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Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost

January 21, 2022

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 prepare for 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](#).

Today's update falls into three categories: 1) Spring 2022, 2) Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Spring 2022

- **COVID-19 health and safety reminders:**
 - Announcing: New testing resources for faculty and staff: On Wednesday, SMU announced two additional resources for employees, their spouses and dependents who are seeking COVID-19 testing – a no-cost, on-site testing option and insurance coverage for at-home test kits.
 - New on-campus option: As of January 20, MyLabsDirect is providing on-site PCR testing for COVID-19 at no cost for SMU employees, spouses and their dependents from 9:00 - 11:00 am Monday through Friday at a drive-up parking site at Expressway Tower on 6116 North Central Expressway. They also offer drive-up testing at several sites in the DFW area with no appointment required. More details are available by visiting smu.edu/employeeecovidtest under the "MyLabsDirect" tab.

- At-home tests – SMU’s health benefits provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX), is providing coverage for at-home COVID-19 tests, as required by the federal government. Here is what you need to know to get your test for free:
 - Over-the-counter (OTC) diagnostic tests must be FDA-authorized.
 - Costs are covered up to \$12 per test purchased from an in-network pharmacy or through a direct-to-consumer shipping program.
 - Up to eight (8) tests are allowed per covered member, every 30 days.
 - No prescription or health assessment from a provider is required.

Visit smu.edu/employeecovidtest under the “Testing kit purchased at a pharmacy” tab for more information and the shipping/reimbursement form.

These testing options are in addition to the Urgent Care for Children and Families services already available to SMU employees and their families.

Remember, if you test positive (including using an at-home kit), please report the results to your supervisor and complete the [SMU Health Reporting Form](#).

- N-95 mask acquisition process approved and underway – This week, SMU completed the purchase of 20,000 N-95 masks that are scheduled for arrival next week. Masks will be delivered to the college, schools and Vice President’s offices upon arrival, and faculty and staff who need masks can pick them up in their Dean’s office. Be on the lookout for more information and instructions next week.
- Consult Mustang Strong for the most up-to-date guidance – Please continue consulting the [Mustang Strong website](#) regularly for the latest information, as our pandemic response is dynamic. Based on experience, we expected and are seeing an increase in [case counts](#) at the beginning of the spring 2022 semester, and, as we have since fall 2020, we will use our COVID-19 operations plan to adjust our response as needed.
- Reminder: Case management for 2022 and updated spring 2022 faculty COVID-19 notification letter – See this [website](#) for an overview of SMU’s COVID-19 case management protocols for spring 2022. With many local governments adjusting their contact tracing efforts and no longer identifying close contacts, SMU will now focus on case management and providing guidance to those who test positive under the new [shortened isolation and quarantine recommendations](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Faculty will continue to be notified of

positive cases in their classes. See [here](#) for a sample of the revised faculty notification letter.

- **Higher education landscape: Fall 2021 UGR enrollment trends** – According to data released last week by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, colleges and universities saw a continued decline in enrollments in fall 2021, mirroring similar outcomes in fall 2020. Undergraduate enrollments dropped 3.1% (465,300 students) in fall 2021. The drop is similar to that of the previous fall and has resulted in a 6.6% decline in undergraduate enrollments nationwide since 2019. According to *The Washington Post*, this analysis suggests that “more than 1 million students have gone missing from higher education in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.” When adding graduate students into the analysis, national enrollment decreased by 2.7% (476,100 students) in fall 2021 with a total two-year decline of 5.1% (937,500 students).
- **SMU’s fall 2021 UGR enrollment performance** – Bucking the national trend, SMU experienced record enrollment in fall 2021 with 12,391 students (6,914 undergraduate; 5,477 graduate). This topped the previous record enrollment of 12,385 students (6,835 undergraduate; 5,550 graduate) set in fall 2020.

For fall 2021, 33% of our first-year students and 44% of our transfers come from traditionally underrepresented populations. 11% of our first-year students and nearly 26% of our transfers are Pell grant eligible. We continue to have optimism about our fall 2022 class as well. As of Thursday, we have received almost 15,603 first year undergraduate applications (14,875 for fall 2021; 12,828 for fall 2020) and 44% of applicants come from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. With a few days left until the extended application deadline, we expect to set another record for first-year admission with increases in both academic quality and student diversity.

