



SMU

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Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost

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Dear Faculty and Staff:

These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we work to advance the goals of SMU's strategic plan and continue to move SMU forward and upward. If you have suggestions for what we should include in future communications, please send your ideas to this [email address](#). Previous newsletters are available [here](#). Today's update falls into four categories: 1) SMU's Road to R-1, 2) Fall 2020, 3) Spring 2021, and 4) News and Noteworthy.

SMU'S Road to R-1

- **Fiscal Year (FY) 2021–2022 Budget Process** – Between now and the early December budget submission deadline, I will be meeting with Deans and Associate Provosts to review their proposed budgets. These meetings began this week. One of my goals for this year's budget is greater transparency and collaboration across the academic units with clear focus on our 2016–2025 Strategic Plan, BUF Action Plan Responses, *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, and Road to R1. Budget proposals will be reviewed by members of SMU's senior leadership team in January and February with final budget decisions announced in March 2021.
- **Post-award grant PI dashboard** – The Sponsored Projects Dashboard is now available for principal investigators (PIs) through my.SMU. This dashboard, created by the Office of Research and Office of Information Technology provides PIs with a real-time financial picture of their sponsored projects. PI Training, via webinar, took place on November 10, 2020. Additional instructions and a recording of the training are available on the [Sponsored Projects Dashboard Wiki](#).
- **College/school research spotlight** – Congratulations to Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison, Associate Dean for External Programs and Professor of Ministerial Studies in the Perkins School of Theology, for her \$999,975 grant through the Lilly Endowment's [Thriving Congregations Initiative](#).

- **Academic Analytics implementation underway** – As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, accurate and transparent data is of vital importance to inform our priorities and investments on SMU’s Road to R-1. [Academic Analytics](#) is a tool used by many R-1 institutions to identify additional opportunities for faculty funding, honorific awards, and/or collaborations. Last week, we signed a contract with Academic Analytics and will begin implementing the tool for SMU’s use within the next few months as a key way to promote faculty development and success. We will provide additional information regarding training and access in subsequent newsletters.

Fall 2020

- **Campus health and safety update** – You can follow our COVID-19 case trends and specifics with SMU’s [dashboard](#). Our operational level remains in the “moderate” category. Remember that our operational level is reviewed each week, and any necessary updates are posted each Monday afternoon on the [Mustang Strong website](#).
- **November faculty/student survey** – As a reminder, the Provost’s Office will provide a final survey this month so that faculty and students can keep providing feedback as we continue to monitor unfolding circumstances and address issues that the surveys reveal. Be on the lookout for an invitation next week to participate in the November survey.
- **Resource for faculty supporting student learning across time zones** – As a reminder, Dr. Sheri Kunovich, Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success and members of her team have developed this [resource](#) for faculty which focuses on supporting students across time zones – whether teaching fully remotely or through SMUFlex.
- **COVID-19 testing guidance for students returning home at Thanksgiving** – Today, Dr. Randy Jones, Executive Director of Health Services in the Dr. Bob Smith Health Center, sent the following [message](#) to students to provide them with guidance and recommendations when returning home for the Thanksgiving break.

Spring 2021

- **Operations plan and assessment tool progress update** – The [Fall Operations Plan](#) that has guided our campus response this semester will feed into a carefully reviewed and updated operations plan for the spring 2021 semester. SMU’s plan remains on track to release the updated plan to the campus community around Thanksgiving.
- **Spring schedule** – The spring 2021 schedule was released on October 19, and can now be viewed in my.SMU. Faculty please remind your students

that spring enrollment for undergraduates will take place by appointment November 16–20. Open enrollment will continue until the end of the add period.

- **Spring 2021 calendar** – In response to concerns about the current spring 2021 calendar that starts a week late and eliminates spring break, our leadership team of Deans, Associate Provosts and Department Chairs is developing strategies to reduce the potential stressors brought on by a full semester without a break in classes. After reviewing options with our leadership team, Faculty Senate Leadership, and the PEC, we hope to announce any additional mitigation strategies within the next two weeks. We encourage you to continue submitting your ideas to the Mustang Strong websites [spring 2021 suggestion box](#).

News and Noteworthy

- **Mental health support in the time of COVID-19** – As a reminder, SMU has an Employee Assistance Program for all full-time and part-time benefits-eligible faculty/staff and their dependents that offers mental health support assistance and resources. Calls to 1-877-704-5696 are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. EAP information and services can be accessed online at the [Magellan Health Services Website](#), which includes online counseling. See this [website](#) for additional information.
- **Announcing Pedagogical Partner Up grants** – CTE is excited to announce a call for applications for [Partner-Up Grants](#) of \$2,000 for full-time faculty to participate in faculty-led learning pods focused on priority areas that emerged as topics from fall 2020 faculty surveys. Please [apply](#) by Monday, November 30. Recipients will be announced by Friday, December 4.

Sincerely,



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