

Weekly Update | July 28, 2023

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

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I hope you are having a restful and productive summer. Whether you are teaching, conducting research, or preparing exhibits or performances, your contributions are vitally appreciated and valued in our quest for even greater academic quality. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to SMU's academic mission.

As mentioned in the [final weekly](#) of the spring 2023 semester, my plan is to send these updates twice for the month July and once in the month of August prior to the start of the fall 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) Summer 2023, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Summer 2023

Performance-based awards for fiscal year 2024

In consultation with the deans over the past three academic years, my office has continued to refine our performance-based funding (PBF) model to inform and promote the distribution of discretionary funds annually from the Office of the Provost to SMU's academic units. As a reminder, PBF is intended to be a transparent way to replace all previous ad hoc requests and negotiations for discretionary funding commitments from the Office of the Provost. Instead, this discretionary funding will be directly disseminated to the deans.

PBF 2024 is designed to reward academic units for actual performance based on transparent measurements and metrics that align with our four academic priority areas through 2025: 1) Academic Excellence, 2) Research Excellence, 3) the 2016-2025 Strategic Plan, and 4) Inclusive Excellence.

For FY 2024, as was the case in FY 2023, we have allocated \$5M total in discretionary funding with hopes to increase or, at a minimum, sustain this level of funding in the years to come contingent upon our ability to generate additional revenue. Based on performance against this year's metrics, using three- or in some cases five-years of data ending with FY 2023, the college and schools have earned the following distributions as a part of the FY 2024 performance-based funding process:

Total Available Funds			Cox	Dedman	Dedman Law	Libraries	Lyle	Meadows	Perkins	Simmons	Grand Total	Rollover Funds
1	Undergraduate	\$1,575,000	\$250,528	\$784,334	\$0	\$0	\$119,382	\$219,178	\$0	\$79,158	\$1,452,581	\$122,419
2	Graduate	\$400,000	\$171,319	\$13,435	\$25,911		\$35,880	\$4,307	\$3,809	\$144,461	\$399,122	\$878
3	Doctoral	\$400,000	\$0	\$135,297	\$7,958	\$0	\$79,223	\$23,756	\$47,177	\$85,659	\$379,070	\$20,930
4	Research	\$1,875,000	\$7,868	\$873,887	\$44,403	\$1,088	\$302,157	\$20,004	\$21,477	\$604,117	\$1,875,000	\$0
5	Management	\$750,000	\$190,291	\$88,133	\$125,357	\$18,750	\$64,808	\$33,822	\$40,179	\$167,232	\$728,571	\$21,429
Total Earned Funds		\$5,000,000	\$620,007	\$1,895,086	\$203,629	\$19,838	\$601,449	\$301,067	\$112,642	\$1,080,628	\$4,834,345	\$165,655
			Cox	Dedman	Dedman Law	Libraries	Lyle	Meadows	Perkins	Simmons	Grand Total	
Rollover Pool Allocation to Libraries			\$0	\$0	\$0	\$33,131	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
Final PBF Allocations			\$620,007	\$1,895,086	\$203,629	\$52,969	\$601,449	\$301,067	\$112,642	\$1,080,628	\$4,867,476	

[Click here](#) for a detailed presentation on the performance-based funding model for FY 2024, including a college/school breakdown of results for all metrics.

While licensing limitations make it impossible to share PBF's interactive Tableau model with the entire campus, I would encourage those with interest to contact their dean or financial business manager for a demonstration. For those with Tableau licenses who would like to review PBF 2024 in greater detail, please contact [Daniel Eady](#) for assistance.

Faculty positions approved for search during academic year 2023-2024 for hire in Fall 2024

Last month, the deans and I had conversations about which faculty lines to open for searches in fall 2023 to join SMU in fall 2024.

Final decisions about approvals for faculty searches were made and communicated to the deans in July. Deans will now begin working within their Schools/College to form search committees for this fall term. A team of faculty administrators joined this past year with the Associate Provost for Faculty Success, Diversity Office, and Institutional Access and Equity to continue strengthening our search processes. Several new changes have been made, including digitizing all signatures and archiving all records both locally and centrally.

The chart below summarizes the number of requests each dean made to the Provost based on data informed by budgetary considerations, student enrollment trends, and strategic priorities. Of the 57 lines requested, 61 lines were approved; 41 represent tenured/tenure-track lines and 20 are career faculty lines. The four additional approved faculty lines were approved in areas of student interest and need. Including rollover searches from previous years, there are 76 faculty searches approved for 2023 – 2024.

This year, I am pleased to announce that we will launch a fourth research cluster, Urban Research, which will add to our existing three research clusters (Data Science, Earth Hazards and National Security, and Technology-Enhanced Instruction and Learning). I would like to once again express my gratitude for the faculty who served in a working group this spring term to bring forward recommendations to inform the development of this new research cluster. Using their recommendations followed by the deans' collaborative efforts, we have currently confirmed eight faculty lines for the initial Urban Research Cluster search with the possibility that in early fall faculty might identify additional lines from the approved list of upcoming searches that would be enhanced by participating in this cluster.

In addition to the information in this chart reflecting approval for full-time faculty searches, 23 one-year visiting faculty lines have been approved to fill for AY 23-24.

