



# PUTTING IDEAS TO WORK

The Strategic Plan for  
Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences  
2011-2016









## CONTENTS

Message from the Dean

Vision

Mission

Introduction

Goals and Objectives

- I. Enhancing Undergraduate Education
- II. Strengthening Graduate Programs
- III. Supporting a Faculty of Excellence
- IV. Advancing Funded Research
- V. Promoting an Interdisciplinary Culture
- VI. Improving Marketing and Furthering Community Engagement

The Path Forward

Dedman College Strategic Planning Committee 2010-2011

Dedman College Executive Board 2011-2012

Dedman College Campaign Steering Committee





## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Discovery starts with bold ideas. Great universities nurture ideas, test them and put them to work in service of people and organizations.

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences is the place where great ideas take root, where students are challenged to transform learning into action.

At the heart of SMU, Dedman College prepares students for the challenges of a complex world with a strong foundation in the liberal arts. The College offers students a wealth of choices, with more than 80 minors and majors spanning the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences, and with opportunities for advanced graduate education in numerous fields. The research conducted in the College – on topics from seismology to drug discovery, domestic violence to the American Revolution – drives solutions for the pressing needs of society, from the neighborhoods of Dallas to the far edges of the world. The faculty, students and alumni of Dedman College are known, on campus and well beyond, for the breadth of their interests and accomplishments, for their intellectual curiosity and creativity and for their profound commitment to making a difference.

As SMU begins its second century of achievement, we stand at a unique moment of opportunity for Dedman College. In this strategic plan, faculty and staff, alumni and community leaders have come together to assess the College's strengths, address its weaknesses, identify its competitive advantages and chart a clear vision for future growth and prominence. We believe that Dedman College stands apart, within SMU and across the landscape of American higher education, in its commitment to the practical benefits of broad, engaged learning across the disciplines and to the transformative power of discovery through research. We also draw strength from our vibrant urban home: Dedman College is energized by the rising global city of Dallas, while Dallas in turn is enriched and inspired by the programs and people of Dedman College.

Every day, in the classrooms of Dallas Hall and the laboratories of Dedman Life Sciences Building, Dedman College challenges students and faculty to turn ideas into actions, to understand a rapidly changing world, to serve a society hungry for answers and to make real the promise of liberal arts education and scholarly research. For Dedman College – and indeed, for SMU – to reach its full potential, we must translate the ideas, aspirations and strategic priorities detailed in the pages that follow into actions, answers and, above all, results. I invite you to join us in creating an extraordinary future for Dedman College.





DAVID J. MELTZER

Henderson-Morrison Professor of Anthropology  
Director of Quest Archaeological Research Program  
National Academy of Sciences member



## VISION

In five years, Dedman College will:

- **Compete nationally for the top undergraduates in the liberal arts.** We will attract the highest achieving students through enhanced academic scholarship programs, personalized teaching and advising, innovative curricular options and one of America's best hands-on research programs for undergraduates.
- **Be the home to thriving, nationally respected graduate programs.** We will attract, train and place exceptional graduate students with competitive stipend and benefits packages, new degrees and certificates and expanded opportunities in leading-edge research.
- **Achieve recognition nationally and internationally for the caliber of its faculty.** We will increase the size of the faculty and the number of endowed professorships. We will continue to recruit and support faculty members who are passionate teachers and inspired, productive scholars.
- **Be an engine of funded research, expanding knowledge and improving human life.** We will substantially increase research activity through enhanced organizational infrastructure, expanded physical space, stronger graduate programs and new investments in technology.
- **Cultivate a dynamic and thoroughly interdisciplinary intellectual community.** We will stimulate discovery across the liberal arts, creating a new interdisciplinary institute of national prominence that transcends the boundaries between the humanities and sciences, teaching and research, theory and practice.
- **Emerge as a catalyst for change in Dallas.** We will support the growth, health and intellectual vitality of our region through ambitious partnerships with leading institutions, enhanced community service initiatives and engaged public scholarship.

In five years, Dedman College will be a model for American higher education, combining the best of the modern research university with the best of the liberal arts tradition. Dedman College will support – and lead – SMU as the institution rises to become one of the top 50 national universities. And while Dedman College will boast many of the qualities of prestigious colleges of arts and sciences, it will retain a distinctive character, born of its abiding strengths, its historic values and its deep roots in Dallas.







## MISSION

Dedman College is the academic heart of Southern Methodist University.

