

“ELABORATING SMU’S VISION FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE”

PROVOST STEVEN C. CURRALL ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL FACULTY AT SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY 25 JANUARY 2017



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you today!

The title of my remarks today is “Elaborating SMU’s Vision for Academic Excellence.”

Therefore, my main objective today is update you on the exciting deliberations currently taking place on how to further articulate what we mean by “academic excellence.”

Our motivation for these deliberations is *SMU’s Second Century Strategic Plan 2016-2025*, which has as goal number 1 to “enhance the academic quality and stature of the university.”

We are taking that goal very seriously, so I will share with you today our ongoing efforts to work collaboratively to craft this plan for academic excellence.

Faculty involvement in defining academic excellence is absolutely crucial.

I wish to emphasize to how grateful I am for a close working relationship with the Faculty Senate in general and your President, Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, in particular. Jeanne, thank you for your partnership!

Before proceeding with my other remarks, I wish to share my reflections on my first year as Provost.

I am deeply grateful to each of you, and to the Faculty Senate, for helping me feel welcomed during this exciting first year.

One of the great strengths of our University is the close-knit community that exists among faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, and friends.

Recently, President Turner and I have reaffirmed our commitment to the shared values that form the fabric of the SMU community, which allow us to simultaneously embrace freedom of expression and sensitivity to the unique perspectives of each person on our campus.

Along those lines, much of my energy as Provost is focused on ensuring that the SMU community fosters a stimulating environment for faculty, and a student experience that shapes each young person's intellectual, social, cultural, spiritual, and physical capabilities.

Outline

- I. 2015-2016 Academic Year: Update on Faculty Hiring, Tenure, and Promotion
- II. Planning for Academic Excellence
- III. Update on Recent and Future Appointments

My remarks to you today will fall into three major categories:

- (1) Updates including a review of faculty hiring, promotion and tenure decisions.
- (2) Our approach to planning for academic excellence during the months ahead.
- (3) Updates on recent and forthcoming academic leadership appointments at SMU.

During my first address to you in January 2016, I committed to holding an extensive listening tour across the campus community.

Therefore, last year I spent over 80 face-to-face hours visiting your facilities and meeting with faculty, staff, and students.

Your input has helped me grasp the nuances and complexities of SMU.

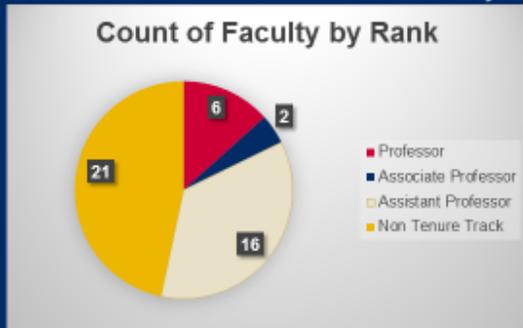
I believe more than ever in the auspiciousness of SMU because I have had the privilege of meeting of you during my visits to each college, school, library, and several centers/institutes.

I am inspired by the brilliance of your world-class scholarship and creative activity, dedication to teaching excellence for both undergraduates and graduate students, and generous service rendered to SMU, professional associations, non-profit organizations, government, and business.

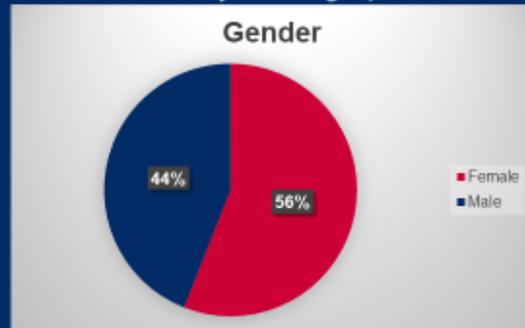
Turning now to faculty recruitment and promotions, during the past year, we continued to strengthen and enhance our faculty ranks. In the area of faculty hiring, promotion, and tenure, we had an outstanding year in terms of faculty excellence and diversity.

