

Weekly Update | October 25, 2024

Provost and Senior 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, 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 submit your ideas through our story form via the button below. Suggestions received before noon on Tuesday will be reviewed and considered for publication in that week's Friday newsletter. Others will be held until the following week.

[Submit your story](#)

Previous newsletters are [available here](#).

Today's update falls into five categories: 1) Fall 2024, 2) Academic Excellence, 3) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 4) Inclusive Excellence, and 5) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2024

SMU shines bright at University Leadership Summit in Boston

Chancellors, presidents, and provosts gathered in Boston this week for an invitation-only University Leadership Summit to discuss key educational challenges and interests, relevant market developments, and practical and progressive ideas and strategies adopted by successful pioneers. As a participant on the summit's "Beyond the Balance Sheet: Fiscal Sustainability Options for Universities and Colleges" panel, I was proud to share insights on SMU's approaches and successes toward greater academic and research excellence. In a time of significant challenges in higher education, including broad enrollment declines, SMU's positive story stood out and garnered considerable interest.

Thank you all for your efforts, big and small, that contribute to the attainment of our goals and that fulfill our mission to shape world changers.

Executive Board meetings

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences Executive Board

On Wednesday, October 23, I had the opportunity to provide Academic Affairs updates to members of the Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences Executive Board. My presentation began with a high-level overview of the near-term academic benefits for SMU of joining the ACC, most specifically through membership in the ACC – AC (Atlantic Coast Conference Academic Consortium). Then I shared highlights on the fall 2024 class at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. I concluded with an update on the current search for the next Elisabeth Martin Armstrong Dean of Dedman College.

Lyle School of Engineering Executive Board

This morning, I provided Academic Affairs updates to the Lyle School of Engineering Executive Board. My presentation opened similarly to the presentation to Dedman College's Executive Board, with an overview of the ACC-AC and the fall 2024 undergraduate and graduate student body. From there, I provided brief status updates on each of SMU's three open dean searches: Cox School of Business, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences and Perkins School of Theology. Lastly, I announced SMU's search for the Scurlock Chair of Ethics in AI.

Council on General Education calling for course proposals

The Council on General Education encourages faculty members to continue submitting course proposals for Common Curriculum (CC) requirements. All proposals must be [electronically submitted before the Council of General Education's meeting deadlines](#), as feedback may be requested. Proposals submitted by today, October 25, 2024, will be reviewed at the November 8, 2024, meeting; proposals submitted by February 14, 2025, will be reviewed at the February 28, 2025, meeting.

For more information, please visit www.smu.edu/council. If you have any questions, contact the Office of General Education at gened@smu.edu.

SMU in Four calls for new or redesigned Civic and Individual Ethics (CIE) tagged course proposals

The Council on General Education has approved updates to the Common Curriculum's (CC) Civic and Individual Ethics (CIE) Rubric to modify the supporting skills in ways that more clearly emphasize ethical topics, questions, concepts and dilemmas within civic or individual contexts. Student learning outcomes remain the same. In light of this updated rubric, SMU in Four is announcing a call for new or redesigned Civic and Individual Ethics (CIE) tagged course proposals and will provide compensation (details below) to the proposals selected for development.

The proposals for new or redesigned CIE-tagged courses are due by November 15 at 5 p.m. via the [online submission platform](#). After the November 15 deadline, the Office of the Provost will review proposals on a rolling basis. Please note that a limited number of courses will be selected for development.

Three types of CIE course proposals are being sought:

- Develop an online, asynchronous course for fall 2025 – one faculty proposer will receive one month of extra salary up to \$10,000 in extra compensation to develop the online, asynchronous course.
- Develop a new, in-person synchronous course for fall 2025 – Two faculty proposers will each receive \$7,500 in extra compensation to propose and develop a new course.

- Redesign of an existing, in-person synchronous course for fall 2025 – Two faculty proposers will each receive \$5,000 in extra compensation to redesign an existing course.

The Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics and Public Responsibility is pleased to announce its support of SMU in Four's efforts, through the Council on General Education, to enhance SMU's Civic and Individual Ethics curriculum. The selected faculty cohort will benefit from immersive retreats designed to foster collaborative learning, deepen their engagement with ethical topics and receive access to course development resources.