We are committed to the promise and reality of a liberal arts education as essential preparation for life and career. Through both discipline-based and interdisciplinary learning, Dedman College students gain the analytical, creative and practical skills necessary for professional success and personal growth in a rapidly changing world. Our focus is educating the whole person and preparing students to be passionate, self-reflective, globally aware and civically engaged leaders and citizens.

We are equally committed to pursuing new knowledge and bringing benefit to society through research. Dedman College fosters the process of discovery across the humanities and sciences, seeking innovation and insight through pure and applied research. Driven by the conviction that research and teaching in the liberal arts must be intimately linked, we strive to engage undergraduate and graduate students directly in the process of problem-solving and scholarly exploration.

Learning, teaching and working at an institution like SMU is a privilege not available to everyone, so we are keenly aware of our responsibility to use education to serve society. We are especially committed to serving Dallas by stimulating a rich intellectual and cultural life for the community, partnering with a wide range of local organizations and contributing to the prosperity and dynamism of a rising global city. In educating new generations of leaders and opening new frontiers through research, Dedman College is a vibrant resource for the state, the nation and the world.





ANNA SKRIVANEK  
Dedman College Scholar  
Anthropology and History double major, Human Rights minor



## INTRODUCTION

There is a rising sense of excitement on campus and in Dallas, as the University begins a four-year celebration of the centennials of its founding and opening. Expectations are high for SMU after a century of achievement and a recent history marked by rapid progress and growing distinction. The evidence of SMU's ascent is readily apparent – in the University's steady climb in the national rankings, in the quality and accomplishment of the student body, in the range and scale of research conducted, in the expansion of campus facilities and in the establishment of the George W. Bush Presidential Center. At a time of retrenchment in most colleges and universities, SMU's trajectory of growth and the ambition of its institutional vision set it apart in the competitive landscape of American higher education. Location also favors SMU: The University's rise and the ongoing evolution of Dallas as a vibrant and entrepreneurial global city are inextricably intertwined.

Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences has contributed actively to SMU's emergence as a leading national university. Dedman College has long and justifiably claimed to be the heart of SMU. Most first-year students begin their careers in the College, and half of all undergraduate degrees awarded are in Dedman College. The College has the largest faculty and offers more graduate programs than any other SMU school. Dedman College has historically generated the University's highest totals of external grant funding for research. Dedman College also takes pride in being the intellectual core of SMU, bringing together the diverse disciplines of the liberal arts and serving as the academic cornerstone for the University's distinguished professional schools.

### The Heart of SMU

With more than 80 majors and minors, Dedman College accounts for more than 40 percent of classes taken by SMU undergraduates.





LISA SIRAGANIAN  
Assistant Professor, Department of English



SMU will never realize its full academic potential or its ambitions of national prominence without a strong and energized Dedman College. Yet in recent years the College has lacked consistent leadership and a clear vision of what it could or should aspire to be. Strong departments have built the scholarly reputation of the College but have lacked the resources to cultivate interdisciplinary exchange and collaboration. The intellectual diversity of the liberal arts has enriched the campus and benefited students but has hampered the College in defining a clear message and a unified identity. Efforts within the College to engage with the Dallas community have been broadly based and innovative but have suffered from weak coordination and a low public profile. Financial resources, meanwhile, have been stagnant for decades. Dedman College's ability to dream, to think big and to plan for the future has been hamstrung by consistently tight budgets and the frustration and cynicism that so often accompany them.

*Now is the time to propel Dedman College forward with the focus, determination and optimism that have driven SMU's rise as a great university.*

This strategic plan grows from the conviction that now is the time for Dedman College to define itself and its vision for the future. Now is the time for Dedman College to make good on the exceptional promise of its faculty, students and programs, and to be ambitious in pursuing excellence. Now is the time to propel Dedman College forward with the focus, determination and optimism that have driven SMU's rise as a great university. And now is the time to affirm Dedman College's place not just as the academic foundation of SMU but also as a vital, creative hub that drives the intellectual life of Dallas and the region.







