

Weekly Update | February 10, 2023

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) Spring 2023, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Spring 2023

SMU's response to last week's adverse and winter weather

As a reminder, I have [charged a committee](#) to provide recommendations on how SMU should address the need for make-up instruction in light of last week's weather-induced class cancellations. The committee will report back by the end of this month, and we will share SMU's approach as quickly as possible.

With the potential for additional inclement weather this semester, please continue to check [SMU Aware](#) for updates and the latest weather information. Thank you for your resilience and flexibility through these challenging conditions.

SMU's first Graduate Student Success day took place on Monday, February 6

The Moody School for Graduate and Advanced Studies hosted its first Graduate Student Success day on Monday, February 6. The all-day event was focused on emphasizing the importance of graduate students to SMU's academic and research aspirations and for convening faculty to share best practices and ideas for promoting their graduate students' success. My thanks to this year's faculty presenters and to all those who were able to participate.

Common Curriculum Course Proposal Deadlines for Spring 2023

The Council on General Education [invites course and approved activity proposals for Common Curriculum general education and graduation requirements](#). This spring's final proposal deadline is March 22, 2023 (for review on March 31). Literary Analysis and Interpretation (LAI) and Technology Advances and Society (TAS) are of particular interest. Accepted proposals will be tagged at the course level and go into effect for summer 2023. Please reach out to the [Office of General Education](#) for questions or proposal development support.

Final reminder: Judges needed - Dallas Regional Science and Engineering Fair

Local scientists and engineers are invited to serve as judges for the 2023 Beal Bank Dallas Regional Science and Engineering Fair (DRSEF) on **Saturday, February 18, 2023**, at Fair Park, Dallas. Judging is a half-day commitment, fulfilled entirely on Saturday, February 18. Please join us in supporting critical thinking and science education for students in our region. Click [here](#) to register.

Road to R1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence

SMU leaders visit Washington D.C. to advocate for SMU earmark proposals

This week, Suku Nair, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer, and I joined executives from Clark Hill – SMU’s federal government relations advisors – to put forward 24 proposals for funding at the federal level as a part of the U.S. Congress’ FY 24 earmark and/or appropriation process. On February 7–8, Suku and I, along with members of the Clark Hill team, met with congressional leadership from both sides of the aisle to advocate for SMU’s faculty research proposals. Thank you again to the 40+ faculty teams who participated in this year’s earmark process.

Research and Innovation Week, March 20-25

[Research & Innovation Week](#) is SMU’s annual showcase and celebration of the outstanding research being done by SMU students and other members of our community. This year’s events will take place **March 20-25** and include a keynote talk, undergraduate and graduate poster sessions, a panel on “Graduate Education and the Future of Research in North Texas” featuring faculty at SMU and other North Texas universities, and the Master of Fine Arts Qualifying Exhibition.

Please encourage undergraduates, graduate students, and postdocs who are conducting research at SMU to be a part of this exciting event by participating in the poster sessions, which will take place on **Tuesday, March 21** (undergraduate poster session) and **Wednesday, March 22** (graduate and postdoc poster session), from **2-5 p.m.**, in the **Hughes-Trigg Student Center Ballroom**. You can find more information, as well as the link to register for the poster session, on the [Research and Innovation Week website](#).

Key leadership searches underway or completed:

Data Science Institute Director

This week, I [appointed a search committee](#) for SMU’s inaugural Peter O’Donnell Jr. Director of the Data Science Institute with plans to fill the position before the fall 2023 semester. Suku Nair, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer, has agreed to chair the search. Be on the lookout for additional information in subsequent newsletters. Continued thanks to Peter Moore for serving as Data Science Institute Director *ad interim* until our new director arrives.

Lyle School of Engineering Dean

On January 11, 2023, SMU [announced](#) Nader Jalili as the next dean of the Lyle School of Engineering effective March 1, 2023. Dr Jalili joins SMU from the University of Alabama, where he has been Professor and Department Head in Mechanical Engineering since 2018.

News and Noteworthy

KERA covers Meadows’ composer’s New York and Philadelphia premier

Last December, SMU faculty member Xi Wang's "Ensō" premiered before New York and Philadelphia audiences. A recent [KERA](#) story described Wang's musical journey - from practicing on a toy piano to becoming a composer.

Dallas Morning News features the West Dallas STEM school

The West Dallas Stem School is a partnership between the Dallas Independent School District, SMU, the Toyota Foundation USA and the West Dallas Community. Now in its second year, the school was recently profiled by the [Dallas Morning News](#).

Reminder: SMU participating in the Sister2Sister Exchange program in summer 2023

The Sister2Sister Exchange Program is a public-private partnership led by American University that aims to empower Pakistani female college students to overcome cultural limitations that inhibit their participation in pursuing competitive and lucrative careers.

Through this program, American University and its partner universities enable 20 young Pakistani women every year to participate in U.S. university summer undergraduate courses, in mostly Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. In summer 2023, SMU has been invited to serve as a partner university and will offer summer scholarships to two undergraduate students.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

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

World Changers Shaped Here