Faculty Hiring Overview: 2015-2016

45 Permanent, Full-time Faculty



Faculty Demographics



- 7% Black or African American
- 11% Hispanic
- 11% Asian

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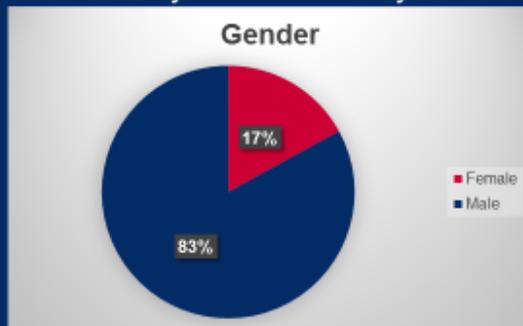
Forty-five permanent, full-time faculty were hired during 2015-2016, including six professors, two associate professors, 16 assistant professors, and 21 non-tenure track faculty.

Those faculty members were formerly at prestigious institutions such as Brown University, the University of Illinois – Urbana Champaign, the University of Minnesota, Drexel University, and Lehigh University.

Among the new faculty hires, 56% were females, 44% males, and 29% from under-represented minorities, 7% of whom were Black or African American, 11% were Hispanic, and 11% were Asian.

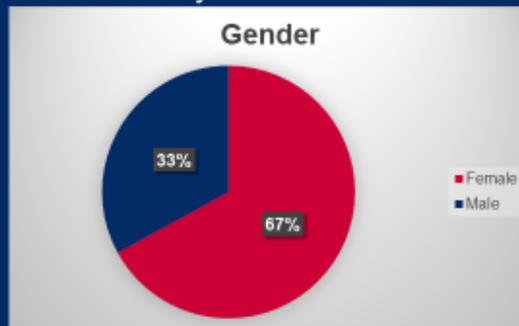
Faculty Promotion and Tenure: 2015-2016

Newly-tenured Faculty



- 17% Black or African American
- 8% Hispanic
- 8% Asian

Tenured Faculty Promoted to Full Professor



- 50% Asian

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In 2016, there were 12 newly tenured faculty members, including 83% males and 17% females and 33% under-represented minorities, 17% of whom were Black or African American, 8% were Hispanic, and 8% were Asian.

Six tenured professors were promoted to full professor, including 33% males and 67% females, 50% of whom were under-represented minorities all of whom were Asians.

That concludes my summary of faculty hiring and promotion from 2015-2016.

I invite you now to “look ahead” with me to 2017 and beyond as we elaborate SMU’s vision for academic excellence.

As I said earlier, faculty involvement in defining academic excellence is crucial.

Therefore, our first, and most important, step was to engage representative members of our faculty to serve on the task forces that will shape the University’s plans.

It is important to note that the themes being explored by the task forces are only a sampling of the possible directions for SMU. Other themes will also certainly be part of our planning.

In response to a Faculty Senate resolution passed in January 2016, the **General Education Review Task Force** was formed to:

- (1) complete a study of the University Curriculum, both UC-2012 and UC-2016, and
- (2) formulate recommendations for improvements.

Members of the General Education Review Task Force

- **Peter Moore** (Co-chair), Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy, and Professor of Mathematics, Dedman College
- **Mickey Quiñones** (Co-chair), O. Paul Corley Distinguished Chair in Organizational Behavior and Administration
- **Rhonda Blair**, Professor of Theatre, Meadows School of the Arts
- **Joe Camp**, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- **Martin Camp**, Assistant Dean for Graduate and International Programs, Dedman School of Law
- **Scott Davis**, Associate Professor of Applied Physiology and Wellness, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- **Robert Howell**, Professor of Philosophy, Dedman College
- **Rita Kirk**, Director of the Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics & Public Responsibility and Professor of Communication Studies, Meadows School of the Arts,
- **Joe Kobylka**, Associate Professor of Political Science, Dedman College
- **Dayna Oscherwitz**, Associate Professor and Chair of World Languages and Literatures, Dedman College
- **Evelyn Parker**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Susanna Wesley Centennial Chair in Practical Theology, Perkins School of Theology
- **Pia Vogel**, Professor of Biological Sciences, Dedman College

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The Task Force is ably co-chaired by Associate Provost Peter Moore and Professor Mickey Quiñones of the Cox School of Business.

