

## Weekly Update | November 11, 2022

**Elizabeth G. Loba, Ph.D. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**

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 toward achieving the goals that fall within our four priority areas through 2025: 1) Academic Excellence/ *US News and World Report* top 50, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 3) 2016 – 2025 Strategic Plan and 4) Inclusive Excellence.

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 2022, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

### Fall 2022

#### **Maintenance Repairs Completed in Southeast Residential Commons**

Throughout the week, tremendous effort has been made to repair a leak that rendered toilets inoperable in the southeast residential commons. As of this morning, crews had restored operations and the toilets are now operational throughout the complex. The students from Armstrong and Crum Commons who were relocated to hotels were informed this morning that they could return to their campus residences. The return process will take some time, as some students likely arrived back on campus for classes this morning before learning that they could check out of the hotels.

Please continue to provide flexibility to students in your courses today, Monday and Tuesday, recognizing that the disruption of moving in and out of hotels and related lack of sleep may have interrupted their studies and preparation for classes.

The facilities team worked round-the-clock to resolve this issue, and appreciates the patience demonstrated by the SMU community.

#### **Common Curriculum Update: Making it Easier to Administer and Fulfill the "Writing in the Major" Proficiency**

SMU faculty have consistently expressed concern about the challenges of isolating the teaching of Writing in the Major to a single course, since many programs distribute the teaching and practice of writing across a program. For the same reason, students on the Common Curriculum have struggled to find sufficient opportunities to satisfy the Writing in the Major requirement, even when they have spent several courses learning to write in accordance with the parameters of their discipline.

For this reason, on September 9, 2022, the [Council on General Education](#) approved a proposal to change how the [Common Curriculum's Writing in the Major Proficiency and Experience](#) is tracked on the Degree Progress Report and replace it with one program-level Writing in the Major student learning outcome.

Effective November 11, the Writing in the Major Proficiency and Experience graduation requirement was removed from the Degree Progress Report for student-level tracking, and in fall 2023, we will begin tracking it through program learning outcomes and program-level assessment.

This approved change honors the true intent of the Writing in the Major Proficiency and values the tremendous work done by faculty to develop WiM-tagged courses, learning outcomes, and assessments. During the transition to this new method of tracking and assessing Writing in the Major, the [Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness](#) will work closely with faculty and programs to write discipline-specific learning outcomes for Writing in the Major and to develop appropriate measures to assess this writing.

## University Testing Center receives National College Testing Association Certification

SMU's [University Testing Center \(UTC\)](#) is now a certified testing center by the [National College Testing Association \(NCTA\)](#). The certification is a rigorous, one-year accreditation process granted to those centers whose test administration policies are compliant with testing industry standards developed by the NCTA. Centers are evaluated using criteria from the NCTA's Professional Standards and Guidelines that focus on the evaluation of the test facility, test integrity methods, test security, confidentiality practices, staff training, and public relations. Special thanks to Lori Krone, UTC Manager, for her leadership through the certification process. [Learn more about this certification](#) or the [services offered by the UTC](#).

## SMU celebrates national First-Generation College Celebration Day

On Tuesday, November 8, SMU celebrated National First-Generation College Celebration Day on Dallas Hall Lawn. This date was selected to honor the anniversary of the signing of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965. The HEA emerged out of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. Much like other hallmark legislation of that era, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, HEA was intended to help level a playing field that for too long had been weighed against Americans from minority and low-income backgrounds. [The Center for First-generation Students](#), an initiative of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and The Suder Foundation, [highlighted SMU's celebration of National First-Gen College Celebration Day](#), known as [First-Gen Fest](#). Learn more about the [first-generation initiative at SMU](#), [resources for students](#), and [become a faculty/staff ally](#).

## Reminders from Last Week

### Invitation to Participate in December Commencement

Please access the [December Commencement RSVP](#) webpage to let us know if you will attend the December ceremony and participate in the academic procession. The deadline to RSVP for attending the ceremony is **Friday, December 2nd**, by 4:00 p.m. Clark Hunt '87, chairman and CEO of the Kansas City Chiefs and FC Dallas and member of SMU's Board of Trustees, will be the commencement speaker.

Prior to the ceremony, there will be a faculty breakfast beginning at 7:45 a.m. in the Miller Champions Club in the Miller Event Center, directly inside the entrance to the Coliseum on Binkley Avenue. [If you want to attend the breakfast, please RSVP by clicking here](#). The deadline to RSVP for the breakfast is **Friday, December 9th**, by 4:00 p.m.

# Road to R-1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence

## Call for Proposals for FY 2024 Congressional Earmark/Appropriation Process

As mentioned in [last week's email](#), we invite faculty to develop proposals for consideration as a part of the U.S. Congress' FY 2024 earmark and/or appropriate process.

This [LINK](#) will take you to a box folder where you may view and copy resources provided by during last week's federal research workshop: (1) A copy of the presentation shown by Clark-Hill, our consultants and (2) a template to be used to develop and submit your proposals.

To be included for consideration in the FY 2024 budget development cycle, first drafts of your proposals must be submitted to [Suku Nair](#) by **November 23, 2022**, with final submission to Suku no later than **December 16, 2022**.

## New Resource: Follow @smuresearch for updates on SMU's research

SMU's [news page](#) recently updated its content to include an "SMU Community" channel that displays tweets from the new @smuresearch twitter feed. I encourage you to follow and share @smuresearch to remain up to date on SMU's most recent research news.

## Moody School Three-Minute Thesis Competition November 14

SMU graduate students will present their research and compete for prizes at this year's [Three Minute Thesis \(3MT\) competition](#), which will take place on Monday, November 14, from 12:00 - 1:30 pm, in the Chamber in the Hughes-Trigg Student Center (lower level). 3MT celebrates the exciting research being conducted by SMU graduate students and allows them to hone their communication and presentation skills.

The rules of the competition are simple: participants present their dissertation or thesis research in non-specialist language in less than three minutes with the assistance of one static PowerPoint slide. They are judged on the effectiveness of their presentation and their ability to convince the judges of the impact of their research. All members of the SMU community are invited to attend. Lunch will be served starting at 11:45 am. Attendees are invited to pick up lunch and take a seat before the competition gets started at 12 pm.

## Key Leadership Searches Underway

### Dean, Lyle School of Engineering

Click [here](#) to review the position description that is now being broadly advertised and please share it with colleagues within your network. Over the next two weeks, committee members will be reviewing applications. They plan to narrow the field to 8-10 semifinalists by November 21<sup>st</sup> and to conduct on-campus interviews in early December.

## News and Noteworthy

### SMU Faculty Member's Translation of *Freeway: La Movie* Released and Featured on National Public Radio

Lourdes Molina, Senior Lecturer of Spanish in Dedman College's department of World Languages and Literature recently released a translation of Jorge Enrique Lage's *Freeway: La Movie* that has garnered reviews in [NPR](#) and [Kirkus](#).

## The Opening of SMU's AT&T Center for Virtualization's Intelligent Systems and Bias Examination Lab (ISaBEL) Featured Locally and Nationally

A new lab at SMU's AT&T Center for Visualization will investigate how facial recognition and other artificial intelligence systems perform on diverse populations. [Dallas Innovates](#), [Biometric Update](#) and [Datanami](#) have recently covered the lab's opening.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

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

**World Changers Shaped Here**