

Weekly Update | October 7, 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) Research/scholarly creative excellence/ Road to R1, 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) Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2022

Perkins School of Theology Executive Board Meeting This Week

On Wednesday, Vice President for Development and External Affairs Brad Cheves and I joined Dean Craig Hill to update Perkins' board members on SMU's – and Perkins' – recent accomplishments in our priority area of academic excellence. I concluded my remarks by introducing Jason Nance, Judge James Noel Dean of the Dedman School of Law; Robin Poston, Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education; and Bishop Mike McKee, Dean-elect *ad interim* of the Perkins School of Theology.

Three-year Budget Planning Update

Yesterday, deliberations continued among the deans and associate provosts toward developing a three-year budget plan, including revenue and expense projections, in Academic Affairs for fiscal years 2024, 2025 and 2026. We plan to provide an overview during the October 25 university kickoff meeting for the FY 2024 budget process with President Turner and the President's Executive Council (PEC) and will share additional information in subsequent newsletters. Thank you to the deans and associate provosts for their efforts, throughout the majority of 2022, developing these

estimates which will help us move toward our goals of greater academic excellence, research excellence and inclusive excellence.

Faculty Senate meeting: Vice Provost for Research (VPR) /Chief Information Officer (CIO) Update

Faculty Senate President Rob Frank asked me to provide senators an update on SMU's search for a new Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer during Wednesday's faculty senate meeting. Last spring, when our leading finalist accepted another VPR position at a major public university, we were left with two options: failing or extending the search. In consultation with the search committee and our executive search firm, we determined that extending the search was our best course of action.

Following Jim Quick's retirement and over the summer/early fall, I tasked Suku Nair, Associate Provost for Research, *ad interim*, to develop a research office that is focused on both compliance and customer service. Since August, he and his team have been hard at work meeting the needs of the research community while also focused on improving service. Among these improvements, the research office was approved this fiscal year to hire additional research support staff who will be embedded in Lyle and in Dedman College – two of our schools in greatest need of additional research support.

With Carnegie R1 as a strategic goal over the next five years, we recognize the importance of a high performing research office and have made it a top priority this year to re-establish stability and forward momentum in that area before moving forward. My office is working to schedule a meeting in November with the search committee for an update, and we will share additional information in subsequent newsletters.

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

Moody School PhD Recruitment Grants

This year, the Simmons School of Education's Ph.D. program, Lyle's department of Civil & Environmental Engineering Ph.D. program, and Dedman College's departments of Chemistry and Mathematics Ph.D. programs were selected to receive Ph.D. Recruitment Grants from the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.

These grants promote active involvement by faculty in recruitment activities. They fund proposals to attract talented and diverse students to SMU's Ph.D. programs. This year's grants will support the hosting of on-campus and virtual information sessions, promotion of SMU Ph.D. programs at academic conferences, and recruitment visits to historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions.

Federal Research Workshop Scheduled for Thursday, October 27

On Thursday, October 27, SMU will be hosting 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.

Be on the lookout for information about how to participate in the workshop as well as additional details about the FY 2024 submission process. Thanks to Dr. Suku Nair, please [contact Dr. Nair](#) to address questions.

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 an immediate next step will be to develop the position description that will guide and inform the search. I will continue to provide regular updates in subsequent newsletters.

News and Noteworthy

Register for In-Person and Virtual Book Discussions of *Inclusive Teaching*

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) continues this year's focus on Viji Sathy's book, *Inclusive Teaching*, by offering both in-person and virtual book discussion opportunities for interested faculty.

In-person Book Discussion

October 13, 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm at Harold Clark Simmons Hall (HCSH) 107. The session will be led by Constantin Icleanu (World Languages & Literatures) and Laura Eigel (Psychology). Click [here](#) to register.

Virtual Book Discussion

October 27, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm via Zoom. The session will be led by Johnitha Johnson (Teaching & Learning) and Robyn Peterson (English). Click [here](#) to register.

Meadows Artists Performing in New York City this December

This week, Sam Holland, Dean of the Meadows School of the Arts, shared information about two exceptional music events featuring Meadows artists that will occur just days apart this December in New York City.

Division of Music faculty composer Xi Wang

Faculty composer Xi Wang has been commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra – one of the world's most revered ensembles – to compose a significant symphonic work. The Philadelphia Orchestra will premiere Wang's piece at Carnegie Hall on December 13, 2022.

On December 15, John Holiday ('07) will perform a named role in the Metropolitan Opera's presentation of Kevin Puts' *The Hours*, which was adapted from Michael Cunningham's acclaimed novel.

This is Jon's second role with the Met, where he will share the stage with international superstar Renee Fleming.

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The Office of Student Academic Engagement and Success has developed a new blog containing a digest of recent news and announcements. To access the blog and subscribe go to the [following page](#) and click the word 'subscribe' in the top right corner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth G. Loba". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

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

World Changers Shaped Here