We expect that approval by SMU deliberative bodies, such as the Faculty Senate, SMU faculty, and Board of Trustees, will be completed no later than 2018, in time for the new curriculum to be launched by the autumn of 2020.

In response to President Turner’s charge, and in line with goal number 2 of SMU’s strategic plan to engage the community for lifelong learning through professional training and continuing education, the **Task Force on Continuing Education** met 11 times during the course of the past year to analyze ways for SMU to broaden and strengthen its continuing education.

The task force was chaired by Vice President for Executive Affairs Harold Stanley and comprised of 9 faculty and staff members.

Members of the Task Force on Continuing Education

- **Harold Stanley**, (Chair) Vice President for Executive Affairs and Geurin-Pettus Distinguished Chair in American Politics and Political Economy, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Ernie Barry**, Associate Vice President for Budgets and Finance
- **Bill Dillon**, Senior Associate Dean and Herman W. Lay Professor of Marketing, Cox School of Business
- **Julie P. Forrester**, Associate Provost for Student Academic Services and Professor of Law, Dedman School of Law
- **Michael Harris**, Director for Center of Teaching Excellence and Associate Professor, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- **Renee McDonald**, Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs and Professor of Psychology, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Volkan Otugen**, Senior Associate Dean and George R. Brown Chair Professor in Mechanical Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- **Priscilla Pope-Levison**, Associate Dean for External Programs, Perkins School of Theology
- **David Sedman**, Associate Dean for Administration and Associate Professor of Film and Media Arts, Meadows School of the Arts
- **Beth Thornburg**, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Richard R. Lee Endowed Professor of Law, Dedman School of Law

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Based on the Task Force report, and in consultation with the Council of Deans, the President and I will soon articulate the parameters for the future of continuing education.

This will include broad faculty participation and will build on – and strengthen – SMU’s existing efforts in this area.

There are three additional task forces working at the moment to develop a bold slate of recommendations that will underpin our vision for academic excellence.

Throughout the spring, I will receive reports from each of these task forces.

My office will then begin the process of reviewing and aligning their recommendations with the broader community – working first with the Deans, senior administration and, finally, the broader community to validate and refine our plans.

Our aim is to further elaborate SMU’s vision for academic excellence by autumn of 2017.

In October, I invited 17 SMU faculty members to serve on the **Task Force on Scholarly Research and Creative Impact**.

Members of the Task Force on Scholarly Research and Creative Impact

- **Fred Chang**, (Chair) Director of the Darwin Deason Institute for Cyber Security, Bobby B. Lyle Endowed Centennial Distinguished Chair in Cyber Security and Professor of Computer Science and Engineering
- **Pia Vogel** (Co-Chair), Professor of Biological Sciences, Dedman College
- **Amit Basu**, Carr P. Collins Chair in MIS, Professor and Chair, Information Technology and Operations Management, Cox School of Business
- **Mark Chancey**, Professor of Religious Studies, Dedman College
- **Nathan Cortez**, Adelfa Botello Callejo Endowed Professor of Law in Leadership and Latino Studies and Associate Dean for Research, Dedman School of Law
- **Andrew Graybill**, Co-director of the William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies, and Professor and Chair, Clements Department of History, Dedman College
- **Randall Griffin**, University Distinguished Professor and Professor of Art History, Meadows School of the Arts
- **Thomas Hagstrom**, Director, Center for Scientific Computation, Professor of Mathematics, Dedman College

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Chaired by Professor Fred Chang of the Lyle School of Engineering and co-chaired by Professor Pia Vogel of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, the task force will provide vital faculty-led guidance by recommending ways for SMU to strengthen its scholarly research and creative activities to advance the University's position as the leading global research university in North Texas.

