

**Subject:** From Dean Quick: Health and Safety in the Coming Academic Year



*Office of Research and Graduate Studies*

30 July 2020

Dear Graduate Students,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you back to SMU for the Fall Semester, 2020. You are valued members of the SMU community and your continued academic success is a university priority.

As the beginning of the fall term approaches and the spread of COVID-19 continues, health and safety are of paramount importance. All of us at SMU will have a role to play in keeping the SMU community safe, and I ask that you to commit to follow the rules and guidance put in place to protect you and your fellow Mustangs. In a later communication, you will be informed about the availability of SMU COVID-19 online training that you will be required to complete before returning to campus. As part of this training you will be asked to take a pledge to protect our community. In addition, if you will be working in a laboratory, you must also check in with the faculty member in charge of the lab and review its current COVID-19 lab operating procedures. Lastly, I strongly recommend that you regularly visit SMU's Coronavirus [website](#) to obtain current information and updates.

As a graduate student, you may be expected to perform teaching, research and other roles at SMU this fall. If you feel uncomfortable with what you are being asked to do or have concerns for your safety as you perform these roles, please be aware that there are resources to assist you. Your department chair or program director are your primary resources and you should not hesitate to bring your concerns to them. If you are not already familiar with your department's policy on resolving issues and addressing such concerns, you should ask that a copy of that policy be provided to you. The associate dean responsible for graduate studies in your home school is another resource if your department or program is unable to address your concerns. Finally, concerns that cannot be addressed by your home school may be brought to my office by contacting Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Dr. Alan Itkin (email: [aitkin@smu.edu](mailto:aitkin@smu.edu), phone: 214-768-4202) for assistance.

As we face the unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, I know that we are stronger together. My staff and I look forward to working together with you to keep our SMU community safe.

Sincerely,

James E. Quick  
Dean of Graduate Studies  
and Associate Provost for Research