



*Office of the President*

May 6, 2013

### **Response to the Task Force from President R. Gerald Turner**

After reviewing the report of the SMU Task Force on Sexual Misconduct Policies and Procedures, I gratefully accept all of the recommendations made. Sexual misconduct is a serious issue at universities and colleges nationwide, which are required by federal law to investigate allegations and maintain procedures for holding violators accountable. Even without such external requirements, SMU is committed to acting on its values and policies to foster a healthy learning environment based on mutual respect, responsible behavior and fair treatment of all students.

Reflecting the complexity of this issue, the report recommends ways to clarify and enhance current practices while also suggesting new measures to strengthen our efforts. As has been noted in the report, some changes already have been implemented by SMU in response to recently updated guidelines by the federal government issued to colleges and universities nationwide. With regard to suggested new initiatives, SMU is committed to implementing changes and continuing to monitor the effectiveness of all our policies and procedures on sexual misconduct.

I thank the Task Force for its hard work, careful deliberations and thoughtful recommendations. I am especially grateful to experts from the Dallas community who served as members of the Task Force and others who provided their perspectives through interactions with the Task Force. Of course, student views were critical to this process, and we appreciate their special insights into the social dynamics that can be a factor in this issue.

Finally, I thank trustee Kelly Compton, chair of the Board of Trustees Student Affairs Committee, who so capably chaired this Task Force. Her dedication, thoroughness, and commitment to students' well-being reflect the values of the full Board in providing a supportive campus environment that fosters the highest achievement among our students.

R. Gerald Turner  
President