There are many reasons for our success. Credit and thanks go to our Division of Enrollment Services, our Office of Student Academic Engagement and Success, to college/school recruiters and to our faculty and staff for making SMU such an appealing option. I would contend as well that, after careful deliberation and developing a robust health and safety plan, SMU’s decision to offer in-person instruction was a differentiator for prospective students and their parents when choosing a school. I recognize that our decision to return to in-person instruction has required, and continues to require, tremendous sacrifice, but we are experiencing

benefits in terms of the academic quality of our students at a time that many other schools are in enrollment decline.

- **Spring faculty meeting recap** – Thanks to all who were able to attend this week’s spring 2022 General Faculty Meeting. Among the highlights was an opportunity to recognize faculty recipients of our many teaching awards:
 - Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor Award
 - Dale Carpenter, Judge William Hawley Atwell Chair of Constitutional Law and Professor of Law, Dedman School of Law
 - Virginia DuPuy, Professor, Division of Music, Meadows School of the Arts
 - Sandra Duhé, Associate Professor and Chair of the Division of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs, Meadows School of the Arts
 - Hervé Tchumkam, Associate Professor of French, Department of World Languages and Literatures, Dedman College
 - President’s Associate Award
 - Alex Lippert, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry, Dedman College
 - Golden Mustang Award
 - Gianna Englert, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Dedman College
 - Provost’s Teaching Recognition Award
 - John Easton, Senior Lecturer and Assistant Chair, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
 - Kiersten Ferguson, Clinical Associate Professor and Program Director, Department of Education Policy & Leadership, Simmons School of Education and Human Development

I also provided an update on recent accomplishments and our latest plans in pursuit of even greater academic quality at SMU, with a heavy focus on the academic excellence of SMU’s undergraduate students. For those who were unable to attend, a recording is available [here](#) (SMU ID and password).

Road to R1/Scholarly Creative Excellence:

- **Key leadership searches underway:**

- Dedman School of Law Dean – Last week, I announced the search committee (members listed below) for our next Dean of the Dedman School of Law. My thanks to committee members for their service and to Matt Myers, Dean of the Cox School of Business, for agreeing to chair this committee.
 - Matt Myers, Dean, Cox School of Business; Tolleson Chair in Business Leadership; David B. Miller Endowed Professor (Chair, Search Committee)
 - Sky Arbuckle, Dedman School of Law student; President of Black Law Student Association
 - Kim Askew, Partner, DLA Piper
 - M. Scott Barnard, Partner, Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, LLP
 - Michael Boone, Partner, Haynes & Boone, LLP; SMU Board of Trustees member; and Dedman School of Law Executive Board member
 - Christa Brown-Sanford, Partner and Deputy Chair of the Intellectual Property Department, Baker Botts; SMU Board of Trustees member; and Dedman School of Law Executive Board member
 - Dale Carpenter, Judge William Hawley Atwell Chair of Constitutional Law and Professor of Law, Dedman School of Law
 - Erika Fadel, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Dedman School of Law
 - David Haley, President (retired) HBK Capital Management; SMU Board of Trustees member; and Dedman School of Law Executive Board member
 - Christopher Hanna, Alan D. Feld Endowed Professor of Law and Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor, Dedman School of Law
 - Greg Ivy, Associate Dean for Library and Technology and Senior Lecturer, Dedman School of Law
 - Mike Lynn, Chairman and Founding Partner of Lynn, Pinker, Hurst & Schwegmann
 - Mary Spector, Associate Dean for Clinics, Director of the Civil/Consumer Clinic, and Professor of Law, Dedman School of Law
 - David Taylor, Robert G. Storey Distinguished Faculty Fellow, Director of the Tsai Center for Law, Science and Innovation, and Professor of Law, Dedman School of Law
 - Paula Voyles, Assistant Vice President for School and Project Development, Development and External Affairs
 - Michael Vuong, Dedman School of Law student; Asian Pacific American Law Student Association, President

- Amy Ware, Ware Law Firm; Dedman School of Law Executive Board
- Steve Yeager, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs & Faculty Supervisor, Corporate Counsel Externship Program, Dedman School of Law

Mr. Chuck O'Boyle, Managing Director of C. V. O'Boyle, a national academic search firm, will be assisting with the process. Previously a practicing attorney in New York and Atlanta, Chuck has specialized in recruiting senior administrators for colleges and universities since 2002 and has particular expertise in serving law schools.

