

*Resolution in Support of a Provost's Task Force on PhD Education**

Whereas the national ranking of SMU is strongly influenced by the reputation, placement, and research output of SMU doctorates that shape the subjective evaluation of SMU by peers in other universities;

Whereas a larger and better qualified pool of PhD students would play a crucial role in supporting high quality undergraduate education and undergraduate research;

Whereas our ability to attract and retain top quality researchers and scholars in academic positions (such as the chaired professorships endowed through the Centennial campaign) often depends on the availability of doctoral students who can act as research assistants, form the base for bringing in research grants, and make it possible for the faculty members to enhance their professional standing by supervising high quality doctorates and placing them in reputable positions;

Whereas doctoral students are the future leaders of research, innovation, and scientific progress, of creative enterprise and arts, and of great scholarship, all of which are some of the longest lasting contributions and legacies that SMU can make to the economy and community;

Whereas SMU has many strong PhD programs with tremendous potential for future growth in quality and national ranking that can only be realized through a major increase in resources available for funding PhD studies and though greater coordination of services;

Whereas many of SMU's PhD programs do not have the resources and support they need to meet their potential and are thereby hampered in attracting top students, admitting as many students as they need, and moving them through the program quickly; and

Whereas attaining the goals of the Strategic Plan makes it incumbent upon the university to increase the quality and number of PhD students as well as the quality of the programs; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate calls upon the Provost to establish a Provost's Task Force on PhD Education for the academic year 2017-18. This would be comparable to the Provost's Task Force on Scholarly Research and Creative Impact and would consider in a comprehensive way steps to improve our PhD programs.

*Because the intention is to focus on terminal academic degrees, the MFA should be included.