

Department Chairs, Associate Deans, Deans, and Academic Affairs Staff,

With a goal of staying connected on internal governance issues, the Provost Office sends a monthly Roundup on the final Friday of each month to the internal university leadership. Note: the August Roundup is longer than we typically send, so you will find the information distributed across three categories: 1) Internal Governance Highlights; 2) General Announcements; and 3) Current Opportunities.

Important Upcoming Dates in September:

- 2nd: Spring Course Scheduling Large Room Requests Due
- 14th: Spring Course Scheduling **Entry Deadline**
- Schedule goes live on October 1: [Visit the Scheduling Wiki](#)

Internal Governance Highlights

Duration of Status Final Rule Impacts on International Students: The International Office will provide an update during the Wednesday, September 2, Faculty Senate meeting to summarize the DHS Duration of Status Final Rule and its implications for international students and academic programs. The presentation will also include important updates regarding Curricular Practical Training (CPT) work authorization and SMU's ongoing review of CPT procedures. For more information, reach out to intloffice@smu.edu, attend the Faculty Senate meeting at 3:10 in the Hughes Trigg Senate Chamber; or connect with your [Faculty Senator \(list here\)](#).

Transfer Credit Re-evaluation Project. The new eForm for the re-evaluation of equivalent courses, generic credit, and transfer credit from other institutions went live for students on August 17th. This dynamic new eForm will significantly reduce the cycle time for credit evaluations, which will help students move forward in their academic journeys more quickly and with fewer administrative delays. This is a meaningful step toward improving the student experience and streamlining our processes across campus. To support this new way of working, the development team has also trained evaluators and created a [Faculty Evaluator Training Video](#) and a [Student Quick Tip Video](#) to help ensure a smooth, successful adoption. Note that the old SharePoint links ([Option 1](#) & [Option 2](#)) now include instructions to redirect students to this new eForm. The SharePoint links for the old workflow will be deactivated on October 1. For more information contact John Easton (easton@smu.edu).

Improvements to EPC Forms. Institutional Effectiveness (IE), in collaboration with the Office of the Registrar, has revised the "EPC Request to Create a New Academic Program" and "Request to Modify an Existing Academic Program" forms to streamline the academic program approval process. The revised forms consolidate several actions that previously required separate forms into a single request. For example, a proposal to add or change a program's modality can now be incorporated into the appropriate new-program

or program-modification request. As a reminder, new academic programs and changes to existing programs require multiple levels of review and approval before they may be implemented. Depending on the nature of the proposal, these may include school-level approval, EPC approval, Board of Trustees approval, and SACSCOC notification or approval. Departments considering new programs or program changes should plan well in advance and consult both the [Academic Program Approval Timetable](#) and the [EPC Meeting Schedule](#) to ensure sufficient time for all required reviews and approvals before the intended implementation date. Beginning this academic year, EPC agendas will also be distributed to all Department Chairs prior to each meeting, providing greater visibility into proposals under consideration and upcoming academic program actions. For more information, contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at assessment@smu.edu.

New Website Clarifying AI-Approved Tools. The Office of Information Technology has created a website, “[Using AI Tools with University Data](#),” to provide guidance on which University data classifications may be used with approved AI tools and services. Before using University data with an AI tool, users are responsible for understanding the classification of the data and using only tools approved for that classification. You can refer to [Policy 8.6 – Information Classification](#) for University data-classification requirements and definitions of Public, Private, and Restricted Data. For more information, reach out to Corrina Taylor, Chief Security Information Officer, at corrinat@smu.edu.

Important Changes about Scheduling Online Courses. To ensure all parties involved in scheduling online courses are aware of the most up-to-date guidance for entering the online schedule in my.SMU, please review the following information.

