Conventional wisdom holds that Southern Methodist University opened the doors to Dallas Hall to its first students on September 28, 1915. That day, approximately 550 young men and women attended their first classes in the College of Liberal Arts, the School of Theology and the Fine Arts Department. What few members of the SMU community remember, however, is that these schools were not the first ones established by the University and that, even though this date was heralded as SMU’s first day of classes, these students were not our first to attend. In fact, by 1915, SMU had already opened and closed its first school, a medical college; its first degree recipients were awarded medical diplomas in 1912. How SMU came to have a medical school and what happened to it by the time the University opened Dallas Hall in 1915 is a story almost forgotten by SMU history.

In 1911, an educational commission made up of five Texas Methodist conferences organized to “promote and select” a site for a new Methodist university west of the Mississippi River. Among proposals submitted by various cities, Dallas was selected, with members of the Dallas community offering 662 ½ acres of land and $300,000 in notes to build Dallas Hall. The University filed its official charter with the state of Texas on April 16, 1911, calling for not only schools in the liberal arts and theology, but also directives for a medical college.

Robert Stewart Hyer, then president of Southwestern University in Georgetown, was named SMU’s first president on April 13, 1911 and soon began the difficult task of creating and building a university.

With plans underway to build SMU, an opportunity for the University soon developed in 1911. Southwestern University was struggling to operate a medical college based in Dallas.
Opened in 1903, the Southwestern University Medical College was located at 1420 Hall Street, between Bryan and San Jacinto streets, across from the St. Paul Sanitorium. It’s building, completed in 1905 at a cost of $40,000, was described by the *Dallas Morning News* as a “handsome structure of classical style of architecture,” boasting stone Corinthian columns and up-to-date facilities and apparatus. The 3-story, gray brick building was easily accessible by the Bryan, Swiss Avenue and San Jacinto streetcars.

Even though Southwestern University Medical College had completed its “eighth annual session, with results eminently satisfactory to all friends of the institution,” inadequate resources resulted in a Class C designation for the school, not the Class A designation needed for it to be accepted by the American Medical Association. The commissioners of education of the Methodist Church, of which President Hyer was also a member, decided the medical college was better suited to the newly-chartered SMU, and in 1911 the Board of Trustees of Southwestern University at Georgetown passed a resolution transferring its school of medicine to SMU. The medical college thus became the University’s first school with the first class of students matriculating in October, 1911, well before ground was broken on Dallas Hall.

Dallas in 1911 was considerably smaller than the city we know today, boasting 100,000 residents. But similar to today’s Dallas, the city was growing and there were several large public hospitals serving Texas and the nearby states.

With two medical colleges, Baylor University and SMU, Dallas had become a city for people to seek not only medical treatment but a medical education. SMU’s Medical Department had associations with St. Paul’s Sanitorium, City Hospital and Children’s Hospital, among others. These hospitals provided much needed internships for the school’s graduates.
SMU was charged with “immediately proceed[ing] with such additions to the building and equipment and teaching facilities as will be necessary to place the Medical and Pharmaceutical Departments in Class A, as determined by the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association.” With money donated by the Dallas community and the Methodist Church, as well as a “large donation expected from the General Board of Education established by Mr. Jno. D. Rockefeller,” SMU ordered new apparatus for physiological laboratories, including X-ray appliances and microscopes, as well as made plans to add a 4th story and addition to the rear of the building. The medical college was well on its way to meeting “in every respect the exacting demands of modern Medical Instruction.”

Described as “clean and healthy,” the building on Hall Street housed a dean’s room, an office, a bookstore and a large assembly hall, divided by folding doors, of which half could be used as a senior lecture hall and the other half as a histological and embryological laboratory. Another spacious hall was “fully equipped with apparatus for physiological work.” An amphitheater held 125 students and was fitted with “opera chairs” and a “demonstrating table.” A library/reading room was also used as a museum for the many specimens at the college.

The building also housed several laboratories. Besides an anatomical and dissecting hall, a dark room laboratory and a store room for pathological and bacteriological work, a chemical laboratory was fitted with 80 individual lockers, gas and water “and every facility for convenience of work.”