MIKE (XINQ) REN  
Dedman College Scholar  
Biological Sciences major, premedical track



This strategic plan asserts that Dedman College can and should combine the best features of the comprehensive research university and the best of the liberal arts college tradition. Dedman College should follow the model of the great modern research universities, fostering the process of scholarly discovery and its application to the countless challenges facing the world. As part of the quest to create new knowledge, the College should support focused graduate programs, sustainable in size and funding, of the very highest quality. While many public research universities today slight undergraduate education, Dedman College should honor its long tradition of training students broadly in the liberal arts. A rich undergraduate experience, based on individual relationships between faculty and students inside and beyond the classroom, must continue to be the hallmark of the College. By fusing high-level research and graduate training with a genuine commitment to teaching and mentoring undergraduates in the liberal arts, Dedman College can claim a distinctive place at SMU and in American higher education.

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Toward the vision of a focused, cohesive and energized Dedman College, six goals, each with a number of associated objectives, are presented in this strategic plan. Metrics for each goal are identified so that progress can be quantified and the administration and faculty of the College can be held accountable over the plan's five-year span. An annual report on progress toward the goals of this plan, based on these metrics as well as other appropriate quantitative and qualitative data, will be prepared by the Dedman College Faculty Council and will be presented by the dean to the College's faculty, the Executive Board and the Campaign Steering Committee. As with SMU's Centennial Strategic Plan, which provided a starting point for this document, the Dedman College strategic plan is intended to be flexible in goals and objectives so that the College can have latitude in responding to ever-changing conditions, challenges and opportunities over the coming years.





BRENT SUMERLIN

Associate Professor of Chemistry

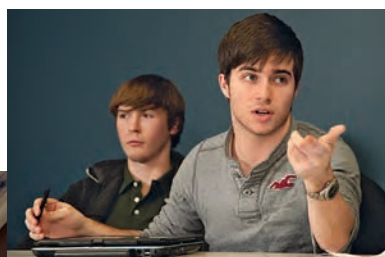
2008 National Science Foundation

Faculty Early Career Development Award Winner

Attaining the standards of excellence outlined in this strategic plan will certainly not be easy. Existing resources will need to be used more effectively, and new streams of support will need to be tapped. Longstanding habits, institutional structures and ways of thinking about Dedman College will have to be reassessed as new goals and priorities guide the College's growth. Above all, as in any organizational transformation, the commitment to embrace a new vision and to welcome change will be critical to the success of this strategic plan. Without the active investment of all those who make up Dedman College – faculty and staff, students and alumni, supporters in the community – progress toward shared objectives will be impossible. Happily, all signs indicate that anticipation is high, that the hunger for meaningful change is real and that the commitment to moving Dedman College forward is deep and broad.

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In an era of diminished expectations in higher education, Dedman College must be bold in its goals and daring in its tactics. Amidst widespread public handwringing over the value of the liberal arts, Dedman College must be resolute in supporting a broad and diverse liberal education. And at a historical moment, when SMU seems poised to join the first rank of elite universities nationwide, Dedman College must be ambitious and contribute actively to the greater success of the University.







## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### I. Enhancing Undergraduate Education

Dedman College is understandably proud of its accomplishments in undergraduate education. Talented teachers, small classes, individual attention and

*In the highly competitive environment of American higher education, Dedman College must do more to keep pace with leading institutions nationally, strengthen recruitment initiatives, define a distinctive identity in the educational marketplace and offer students the richest undergraduate experience possible.*

a wealth of curricular options distinguish the College's undergraduate program. In the highly competitive environment of American higher education, however, Dedman College must do more to keep pace with leading institutions nationally, strengthen recruitment initiatives, define a distinctive identity in the educational marketplace and offer students the richest undergraduate experience possible. Dedman College also must strive, as part of a university with several high-caliber professional schools

that offer attractive undergraduate programs, to provide the kinds of curricula and educational experiences that can draw the best students to the liberal arts. Since learning does not stop at the classroom door, the College must enhance advising, programs for high-achieving students and international options. Technology that enriches the total learning experience should be embraced. Particular emphasis should be placed on expanding research opportunities for undergraduates. Participation in the process of discovery is an intense and uniquely valuable experience for students, and Dedman College, with its commitment both to cutting-edge research and individualized education, should elevate undergraduate research as a distinguishing feature of its educational programs.

#### National and International Achievement

Dedman College students have recently been awarded the most prestigious recognition, including:

- Five Fulbright Scholars
- Two Truman Scholars
- Four Goldwater Scholars or Honorable Mentions
- Six Gilman Scholars
- Five French Government Teaching Assistants

### Objectives

- *Build endowed scholarship funds to attract the best students to Dedman College and to the liberal arts.* The expansion of the Dedman College Scholars Program is especially important in guaranteeing a strong student body for the College.
- *Promote undergraduate research across the College.* Existing initiatives should be aligned, and new opportunities should be created to engage students in creating and applying knowledge. Endowed funding will be critical to making research experiences accessible to more Dedman College students.