Members of the Task Force on Scholarly Research and Creative Impact (Continued)

- **Leanne Ketterlin Geller**, Professor, Texas Instruments Endowed Chair in Education, Director of Research in Mathematics Education and Director K-12 STEM Initiatives, Caruth Institute for Engineering Education, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- **Zhong Lu**, Shuler-Foscue Chair in Geophysics and Professor of Earth Sciences, Dedman College
- **Duncan MacFarlane**, Associate Dean for Engineering Entrepreneurship, Bobby B. Lyle Centennial Chair in Engineering Entrepreneurship, and Professor of Electrical Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- **David Meltzer**, Henderson-Morrison Professor of Prehistory in Anthropology and Interim Chair, Anthropology, Dedman College
- **Daniel Millimet**, Professor of Economics, Dedman College
- **Sukumaran Nair**, University Distinguished Professor, and Professor and Chair, Computer Science and Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- **Evelyn Parker**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Susanna Wesley Centennial Professor of Practical Theology, Perkins School of Theology
- **Ryszard Stroynowski**, Professor of Physics, Dedman College
- **Nick Tsarevsky**, Associate Professor of Chemistry, Dedman College

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The task force has met regularly since October and is making good progress. I anticipate receiving a briefing from this task force in March.

In November, I invited 8 SMU faculty members to serve on the **Task Force on Creative and Interactive Technology**.

Chaired by Dean Tom DiPiero of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, this group will provide critical faculty-led input in shaping our aspirations for more deeply integrating digital humanities, creative computation, and computer gaming.

Members of the Task Force on Creative and Interactive Technology

- **Tom DiPiero** (Chair), Dean, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences and Professor of World Languages and Literatures
- **Gary Brubaker**, Director of The Guildhall
- **Marc Christensen**, Dean, Lyle School of Engineering and Lyle Endowed Professor of Engineering Innovation
- **Tony Cuevas**, Director of Instructional Design and Clinical Associate Professor, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- **Scott Douglas**, Professor of Electrical Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- **Ira Greenberg**, Director, Center of Creative Computation and Professor, Meadows School of the Arts
- **Jo Guldi**, Assistant Professor of History, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Sam Holland**, Dean of Meadows School of the Arts and Professor of Music

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The task force has met regularly since November and currently developing their report. I anticipate receiving a briefing in February.

In October, 6 SMU faculty members began meeting – under the leadership of Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies James Quick – to conceive of a vision for the future of **data science and data analytics** at SMU.

Members of the Task Force on Data Science and Analytics

- **James Quick** (Chair), Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Earth Sciences, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Alejandro Aceves**, Professor and Chair of Mathematics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Marci Armstrong**, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, Cox School of Business
- **Tom Fomby**, Professor of Economics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Sukumaran Nair**, University Distinguished Professor and Chair of Computer Science and Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
- **Santanu Roy**, University Distinguished Professor and Chair of Economics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Lynne Stokes**, Professor and Chair of Statistical Science, Dedman College

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The group's preliminary work has focused on developing a robust inventory of SMU's investments as well as our research and educational programs.

With this information, the task force will then develop more formal recommendations.

Enthusiasm from both the President and me for supporting research and education in the fields of data science and analytics has been underscored by the SMU's recent commitment to continued investment in high-performance computing.

SMU's new research computing resource, the ManeFrame II supercomputer, is currently being installed and should be ready for use by the end of the semester.

It boasts double the number of CPU cores, storage, and network speed of the previous supercomputer, ManeFrame I.