- ARR (Arranged) is a common meeting pattern selected for online courses, but it is most appropriate for fully asynchronous classes.
- Any class with synchronous participation expectations (scheduled engagement with faculty, the class, or another party) should not use the ARR pattern alone for scheduling as this does not adequately prepare students for course expectations and it does not allow my.SMU to catch possible course conflicts. Meeting rows or class notes should be added to share scheduling expectations.
- Meeting Rows. Any meeting that assembles the whole class (be it for onboarding, lecture, discussion, or exams) must be communicated in meeting rows my.SMU. If the meetings are not patterned consistently throughout the term, individual meeting rows may be entered for each unique class session. Even if this results in a long list, each meeting should be entered.
- Class Notes. Appointment-based synchronous expectations or any other expected activity that may require live scheduling should be summarized and shared in class notes.
- If an instructor considers synchronous class meetings optional or provides back up opportunities for these, this may also be shared in class notes.
- If faculty have previously solidified their course schedule in consultation with their students early in the term, this practice must also be done in concert with the steps above so that all stakeholders have confirmed the schedule. To avoid as many

student scheduling conflicts as possible, we recommend scheduling synchronous hours after 3pm central time. No synchronous meeting times can be scheduled before 9am central time to address students who may study from the Pacific coast.

We encourage faculty to speak with their schedulers about how to best convey their course expectations. Darrah Rippy (drippy@smu.edu) from the Registrar's Office is also available to help with questions about inputting course schedules in my.SMU.

General Announcements

Academic Catalog for 2026-27 is Live at <https://catalog.smu.edu>. Please note the following enhancements and changes:

1. New Catalog Platform. The catalog is now hosted on the Coursedog platform, which synchronizes program and course information directly with my.SMU and the Coursedog Curriculum Management module.
2. Single University Catalog. Beginning with the 2026–2027 edition, the Undergraduate and Graduate catalogs have been combined into a single University catalog. When viewing a department, all academic programs associated with that department in my.SMU will now be displayed together.
3. Student-Centered Design. The new catalog has been designed with a more student-centered approach, organizing information to make it easier for students, faculty, and staff to locate and navigate.
4. Archived Catalogs. Archived catalogs remain available at <https://www.smu.edu/catalogs/archives>. They are available only as PDF documents, as we are unable to retain the HTML versions. This should prevent search engines from directing users to outdated catalog information instead of the current edition.

For more information, contact Bobby Lothringer, Assistant Vice Provost & University Registrar at blothringer@smu.edu.

Federal Student Loan Updates: What Faculty Need to Know. The recent One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) brings significant changes to federal student loan programs, effective July 1, 2026. Because these changes impact student financing and program affordability, Student Financial Services (SFS) is actively monitoring the updates to support our students. Key changes include: 1) Elimination of Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans for students beginning or changing their program of study; 2) New annual and lifetime borrowing limits for graduate and professional students; 3) Reduced loan eligibility for students enrolled part-time; and 4) Updated repayment options. There are possible exceptions for current students. Students who were already enrolled and receiving a federal loan for their current program *before* July 1, 2026, may qualify for a limited exception from these new rules. This allows them to keep their previous loan limits and Grad PLUS eligibility for up to three academic years or until they reach their time

to credential, whichever is sooner. Time to credential is defined as the published program length in years. Faculty and staff can visit the [One Big Beautiful Bill Act Update webpage](#) for a detailed summary, FAQs, and examples of how these changes apply. Please direct students with questions about their individual borrowing eligibility to the SMU Mane Desk.

Graduate Career Outcomes Dashboards are Available. The 2024-25 Career Outcomes Dashboards are now available, providing updated information about the post-graduation outcomes of SMU graduates. Two versions of the dashboard are available:

- Internal Career Outcomes
Dashboard: <https://di.smu.edu/views/PostGraduationCareerOutcomes/Post-GraduationCareerOutcomes2024-25>
Available to the SMU community, this dashboard provides more detailed information about graduate outcomes and allows users to explore data by factors such as school or college, degree program, major, employer, industry, and other available categories.
- Public Career Outcomes
Dashboard: <https://www.smu.edu/provost/assessment/career/dashboard-new>
The public-facing dashboard provides a high-level view of SMU graduate outcomes, including general information about employment outcomes and salaries.