- *Develop new minors and majors that meet the interests and needs of current and future students and that can become signature programs for Dedman College.* The Embrey Human Rights Program, which boasts the largest undergraduate minor in human rights in the United States, has captured student and faculty interest and attracted national attention. Other outstanding degree programs of this nature that leverage the strengths of Dedman College and its faculty should be encouraged.
- *Champion the University Honors Program and support the development of honors/distinction tracks in majors.* Dedman College should ensure that programs are in place to engage and challenge highly motivated and high-achieving undergraduates.
- *Support the successful implementation of the new University Curriculum.* As home to the Office of General Education, and as the largest provider of general education courses, Dedman College must take the lead in realizing the ambitious vision of the University Curriculum.
- *Participate in the creation of academic programs and enrichment activities in the new Residential Commons.* SMU's evolution to a more residential campus offers the College new ways of engaging with and serving undergraduates.
- *Strengthen recruitment activities.* Dedman College needs a polished, professional and adequately staffed team to recruit the best qualified and most exceptional students to the liberal arts.
- *Enhance advising and student records based on the recommendations of the Task Force on Undergraduate Services.* High-quality and personalized advising and mentoring are critical to the undergraduate experience and should be prioritized by the College.
- *Create a "sense of place" in Dedman College.* In contrast to most of SMU's schools, Dedman College's departments, programs and administrative units are widely dispersed across campus. To undergraduates, and even Dedman College majors, the College seems to lack a physical core, a central meeting place for students and faculty, and a real sense of spatial identity. Unified signage in College buildings and improved spaces for informal interaction among students and faculty are important first steps in establishing a more welcoming "sense of place."
- *Provide more opportunities for international exposure, both inside the classroom and through education abroad, and for service learning.* New and enhanced options in experiential learning and building global awareness will contribute to the undergraduate experience.

## Key Metric

The average SAT of incoming first-year students intending to major in Dedman College will reach 1300.

## Other Metrics

- Number of funded Dedman College Scholars, up to the current goal of 10 new scholarships per year.
- Average SAT scores of incoming Dedman College Scholars.
- Percentage of incoming SMU first-year students who indicate an intention to major in Dedman College.
- Number of undergraduate research projects completed and number of resulting publications and presentations at scholarly conferences.
- Satisfaction with academic advising, as measured by student surveys.
- Percentage of undergraduates participating in SMU Abroad programs.





## II. Strengthening Graduate Programs

Vibrant graduate programs are essential to the pursuit of research at the highest level and to the creation of a lively intellectual climate in the humanities and

*Strong graduate programs feed collaborations across disciplines, build bridges to the community through research and service and enhance the productivity of faculty.*

sciences. Strong graduate programs also feed collaborations across disciplines, build bridges to the community through research and service and enhance the productivity of faculty. Significantly, graduate students have important roles in undergraduate education, from classroom teaching to the supervision of labs to mentoring undergraduate research.

Across the nation, leading private universities are distinguished by the quality of their doctoral and Master's programs in the liberal arts and sciences.

Many graduate programs in Dedman College have long histories and enviable records of educating and placing their students. Unfortunately, most of the programs in the College now struggle with insufficient funding and are unable to offer competitive financial packages to attract top students. A number of programs also have shrunk, again due to funding constraints, to a small and unsustainable number of graduate students. Meanwhile, the benefits provided to our graduate students have lagged behind what many of our peer institutions can offer.

In order for Dedman College to realize the vision of fusing the best features of the contemporary research university with the best traditions of the liberal arts college, substantial new investment in graduate education will be essential.

### Nationally Recognized Graduate Programs

- The Dedman College doctoral program in clinical psychology is accredited by the American Psychological Association.
- In the last decade, Anthropology graduate students have received 30 National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grants and six NSF Graduate Fellowships.
- In 1959, the Department of Economics became the first department at SMU to offer a Ph.D. The first doctoral degree was conferred in 1963, the first Ph.D. granted by a university in Dallas.
- Recent graduates from Dedman College doctoral programs are working for the World Bank, Exxon-Mobil, the government of Turkey and leading archaeological and environmental consulting groups. Others hold positions at Dartmouth Medical School, Auburn University and Universidad de las Americas in Mexico.