For more information on the course proposals being sought, expectations of selected courses and the Maguire Center's support for this initiative, [read the full blog post here](#).

Office of General Education hosting training series for faculty and staff

The Office of General Education will host multiple training sessions this fall for faculty and staff. Training sessions will be offered on SMU's Common Curriculum (CC), departmental responsibilities regarding the CC, and course and experience proposals.

For those interested in attending, [registration is available on SMU360](#). After registering, you will receive reminder emails leading up to the event, an Outlook Calendar invite and any resources used or distributed during the training. All workshops will take place on the first floor of the Laura Lee Blanton building.

Any questions, comments, or concerns can be directed to gened@smu.edu.

Academic Excellence

Cox School of Business MBA student wins scholarship at Women's Energy Network North Texas Leadership Conference

Cox School of Business full-time MBA student Hayley Ray, MBA '25, attended the [14th Annual Women's Energy Network North Texas Leadership Conference](#) on Thursday, October 3 in Las Colinas, TX. During the conference, she received a [2024 WEN North Texas Scholarship](#), one of only four such awards granted annually. These "scholarships of \$5000 each [are awarded] to female, undergraduate or graduate students from North Texas with exemplary academic records, demonstrated leadership potential, and an intent to pursue a career in energy".

Also at the conference, Brandy Dalton, senior director of BBA and MS career programs at the Cox Career Management Center, represented the Cox School and SMU by participating in a panel discussion on "Career Success Through Continuous Learning and Development".

Twenty-six doctoral students recognized at Moody School Candidacy Ceremony

On Friday, October 18, twenty-six doctoral students from 14 departments across the schools and college participated in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies' Doctoral Candidacy Ceremony in Frances Anne Moody Hall. The ceremony was led by Robin Poston, dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. Dean Stephanie Knight, Simmons School of Education and Human Development, and Ali Beskok, associate dean for research innovation and industry partnerships at Lyle School of Engineering, were also present, along with the students' advisors and guests.

Advancement to candidacy marks the point in a doctoral student's progress when they have completed all coursework and qualifying examinations and have been judged by the faculty of their department to be ready to complete an original and significant research project worthy of the doctoral degree. The Moody School Candidacy Ceremony honors Ph.D. and other doctoral students who have passed this important milestone.



Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence

SMU partners on Mobility Equity Research Center, funded by \$2.97 million research grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation, to support communities with transportation challenges

Researchers from SMU, Florida A&M University, Arizona State University, and The University of Utah have received \$2.97 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation to expand accessibility and mobility for underserved communities. This award has been used to create the first-of-its-kind [Mobility Equity Research Center](#) and to establish a collaborative effort, [Advancing Community-Centric Equitable Systems and Solutions in Mobility](#) (ACCESS-M) at Florida A&M. Dr. Janille Smith-Colin, J. Lindsay Embrey Trustee Assistant Professor, in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Lyle School of Engineering, will be the lead researcher from SMU on this project.

Using a three-pronged research approach of policy, technology, and operation, the Mobility Equity Research Center will develop comprehensive solutions that can be implemented across diverse regions and communities. As part of the initiative, Dr. Smith-Colin and her research group will be helping the City of Dallas measure the performance of infrastructure investments to determine progress made toward our region's equity goals. Her research aims to create better outcomes for communities in the infrastructure development process, creating a more just transportation system now and for future generations.

Learn more about this [research project here](#).

Inclusive Excellence

Cox Latino Leadership Initiative partners with Wells Fargo Commercial Banking for networking event

The Cox Latino Leadership Initiative partnered with [Wells Fargo Commercial Banking](#) for a screening and networking event on Tuesday, October 8, of the new film *Show Her The Money*, in Crum Auditorium. This award-winning documentary explores the venture capital environment by focusing on diverse, women-owned businesses and the journeys of four visionary women entrepreneurs in their efforts to raise capital. The screening was followed by a panel discussion in the Bank of Texas dining room, featuring cast members and a networking event with 50 women executives and other key stakeholders.

Toyota North America partners with Cox Executive Education for Counsel in Motion program

Cox Executive Education helped [Toyota North America](#) champion diversity in law by partnering with the automaker's pioneering [Counsel in Motion program](#). In September, at Toyota's headquarters in Plano, TX, Cox Executive Education instructor Jerry Magar led the concluding workshop before the 2024 cohort's graduation. During Professor Magar's interactive session entitled "Becoming a Trusted Advisor: Partnership in Turbulent Times," the 19 participants received insights and tools for navigating organizational change, interpersonal influence, high-trust leadership behaviors, complex workplace dynamics and much more.