Much of the information we know about SMU’s Medical College comes from the Catalogue for Medical and Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University, “issued quarterly by the Southern Methodist University Medical Department, 1420 Hall Street.” According to the 1911 catalogue, the faculty comprised 21 members and 14 associate faculty members. The goal of the faculty was to “impress, not alone the salient points that pertain to the purely technical knowledge of the healing art, but also those lofty principles of professional conduct which form such an important part in the life of the true physician.” Faculty was expected to work full-time and not engage in private practice. Departments within the school included anatomy, medicine, surgery and eye, ear, nose and throat, all of which were designed to
“equip the student with [the] knowledge of medicine and surgery which will best prepare him for the practical labors of his profession.”

The dean of the medical department was Dr. John Oliver McReynolds, whose association with both Southwestern’s medical college and SMU were well established. Not only did he donate the land upon which the medical college was built, Dean McReynolds also served on the Dallas Chamber of Commerce’s committee which helped secure SMU’s location. According to the *Dallas Morning News*, Dallas was in a heated race with Houston and Fort Worth to have the Methodist church establish its new university here. The night before the final vote was cast, Dr. McReynolds called upon Will Caruth to help the Chamber of Commerce sway the vote in favor of Dallas. Dr. McReynolds had saved Mr. Caruth’s daughter’s life and the product of his efforts resulted in Mr. Caruth’s grant of land which brought SMU to Dallas.

Born in Elkton, Kentucky in 1865, Dr. McReynolds received his medical degree from the University of Maryland in 1891 and attended clinics nationally and in Europe to specialize in eyes and ears. He moved to Dallas in 1892 where he began his medical practice and eventually his teaching career in 1903, when Southwestern founded its medical college. He was well-regarded as an expert in his field, contributing theory and research on eye and ear diseases in several textbooks. Among the many positions he held in various medical societies, Dr. McReynolds served as vice president of the American Medical Association and president of the Pan-American Medical Association. He also received several honors including the Order of Carlos Finlay, bestowed upon him by the President of Cuba in 1934, and a similar decoration from the Republic of Venezuela. In his obituary, the *Dallas Morning News* recounted the story of a wealthy Texan who traveled to Vienna, Austria to see a noted physician for an eye problem. Upon learning the man was from America, the Austrian doctor asked, “Did you ever hear of a place called Dallas?” The Texan replied that he lived 50 miles from the city. Then the Austrian doctor said, “Why did you come all the way to Europe to see me? You have in your compatriot Dr. McReynolds, one of the world’s greatest and finest.”

In addition to rising to the top of the medical profession, Dr. McReynolds was extremely civic minded, not only securing Southwestern Medical College and SMU for Dallas, but also the
Federal Reserve Bank. Additionally, the Citizens Association of Dallas was organized under his leadership. R.L. Thorton once said of Dr. McReynolds, “He has builded his profession into a brilliant career. He has builded his citizenship to a great height.”

Another faculty member was a pioneer in Dallas medicine whose legacy reaches out to many in our city today. Dr. William Beall Carrell was an instructor of surgery in the medical department. Born in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee in 1883, Dr. Carrell received his medical degree from Southwestern Medical College in 1908. His specialty became orthopedics and he devoted his lifetime to helping the crippled, especially children affected by polio and skeletal deformities. He worked tirelessly for legislation to provide care to indigent children suffering the effects of polio. In 1922, his dream of a hospital devoted to helping children with orthopedic problems was realized when Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children, now known as the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, opened its doors. Dr. Carrell became its chief surgeon and refused to accept any payment for his services.

His other lasting legacy to Dallas was the establishment of his first clinic in the 1920’s, the Carrell-Girard Clinic in Oak Lawn at Wellborn and Maple. Eventually, this clinic moved to Lemmon Avenue and was renamed the W.B. Carrell Memorial Clinic. Today, the Carrell Clinic is located on Central Expressway and is a nationally recognized facility offering state-of-the-art diagnoses and treatments for a variety of orthopedic issues.
Dr. Carrell’s varied accomplishments included serving as president of many orthopedic societies and serving as vice president of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons, as well as being named the first chief of orthopedic surgery at Baylor University Medical Center. He was a recipient of the Linz Award in 1925 for his outstanding service to Dallas.

