SMU

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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 manage a safe, healthy and productive spring 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.

Spring 2022

- **Board of Trustees meetings recap** – SMU's Board of Trustees met this week, concluding today. Kelly Compton, Chair of the Committee on Academic Affairs, and I had three opportunities to engage Board members.

  o **Joint meeting with DEA** – Brad Cheves, Vice President for DEA, invited me to review our University-wide campaign priorities for Academic Affairs with the members of his committee. These priorities align with the three major components of the SMU Ignited campaign: 1) Student support, 2) Faculty and academic support, and 3) Campus and community support.

  o **Committee on Academic Affairs** – During this meeting, our focus was on faculty success. It has been a historic year for SMU in terms of faculty accomplishments, most notably in terms of research

productivity, and I was grateful for the opportunity to share your accomplishments with Board members.

Jim Quick, Dean of the Moody School for Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Research, and I updated the board on SMU's performance in the most recent (2021) Carnegie Classification system rankings. SMU advanced six rankings this year, from 155 in 2018 to 149 in 2021, putting us on the cusp of R-1 status. With continued progress across all of Carnegie's ten measures, (1) Science/Engineering research expenditures, 2) Non-science/engineering research expenditures, 3) Science and engineering research staff, 4) STEM Ph.D.'s, 5) Social Science Ph.D.'s, 6) Humanities Ph.D.'s, 7) Other doctorates, 8) Science and Engineering research expenditures/tenure-track faculty, 9) Non-science and engineering research expenditures/tenure-track faculty, and 10) Science and engineering research staff/tenure-track faculty, SMU can continue in our steady progress since 2005 toward R-1.

I also updated the Board on plans and efforts underway, made possible through the Moody gift, to bring our data and reporting capabilities for graduate students to the level of our reporting for undergraduate students. Ph.D. and doctoral degree conferrals are a core component of the Carnegie system and enhanced graduate student reporting will help us maintain and expand academic excellence at the graduate level.

We concluded the meeting with a research update from Leanne Ketterlin Geller, Professor in the Simmons School of Education and Human Development's Department of Education Policy and Leadership and Texas Instruments Endowed Chair in Education. Having been recently awarded $8M by the U.S. Department of Education (the largest single year research award in SMU history), Professor Ketterlin Geller shared how this grant will be used to enhance instructional practices for students facing math difficulties in grades 4 – 8.

- o **Full Board of Trustees** – During Friday's meeting of the Full Board, Chair Compton shared a consolidated version of my presentation to the Committee on Academic Affairs, focusing most heavily on faculty accomplishments this year to date.

- **Modified communication protocols in response to this week's winter weather event** – Working with Faculty Senate President Pia Vogel and the Deans, we have established a group of faculty and academic staff to bring forward ideas that can inform our future responses to inclement weather events.

  This week's winter weather advisory gave us a first opportunity to implement some of this group's recommendations, most notably in the area of enhanced communication. In addition to the SMU Aware notification sent on Tuesday, Vice Presidents and Deans were encouraged to provide additional detail regarding changes in operations and instruction that might be more unit specific.

- **SMU Fraud Reporting Program Update** – As announced earlier this week, the Internal Audit Team has updated the SMU Fraud Reporting Program. Through a partnership with NAVEX, an independent ethics and compliance firm, SMU now utilizes NAVEX's EthicsPoint hotline reporting solution. If you observe a situation or have knowledge that appears to involve fraud or illegal acts concerning SMU, please file a report through EthicsPoint. All individuals, whether they prefer to file a report anonymously or not, will be protected from retaliation.

  EthicsPoint Hotline (Toll-free): 844-995-4895
  Online Reporting Portal: smu.ethicspoint.com
  Mobile: smumobile.ethicspoint.com or scan the QR code
  For additional information on the SMU Fraud Reporting Program, please visit https://smu.edu/fraud or contact the Director of Internal Audit, Chandra McQueen, at (214) 768-4767 or chandram@smu.edu.