Launched in 2022 to help talented young lawyers from diverse backgrounds enhance their professional growth, the six-month program provides mid-level attorneys from the company's partnering law firms with leadership and mentorship from the Cox School of Business and other renowned industry experts, along with business development training.

News and Noteworthy

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences faculty member has research featured in France's premier newspaper

Professor Klaus Desmet's research on U.S. polarization was [covered by an opinion piece in Le Monde](#), France's premier newspaper.

In the [original research paper](#), Professor Desmet shows that for the last forty years, the degree of underlying polarization of the American public, in terms of their values, has been high and relatively stable. Growing polarization in the U.S. is a reflection of partisan views becoming increasingly aligned with the main values-based clusters in society.

Dedman Law Review Symposium: Rahimi and the Future of Text, History, and Tradition

The SMU Law Review Association, led by Dedman Law Professors Eric Ruben and Natalie Nanasi, and the Duke Center for Firearms Law are hosting a full-day symposium today, October 25. This collaborative event brings together leading scholars from across the country to discuss key developments in the Second Amendment and its interpretation.

Professor Ruben is a national expert on the Second Amendment whose recent scholarship has been published by the Yale Law Journal and cited by the Supreme Court of the United States. Professor

Nanasi is the Director of the Judge Elmo B. Hunter Legal Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women whose recent scholarship will be presented at Yale Law School and published in the Yale Journal of Law and Feminism.

SMU joins Ocean Energy Safety Institute Consortium

SMU Lyle has recently joined the [Ocean Energy Safety Institute](#) (OESI) Consortium. OESI is a collaborative consortium managed by the [Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station](#) (TEES).

OESI was established to enhance the safety, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness of offshore energy production, including oil, gas, and renewable sources like wind and marine energy. OESI brings together academic, government, and industry stakeholders to focus on developing advanced safety technologies, workforce training and environmental protection for offshore operations. OESI is currently funded as part of a \$40 million sponsorship between the [Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement](#) (BSEE) and the [Department of Energy](#). OESI currently has 26 members from academic institutions, 38 members from industry as well as representation from several state and federal organizations and national labs. Consortium members enjoy a range of benefits, including the opportunity to compete for research funding through project calls and to collaborate with researchers in leading-edge facilities.

Professor Saeed Salehi, Herman Brown Chair of Mechanical Engineering at Lyle School of Engineering, serves as the technical representative for the Ocean Energy Safety Institute (OESI) Consortium.

Recap: Cox School of Business organizes second annual Healthcare Conference

Cox School of Business held its [second annual Healthcare Conference](#) on October 10-11, bringing together nearly 300 healthcare professionals for sessions focused on improving the consumer experience in the healthcare industry. The event featured leaders from organizations like [McKesson](#), [Texas Health Resources](#), and [UT Southwestern](#), alongside state and federal officials.

The keynote speaker was Scott Flannery, CEO of [UnitedHealthcare](#), who spoke on "Payers' Perspectives on Consumer Experience" on day one of the conference.

After the keynote session, Stephen Gillett, CEO of [Verily](#) (formerly Google Life Sciences), participated in the "Leaders on Leadership Fireside Chat." Gillett shared insights from his 25-year career in tech and retail, emphasizing the difference between "capital L" leadership, which is public-facing, and "lowercase l" leadership, which is defined by personal integrity and decision-making when unseen.

SMU Global Online and Continuing Education (GOCE) hosts Tech It Out workshop

On October 2, 2024, SMU Global Online and Continuing Education (GOCE) hosted the Tech It Out workshop at Frances Anne Moody Hall, in collaboration with the [WICT Network](#). The event was open to students, staff, and faculty, and featured Sharlene Jenner, who led a session on Generative AI for Business. Approximately 100 attendees participated in discussions, including a fireside chat with Gordon Marantz of The Walt Disney Company and a panel led by Danny Cohen, featuring women leaders from Spectrum, Comcast, and other companies, emphasizing how AI enhances human-centric work.

Sincerely,



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SMU