Outstanding leadership and faculty attracted good students. Most of the students in SMU’s medical and pharmaceutical departments were from Texas, although a few came from Oklahoma. Tuition was $100 per year for general instruction and another $5 for lab fees. Admittance to a medical college was quite different than it is today. In order to be admitted, a student had to have evidence that he graduated from a high school or normal school or “some other institution of high grade,” or possess a certificate of entrance to the freshman class of a recognized college or university. He also needed an accredited certificate proving he completed 14 units in “literary work,” such as English, history, mathematics, sciences and foreign languages. This information was due in the registrar’s office two weeks prior to admittance along with the required fee of $1.00. Additionally, each student needed a letter granting permission from the State Board of Medical Examiners certifying the above credentials. It is interesting to note that the 1911 catalogue stated that “the number of students [at the school] has not been large because of the recent organization of the school, and because of the fact that the standard of scholarship required eliminated a large number of students who were simply in search of a diploma.”

The School of Pharmacy had less rigorous standards. To enter it, “only one year’s attendance at a good high school” was required. Consisting of five faculty members, the pharmacy department taught “professional-technical preparation” and “practical instruction in the daily routine of the druggist’s occupation which every competent pharmacist’s assistant must have before his services can be regarded as intelligent and satisfactory-the kind of training which
A capable manager of a first-class, up-to-date pharmacy might give his assistants if he has time to do so, but which the clerks in smaller pharmacies never get."

In order to receive a degree from SMU’s Medical Department, graduates were required to be at least 21 years old, possess good character, complete four years of medical college (at least one of which had to be at SMU), be in satisfactory standing with 80% attendance, and owe no money to the University. Additionally, the catalogue stated that “the degree will not be conferred upon any candidate who, without permission, absents himself from the public commencement.”

In 1911, 66 students matriculated in the medical department and 27 matriculated in the pharmacy school. By 1912, a full year after SMU assumed control of the medical college, The Dallas Morning News reported that the school had a record freshman class and all other classes were larger than ever before. Students came from “every section of the Southwest” and from over 100 counties in Texas. The building had been completely remodeled, including a $5,000 expenditure towards “enlarging its outfit for the betterment of the work,” which, according to this invoice from the SMU archives, included ordering pregnancy models and a female pelvis.
On May 31, 1913, SMU held the 10th commencement of the college and awarded 14 medical degrees to graduates and 10 pharmaceutical degrees. At the banquet following the commencement ceremony, Dr. Hyer delivered a toast entitled, “The Science of Growing Class A Medical Colleges.” It appeared that SMU was well on its way to developing its first successful program.

It was also in 1913 that SMU published its first volume of The Campus. Part yearbook, part recruitment brochure, The Campus highlighted SMU’s charter, its future as a university, and its medical department. It extolled the virtues of its dedicated faculty and talented students, including the graduates of the class of 1913.

Each graduate’s photograph was accompanied by a short poem. Among the medical college graduates in 1913 was a new doctor by the name of John William Macune. Under Dr. Macune’s photo it read:

“Macune is just one who is beginning to know
How when he has hopes he will be humbled so low
By diseases that have baffled the best of our men
And will do the same for him thought (sic) he may not know when.
With a future like this I can only say now
It takes courage to keep up and your hands to the plow.
Let’s look to the brighter, to those whom we may help
And for the others ask God that by him may be kept.”

The son of a physician and Methodist minister, John Macune was born on January 9, 1882, and grew up in Cameron, Texas, a small town southeast of Temple. After receiving his medical degree, Dr. Macune served as a First Lieutenant in the Army Medical Corps stationed at Newport News, Virginia during World War I. He later moved his wife and two children to the border town of Eagle Pass, Texas. Although there is no record that Dr. Macune served as an official Methodist medical missionary in Mexico, according to his family he worked two days a week in Allende, Mexico, treating patients. Because Mexican authorities could not verify that SMU had a medical college, they repeatedly arrested Dr. Macune for practicing medicine without a license. For a year, Dr. Macune paid daily fines in order to continue his practice in Mexico.
Eventually the National University of Mexico settled the issue because handwritten in Spanish in the upper left-hand corner of Dr. Macune’s diploma is the following statement:

“The National University of Mexico formerly declares this Doctor of Medicine Diploma conferred to Mr. John W. Macune through Southern Methodist University College of Medicine Dallas, Texas U.S.A official. From the view of said institution he is deserving of this credit and Mr. Macune has distinguished himself.”

