



# SMU®

*Office of the Provost*

August 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome back to Fall 2020 on the Hilltop! As you finalize your syllabi for this academic term, please communicate the following to your students. Faculty syllabi are an effective way to demonstrate our support for new and returning students. As you finalize your syllabi for this academic term, please communicate the information below to your students. Sharing this information in writing will create a record that you have outlined the accommodations provided for by University policy. This also provides students with a reminder not only of the policies themselves but also of how to access the services and accommodations available. Also, please make sure your syllabi are uploaded to <https://sites.smu.edu/des/syllabus/>. (The Syllabus Library is a resource for SMU faculty, staff, and students, and can only be accessed with an SMU ID and password.) These policies provide expectations for both faculty and students. Faculty who do not follow University policy need to provide their Department/Division Chair with a written explanation.

**(Please Note: The Disability Accommodations statement has been updated as of August 2020 and should be copied/pasted as is. Please do not copy the old statement from a previous syllabus. Exception: Law school faculty members should consult with Stephen Yeager, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, for the specific statement appropriate for law syllabi.)**

- **Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/SASP/DASS> to begin the process. Once approved and registered, students will submit a DASS Accommodation Letter to faculty through the electronic portal *DASS Link* and then communicate directly with each instructor to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.
- **Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should

discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

(<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/Chaplain/ReligiousHolidays>).

- **Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (See [2020-2021 SMU Undergraduate Catalog](#) under “Enrollment and Academic Records/Excused Absences.”)
- **Student Learning Outcomes:** Please include in your syllabi all student learning outcomes, both those specific to your course, as well as those that satisfy major and general education requirements.
- **Student Academic Success Programs:** Students needing assistance with writing assignments for SMU courses may schedule an appointment with the Writing Center through Canvas. Students wishing support with subject-specific tutoring or success strategies should contact SASP, Loyd All Sports Center, Suite 202; 214-768-3648; <https://www.smu.edu/sasp>.
- **Final Exams:** Final course examinations shall be given in all courses where they are appropriate, and some form of final assessment is essential. Final exams or final assessments must be administered as specified in the official examination schedule, and shall not be administered during the last week of classes or during the Reading Period. Faculty must state clearly in the syllabus the date/time and form of the final exam or assessment. All exams, tests, and quizzes will be delivered online this fall so that all students, regardless of mode of instruction, have equitable access to testing.
- **Caring Community Connections (CCC) program:** This is a resource for anyone in the SMU community to refer students of concern to the Office of the Dean of Students. Faculty play a critical role in identifying students who are experiencing challenges, as you may be the first to notice a change in behavior such as class attendance or performance. The online referral form can be found at [smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc](http://smu.edu/deanofstudentsccc). After a referral is submitted, students will be contacted to discuss the concern, strategize options, and be connected to appropriate resources. Additionally, should you have concerns about students and are unclear about what to do, please see

the [CCC Reference Guide](#), or contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 214-768-4564.

- **Recommended Syllabus Statement for Pregnant and Parenting Students:** Accommodations for pregnant and parenting students: Under Title IX students who are pregnant or parenting may request academic adjustments by contacting Elsie Johnson ([elsiej@smu.edu](mailto:elsiej@smu.edu)) in the Office of the Dean of Students, or by calling 214-768-4564. Students seeking assistance must schedule an appointment with their professors as early as possible, present a letter from the Office of the Dean of Students, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that academic adjustments are not retroactive and, when feasible, require advance notice to implement.

**Covid-19 Attendance Statement:** Students who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or who have been notified through contact tracing of potential exposure and need to self-quarantine or isolate must follow the protocols laid out in [SMU's Contact Tracing Protocol](#). To ensure academic continuity, students in these situations will not be penalized and will be provided appropriate modifications to assignments, deadlines, and testing. Please also note that SMUFlex classes might, in rare circumstances, go remote for two-week periods to accommodate COVID-related issues. To ensure these necessary accommodations, affected students must:

- Provide as much advance notification as possible to the instructor about a change in circumstances. Students must notify their instructor about a potential absence as well as plans for a return to class. For cases in which students test positive for COVID-19, they should fill out a [CCC form at this link](#).
- Communicate promptly with the instructor to establish, as necessary, alternative assignments and/or changes to deadlines and exams. Students are then responsible for meeting the expectations laid out in these alternative arrangements.
- Continue participation in class via Zoom, as health circumstances permit. Attend class regularly, when not in a situation outlined above, in accordance with safety measures laid out by SMU CAN in the [Pledge to Protect](#) (including wearing masks, maintaining social distancing, and cleaning personal space after class). In-person participation in SMUFlex classes is required on students' assigned red/blue rotation days except in cases when students are experiencing illness, are in self-quarantine or in isolation.
- Students facing multiple or extended COVID-19-related absences or illness can work with the Office of the Dean of Students to consider options such as fully remote learning or medical withdrawal.

This policy, aligned with the [SMU Honor Code](#) and the SMU [Pledge to Protect](#), relies on mutual trust and respect between students and faculty to ensure safety, academic integrity, and instructional continuity.

In the attached, I have provided additional recommendations and resources that should improve the classroom experience for you and your students if helpful to you. Additionally, you may wish to share the attached “2020 Know What to Do” and the “DASS informational sheet” with your students.