## Objectives

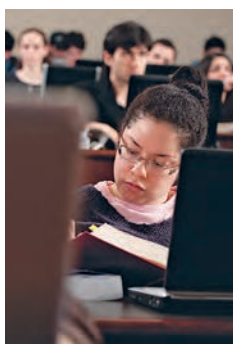
- *Increase support for graduate education substantially.* Financial packages for graduate students should be increased to levels competitive with our peer institutions. The number of graduate students supported should be increased in most departments, but most urgently in those most actively engaged in externally funded research. Graduate students should have benefits packages comparable to those provided by our aspirational peer institutions.
- *Strengthen recruitment, retention and placement of graduate students.* More coordinated efforts to recruit, retain and assist in the placement of graduate students should be undertaken.
- *Enhance graduate programs by studying, sharing and implementing best practices.* Innovative approaches to graduate training, both at SMU and at other leading research universities, should be explored and implemented.
- *Identify and establish promising new Master's and graduate certificate programs.* Priority should be given to creating new programs, especially those with a professional focus, that serve students and the community, generate new revenue for departments and the College and enhance the reputation of the University.

### Key Metric

Financial packages for incoming graduate students will be competitive with those at SMU's aspirational peer institutions.

### Other Metrics

- Benefit packages offered to graduate students.
- Number of funded graduate students.
- Number of graduate students supported with external grant funds.
- Retention rate of funded graduate students.
- Placement rate of graduate students in academic and professional positions.
- Time to degree for doctoral students.







### III. Supporting a Faculty of Excellence

The foundation of Dedman College's excellence is its faculty. Although many elements contribute to the reputation of a university, from facilities to

*For Dedman College to reach its potential, further investment is necessary to increase the size of the faculty, thus bolstering targeted departments, building new capacity in research and creating new opportunities for students.*

student accomplishments to the success of sports teams, the quality and size of the faculty are undeniably critical factors. Dedman College is justifiably proud of its faculty members, many of whom are celebrated locally, nationally and internationally for their contributions in teaching, research and service to the profession and the community. The number of College faculty elected to elite bodies (like the National

Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences), and the faculty's record of success in winning grants and recognition from prestigious organizations (including the National Science Foundation and the Guggenheim Foundation), are testaments to the quality of Dedman College.

#### Recognition for Scholarship

Dedman College faculty have been recognized with prestigious academic awards, including:

- National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship
- Sloan Research Fellow
- Election to the National Academy of Sciences
- National Science Foundation Young Investigator Award
- Department of Energy Early Career Award
- Sam Taylor Fellowships

Recruiting and retaining a faculty of excellence are ongoing challenges, especially in the competitive climate of American higher education today. Ensuring a healthy diversity among the faculty and staff is no less demanding. For Dedman College, however, the size of the faculty is now the most pressing concern. Despite the overall growth at SMU, the development of new programs and the ever-increasing demands on scholars and educators, the total number of faculty in Dedman College has not changed in 25 years. Almost all College departments have fewer tenure-track faculty than their equivalents in SMU's aspirant institutions, and some are not even staffed to the levels found in small liberal arts colleges. This means that Dedman College departments generally do not have the critical mass of faculty necessary to provide the breadth of teaching and research expected in leading American universities.

For Dedman College to reach its potential, further investment is necessary to increase the size of the faculty, thus bolstering targeted departments, building new capacity in research and creating new opportunities for students.

## Objectives

- *Recruit and retain an exceptional and diverse faculty, dedicated to excellence in research and teaching.* Dedman College should nurture a faculty of national prominence that embraces the institutional vision of research at the highest level combined with a fundamental commitment to undergraduate education.
- *Increase the number of faculty lines in Dedman College incrementally.* The creation of new endowed professorships and chairs will be an important part of this growth.
- *Reduce dependence on part-time faculty in undergraduate classes.* Like many American universities, SMU has become increasingly dependent on part-time faculty and adjuncts, especially in lower-level undergraduate courses. By increasing the number of College faculty and encouraging more faculty to teach introductory classes, the student learning experience will be enriched and more consistent.

### Key Metric

The number of full-time faculty in Dedman College will increase by 15 over the next five years. The number of endowed professorships and chairs will increase by five over this time.

### Other Metrics

- Ratio of faculty to student credit hours generated.
- Number of endowed professorships.
- Percentage of faculty appointments held by women and members of underrepresented groups.
- Percentage of undergraduate student credit hours taught by full-time faculty.