SMU collects and reports career outcomes in accordance with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) First-Destination Survey standards and protocols. NACE methodology provides for collecting information about graduates' outcomes during the months following graduation. Consequently, career outcomes are reported approximately one academic year behind the current year. This allows SMU to capture more complete information about graduates' post-graduation destinations while following nationally recognized reporting standards. We encourage members of the SMU community to explore the internal dashboard and use these data to support academic and strategic planning, program review and assessment, accreditation, student recruitment, and conversations about career preparation and student success. The public dashboard may also be shared with prospective students, families, employers, and other external audiences interested in the outcomes of SMU graduates. Questions about the dashboards or SMU's career outcomes data may be directed to Diana Easton in SMU University Decision Support: deaston@smu.edu.

Campus Accommodations on Friday, November 6th. SMU will be hosting Virginia Tech for a football game on Friday, November 6th. To accommodate, we will invite faculty to shift their courses to remote teaching for all classes beginning at noon or later. We also request that faculty, staff, and students move their vehicles at noon, when possible, to accommodate out-of-town guests. Boulevard will formally begin at 1:00 p.m. For more information, reach out to facultysuccess@smu.edu.

Moody School Leadership Academy. In 2025-2026, the Moody School piloted a new program to support the academic and professional success of graduate students: 18 PhD students from a range of fields completed the Moody School Leadership Academy, a series

of structured professional development workshops offered in collaboration with campus partners including the Office of Research and Innovation, the Hegi Family Career Development Center, SMU Libraries, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the Office of Information Technology. Participants developed leadership and professional skills and built a portfolio of materials to support their future careers. This year, the Leadership Academy expands, with sessions open to all graduate students offered throughout the fall and spring semesters. SMU graduate students who complete ten sessions over the course of their graduate career are eligible for recognition as Moody Leadership Scholars, including a digital badge, printable certificate, and transcript notation. They are also featured on the Moody School website and are invited to special events for fellows of the Moody School. Information and a list of upcoming sessions can be found on the [Leadership Academy webpage](#).

Current Opportunities

Moody School Faculty Associate. The Moody School invites applications for a newly established Faculty Associate position designed to strengthen faculty participation in graduate-student professional development, graduate-education research, and institutional policy development. Beginning in Spring 2027, the Faculty Associate will devote approximately eight hours per week to responsibilities including: directing the Moody School Leadership Academy, completing research or policy projects, and participating in designated Graduate Council meetings and working groups. The Faculty Associate will serve for an initial one-year term (Spring-Fall 2027) with the possibility of renewal. They will receive a two-course reduction (one each in Spring 2027 and Fall 2027) and, depending on availability, a stipend of \$5,000 for summer responsibilities. Their home unit will receive replacement-instruction costs of up to \$40,000. Applications are due by Tuesday, September 15, by email to aitkin@smu.edu and should include: 1) a CV, 2) a cover letter describing the applicant's engagement with graduate education and interest in and relevant experience for the responsibilities of the position, and 3) a statement of endorsement from the department chair, confirming the support of the chair and school/college dean for the two-course reduction. More information can be found in the [call for applications](#). Questions can be directed to Dr. Alan Itkin at aitkin@smu.edu.

Funding Available for Undergraduate Research Assistants. The Office of Engaged Learning offers match funding to hire Undergraduate Research Assistants. These students may work up to 10 hours per week during the academic year, with a recommended starting wage of \$15/hour. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with a priority deadline of Friday, September 4. Information and application are available at smu.edu/URA

Nominations for National Undergraduate Fellowships. In the last two years, 11 SMU undergraduates and undergraduate alumni have been granted Fulbright scholarships to destinations around the world. Others have been recognized for scientific achievement through National Science Foundation and Goldwater scholarships. Help us keep the momentum. [Submit a nomination here](#). In addition, we enlist the support of faculty to

serve on faculty interview panels for several undergraduate awards. The Student Academic Engagement and Success (Honors and Scholars) and the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies invite you to serve on one of these panels: the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. The total time commitment is approximately three to five hours. If you are interested in participating in this year's interviews, please [complete this form](#) by September 18.

Keep the community informed about faculty awards: Please let us know if you have received or have been nominated for an award – or if you have nominated an SMU colleague [at this link](#).

We welcome your suggestions for future areas to feature in the monthly roundup; email facultysuccess@smu.edu. You can [find past issues at this link](#).