NEWSLETTER
The Division of Enrollment Services Newsletter
Southern Methodist University
An Electronic Newsletter of
Undergraduate Admission, Financial Aid, University Bursar, and the University Registrar
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VIPs - Very Important Ponies

Some of our VIPs this month are:

Schedule.SMU (Astra) Project Team - Joe Papari, Monica Cordero, Darrah Rippy, and Kathy Rowe. I just want to say that I thought the series of Astra sessions that you folks put together for Lisa was very well done. Thanks to you. You provided a very good overview of the complex project and showed that a great deal has been accomplished (with a lot of effort on the part of you folks) while outlining some of the key challenges still ahead in the implementation of the software. Randy Phillips and John Hall

Kelly Milazzo - Thank you so much for your quick and detailed response. I really appreciate it. Happy Dad

Jill Branson - A huge thank you for your help with getting our Telestangs paid on time. You went to extra effort to get their hours while keeping us informed so we could make sure they were reported in time for them to be paid. It is a pleasure working with you. Welcome to Enrollment Services!

Stephanie Dupaul - Interim Dean of Admission, reports that letters are being printed and will be mailed before the holiday break notifying students regarding early action on their application for admission. Dr. Dupaul expressed that the quality of applicants is holding firm and presents her staff for their incredible effort during fall. "Now we move on to the next phase," states Dupaul.

Enrollment Services reaches out to students who have not enrolled for spring 2011 - The University Bursar and University Registrar are contacting any undergraduate student who is eligible to enroll for spring 2011 who has not yet completed his/her initial enrollment. This early intervention primarily targets students with financial holds on enrollment. This effort has been in place for two years, but has been reported in time for them to be paid. It is a pleasure working with you. Welcome to Enrollment Services!

SMU Trivia

Question
Has SMU’s graduation ceremonies always been on a Saturday?

Answer
No. Why would I ask if it was? From 1957-1965, Monday was the usual day of commencement in late May or early June at 5:30pm. In 1966, the ceremony was moved to Sunday around 2pm. The move to Sunday made it difficult for visitors to park, then to go to Umphrey Lee at 10:30am, go to lunch, and park again to make it to Commencement by 2pm. In the later 1960’s the Graduation Luncheon in the later 1960’s the Graduation Luncheon in Umphrey Lee was provided at a cost of $2.40 to address the parking issue. Finally Baccalaureate was moved to Friday evening and Commencement to Saturday.

Recognition of December Graduates turns 20

Until 1990, SMU conducted a formal graduation ceremony only once a year in May or June. Students who would receive their degrees in December or August could participate in the May Commencement ceremony. In the years leading up to 1990, most undergraduates
moved to earlier in the fall term each year. Enrollment Services knows that each area has more options to assist students with financial holds the sooner the student begins to work with them on resolution. There may be other financial aid options, payment plans, and student employment assistance, but each has deadlines the pass as we approach the first day of instruction. Encourage students who have not enrolled to contact a staff member in Enrollment Services immediately so a resolution can be found well ahead of classes beginning on January 18th.

NSC Self-Service adds Services - The University Registrar’s office continues to provide self-service options for students to make services available 24/7 online. November 2010 was the first full month of being live in National Student Clearinghouse to provide enrollment certification online. During November, 1,021 hit were made on this function in Student Self-Service. “An astounding number,” says John Hall. In addition to requesting transcripts through self-service, students generated 240 enrollment certifications, viewed 67 enrollment histories, and did over 60 other self-service actions. This was another great partnership between the Registrar’s office and OIT.

Bursar’s Office enhances online payments - Two new functions have been added to the online payment system in ACCESS.SMU. For some time, families have asked for an option to select payments for the student tuition account or the miscellaneous account and to pay both, if desired, in one transaction. SMUPay now offers both options. Other Payers -- either those Authorized by the student or Guest Payers, may select whether to make a payment to the Student Account or to the Miscellaneous Account or to both. Non-student payers often over looked charges on the Miscellaneous Account because it did not appear unless the payer check for a balance.

SMU Host Workshop

The University Bursar’s office host a state-wide workshop to assist colleges and university in collecting balances owed to their institutions. Presented by ConServe University, over 35 participants representing institutions of higher education from as far as Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio and many in the North Texas area, attend the December 15th program. The keynote speaker, Brian Hill, Director of Student Accounts at Carnegie Mellon University presented his ideas for “Managing Conflicting Priorities in the Bursar’s Office.” Pam Kelleher, Vice President for Privacy and Compliance Officer for ConServe facilitated the workshop.

ConServe University explains the workshop as a collaboration with ConServe and Colleges and University partners. The program offers one of the most comprehensive training workshops available to help augment the collection skills of College and University Bursar staff.

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Participants Could Set Record

The numbers of graduates receiving their degrees this December is over 800. Four hundred, fifty-three graduate students will graduate - twenty three receiving PhDs, two receiving Doctor of Engineering degrees, fifty-six receiving professional degrees in Theology and Law, 328 receiving undergraduate degrees, and nine students receiving certificates from the Guilhull.

The exciting news is that over 700 graduates have rented regalia for the ceremony. If all attend, this will be over 85% of the graduate participating in the ceremony.

The Academic Ceremonies staff is preparing for the crowd and look forward to a memorable event for our students, their families and friends.

The December Graduation ceremony is held in Moody Coliseum at 10am on Saturday, December 18th. We recommend arriving by no later than 9:30am to ensure easier parking and seating.

The Division of Enrollment Services wishes you a happy and safe holiday!

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The Moody ceremony mirrors the May Commencement with a few modifications. In December the speaker is the Provost of the University. Students do not receive their diplomas but all walk across the stage to be congratulated by their dean and the President of the University.

So Happy Birthday, December Graduation -- and many more.

Smiles all the way around

The staff of the Blanton building jumped head first into the SMU Staff Associations holiday philanthropy project of providing arts and crafts for families of young ones in Children’s Medical Center. The effort did not begin and end with a collection box by the elevators in Blanton, staff attending the annual Blanton Holiday Luncheon were asked to make activity books to be placed in the Waiting Rooms at Children’s for Adults and Children to help manage the stress and hours of a hospital stay of a family member. Twenty books for children and 20 books for adults were finished by the time the luncheon ended. Provost Ludden showed his leadership at the reserve table of guests by say after finishing his meal, "Okay, let’s get busy on this!"

The day after the luncheon, the Blanton Building hosted one of its ever popular "Coffee Breaks," giving free coffee and donuts to anyone coming by. The staff hosting, gave participants an opportunity to contribute to the Children’s effort. Ninety dollars was collected in just an hour. These funds will go towards buying more Arts and Crafts items for the Arts and Crafts area at Children’s.
Thank you and Happy Holidays to all who participated. The smiles of the staff only will be out shined by the families at Children's.