



Elizabeth G. Lobo, Ph. D.
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost

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Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your interest in, and commitment to, advancing SMU's academic mission. These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we continue with a safe, healthy and productive fall semester. 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 three categories: 1) Fall 2021, 2) Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2021

- **Warm holiday wishes** – On behalf of the Provost's Office team, I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season. For nearly two years now, COVID-19 has brought increased uncertainty and challenges to our campus and to the world around us. Despite these difficulties, and thanks to your sacrifice, flexibility and perseverance, SMU is well-positioned to meet its goals for even greater academic quality in the years ahead. It is an honor and privilege to work alongside you every day as we define and execute SMU's academic strategy.
- **In-depth visit: Dedman School of Law** – One of my goals this fall has been to conduct in-depth, half-day meetings with each of SMU's academic units to review, inform and contextualize our academic quality goals and priorities through 2025 at the local level. My thanks to the faculty and staff in the Dedman School of Law for hosting me this week, and to Dean Jennifer Collins and the members of her office staff who made this week's meetings possible.

- **Commencement on December 18** – [December Commencement](#) will take place at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow, Saturday, December 18, in Moody Coliseum. We anticipate about 550 graduates to participate. SMU Trustee Kelly Hoglund Compton, '79 will be our commencement speaker.

We invite all faculty who are attending the graduation ceremony to join us for a breakfast in the Miller Event Center on Saturday morning at 8:00 am. Please RSVP by sending your name to facultyysuccess@smu.edu.

Doors open at 8:00 a.m. and guests are encouraged to be seated by 8:45 a.m. [Security screening](#) is in place. Guest tickets are not required for this event. Seating is general admission. If the venue reaches capacity, guests will be directed to a simulcast location. The ceremony will also be live streamed at smu.edu/live.

Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence

- **Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 – 2023 Budget Process** – Last week, the Provost's Office team met to review college/school budget requests for FY 2022 – 2023. With low tuition increases projected over the next few years, SMU must reallocate existing resources and establish new funding streams, such as online and professional education programs, to generate the funding that will support our growth.

While we will require additional conversations in the new year before finalizing Academic Affairs' FY 2022 – 2023 budget requests, we have made good progress. Requests from the college, schools, and SMU Libraries, for one-time as well as recurring funds, total approximately \$3.13 M. With continued strong performance this year, most notably in Cox's online MBA, and based on revenue projections in areas such as Intersessions, we anticipate having up to \$5M available in one-time performance-based funding to address Academic Affairs' budget needs. Thanks to the team of Deans and Associate Provosts for their hard work and patience establishing a collaborative set of strategic priorities for academic affairs through the budget process.

- **Preparation for the Dedman School of Law Dean search** – As [announced last week](#), Jennifer Collins, Judge James Noel Dean and Professor in the Dedman School of Law, has accepted an offer to become the next President of Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee on July 1, 2022. Jennifer's presence and contributions will be sorely missed. We are fortunate to retain Jennifer for the spring semester but have considerable work in the days ahead to begin the search for her successor.

- This week's activities: On Monday, I met with Dedman School of Law faculty for a better understanding of their desires and expectations when searching for a new Dean. I hosted a similar meeting with members of the Dedman School of Law's Executive Board to hear their perspectives as well. We have also begun conducting preliminary interviews with search consultants and hope to name our executive search partner within the next few weeks.
- In terms of next steps: We will complete the interview process for executive search firms by early next week and select the best partner to support SMU in the search process. Working over the holiday break, we will identify search committee members with hopes of announcing that group very early in the spring 2022 semester.
- **Simmons faculty member receives largest single-year research award in SMU's history** – Congratulations to Leanne Ketterlin Geller, Professor, and Texas Instruments Endowed Chair in Education in the Simmons School of Education's Department of Education Policy and Leadership, for receiving a nearly \$8M, five-year research award from the US Department of Education (DoE) to enhance instructional practices to meet the high needs of students experiencing math difficulties in grades 4-8.

Professor Ketterlin Geller and a team of three co-PIs from other US institutions are collecting evidence about the efficacy and scalability of an evidence-based intervention focused on fractions for upper elementary and middle school students experiencing difficulty in mathematics.

The \$7.99M award will be processed in total this fiscal year and represents the largest single-year award a SMU faculty member has ever received!

- **Update on key leadership position searches underway**
 - **SMU's Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer** – Click [here](#) to review the position profile for SMU's new Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer. Please share this profile with members of your network who might be interested in applying or know someone who would be a strong candidate.

Last month, the search committee met with Isaacson, Miller, our executive search consultants, to review a preliminary slate of candidates, and the search committee anticipates receiving a completed applicant pool for review in mid-January.

- **SMU's Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education** – Click [here](#) to review the position profile for SMU's new Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education. Please share this profile with members of your network who might be interested in applying or know someone who would be a strong candidate.

Next month, the search committee will meet with Isaacson, Miller to review a preliminary slate of candidates.

News and Noteworthy:

- **Guildhall hosts "Bagel Day" to engage the community and feature student games** – Last week, the Guildhall hosted its annual bagel day – in person and via livestream. This popular tradition provides community members an opportunity to gather together over coffee, orange juice and bagels to preview the latest release of student-developed games.



- **Temerlin Advertising Institute (TAI) hosts annual advertising Portfolio Night** – This week, the TAI hosted Portfolio Night, an annual celebration of the best work produced by TAI's creative track students. The evening's events included a portfolio review of

student work by dozens of ad industry professionals and a gallery exhibition of work judged by numerous creative professionals in attendance from top advertising agencies across DFW. Winners were awarded in several “best of” categories, including art direction, copywriting, graphic design, digital advertising and best overall.

- **Call coming soon for applications: Provost Faculty Fellow** – After nearly 18 months as Faculty Fellow for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, Carolyn Smith-Morris, Professor of Anthropology, is concluding her service in this position. The Provost’s Office team wishes to thank her for her contributions as Faculty Fellow.

Early in the new year, we will share the plan and process for filling this role.

- **Karen Thomas announced as Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE).** – Please join me in congratulating Karen Thomas, Professor of Practice in the Division of Journalism and the inaugural Diversity Officer in the Meadows School of the Arts. On January 7, she will begin as the new Director of the CTE. She brings high praise from SMU students and colleagues who describe her as a talented, student-centered instructor who brings professionalism, creativity, and strong interpersonal relationships to the classroom.

She joined SMU after more than 25 years in journalism, both as a national correspondent for the Chicago Tribune and as a columnist for *The Dallas Morning News*. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Narrative Writing from the University of Georgia, a Master of Science degree in Journalism from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism/English from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Please join me in congratulating Professor Thomas as she takes on this vital leadership role.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Lobo, PhD
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern Methodist University
<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

World Changers Shaped Here