



SMU®

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

January 22, 2021

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 three categories: 1) SMU's Road to R-1, 2) Spring 2021, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

SMU'S Road to R-1

- **Fiscal Year (FY) 2021–2022 Budget Process** – Final budget proposals will be reviewed by members of SMU's senior leadership team beginning this week, continuing next month, with final budget decisions announced in March 2021. The focus throughout our budget deliberations this year, including faculty/staff hiring requests, has been on how budget requests will help us attain SMU's goals within the 2016–2025 Strategic Plan and Black Unity Forum (BUF) Action Plan, as well as *U.S. News & World Report* top 50 ranking and R1 status. Thanks to the Deans and Associate Provosts for their collaborative approaches to prioritization.
- **Department-level workload policies revised and approved by May 2021** – This week, the Deans and I continued our conversations about SMU's commitment to developing and approving department-level workload policies by May 2021. Having departments clarify and operationalize transparent workload policies will be a critical step in helping us reach our research goals. Additionally, establishing these workload policies by the end of spring 2021 is a commitment SMU made in response to the Black Unity Forum Action Plan. Ultimately, each department's workload policies should reflect a clear and transparent understanding of the research, teaching, and service expectations for all faculty. To meet the late-May timeline, I have asked Deans to engage faculty and Department Chairs to develop and submit draft workload policies to my office by Wednesday, March 31. Meeting this deadline will give my office sufficient time to review and recommend any modifications prior to final approval by each Dean and by me in late May.
- **STABLE to transform how SMU plans, uses and supports campus facilities** – SMU has launched the implementation of an integrated workforce management system (IWMS) to transform the way we plan, utilize, and support our campus facilities. At the core of this solution is the space management module. The space management module documents the physical buildings and assets of the University, including interactive floor plans. Understanding space - assignment, maintenance and

management, as well as planning for space utilization or renovations - will be critical in reaching our strategic goals. The system will integrate with PeopleSoft (my.SMU), eBuilder, and other applications at SMU and will arrive at the Hilltop later this year. To learn more about this technology and to stay informed with the project throughout the semester, please visit our [website](#). We have also created a blog which will feature weekly updates throughout the semester as the implementation progresses. If you have any questions about this project, please direct them to stable@smu.edu.

- **Two SMU undergraduates to participate in this year's Texas Undergraduate Research Day** – SMU has been invited to send two projects to this year's [undergraduate research day](#) on February 23-24. Student participants come from public universities and health science centers, as well as independent (private) universities and colleges across the state. Representing SMU at this year's event:
 - Hannah Webb: *Thriving in College: International, First-generation and Transfer Students*
 - Samiah Woods: *Ketamine's Role in Spirituality: How one Synthetic Drug Catalyzes a Natural Experience*

Thanks to Dr. Dustin Grabsch in Residence Life and Student Housing for his support of Hannah's research and to Dr. William Barnard in the Department of Religious Studies for his support of Samiah's.

Spring 2021

- **Expectations regarding spring 2021 instruction** – Please see my [e-mail](#) from earlier this week for guidance and expectations around the use of Canvas to support faculty's teaching modalities during the spring, May and summer 2021 terms. We appreciate your attention to these parameters as they are intended to help faculty and students navigate our response to COVID-19 while staying within our compliance guidelines.
- **Faculty welcome-back video** – I hope this [video](#), shared in the previous two newsletters, will be a useful source of encouragement and information as we prepare for the start of the spring 2021 semester.
- **COVID-19 vaccine plan updates** – [SMU is now an approved provider](#) for the COVID-19 vaccine. Under an updated ordering system outlined by the state this week, the University has made the required formal request for doses. A request for vaccine in no way guarantees that SMU will receive vaccine. Requests for vaccine are made on a weekly basis. Once we do receive an allotment, the Dr. Bob Smith Health Center will follow state and local guidelines in making the vaccine available to the campus community beginning with the 1A phase designated for campus health care workers and police. Next, the 1B phase will prioritize people 65+ and/or those with underlying medical conditions who are directly on campus, including faculty, staff and students.

