



**Elizabeth G. Lobo, Ph. D.**  
**Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**  
**Office of the Provost**

April 22, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your interest in, and commitment to, advancing SMU's academic mission. These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we manage a safe, healthy and productive spring semester. If you have suggestions for what we should include in future communications, please send your ideas to this [email address](#). Previous newsletters are available [here](#).

### **Spring 2022**

- **Interim dean for SMU's Dedman School of Law** – Informed by meetings this spring with the Law School's Executive Board, faculty and staff, I am pleased to announce that Thomas Wm. Mayo, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor and Professor of Law has agreed to serve as Dean *ad interim* of the Dedman School of Law. He will become Interim Dean on May 16 and will serve in this capacity until we have appointed a new permanent dean for the school.
- **Leadership changes in the Office of General Education** – With the elevation of Dayna Oscherwitz from Assistant Provost for General Education to Associate Provost for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, and in order to ensure the stability of the Common Curriculum, my office will be making changes to the institutional structure of the area of general education at SMU.

A key goal of this reorganization is to reduce administrative burden on faculty. Therefore, academic counselors within the Office of General Education will be working with school records offices to provide dedicated support to facilitating the common curriculum and reducing faculty time spent on routine advising tasks.

In addition, the Assistant Provost for General Education will become a staff position and report to Sheri Kunovich in her role as Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success. This Assistant Provost will manage the operations of the Common Curriculum, focused heavily on implementing, administering and assessing SMU's required general education curriculum. Curricular decisions will continue to be made by faculty through the Council on General Education. The Assistant Provost will become an ex-officio (non-voting) member of the Council on General Education. The Associate Provost for Student Academic Engagement and Success will also be an ex-officio member of the Council.

The Council on General Education will be chaired by a faculty member who is a voting member of the Council. Support for the Council in terms of scheduling meetings, managing proposals, petitions, and council minutes will all be managed by the Office of Student Academic Engagement and Success. The chair will be appointed by the Provost upon the recommendation of the Associate Provosts of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, Student Academic Engagement and Success, and Curricular Innovation and Policy. All processes and procedures related to the Common Curriculum will continue as established.

The Common Curriculum plays a critical role in first-year retention and graduation, both key goals of SMU in Four. In particular, this realignment will enhance our efforts to make the transfer student experience as seamless as possible, will augment ongoing initiatives around gateway courses, and will improve our ability to ensure adequate access to breadth courses and proficiencies and experiences.

- **SMU's plans to sunset COVID-19 procedures** – As President Turner [announced earlier this semester](#), SMU will follow local, state and national trends by sunsetting our COVID-19 pandemic procedures by the end of the spring 2022 semester. Faculty mask guidelines in classrooms that were

established earlier this term will remain in place for the remainder of the spring 2022 semester at the faculty's discretion. For more information including details and dates of all modifications, [please see the sunsetting grid in President Turner's letter.](#)

For the remainder of spring 2022, SMU continues to provide access to convenient COVID-19 testing for employees and their families. The University covers 100% of the cost and no insurance paperwork is needed for those who have SMU health benefits.

- **Urgent Care for Families** has [locations](#) around the DFW area. (Make sure to click on the Dallas/Fort Worth tab at the top of the page to view area locations). Screening and testing costs are covered by SMU. In order to schedule a test, you must first book a virtual visit using this [link](#). Enter "SMU - COVID-19 test" as the reason for the visit and click on the "self-pay" button. The closest location to campus is on the corner of Preston Road and Forest Lane. Other locations in Arlington, Frisco, Garland, McKinney, and Plano may be convenient to your home or along your commute to and from work. They are open 7 days a week.
- **My Labs Direct** provides drive-through PCR testing for employees and their families at various [locations](#) throughout the metroplex including an SMU on-site location, which is available through May 15, 2022. The on-site testing location is on East Campus in the Expressway Tower parking lot (6116 N. Central Expressway). Testing times are Monday through Friday 9:00 - 11:00 am. To schedule an appointment at Expressway Tower, use this [link](#). Appointments may be scheduled for all other locations Monday through Friday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. No virtual visit is required prior to testing.

Continuing after May 15th, SMU will continue to provide the following pandemic resources:

- **Vaccines/Boosters** – COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters (fourth shots for those 50+ or with pre-existing health conditions) will be available for students and employees (and families) at the [Dr. Bob Smith Health Center](#).

- **Testing** – COVID-19 testing will be available for students (only) at the Dr. Bob Smith Health Center. Employees should see the [HR website](#) after May 15th for several available options off campus.
- **Pandemic information** – Basic pandemic information will remain on the [Mustang Strong](#) website.

### **Road to R1/Scholarly Creative Excellence:**

- **Request for proposal (RFP): SMU – Bush Institute post-doctoral program** – The Office of the Provost, in partnership with the George W. Bush Institute, has created a new [post-doctoral fellowship program](#) with the goals of encouraging collaborative research between SMU and the Bush Institute and increasing the number of post-doctoral fellows at SMU. Under this program, three post-doctoral positions will be funded annually. Funding is limited to one year (12 months) per post-doctoral fellow, and preference will be given to proposals that are able to provide a second year of funding for the requested post-doctoral fellow and to proposals from Principal Investigators (PIs) at the rank of Assistant Professor.