In 1924, the Macunes moved to Ballinger, Texas, where Dr. Macune was a county health officer, city hospital anesthesiologist and general practitioner. He was actively involved in civic work and was a vital member of his community until his death from cancer on April 3, 1945. Upon his death, flags were lowered to half mast in Ballinger in honor of Dr. Macune’s legacy.

Dr. Macune’s sheepskin medical diploma which I have here today, donated to the University by his daughter Alida Macune Rappaport, currently hangs in SMU’s Laura Lee Blanton Building as a reminder of the first students in a long line of graduates who went on to be outstanding representatives of their *alma mater.*
Conventional wisdom holds that Southern Methodist University opened the doors to Dallas Hall to its first students on September 28, 1915, offering classes in the liberal arts, theology and the fine arts. What is sometimes forgotten is that even though this date is heralded as SMU’s first day of classes, these students were not the first ones to attend the University. In fact, by 1915, SMU had already opened and closed its first school, SMU’s College of Medicine. Formerly Southwestern Medical College in Georgetown, Texas, SMU assumed control of the medical college in the fall of 1911. Housed near downtown Dallas at 1420 Hall Street, the medical college, which also included a pharmaceutical school, instructed approximately 100 men in the disciplines of anatomy, medicine, surgery and eye, ear, nose and throat. By 1914, the medical school was granted the prestigious Class A ranking by the American Medical Association, placing it among some of the finest medical colleges in the country. Despite its successes, SMU’s Board of Trustees made the financial decision to close the school after the 1914-1915 school year, so that it could better concentrate its resources on its liberal arts program.

During its brief tenure, SMU’s Medical College graduated four classes. One of its graduates in the Class of 1913 was John William Macune, whose diploma hangs above. The son of a physician and Methodist minister, John William Macune was born on January 9, 1882, and grew up in Cameron, Texas, a small town southeast of Temple, Texas. After receiving his medical degree from SMU in 1913, Dr. Macune served as a First Lieutenant in the Army Medical Corps during World War I stationed at Newport News, Virginia. He later moved his wife and two children to the border town of Eagle Pass, Texas. Although there is no record that Dr. Macune served as an official Methodist medical missionary in Mexico, according to his family he worked two days a week in Allende, Mexico, treating patients. By this time, SMU had closed its medical college and, because Mexican authorities could not verify that SMU had ever operated a medical school, they repeatedly arrested Dr. Macune for practicing medicine without a license. For a year, Dr. Macune paid daily fines in order to continue his practice in Mexico. Eventually the National University of Mexico settled the issue because handwritten in Spanish in the upper left-hand corner of Dr. Macune’s diploma is the following statement:

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Another member of the Class of 1913 was Coleman J. Carter. Under his photograph, his poem read:

“Coleman J. Carter whom we often call ‘Nick,’
Has taken to medicine and there to stick.
Now that he’s a doctor and for patients must care,
He has gone into St. Paul’s for that will help to prepare
Him for work that will win him great fame,
And make him a great doctor, as well as give him the name.”

His poem was not prophetic. Yes, Dr. Carter did win great fame but not as a doctor. Born in Abbott, Texas in 1891, Dr. Carter attended SMU Medical College for three years. Shortly after graduation, he married Mattie Kimbell, sister of Mr. Kay Kimbell of Fort Worth. He served in the U.S. Army medical corps as a first lieutenant during a 1920 tour of duty in Serbia and practiced medicine in Fort Worth until 1934, when he left to work with Mr. Kimbell in his wide network of oil, grain, insurance and grocery holdings. In 1935, Mr. and Mrs. Kay Kimbell and Dr. and Mrs. Coleman Carter formed the Kimbell Art Foundation.

Collecting mostly 17th and 18th century European paintings, the Kimbell Art Foundation eventually became one of the major private collections of art in the world. Upon Kay Kimbell’s death in 1964, the bulk of his estate and that of his wife Velma’s holdings went to the foundation, which established and built the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth. Dr. Carter served as chairman of Kimbell, Inc. and the Kimbell Art Foundation until his retirement in 1974. He died in 1990 at the age of 99.
By the fall of 1913, *The Dallas Morning News* reported that SMU’s Medical College, now in its third year, had “entered upon a new plane of scientific efficiency.” A record number 120 students were expected, faculty numbers had increased to 44, entrance requirements were raised to include a full year of chemistry, physics and biology at the college level, and $25,000 was spent on lab equipment. In short, the college was “rapidly conforming to those measures required by the AMA for a Class A school.”