Based on theoretical capabilities we expect ManeFrame II to appear in the next list of the top-500 fastest supercomputers in the world.

The advice of the task forces will be fundamental in our planning during the next several months to elaborate "the academic quality and stature of the university."

I expect that we will be back to you by September with further information that reflects the deliberations of the SMU community.

Finally, let me now provide a brief review of recent developments regarding academic leadership appointments...

Several existing positions in the Provost's Office became available due to individuals' retiring or departing the university.

Provost Office Appointments (2015-2016)

<u>Existing Positions</u>	<u>New Positions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wes Waggoner, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management• Craig Hill, Dean of the Perkins School of Theology• Doug Reinelt, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, and Professor of Mathematics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences• Ebonii Nelson, Assistant Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Director of Student Retention, <i>ad interim</i>• Daniel Eady, Assistant Provost (Chief of Staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maria Dixon Hall, Senior Advisor for Campus Cultural Intelligence Initiatives and Associate Professor of Communication Studies, Meadows School of the Arts• Peter Moore, Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy and Professor of Mathematics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences

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In February 2016, I announced **Wes Waggoner** as SMU's new Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management. You may remember that Wes filled the position vacated by the departure of Stephanie Dupaul.

Wes is doing an outstanding job leading our student admission recruitment process, financial aid, and other aspects of enrollment management.

Last spring, a national search led to the appointment of Professor **Craig Hill** as Dean of the Perkins School of Theology.

Previously, Craig served as executive director of the Doctor of Ministry and Master of Christian Practice programs at Duke Divinity School. Also, Craig was appointed the first non-British chaplain at Christ Church college in Oxford, and has held numerous leadership positions in United Methodist Churches.

During the spring, I also appointed Professor **Paige Ware** Dean *ad interim* of the Simmons School of Education and Human Development.

Paige previously served with distinction as the chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning in the Simmons School.

She has also served as director of the Simmons School's Ph.D. program.

I believe that faculty members are the lifeblood of our University. Therefore, there are perhaps no more important decisions made in my office than those involving faculty recruiting, development, promotion, and tenure.

Last spring, my partner in this process was Associate Provost **Linda Eads** who, in summer of 2016, retired to return to teaching in Dedman School of Law after several years of extraordinary service as Associate Provost.

Therefore, effective August 2016, I named Professor **Doug Reinelt** as our new Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs.

As you know, Doug has held a variety of leadership positions on campus including, most recently, President of the Faculty Senate.

Doug is extraordinarily well-equipped to lead our efforts in faculty recruitment, development, rewards, and retention.

You may recall that Tony Tillman departed SMU last summer. Therefore, I appointed **Ebonii Nelson** as Assistant Provost for Strategic Initiatives and Director of Student Retention *ad interim*.

In her duties, Ebonii will further propel SMU's initiatives focused on student success, retention and outreach to at-risk students.

After a comprehensive search, **Daniel Eady** has joined my team as Assistant Provost and my Chief of Staff. Lisa O'Donnell held the position previously.

Daniel's duties will include support for both the operational activities and strategic initiatives that fall under my office.

The remaining two appointments represent new positions, one temporary and part-time; the other permanent and full-time.

The indomitable Professor **Maria Dixon Hall** of the Meadows School of the Arts was appointed as the Provost's Senior Advisor for Campus Cultural Intelligence Initiatives.

Maria has strategic oversight of an exciting initiative designed to foster a campus culture that equips our faculty, staff, and students to effectively engage today's culturally complex world. Her leadership is key to SMU's efforts to promote diversity and inclusion.

Professor **Peter Moore** who, as we all know, has an encyclopedic knowledge of all matters regarding the University's curriculum, was named as Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy.

Peter will also serve in the vital roles of Chair of the Educational Policy Committee and Academic Program Evaluation Committee, as well as continuing as Chair of the Council on General Education.

Looking toward the remainder of this calendar year, we will hold Dean searches for three of our academic units.