The committee had its kickoff meeting on Thursday and Mr. O'Boyle participated in a full day of meetings with key stakeholders to accelerate the development of a position description. We will continue to provide regular updates in subsequent newsletters.

- **SMU's 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. Please share this profile with members of your network who might be interested in applying or know someone who should.

Last week, Isaacson, Miller shared a slate of recommended applicants to the search committee for consideration. The committee has reviewed applicants and will be recommending a slate of 5 – 8 candidates for airport interviews.

- **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 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. Please share this profile with members of your network who might be interested in applying or know someone who should.

This month, Isaacson, Miller will provide the search committee with updates on the developing candidate pool and strategize ways to yield applications.

- **Research awards and research expenditures as of December 31** – As mentioned in several of my weekly newsletters last fall, SMU faculty are on a historic pace this year

in terms of grant activity – as measured by awards received as well as by research expenditures (a key metric used by Carnegie).

Research awards as of 12/31 (2020 and 2021)			
College/School	12/31/2020	12/31/2021	%INCR (Decrease)
Dedman	\$ 9,502,691.00	\$ 15,458,420.00	62.7%
Lyle	\$ 4,250,896.00	\$ 3,149,357.00	-25.9%
Simmons	\$ 6,979,985.00	\$ 18,457,322.00	164.4%
Other	\$ -	\$ 985,860.00	NA
Grand Total	\$ 20,733,572.00	\$ 38,050,959.00	83.5%

We closed calendar year 2021 above \$38M in research awards for the first time ever in SMU’s history. Overall, there was an 83% increase in the research award dollars received by December 2021 when compared with December 2020. Dedman College (63% increase) and the Simmons School (164% increase) are currently driving this outstanding growth.

Research expenditures as of 12/31 (2020 and 2021)			
College/School	12/31/2020	12/31/2021	%INCR (Decrease)
Dedman	\$ 7,296,393.07	\$ 8,554,281.24	17.2%
Lyle	\$ 3,761,659.00	\$ 4,142,021.26	10.1%
Simmons	\$ 5,029,593.74	\$ 5,310,697.35	5.6%
Other	\$ 427,814.15	\$ 302,165.94	
Grand Total	\$ 16,515,459.96	\$ 18,309,165.79	10.9%

In terms of research expenditures, we had an 11% increase by December 2021 when compared with December 2020. All three of our most research-productive academic units contributed to the increase with Dedman College growing research expenditures by 17%, Lyle by 10%, and Simmons by nearly 6%.

Thank you to our faculty for this tremendous accomplishment.

News and Noteworthy:

- **SMU senior receives a prestigious Marshall scholarship** – SMU’s senior environmental science major, Isabelle Galko, is one of just 41 American university students named a Marshall Scholar for 2022, a prestigious opportunity to pursue graduate studies in the UK for distinguished young Americans with leadership potential.

The only student from a Texas university to receive the honor, Isabelle will use the two-year scholarship to further her studies on climate and policymaking at both Oxford and Durham Universities in England.

- **Dream week activities to honor the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** – By tradition, SMU honors Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., with Dream Week to coincide with the return of students to campus for the spring semester, usually the week after the traditional observance of MLK Day. President Turner, students, faculty and staff honored the enduring influence of Dr. King with a Unity Circle ceremony on Wednesday. In addition to the Unity Circle, SMU’s Office of Social Change and Intercultural Engagement will hold other Dream Week activities tonight and tomorrow including:
 - A student, faculty and staff viewing of the film, “Selma” at 6:00 pm., Friday, January 21, at the Hughes-Trigg Student Center Auditorium featuring a keynote from Civil Rights Activist JoAnne Bland.
 - A day of volunteer service for students, faculty and staff from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm on Saturday, January 22, starting at the Hughes-Trigg Student Center Ballroom A/B.

Sincerely,



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<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

World Changers Shaped Here