All SMU tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to submit proposals and to serve as PI. All faculty, including non-tenured-tenure-track faculty, may serve as co-PI on proposals and awards. One proposal may be submitted per year per PI. There are no restrictions on the number of proposals on which a faculty member can serve as co-PI. Proposals must be submitted by May 2, 2022 to [provost@smu.edu](mailto:provost@smu.edu) in 11-point or greater font and not exceed two, 8.5. x 11 pages in length.

- **SMU libraries offers \$1,000 research assignment stipends** – SMU Libraries' Research Assignment Stipend awards \$1,000 to faculty for winning proposals to integrate new information literacy components into undergraduate and graduate coursework in collaboration with librarians. Information literacy gained from well-designed research assignments allows students to think more critically, to translate information into knowledge, and to use what they've learned outside of the classroom to support their own understanding. [Submit your proposals](#) for summer/fall 2022 by May 28, 2022.

- **Key leadership searches underway**
  - **Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education** – Interviews and campus visits for two of our four finalists took place this week. Click [here](#) for more information as well as details on how to participate in next week's campus visit with our third candidate.

As a reminder, all candidates arriving to Campus should remain confidential. Please do not share candidates' names or visits with anyone outside of SMU.

- **Dedman Law Dean** – The search committee will conduct confidential semifinalist interviews later this month with plans to complete campus interviews with finalists in May prior to Commencement.
- **Vice Provost for Research (VPR) and Chief Innovation Officer (CIO)** – We have completed on-campus interviews and hope to announce our new VPR/CIO later this month.
- **Lyle School of Engineering Dean** – Having now completed a round of listening sessions with Lyle's Executive Board, faculty, staff, Deans, Associate Deans, Department Chairs, Center and Institute Directors and students to inform my decision, I am hopeful to announce Lyle's dean *ad interim* soon. The search committee will be appointed and charged at the start of the fall 2022 semester and Sam Holland, Dean of the Meadows School, will chair the committee.

### **News and Noteworthy:**

- **Announcing Access SMU, a new scholarship program for high-achieving, high-need Texas students** – Academic excellence is one of our four priority areas through the year 2025. One of the ways we will achieve this goal is by increasing access to SMU for more high achieving, first-generation and underrepresented students. *Access SMU*, a new scholarship program set to [launch this fall](#), will close financial gaps among high-achieving Texas students who are eligible for Pell Grants. We are grateful

to SMU's generous donors who, through the *SMU Ignited* capital campaign, are demonstrating their strong support for this critical and world-changing initiative.

- **Farewell receptions for Deans Christensen and Collins** – This spring, we have the bittersweet opportunity to bid farewell – and congratulations – to two of our Deans who will soon become university presidents. On Tuesday, May 10th from 4:00 – 5:00 pm in the Hughes-Trigg Student Center Ballroom, President Turner and I will host a [farewell reception](#) for Jennifer M. Collins, Judge James Noel Dean and Professor of Law in the Dedman School of Law. And, on Wednesday, May 11th from 4:00 – 5:00 pm in the Mack Grand Ballroom, President Turner and I will host a [farewell reception](#) for Marc P. Christensen, Dean and Lyle Professor of Innovation in the Lyle School of Engineering.
- **Research Computing Day at SMU** – SMU's [Center for Research Computing](#) invites faculty and staff to the inaugural SMU Research Computing Day on April 29, 2022, at the Miller Event Center from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. At this event, you will have a chance to hear about cutting-edge research from across campus using high-performance computing, artificial intelligence, and data analysis to address complex problems in science, engineering, and the social sciences, as well as keynote speakers. Participation is free, but [registration](#) is requested by Friday, April 22nd.
- **Invitation to May Commencement** – SMU's 107<sup>th</sup> annual May Commencement will take place on Saturday, May 14th, at 9:00 am in Ford Stadium. May Commencement, with its associated events, is an important occasion in the life of our community – a time when we celebrate our students and their academic success. Your presence at this significant rite of passage is important both to those whom you have taught and to the entire University community. We are pleased to welcome Grant Moise, President and Publisher of the *Dallas Morning News*, as this year's Commencement speaker.

Please access the [May Commencement RSVP](#) webpage to let us know if you will attend the ceremony and participate in the academic procession. It is important that we know how many faculty will attend the morning ceremony so we can reserve enough seats for everyone who

participates. We also welcome you to the Faculty Breakfast to begin at 8:00 am. Please let us know if you will be able to join by emailing [facultyysuccess@smu.edu](mailto:facultyysuccess@smu.edu). The deadline to RSVP for attending the ceremony is **Friday, April 29**, by 4:00 pm.

Click [here](#) for additional information on May commencement festivities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth G. Loba", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Southern Methodist University  
<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

**World Changers Shaped Here**