focused on student success. And that the College understands how faculty are the best agents to accomplish student success because faculty are here with the desire to work with the students! TCNJ seems to be an institution that is capitalizing on that and doing a great job.

CC: Realizing you have only been here for a few weeks, what do you perceive as your most pressing challenges?

Probably, having to say “no” to certain things as we face budgetary constraints. I find it amazing that TCNJ has managed to be protected from the pressures affecting other institutions. As the state money is disappearing and we are facing the loss of students, other institutions are in a very difficult position. TCNJ so far has not been affected by this too much, but, I am afraid, we will have to face that very soon. And I think I will have to be an agent of that realization to a certain extent. But I just need to figure out a way to do it so that we defend this institution and help it move forward, while we may have to make some hard decisions. So this might be one of my challenges to figure out how to address issues that are inevitable, but do it in a way that does not send a discouraging message and uses the language and ways of communicating that are unique to TCNJ.

CC: What else would you like faculty to know about you?

Well, maybe that I speak three languages. I went through a quite traditional higher-education system, so I think of myself as a sort of classic European intellectual. This is another way in which TCNJ is a good fit for me because of its commitment to intellectual traditions and knowledge. I have 3 kids. They're quite young, so they take up a lot of my time. So finding work and life balance is a challenge for me, as I imagine for all women when they pursue careers.