When we do receive the vaccine, we'll be ready to go. A vaccination distribution site has been set up outside the Health Center with extra parking spaces marked for vaccine recipients. Registration will not begin until the doses arrive. By next week, you will be able to find the latest information on a new vaccination page on the [Mustang Strong website](#). You will be able to use this new vaccination page to help determine which eligibility phase applies to you and learn more how to register for and get the vaccine. It will also contain answers to frequently asked questions you may have.

One way you can assist our planning efforts is by confirming that your mobile phone number and SMU email address is up to date in SMU's registry. The Health Center will be using your mobile phone number and SMU email address for registration and follow up. To update your information, go to my.smu.edu, click on the **Personal Information** tile to review, and verify it. If incorrect, click 'change number' and make the necessary edits so that you can be sure to receive notifications.

Because the distribution timeline is uncertain, we encourage you to take advantage of the first opportunity to get the vaccine regardless of whether it is through SMU or another provider. Check with your primary care physician or pharmacist or visit the [Texas COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Locations map](#) for additional vaccination sites and availability.

- **COVID-19 test sites on campus** – Another option is now available to get a quick and easy COVID-19 test at SMU. The Curative kiosk uses a self-administered oral swab to collect the test sample at no cost to SMU faculty, staff and students. It is located near the Airline Parking structure at 6501 Airline Court. [Appointments are required.](#)

The Urgent Care for Kids and Families no-cost, rapid drive-through testing site is also still available for employees and their dependents. It is located on the East Campus at Expressway Tower, [6116 North Central Expressway](#). [Complete a telemedicine screening to schedule a test.](#)

- **Updates to guidelines for student events** – The Division of Student Affairs has made updates to the student event [guidelines](#) for spring 2021 to govern any activity, event, meeting, gathering, practice, ceremony, etc. planned by a SMU student or student group.
- **No extra 5-minute break in classes for spring 2021** – We will return to the standard 10-minute passing period between classes for spring 2021. This decision comes in response to feedback from faculty and students across the fall semester. This return to the typical passing period schedule is reflected in my.smu.edu.
- **Syllabus language for spring 2021** – See my previous [e-mail](#) to faculty for specific information and a number of informational attachments to address policies such as classroom participation, attendance, face coverings and additional content for faculty to include in their spring 2021 course syllabi. This language was developed by members of my office working in partnership with Faculty Senate and Student Senate.
- **Scheduling process for fall 2021 classes** – Earlier this month, President Turner [announced](#) SMU's plans to return to a primarily in-person fall 2021 semester. While we are planning for a primarily in-person fall semester, we remain vigilant in our prevention and safety protocols on campus. We also will continue to carefully monitor health trends and create contingency plans so we are ready to meet any new challenges that might arise.

Building upon lessons learned and best practices from our experience developing fall 2020 and spring 2021 schedules, Peter Moore, Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy, will begin working with Deans, Associate Deans, Department Chairs, and class schedulers to develop the schedule for fall 2021.

News and Noteworthy

- **Lyle School of Engineering's recognition by the American Society for Engineering Education diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts** – Congratulations to Dean Marc Christensen, Diversity Officer Kathy Hubbard, and the entire Lyle School of Engineering team for their recent recognition by the American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE). Lyle's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts have earned them ASEE's bronze level award as an acknowledgement of their commitment to the principles of diversity by engaging in the systemic changes and metrics necessary to make sustainable cultural change. At the bronze level, SMU joins the ranks of other universities such as Rutgers, Duke, Tufts and Tulane.
- **Reminder: Spring faculty meeting January 27** – I hope you saw last week's updated [invitation](#) from Judy King in the Office of the Associate Provost for Faculty Success to the spring General Faculty Meeting, now scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, at 3:45 p.m. in Crum Auditorium as well as by Zoom.

Here is the [Zoom registration link](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. Please note that limited seating is also available in Crum Auditorium. If you prefer to attend in person, e-mail jaking@smu.edu to make a reservation.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba
Provost and Vice President for
Academic Affairs
Southern Methodist University
P.O. Box 750221, Dallas, TX 75275-0221
egloboa@smu.edu
214-768-3219