So much of the Cox School of Business's success is attributable to Dean Al Niemi's outstanding tenure. For example, during his deanship, the school's endowment has increased from \$78 million to more than \$160 million.

**MEMBERS OF THE DEAN SEARCH COMMITTEE
FOR THE COX SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

- **Jennifer Collins** (Chair) Dean, Dedman School of Law
- **Michael Braun**, Associate Professor of Marketing and Fisher Faculty Fellow
- **Jim Bryan**, Assistant Dean, Cox BBA Admission
- **Joe Cahoon**, Director of the Folsom Institute for Real Estate, Adjunct Professor for Department of Real Estate, Risk Management and Business Law
- **Hemang Desai**, Robert B. Cullum Professor of Accounting
- **Sherrie Johnson**, Cox Graduate Student
- **Kaleb Lee**, Cox Undergraduate Student
- **Darius Miller**, Caruth Chair in Finance, Professor of Finance
- **David Miller**, SMU Trustee Vice-Chair and Member of Cox School Executive Board
- **Laran O'Neill**, Executive Director of Development
- **Robin Pinkley**, Janet and Craig Duchossois Endowed Professor of Management and Organizations
- **Canan Savaskan-Ebert**, Associate Professor of Information Technology and Operations Management
- **Carl Sewell**, SMU Trustee and Member of Cox School Executive Board
- **Jacquelyn Thomas**, Associate Professor of Marketing, Frank and Susan Dunlevy Faculty Fellow

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We are fortunate to have an outstanding search committee, which will assist in finding a distinguished academic leader with a record of scholarly research and administrative experience, as well as a strong commitment to excellence in the School's professional programs.

Founded in 2005, and named in 2007 in recognition of a landmark gift from Harold and Annette Caldwell Simmons of Dallas, the Simmons School has extraordinary momentum toward becoming one of the nation's best schools of education.

Again, we have a wonderful search committee, which is helping us find the next leader of the Simmons School.

**MEMBERS OF THE DEAN SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE
SIMMONS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

- **Marc Christensen** (Chair) Dean, Lyle School of Engineering
- **Patty Addington**, Director of Development, Simmons School of Education
- **Jill Allor**, Professor and Chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning
- **Hal Barkley**, Clinical Associate Professor and Chair of Dispute Resolution and Counseling
- **Eric Bing**, Director and Professor of Global Health Services, Department of Applied Physiology and Wellness, Simmons School of Education and Professor of Anthropology, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Tony Cuevas**, Director of Instructional Design and Clinical Associate Professor
- **Molly Ellis**, Graduate student, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- **Becky Hood**, Senior Assistant Dean for Finance and Operations, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
- **Fred Olness**, Professor of Physics, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- **Connie O'Neill**, SMU Trustee and Member of Board Committee on Academic Affairs
- **Dawson Orr**, Chair, Education Policy and Leadership
- **Hon. Jeanne Phillips**, SMU Trustee, Senior Vice President, Hunt Consolidated, Corporate Affairs and International Relations
- **Peter Weyand**, Glenn Simmons Endowed Professor in Applied Physiology and Biomechanics

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As with the Cox School, the University seeks an eminent academic leader with a distinguished record of scholarly research and administrative experience to lead the Simmons School.

Dean and Director of Central University Libraries Gillian McCombs announced her plans to retire from her position in summer of this year.

Gillian joined SMU in 1998 and has guided the University's central library system through a transformation of resources, facilities and services.

