

## Weekly Update | March 3, 2023

**Elizabeth G. Loba, Ph.D. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Dear Faculty and Staff,

These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we work toward achieving the goals that fall within our four priority areas through 2025: 1) Academic Excellence/ *US News and World Report* top 50, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 3) 2016 – 2025 Strategic Plan, and 4) Inclusive Excellence.

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](#).

Today's update falls into three categories: 1) Spring 2023, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

### Spring 2023

#### **FY 2024 Budget meetings conclude this week**

Earlier this week, the deans and associate provosts received preliminary notification (pending May Board of Trustees' approval), of their budgets for fiscal year (FY) 2024, which begins this June. As in previous years, requests have been weighed against their relationship to our goals for 1) Academic Excellence, 2) Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 3) the 2016 – 2025 Strategic Plan, and 4) Inclusive Excellence Initiatives.

While Academic Affairs has transitioned to a three-year budget planning cycle, this year's approvals only pertain to FY 2024. This allows us flexibility to pivot, as needed, in future years but to do so with a better understanding of needs – and funding sources – to inform our planning.

Thanks to the deans and associate provosts for their collaborative approaches to strategic budget prioritization once again this year. We will share more specifics once the FY 2024 budget has received board approval.

#### **\$20M gift to Lyle School of Engineering expands research excellence and educational impact**

To conclude last week's Board of Trustees' meeting, SMU announced a [landmark \\$20M gift](#) that creates the Mary and Richard Templeton Engineering Excellence Program that includes research support for faculty, fellowships for postdoctoral scholars and doctoral students, undergraduate

scholarships – especially for women and students from underrepresented populations, and an endowed chair in electrical and computer engineering. The gift will also endow the Mary and Richard Templeton deanship in the Lyle School, with Nader Jalili to serve as the inaugural dean.

Dean Jalili assumed the Lyle deanship on Wednesday, March 1. Please join me in welcoming him, his wife Fatima, and their family to the Hilltop. As a reminder, President Turner and I will be hosting a welcome reception for Dean Jalili on Tuesday, March 7, at 4 p.m. in the Hughes Trigg Student Center Ballroom.

### **Request for participation in SMU's annual space allocation survey**

A proper accounting of our institution's space utilization is vital for current and future planning as well as for our ability to ensure data accuracy for required reporting to outside agencies and campus leadership. SMU is asking select representatives from all schools and departments to complete a survey to review, validate and revise the current space utilization data housed in STABLE, SMU's system of record, to understand how our space is allocated, utilized and shared. This week, survey participants received an email invitation for a kick-off meeting to review the survey's scope, process and timeline with a request to complete the survey by Friday, March 31. Thanks, in advance, to survey participants' for prompt attention to this important request.

### **Provost participating in informal conversations with college/school faculty this spring**

Over the course of the spring semester, I will be visiting the college/schools for informal conversations open to all their faculty. The purpose of these meetings is to listen and to engage in conversation with no set agenda. My first visit, with the Lyle School of Engineering, took place today, and my second visit is planned in the Perkins School of Theology on Friday, March 10. Be on the lookout for information on subsequent visits, and I hope you will be able to attend.

### **Three updates from the Office of Engaged Learning (OEL)**

#### **The OEL is accepting faculty applications for the [Summer Research Intensive \(SRI\)](#)**

The SRI program matches funding for up to two Undergraduate Research Assistants (URAs) per faculty mentor. The students may work up to 30 hours per week during the summer. Students are expected to attend weekly professional development workshops and symposia in addition to their URA duties.

#### **Registration is open for the [Undergraduate Poster Session \(March 21\)](#) during [Research and Innovation Week](#)**

Any undergraduate is eligible to present their research and compete for prizes. Please encourage your students to sign up by Friday, March 10.

#### **Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REUs)**

[Research Experiences for Undergraduates](#) are paid summer internships where students can work with faculty on research projects. These programs are funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The OEL website site lists REUs taking place at SMU as well as recommended programs from our partners. There are numerous programs across the country, which can be found on the [NSF website](#).

# Road to R1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence

## Call for Proposals: University Research and Travel grants

All faculty and emeriti faculty are reminded that the deadline to apply for University Research Council (URC) research and travel grants is Monday, March 6, by 5 p.m. Click [here](#) for more information.