By the following spring, the Texas State Board of Medical Examiners adopted a resolution declaring SMU’s Medical College was “doing a character of work equal to that of the very best medical colleges in the United States” and that it is “thoroughly equipped with laboratory facilities and has an abundant supply of clinical material.” This resolution prompted the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association to raise the Medical College’s rating, “placing it among the high medical institutions of the country.”

In just a few years’ time, the Medical College under the direction of President Hyer and Dean McReynolds had reached its goal of Class A status. So it was especially curious that despite its successes, by June of 1915, with the University’s official “opening” set for September, SMU’s Board of Trustees “temporarily suspended” both the Medical and Pharmaceutical Colleges citing financial concerns. Although trustees were “delighted” that both departments had received the Class A grade, “financial conditions are such that the great expense of such a department is not considered justifiable for the limited number of students, and the money can be spent to better advantage in the college of liberal arts.” Additionally, the more rigid entrance requirements needed for the Class A ranking resulted in “only a few of the many applicants able to enter the classes.” These financial concerns, coupled with more stringent admission requirements, were deemed “sufficient for the suspension of the school for the present year.”
One week later, the trustees officially disbanded the medical faculty. The decision benefitted Baylor University’s fledgling medical school in Dallas. Baylor had not been granted Class A standing at this time by the American Medical Association. Its dean, Dr. E.H. Cary, asked SMU and the Methodist Church for its full cooperation in helping Baylor “take advantage of the clinical privilege of the City Hospital” assigned to SMU. It was agreed that the “physiological apparatus…laboratory equipment and specimens” be sold to the Baylor College of Medicine. Baylor College of Medicine existed in Dallas until 1943, when the MD Anderson Foundation asked it to join the newly-formed Texas Medical Center in Houston, where it still operates today. SMU’s medical college building on Hall Street was used by the Dallas Polyclinic-Postgraduate Medical School, a postgraduate program run by Dallas physicians.

SMU did open its doors that September but without a medical college. Now, almost 100 years later, it is interesting to reflect on whether the Board of Trustees made a wise move in disbanded the program. It is difficult to know whether the University’s liberal arts programs could have thrived as they did in those early days had SMU kept its medical school. What we do know is that SMU’s earliest faculty and alumni taught and studied from its little-known medical college four years earlier than the first faculty and students to enter the Hilltop through Dallas Hall.

LETTER ALLUDING TO DISBANDING THE MEDICAL COLLEGE
They left a lasting legacy of dedication, commitment and civic-mindedness that is still pursued by today’s SMU professors and graduates.
Endnotes

ii. *History of Southern Methodist University* by Page A. Thomas
iii. *History of Southern Methodist University* by Page A. Thomas
iv. *The Dallas Morning News*, April 17, 1911
v. *Dallas Morning News*, February 4, 1904, July 30, 1905 and September 22, 1905
vi. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
vii. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
viii. *Dallas Morning News*, August 4, 1911
ix. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
x. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xi. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xii. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xiii. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xiv. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xv. *Dallas Morning News*, August 4, 1911
xvi. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xvii. *Dallas Morning News*, June 16, 1930
xviii. *Dallas Morning News*, July 8, 1942
xix. *Dallas Morning News*, June 16, 1930
xxi. *Carrell Clinic Web site*, www.wbcarrellclinic.com
xxii. *The Dallas Morning News*, February 24, 1944
xxiii. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xxiv. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xxv. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xxvi. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xxvii. *Catalogue for Medical Pharmaceutical Departments of Southern Methodist University*, August 1911
xxviii. *The Dallas Morning News*, October 1, 1912
xxix. *The Dallas Morning News*, October 1, 1912
xxx. Southern Methodist University’s *The Campus*, Volume I, 1913
xxxiv. *The Dallas Morning News*, October 3, 1913
xxxv. *The Dallas Morning News*, October 3, 1913
xxxviii. *The Dallas Morning News*, June 6, 1915
xxxix. *The Dallas Morning News*, June 6, 1915
xl. *The Dallas Morning News*, June 6, 1915
xli. *The Dallas Morning News*, June 6, 1915