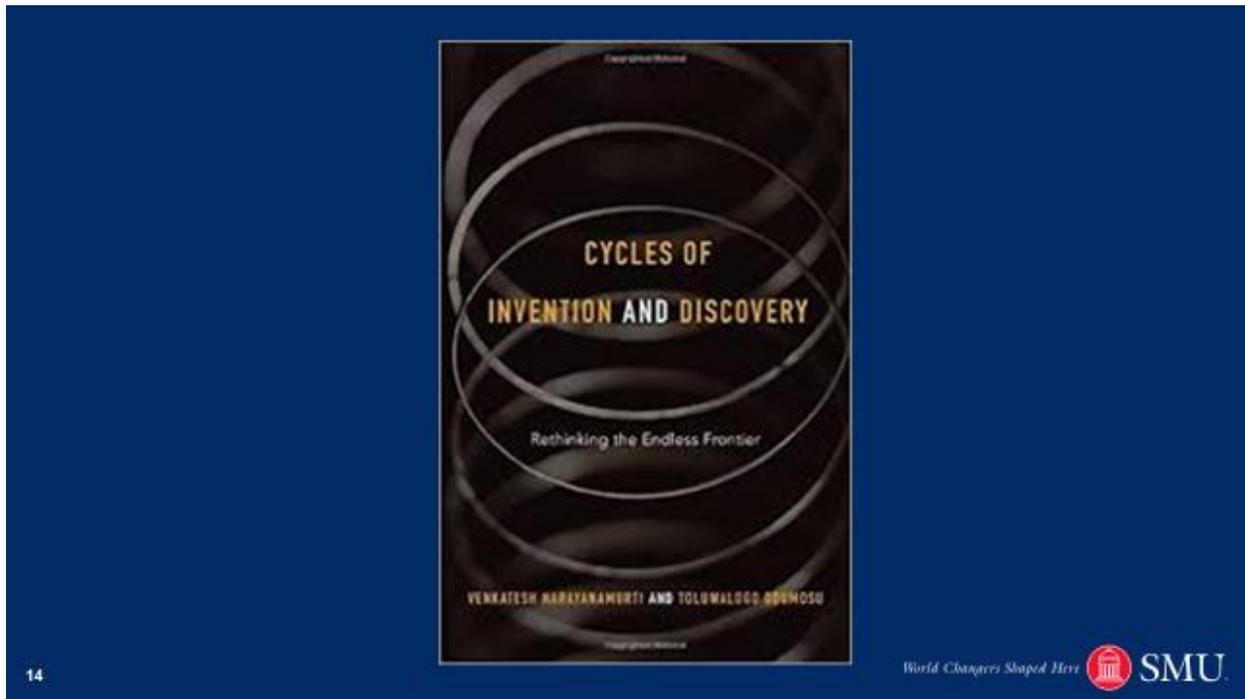
One of the most visible examples of her leadership legacy is the Fondren Library Center renovation. The grand Centennial Reading Room and new Hillcrest Foundation Exhibit Hall opened in April and are fabulous new spaces for intellectual inquiry and observation.

As a first step to identifying the next Dean and Director, I will identify and charge a faculty and staff task force to develop aspirations regarding the future of libraries at SMU.

The task force's findings will inform and shape priorities for the next Dean and Director of Central University Libraries at SMU.

We will begin the search during autumn of this year and have an interim Dean and Director until summer of 2018, when the search will be concluded.

In closing, and in keeping with tradition, I wish to share with you a book that I believe you will find interesting.



It's entitled *Cycles of Invention and Discovery: Rethinking the Endless Frontier*.

The authors' aim was to propose a model that diminishes the longstanding barriers between "basic" and "applied" research.

Although political and historical reasons combined to create these distinctions, they obstruct collaboration and interdisciplinary research.

The authors' observations are particularly relevant to our ongoing dialogue about our goals to both enrich the intellectual lives of our students and to shape a vision for academic excellence at SMU.

For example, similar to the authors' views, interdisciplinarity is vital to SMU's future successes in scholarship and creative activity, and will increasingly be a hallmark of our campus for years to come.

In closing, thank you for the outstanding work that each of you do every day in fulfilling our scholarly, creative, and teaching mission.

I look forward to working with you to further elaborate SMU's vision for academic excellence! Again, thank you.