## SMU faculty receive \$1.7M multi-year grant for social impact lab and real estate impact investing

Made possible through the generous support of the Phillips Foundation, a new SMU Impact Lab will invest in for-profit social impact endeavors in the social, creative, and arts spaces. Housed in the Corporate Communications and Public Affairs (CCPA) division in the Meadows School of the Arts, working in collaboration with Cox School of Business, the SMU Impact Lab will serve the University's entrepreneurial students, faculty, and alumni in the domains of social, creative, and arts entrepreneurship as a nexus for devising solutions to complex problems and serving as the principal means of funding for social and creative entrepreneurship endeavors at SMU.

Congratulations to Jim Hart, Director of Social Innovation, Creative and Arts Entrepreneurship and Professor of Practice in the Meadows School of the Arts' Division of CCPA; Doric Earle, Professor of Practice in the Meadows School of the Arts' Division of CCPA; Carlos Martinez, Adjunct Professor in the Cox School of Business' Department of Strategy and Entrepreneurship, for this accomplishment; and to Joseph Cahoon, Cox School of Business' Director of the Folsom Institute for Real Estate.

## Research and Innovation Week, March 20-25

[Research & Innovation Week](#) is SMU's annual showcase and celebration of the outstanding research being done by SMU students and other members of our community. This year's events will take place **March 20-25** and include a keynote talk, undergraduate and graduate poster sessions, a panel on "Graduate Education and the Future of Research in North Texas" featuring faculty at SMU and other North Texas universities, and the Master of Fine Arts Qualifying Exhibition.

Please encourage undergraduates, graduate students, and postdocs who are conducting research at SMU to be a part of this exciting event by participating in the poster sessions, which will take place on **Tuesday, March 21** (undergraduate poster session) and **Wednesday, March 22** (graduate and postdoc poster session), from **2-5 p.m.**, in the **Hughes-Trigg Student Center Ballroom**. You can find more information, as well as the link to register for the poster session, on the [Research and Innovation Week website](#).

## Key leadership searches underway

### **Peter O'Donnell Jr. Data Science Institute Director**

Last month, I [appointed a search committee](#) for SMU's inaugural Peter O'Donnell Jr. Director of the Data Science Institute with plans to fill the position by the end of the spring 2023 semester. The search committee's kickoff meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, March 9. Representatives from our executive search firm, Isaacson-Miller, will also spend time that day meeting with

members of both the Data Science Institute Advisory Board and the Data Science Cluster Hire Task Force, as well as with select faculty to inform the position description that will guide our search.

Suku Nair, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer, has agreed to chair the search. Be on the lookout for additional information in subsequent newsletters. Continued thanks to Peter Moore for serving as Data Science Institute Director *ad interim* until our new director arrives.

## News and Noteworthy

### SMU hosts future-focused energy symposium

On February 15 and 16, SMU Cox's Maguire Energy Institute, in collaboration with the George W. Bush Presidential Center, hosted an invitation-only [symposium](#) to discuss the future of energy. [Energy Outlook '23](#) took place at the George W. Bush Presidential Center and represented the largest gathering of energy thought leaders (over 300) in North Texas history, with 20 sessions and 50 speakers representing energy producers, investors, policymakers and consumer organizations.

### Dallas Innovates features SMU faculty member in its "Future 50"

Congratulations to J.C. Chiao, Mary and Richard Templeton Centennial Chair and Professor in the Lyle School of Engineering's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, upon his being recognized by *Dallas Innovates* in its "Future 50" publication. The "Future 50" list consists of "entrepreneurs, leaders, inventors, creatives and educators . . . (who) are disrupting industries, solving challenges and making Dallas-Fort Worth (and beyond) a better place."

### Video and materials from Graduate Student Success Day now available

Last month, the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies hosted its first Graduate Student Success day, an all-day event focused on convening faculty to share best practices and ideas for promoting their graduate students' success. For those who were unable to attend, or for anyone who wants to learn more about graduate mentoring at SMU and the resources available to support graduate student success, a Box folder with materials from the event is available [here](#). These materials include a video recording of the presentation on "Best Practices in Mentoring Graduate Students" by the guest speaker, Kurt Kraiger, Professor and Chair of the Department of Management, Fogelman College of Business and Economics, University of Memphis.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

**World Changers Shaped Here**