- **COVID-19 health and safety reminders** – Please continue consulting the [Mustang Strong website](#) regularly for the latest information, as our pandemic response is dynamic. SMU continues to provide [testing options](#) for faculty, staff and their eligible dependents as well as [vaccinations and boosters](#). If you test positive (including using an at-home kit), please report the results to your supervisor and complete the [SMU Health Reporting Form](#). SMU also continues to provide [N-95 masks](#) for faculty and staff who wish to use them in their workspace.

Road to R1/Scholarly Creative Excellence:

- **Provost's Promotion and Tenure Advisory deliberations underway** – Earlier this month, the [Provost's Advisory Committee on Promotion and Tenure](#) began its deliberations on 21 faculty members whose dossiers are under consideration for promotion, tenure and/or promotion and tenure this year. My thanks to advisory committee members for performing this very important advisory role.

- **Key leadership searches underway**

  o **Peter O'Donnell, Jr. Data Science Institute Director**: Jim Quick, Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Research, and Peter Moore, Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy, will co-chair our search for the newly-endowed Peter O'Donnell, Jr., Director of SMU's Data Science Institute. WittKieffer will serve as our executive search firm. My office is working with Maria Dixon Hall, Chief Diversity Officer, to finalize search committee composition and plans to invite and charge committee members later this month.

  o **Dedman Law Dean**: Click [here](#) to go to the website where the position profile is posted that will guide our search for the next Dean of the Dedman School of Law. And, please share with prospective candidates from within your network.

  o **Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer** - Click [here](#) to review the position profile that is guiding our search for SMU's new

Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer. The search committee has reviewed our pool of applicants and has identified a slate of 5 – 8 candidates for airport interviews that will take place next week. Finalist interviews are currently slated for late March/early April.

o **Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education**– Click here to review the position profile that is guiding our search for SMU's new Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education. Next month, the search committee will review our pool of applicants to recommend a slate of 5 – 8 candidates for airport interviews.

News and Noteworthy:

- **University testing center opening in fall 2022** – We are pleased to announce that plans are underway to open a dedicated University-wide testing center in fall 2022. As a reminder, students can schedule tests to be proctored by Disability Accommodation and Success Strategies (DASS) in the Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center (A-LEC). In the meantime, please review our policies and procedures about accommodated testing.

- **Lyle's J.C. Chiao elected to the 2022 class of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE) College of Fellows** – As announced last week AIMBE has announced the election of Dr. Jung-Chih Chiao, Mary and Richard Templeton Centennial Chair Professor of the Lyle School of Engineering's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering to its College of Fellows. I nominated Dr. Chiao and he was then reviewed and elected by peers and members of the AIMBE College of Fellows for outstanding contributions to the development of novel wireless and batteryless implantable devices for chronic disease management. See this SMU press release for additional information.

- **Research and Innovation week March 28 – April 1** – This year, Research Days will become SMU Research and Innovation Week, with events organized by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, the

Office of Engaged Learning and the Office of National Student Fellowships taking place March 28 – April 1, 2022.

Please encourage students who are conducting research under your supervision to be a part of this exciting event by participating in the poster sessions. Students can find more information, as well as the link to register for the poster sessions, on the [Research and Innovation Week website](#).

- **SMU retains the e-sports Iron Skillet** – Last weekend, Guildhall faculty, staff and students and Office of Information Technology (OIT) staff hosted the annual e-sports Iron Skillet competition in Ford Hall. SMU's team beat TCU to retain this year's e-sports Iron Skillet. My thanks to the all-volunteer effort required to host this event and congratulations to SMU's contingent for securing a victory! If you are interested in knowing more about e-sports at SMU, contact Dr. Sheri Kunovich at academicsuccess@smu.edu.

Sincerely,

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Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern Methodist University
https://www.smu.edu/provost
World Changers Shaped Here