#### IV. Advancing Funded Research

Universities such as SMU serve society by educating students and creating knowledge through scholarly research. Dedman College faculty have long been

*Enhanced research in Dedman College will benefit Dallas by generating new economic opportunities and addressing a variety of pressing social, political and cultural challenges in the local community.*

enthusiastic participants in the process of discovery, and many departments have vigorous and productive cultures of research. SMU and the College were relatively slow, however, in developing an institution-wide commitment to research and in establishing the infrastructure necessary to support high research and grant activity. Although progress in these directions, led by the Office of Research and

Graduate Studies, has been significant in recent years, more must be done to leverage the research capabilities of the College, facilitate funded research and remove structural impediments to investigators. In addition, adequate physical space, especially for laboratories and collaborative spaces in the natural and social sciences, is essential for a vibrant institutional program of research. So too is up-to-date technology that supports the work of scholars and students.

##### Leading Research Activity

Over the past three years, external research grants to the University have surpassed \$63 million. Dedman College research – more than \$36 million over three years – accounts for 57 percent of SMU's research grants.

By investing in the organizational and physical infrastructure for research, and by promoting a broad and vigorous culture of scholarly exploration, Dedman College is well positioned to stimulate research activity, increase external grant funding and boost its national reputation. Enhanced research in Dedman College will benefit Dallas by generating new economic opportunities and addressing a variety of pressing social, political and cultural challenges in the local community.

##### Objectives

- *Assess and refocus College efforts to promote funded research.* A variety of programs that help faculty from across the College compete for external grants should be developed. Start-up funding packages must remain competitive to attract top researchers to the faculty. Current College efforts to encourage research activity should be evaluated and reorganized, if necessary, to guarantee the most effective use of resources.

- *Align the organization of the Dedman College Dean's Office with the goal of advancing research.* A new position at the associate dean level should be created to stimulate scholarly activity and lead College efforts to encourage externally funded research. This new appointment should work closely with faculty and with SMU's Office of Research and Graduate Studies.
- *Support initiatives like the Dean's Research Council to provide seed and bridge funding to faculty.* Private support should play a significant role in stimulating research activity and providing resources for promising new projects.
- *Implement a new space policy, seeking ways to optimize the use of existing space and gain additional campus resources as they become available.* Research and grant activity in Dedman College will not be able to grow substantially without additional physical space. More efficient use of existing resources will provide some short-term relief, but ultimately Dedman College will require significant new space for researchers in the social and natural sciences.
- *Improve instrumentation and computational facilities.* Up-to-date equipment for research and teaching in the sciences should be acquired and maintained. Continuous development of the network and computer infrastructure that provides a backbone for research across Dedman College should be prioritized.
- *Develop sources for the support of graduate student research projects.* In addition to supporting undergraduate and faculty research, the College should identify resources to support promising research endeavors of graduate students.

#### Key Metric

External funding for research in Dedman College will increase to \$20 million annually by 2015, in keeping with the goals of SMU's Centennial Strategic Plan.

#### Other Metrics

- Number of external grant applications submitted.
- Percentage of faculty submitting grant applications.
- Number of postdoctoral researchers.
- Support for faculty research from the Dean's Research Council and other College sources.
- Square footage of office and research space in Dedman College.







## V. Promoting an Interdisciplinary Culture

Strong disciplinary research and teaching, rooted in academic departments, is fundamental to the success of any university. But so too is interdisciplinary interchange, the free and dynamic flow of ideas across the traditional boundaries of disciplinary methodology and knowledge. Scholars and students

increasingly recognize that the major challenges we face as a society, from disease to environmental issues to the impact of global migration, can be addressed effectively only through interdisciplinary collaborations.

Dedman College has a wealth of interdisciplinary programs, some of which have flourished while many others have

languished with little faculty investment, scant student interest and minimal institutional support. For the College to be vibrant intellectually, with timely and innovative research and teaching programs, its culture of interdisciplinarity must be fostered and energized. Toward this end, existing interdisciplinary initiatives should be assessed, and strong programs that actively serve faculty, students and the community should be promoted. Promising new interdisciplinary ventures, from degree programs to research projects, should be encouraged. Perhaps most importantly, the establishment of a new institute dedicated to stimulating interdisciplinary interchange across the humanities and sciences should be an immediate priority. By providing a forum for dialogue and serving as an incubator for new collaborations, this institute would provide the institutional impetus to a more vigorous and creative interdisciplinary culture in Dedman College.