You may also choose to include the following statement regarding the “campus carry” law: “In accordance with Texas Senate Bill 11, also known as the “campus carry” law, following consultation with entire University community SMU determined to remain a weapons-free campus. Specifically, SMU prohibits possession of weapons (either openly or in a concealed manner) on campus. For more information, please see: [http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police/Weapons\\_Policy](http://www.smu.edu/BusinessFinance/Police/Weapons_Policy).”

Thank you for your help in promoting a great start to the fall 2020 semester. A copy of this letter and the attachments will be posted on the Office of the Provost website under [“Provost’s Communications.”](#)

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba  
Provost and Vice President for  
Academic Affairs  
Southern Methodist University  
P.O. Box 750221, Dallas, TX 75275-0221  
[eglobo@smu.edu](mailto:eglobo@smu.edu)  
214-768-3219



# DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS & SUCCESS STRATEGIES

## WHAT WE DO

DASS coordinates the provision of classroom accommodations and disability access on campus. As part of the Student Academic Success Programs (SASP), DASS operates under the University Provost's office. The DASS team:

- reviews documentation to determine eligibility for services
- creates accommodation letters for students to share with faculty or departmental representative
- facilitates test proctoring services when faculty are unable to provide this
- offers disability awareness training for campus departments
- provides academic coaching for students with learning differences
- refers students to on and off-campus support

Please review our website for more details, and read our faculty newsletter, the *DASS Insider*, which comes out by email twice a semester and can be found on our website.

## WHERE WE ARE

### Office and Student Support

The DASS team is located within the Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center (LEC) at: **202 Loyd Ctr. or 5800 Ownby Dr.**

Entrance to our building is adjacent to Gate 3 of Ford Stadium. Take the elevator to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Parking for faculty/staff is behind and under the Meadows Museum.

### Test Proctoring Services

We strongly encourage students and faculty members to work out test accommodations within the department. For F2020 computer-based tests, please consult DASS or OIT to determine the most efficient method to utilize technology to proctor/monitor your students. In the event that a faculty member is not able to provide the accommodations, DASS serves as a back-up (at a cost to the University). Our administrative assistant coordinates this process with faculty and students. Please contact our office for more details, or review the information on our website under "Test Proctoring."

Exception: Students in Dedman School of Law should contact Dean Yeager.

## WHO WE ARE

Director: Alexa Taylor

Learning Specialist: David Tylicki

Accommodations Coordinators: Michelle Bufkin, Karen Turbeville, Tomasine Sam

Administrative Support: Candy Brown & Chandler Gobin

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\*The DASS office utilizes an online database system, called *DASS Link*, for all accommodation files, letters of accommodation as well as scheduled test proctoring held at the DASS office. Faculty log in at:

<https://shibboleth-smu-accommodate.symplicity.com/sso/faculty>

# GET INFORMATION & KNOW WHAT TO DO DURING AN EMERGENCY

- Ensure you will receive SMU emergency notifications: Update your cell phone # in My.SMU.edu
- During an emergency, look for information updates through texts, [www.smu.edu](http://www.smu.edu), Twitter (@SMU), or Facebook.
- View safety videos at [www.smu.edu/emergency](http://www.smu.edu/emergency)

## LOCKDOWN

Run, Hide, or Fight



### WHEN

You will receive this notice if there is an intruder with a weapon or the threat of another type of violence on campus.

ACTIONS (Depending on your personal situation and location)

- **RUN** – go to a safer location, if that is an option
- **HIDE** – get out of sight, remain quiet; lock doors when possible
- **FIGHT** – confronted with the violence, collaborate with others to distract the intruder and get away or defend yourselves
- Warn others and call 214-768-3333 if you have information for Police
- Wait for campus officials to notify you when to return to normal activities

## SEEK SHELTER

Find a safe place in a building



### WHEN

Outdoor warning sirens sound to signal there is severe weather or environmental danger outside

ACTIONS

- **Go Inside** a building, to bathrooms or interior halls, away from glass doors and windows
- Monitor one or more media sources
- Wait for campus officials to notify you when to return to normal activities

## EVACUATE

Leave your building immediately



### WHEN

Indoor alarms sound or strobe lights flash to signal there is a danger inside or near the building, such as fire

ACTIONS

- **Go Outside** the building; assist those who are disabled
- Take valuables and cell phone with you
- Proceed to the assembly area outside
- Wait for campus officials to notify you when to return to normal activities.

## ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Early and Midterm Progress Reports and Grading:** Faculty are encouraged to have quizzes, tests or other forms of assessment throughout the semester. The official midterm grade is due Week 11 of classes, but it is recommended that students be assessed by Week 6 or 7 so they may make adjustments. Throughout the semester, you will receive Progress Reports for a variety of student populations (ex: 1st year students, student athletes, students on probation). The requests include links to provide information that advisors and students use to identify courses in which the student is academically at-risk. It is particularly important for you to report a student with a midterm grade of C- or below.
- **Course Grade:** In your syllabus, please inform students about how final course grades will be determined, including information pertinent to your grading decision, such as class participation.
- **Office Hours:** Faculty are expected to have designated office hours. These can be in person with appropriate social distancing and masks, over Zoom, or a combination of both.
- **Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct of any kind is prohibited by the SMU Student Honor Code. Faculty who suspect plagiarism or cheating should consult <http://smu.edu/honorcouncil/> for appropriate actions and options.