

Weekly Update | October 21, 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 while, 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

Executive Board Meetings this Week

This week, President Turner, Vice President for Development and External Affairs Brad Cheves, and I joined Deans Holland and DiPiero in meetings with their units' executive boards.

Meadows School of the Arts

For this meeting, I updated board members on SMU's – and Meadows' – recent accomplishments toward greater academic excellence and provided introductions of our newest deans – Jason Nance, Judge James Noel Dean of the Dedman School of Law, and Robin Poston, Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education. I concluded with an update on our search for a new dean of the Lyle School of Engineering.

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences

For this meeting, I updated board members on SMU's – and Dedman College's – recent accomplishments in two of our four priority areas for academic affairs: 1) academic excellence and 2) research excellence. I concluded my remarks by introducing Deans Nance and Poston and providing a status update for our next dean of the Lyle School of Engineering.

In a luncheon following the meeting, SMU [announced](#) a \$5M gift from Liz and Bill Armstrong to endow and name the dean position for the Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences. This historic gift will provide permanent funding for the academic leader of Dedman College, and Dean Tom DiPiero will serve as the inaugural Elisabeth Martin Armstrong Dean of Dedman College.

Invitation to Participate in December Commencement

Last week, I sent the following [email](#) inviting faculty participation in the University's December Commencement. Your presence at, and role in, Commencement means a great deal to our graduating students, their families and guests. I hope you will join with your colleagues in support of these events and the values they represent. 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.

On Saturday morning, December 17th, Commencement will be held at 9:00 a.m. in Moody Coliseum. Please access the [December Commencement RSVP](#) webpage to let us know if you will attend the ceremony and participate in the academic procession. It is very important that we know how many faculty will attend the Saturday morning ceremony so we can reserve seats for everyone who participates. The deadline to RSVP for attending the ceremony is **Friday, December 2**, by 4:00 p.m.

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 9**, by 4:00 p.m.

If you need academic regalia, please contact your department administrator to determine the ordering process. Orders for faculty must be placed by **Tuesday, November 1**, to ensure that regalia arrive in time. After this date, the bookstore will supply faculty with in-stock SMU regalia. More information can be found [here](#).

Reminders from Last Week

SMU Joins National Tuition Exchange Consortium

Last week, SMU [announced](#) that it would be joining [Tuition Exchange](#) (TE), a national consortium of colleges and universities that provides educational scholarships to its more than 670 member institutions. Beginning in spring 2023, dependents of SMU benefits-eligible employees will be able to apply for full or partial tuition awards at other TE member institutions. More information about eligibility requirements and the application process can be found here on the [HR website](#).

Call for Nominations: Faculty Teaching Awards

Each year, we have the honor to award a number of teaching awards to deserving SMU faculty, underscoring our commitment to excellence in teaching.

Last week, I sent the [following email](#) with a call for nominations.

Please, take a few minutes to nominate a deserving colleague today. Please send the name of your nominees to the Center for Teaching Excellence, cte@smu.edu. The deadline for nominations is 5:00 pm on **Friday, October 28**.

Road to R-1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence

SMU to Announce Partnership with Pegasus Park to Promote Research and Innovation

Look for an announcement next week on SMU's agreement with Pegasus Park, a 23-acre campus of flexible office and laboratory space in the heart of Dallas that encourages research, innovation, collaboration, and problem-solving in an interdisciplinary way.

SMU's initial participants come from a broad and interdisciplinary range of departments, including: Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, Mathematics, Statistics, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering,

Mechanical Engineering, Applied Physiology and Sport Management and Information Technology and Operations Management (ITOM).

In addition to SMU faculty tenants, Pegasus Park hosts potential partners and collaborators from a range of academic, medical, corporate and non-profit institutions. We are excited for this new opportunity to pursue world changing research for good.

Federal Research Workshop Scheduled for Thursday, October 27

On Thursday, October 27, SMU will host a federal research workshop on campus to support the development of research projects to be submitted to the U.S Congress as part of the FY 2024 earmark and/or appropriation process. See [this email](#) for additional information.

The Town Hall is scheduled from **12:30 – 1:45 pm on October 27 in Crum Auditorium, Collins Executive Education Center**. You will receive additional detailed information this Monday, October 24th. Thanks in advance for your participation. Please direct questions to [Suku Nair](#), Associate Provost for Research *ad interim* regarding additional details about the FY 2024 submission process.

Key Leadership Searches Underway

Lyle School of Engineering

Last month, I launched [the search committee](#) for our next dean of the Lyle School of Engineering. My thanks to committee members for their service and to Sam Holland, Dean of the Meadows School of the Arts, for agreeing to chair this committee.

The search committee's kickoff meeting took place on Tuesday, September 27, and committee members have spent the past few weeks reviewing and refining the position description that will guide our search. Click [here](#) to review the position description that is now being broadly advertised and please share it with colleagues within your network. I will continue to provide regular updates in subsequent newsletters.

News and Noteworthy

Wesley Theological Seminary, in partnership with SMU's Perkins School of Theology, Receives \$5M Lilly Grant to Expand Pathways to Ministry

This week, it was announced that Wesley Theological Seminary and the Perkins School of Theology would collaborate to develop new non-degree courses and certificates for pastors with the support of a \$5 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. The grant, part of the third and final phase of Lilly's Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative, will allow both schools to develop a business model to better support comprehensive theological education: layered and articulated courses and programs that reach and serve pastors and lay ministers throughout their ministries and across many contexts.

Simmons Faculty Compares Performance Gap Between Male and Female Runners

New research from Peter Weyand, Glenn Simmons, Endowed Professor in Applied Physiology and Biomechanics in the Simmons School of Education and Human Development's Department of Applied Physiology and Sport Management, and Ph.D. student Emily McClelland compares the performance gap between male and female runners in an article published recently in [Outside Magazine](#). They found the performance gap is narrower in short sprints than in endurance events.

Former SMU Football Player Investing in Affordable Housing in Southern Dallas

Former SMU football player Mikial Onu is one of the South Dallas leaders investing in affordable housing in southern Dallas. The [Dallas Morning News](#) recently covered the story.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth G. Loba".

Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

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

World Changers Shaped Here