*Scholars and students increasingly recognize that the major challenges we face as a society, from disease to environmental issues to the impact of global migration, can be addressed effectively only through interdisciplinary collaborations.*

### Interdisciplinary Study

More than 40 percent of Dedman College students are double or triple majors. Interdisciplinary study includes innovative programs including:

- Markets and Culture academic major
- Embrey Human Rights Program
- John Goodwin Tower Center for Political Studies
- International Studies
- Biochemistry
- Women's and Gender Studies





## Objectives

- *Create a new, high-profile institute that will promote interdisciplinary studies across the College.* This new unit is inspired by the humanities centers found at most of SMU's peer universities but would encompass all liberal arts disciplines and embrace teaching as well as research. The institute would encourage interdisciplinarity and nourish the intellectual life of the College by sponsoring faculty reading groups and thematic seminars, providing seed funding for interdisciplinary projects, pursuing external grant opportunities and developing new initiatives to serve scholars, students and the community. Endowed funding will be essential to create a new interdisciplinary hub that can energize the College and gain national prominence.
- *Review the viability of current interdisciplinary programs and encourage the development of new and reorganized interdisciplinary units.* Successful existing programs that engage faculty broadly and attract strong student interest should be supported. Additional signature programs for the College should be developed, based on faculty expertise and student demand.
- *Evaluate programs in international and area studies and develop a coordinated strategy for best meeting the needs of students, faculty and the community.* Ensuring the global literacy of students and supporting faculty with international research and teaching interests should be prioritized. More effective institutional structures and curricular options should be explored and implemented.
- *Promote existing interdisciplinary centers and institutes and encourage them to take larger roles in promoting research and gaining external funding.* Dedman College is fortunate in having a number of established units that support interdisciplinary research: the John Goodwin Tower Center for Political Studies and the Clements Center for Southwest Studies have national and international profiles, the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man is a long-term contributor to research in the sciences and the new Center for Scientific Computational Science has great potential. These centers and institutes can and should provide leadership in stimulating interdisciplinary dialogue on campus and facilitating external grant funding for interdisciplinary projects.
- *Support partnerships in research, teaching and outreach across the SMU campus.* Building stronger relationships between Dedman College and the other schools and major administrative units at SMU will be mutually beneficial.

### Key Metric

Programs of the new interdisciplinary studies institute will touch all Dedman College faculty, graduate students and undergraduates.

### Other Metrics

- Number of undergraduates majoring and minoring in interdisciplinary programs.
- Number of undergraduates with majors and minors in more than one discipline.
- Number of "Ways of Knowing" interdisciplinary courses in the new University Curriculum offered by Dedman College faculty.





## VI. Improving Marketing and Furthering Community Engagement

Dedman College has a wealth of stories to tell, from the classroom, from the discoveries of research and from service to the community. The College has long struggled, however, to craft a coherent message and effectively communicate

its strengths and successes to audiences both on campus and off. In order to realize its full potential, Dedman College must develop a clearer identity, improve its infrastructure for marketing and external relations and do a much better job of telling its stories to a wider public.

*The College should do more to serve its home community and to make the most of its enviable location in one of the nation's fastest growing and most dynamic urban areas.*

### A Vital Civic Partnership

Dallas and the surrounding areas provide Dedman College a unique opportunity not only to draw from the spirit of entrepreneurship and culture but also to make a significant impact on the community by putting ideas to work to improve society.

Dedman College students and faculty are engaged in active research with many Dallas organizations and corporations to improve communities, including:

- Dallas Child Abuse Prevention Center
- Dallas Independent School District and dozens of individual school campuses
- Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
- University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center

Dedman College has a respected, longstanding record of involvement in the community and a history of successful collaborations with institutions as disparate as the Federal Reserve Bank, UT Southwestern Medical Center and the Aberg Center for Literacy in East Dallas. Nevertheless, the College should do more to serve its home community and to make the most of its enviable location in one of the nation's fastest growing and most dynamic urban areas. Connecting Dedman College more deeply with Dallas will prove broadly beneficial, enriching faculty scholarship and the student experience, providing new opportunities for applied research and grant funding and contributing to economic vitality and the quality of life in the city and the region.