School	Number requested	Number approved	Number rolling over	Total number approved for search AY23-24
Cox	1	1	7	8
Dedman College	15	17	2	19
Dedman Law	7	7	2	9
Lyle	17	17	1	18
Moody	0	0	0	0
Meadows	12	12	1	13
Perkins	1	1	0	1
Simmons	4	6	2	8
TOTAL	57	61	15	76

Perkins Invites Nominations for 2023 Distinguished Alumnus/a Award

Perkins School of Theology is accepting nominations for its 2023 Distinguished Alumnus/a Award until Thursday, August 31. The annual award recognizes Perkins graduates who have demonstrated effectiveness and integrity in service to the church, continuing support for the goals of Perkins and SMU, distinguished service to the community, and exemplary character. The recipient will be honored at an awards banquet during the 2023 Fall Convocation.

Visit the [Perkins website](#) to learn more about nomination criteria, or reach out to Matt Jacob, Director of Public Affairs and Alumni/ae Relations at mjacob@smu.edu.

Office of Engaged Learning accepting faculty applications for fall/spring Undergraduate Research Assistants

The Office of Engaged Learning (OEL) is currently accepting applications from faculty to fund fall/spring Undergraduate Research Assistants (URA). The URA program provides matching funds to a department, school, or research grant to employ undergraduate SMU students. URAs may work up to 10 hours a

week during the academic year at wages up to \$15 per hour (50% paid by the employing area, 50% paid by OEL). Each faculty member may apply to have up to four URAs with up to \$1,500 available for each student for the year. The priority deadline for applications is August 18.

For more information and how to apply, visit smu.edu/ura.

Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence

SMU-led research team uses microwave frequency data to confirm volcanic activity on the Moon and get write-up in *The Economist*

Research Professor Matthew Siegler, Associate Professor Rita Economos, Postdoctoral Researcher Jianqing Feng, and graduate students, Katelyn Lehman-Franco and Mackenzie White in Dedman College of Humanities & Sciences' Roy M. Huffington Department of Earth Sciences published a study in [Nature](#) about their use of microwave frequency data to measure heat below the surface of the moon, which confirmed their theory that the feature was volcanic. The team used the data to determine that the heat being generated below the surface was coming from a concentration of radioactive elements that can only exist on the Moon as granite. Finding this granite body helps explain how the early lunar crust formed.

The [study was also published](#) in the science and technology section of *The Economist's* July 15 issue. The weekly print and digital news magazine has approximately 1.2M subscribers according to *The Economist's* own website and a social media following of 56.6M accounts.

Researchers from SMU and University of Texas at Austin team-up to uncover first Jurassic vertebrate fossils in Texas using a clue left in a 1938 SMU professors' paper

SMU researchers Timothy Myers, Louis Jacobs and Michael J. Polcyn in Dedman College's Roy M. Huffington Department of Earth Sciences and researchers from the University of Texas (UT) at Austin have discovered fossils in the Malone Mountains of West Texas that [establish Jurassic age creatures did live in Texas](#). Prior to this discovery, it was only hypothesized that Texas was inhabited during the Jurassic Period. Former SMU geology professor Claude Albritton mentioned finding large bone fragments in a 1938 paper on the geology of the Malone Mountains, a clue that UT's Steve May, lead researcher on this project, knew held promise to uncovering Jurassic Period fossils in Texas' geological record. The research written from this project was published last month in [Rocky Mountain Geology](#).

Key leadership searches underway

Peter O'Donnell Jr. Data Science Institute (DSI) Director

Currently, the search committee is scheduling interviews for finalists with plans to conduct two-day on-campus interviews throughout the month of August. We hope to fill the position by the fall.

As always, thank you to Suku Nair, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer, for chairing the search committee, and to Peter Moore, who is serving as the DSI Director *ad interim* and the Center for Research Computing Director *ad interim* until the new Director arrives. Be on the lookout for additional information in subsequent newsletters.

News and Noteworthy

SMU voice professor has spent more than 20 years building up South African music and her students

Meadows School of the Arts Professor Barbara Hill Moore was featured in *The Dallas Morning News* for her exceptional work with voice students both at SMU and abroad, most notably in South Africa. In 2011, she established and still currently serves as the Executive Director of the SMU-in-South Africa study abroad program. The program's creation was prompted by Professor Moore's many trips to South Africa to teach and recruit talented voice students and has evolved into a close bond between Nelson Mandela University and SMU.

When Professor Moore first started traveling to South Africa in 2000, she found eager students who wanted to study music and some who wanted to travel abroad to refine their talents. 23 years later, Professor Moore's former students are now teachers themselves, instructing at every major university in South Africa showing how one trip more than two decades ago started an international musical renaissance.

SMU Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center partners with Child Poverty Action Lab to improve criminal justice in Dallas County

A [new long-term partnership](#) between SMU Dedman School of Law's [Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center](#) and the [Child Poverty Action Lab](#) (CPAL) hopes to reduce pre-trial family separations and expand victim advocate assistance services across Dallas County. This long-term partnership will allow the two organizations to share resources and expertise to improve the criminal legal process in Dallas County.

Additionally, the Deason Center plans to study the impact of the partnership starting with a randomized control trial of the victim advocates' initiative. After collecting data throughout the year, the Center will publish its findings about the effect of victim advocates on charging timelines, charging outcomes and pretrial detention.

Sincerely,



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Southern Methodist University
<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

World Changers Shaped Here