### Objectives

- *Improve marketing capabilities in the College.* Dedman College is the only school at SMU without a dedicated staff for marketing and public relations. Developing a marketing team in the College Dean's Office should be an immediate priority. This new team, with leadership at the assistant dean level, should work closely with the Office of Public Affairs, provide enhanced support for departments and programs (including for websites and newsletters) and create materials for the College's recruiters and development staff.

- *Promote community engagement, especially in Dallas, and support partnerships with other regional universities and institutions, including with the George W. Bush Presidential Center.* Collaborations on all levels, from service learning projects to major partnerships, should be encouraged. Developing a productive long-term relationship with the Bush Institute should be prioritized. New mechanisms also should be explored for tapping community expertise for classroom instruction and for the mentoring of Dedman College students. Engaged learning experiences that allow undergraduates to bridge the classroom and the larger community will be stressed.
- *Improve alumni relations.* The College needs to improve its ability to track alumni, maintain close contact with its alumni and supporters and sponsor events that engage alumni with College departments and programs.
- *Promote and reward public scholarship.* Scholars play an important role in bringing academic knowledge to bear on issues of public interest, from politics to health care to literature. Taking scholarship beyond the academy through the media, by writing for general audiences or by undertaking public outreach should be encouraged. An endowed award recognizing public scholarship by a Dedman College faculty member would be an important incentive and reward for such activity.

## Key Metric

During the next five years, Dedman College undergraduates will complete at least 100 “engaged learning” projects, applying their classroom experience in situations beyond campus.

## Other Metrics

- Number of formal partnerships with other institutions and community organizations.
- Proportion of Dedman College units with regular print or electronic newsletters for alumni and supporters.
- Community participation in events sponsored by Dedman College.
- Number of Dedman College alumni donors during each year of The Second Century Campaign.











## THE PATH FORWARD

Today, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences has much to be proud of, from a nearly century-long history of training students in the liberal arts, to a talented and productive faculty, to an important place at the heart of a rising global city. Our ambitions are high, and so is our potential. There are substantial challenges, to be sure, but they are far outweighed by the opportunities ahead.

In an institution the caliber of Dedman College, excellence can and should be expected of all departments, programs, centers and institutes. Ultimately, the College can attain its potential only if all of its constituent parts are strong, focused and energized. At the same time, we should recognize that investments must be targeted to have the greatest impact and that priorities must be established to achieve our collective goals. Toward this end, over the next five years Dedman College should continue to support its longstanding strengths in the humanities, build the foundations for long-term growth in the natural sciences and prioritize new investments in the social sciences. We also must work to define and strengthen our points of distinction, those degree programs, areas of research specialization and community partnerships that will set Dedman College apart in the highly competitive environment of American higher education today. By moving deliberately in these directions – allocating resources where the promise of immediate returns is the greatest, cultivating a more distinctive institutional identity and laying the broad foundations for future development – we will position Dedman College for leadership within SMU and on the national level.







Realizing the vision of a Dedman College that combines the best of the modern research university with the best of the liberal arts tradition will require commitment and flexibility from faculty and staff, consistency and transparency from College leadership, support and good counsel from students, alumni and the community. It also will demand creative stewardship of the College’s existing resources and the development of new sources of financial support for the growth to come. Energizing and mobilizing the Dedman College Executive Board and Campaign Steering Committee will be essential to our success. And, not least, striving for such high goals will take the kind of bold, optimistic audacity that has fired the growth of Dallas and the rise of SMU.

The University’s Centennial Strategic Plan affirmed that “the academic stature of SMU will be influenced largely by the overall quality of the departments within the liberal arts and sciences” and concluded that “the University should be able to enhance its quality and stature if, during the Centennial Decade, significant resources are targeted for transformative improvement ... within Dedman College.” There can be no doubt that the time for this transformation is now.











## DEDMAN COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE 2010-2011

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Brian W. Stump, *Albritton Professor, Huffington Department of Earth Sciences*

William M. Tsutsui, *Professor, Clements Department of History (Committee Chair)*

Sarah Willen, *Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology*

The work of the committee was supported by Alma Alvarez-Smith, *Associate Dean, Dedman College*; Courtney Corwin '89, *Director of Development, Dedman College*; and Cindy Havens, *Assistant to the Dean, Dedman College*.









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A nationally ranked private university with seven degree-granting schools,  
SMU is a distinguished center for teaching and research located in the heart of Dallas.  
SMU's 11,000 students benefit from small classes, leadership opportunities,  
international study and innovative programs.

