September 2025 Roundup

Department Chairs, Associate Deans, and Deans,

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.

Conversations about Promotion and Tenure. President Hartzell and Provost Mersey are offering two open sessions for faculty interested in discussing promotion and tenure at SMU. Faculty leadership is also welcome to join; please encourage your faculty to attend.

- **TODAY**: 3:00pm-4:00pm – Hughes-Trigg Ballroom A
- Tuesday, September 30th: 4:00pm-5:00pm – Hughes-Trigg Oren Auditorium

Early Participation Reports (Due September 30). Faculty teaching undergraduate courses are expected to complete the Early Participation and MidTerm Progress Reports. Please remind your faculty and offer support to faculty teaching for the first time. The attached letter also provides directions for how you can check on progress by viewing the data from the query tool in my.SMU. Pulling your data when you are ready to send your reminder is most helpful as it captures immediate changes. The most helpful query to monitor faculty specific EPR and MPR submissions is U_SR_GR5950_MTL_PARTIC_COURSE.

2025 Change to University Wide Academic Progress. This is the first semester that SMU will notify new students that they have been placed on Academic Alert at the end of their first semester (see attached SMU2025 Catalog Academic Progress for more details). Academic alert is a warning that the student fell below minimum GPA (2.0) and completed semester credit hour requirements (12). An academic alert does not prevent future enrollment and is not displayed on their academic record. We are drawing your attention to this change because SMU has not previously used completed semester credit hours as a metric by which to evaluate academic good standing. We hope that this shift will encourage students to persist in courses where they are doing well (above a B-) but may not necessarily be able to earn an A. This shift may also result in a few more students asking faculty if they may change to Pass/Fail in the course so that they can keep the credit but not necessarily earn the letter grade. November 25 is the last day to: declare a course pass/fail (see UG catalog for specific information), drop a course (grade of W), or withdraw from the University (grades of W). *(This date does not apply to courses in which the last class meeting and final exam have occurred.)*

Faculty Activity Reporting Rollout. Please know that a faculty-wide email about the new Faculty Activity Reporting System will be sent early next week. You can [learn more at this site](). Please reach out to Molly Ellis at facultysuccess@smu.edu if you would like in-person support at either a departmental or school-level meeting to help answer questions about this system. An invitation for a 90-minute session for new (and any interested continuing) department chairs to take a deeper dive into the system is forthcoming for early October.

SMU Intersessions and SMU Taos. The call for proposals for SMU Intersessions and SMU Taos (May & Summer 2026) is now live! Faculty are invited to submit course proposals by October 10. Chairs and deans will be asked to review and approve submissions in late October/early November. For more information or to propose a course, please complete these forms: SMU Intersessions and SMU Taos For any questions, please contact intersessions@smu.edu or smutaos@smu.edu.

Nominations Now Open for Moody Outstanding Mentor Awards. The Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and the Center for Teaching Excellence are now accepting nominations for Moody Outstanding Mentor Awards. These awards recognize exceptional mentoring of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars by SMU faculty. Four awards are given each year. Each department may nominate one faculty member for this award each year. All full-time SMU faculty who work closely with graduate students and/or postdoctoral scholars are eligible for nomination. Moody Outstanding Mentor Awards provide a fund of $10,000, to be used by the end of the following academic year, to support research and professional development expenses for graduate students and postdoctoral scholars under the awardee's mentorship. In addition, awardees will each receive $1,000 for their personal use. Nominations should be submitted via the online form here no later than Friday, Oct. 10. Further nomination instructions and selection criteria can be found in the call for nominations and the evaluation rubric. Faculty are encouraged to work with department colleagues to nominate an exemplary mentor for these awards.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month. This October, SMU OIT Security is brewing up a spooky-good Cybersecurity Awareness Month full of tricks, treats, and a few digital scares. Each week features a fun activity—from outsmarting a "haunted AI" to spotting phishing scams in disguise—leading up to our in-person Cyber Fair on October 29 from 2:00-3:30 in the Moody Hall Atrium. At the fair, you'll find booths covering all facets of security, including online safety, Microsoft Authenticator, and even physical security with a live lock-picking demonstration. Faculty are encouraged to join the fun, cheer on their students, and model safe cyber habits along the way. Plus, every activity earns points toward frightfully fun prizes—so the more you play, the more chances you have to win! Also, if will give you a chance to meet our new Chief Information Security Officer, Corrina Taylor. Learn more here.

Update on Qwickly Attendance Platform. We have had a relatively smooth rollout of the new attendance-taking platform. A team formed by OIT, the Office of Faculty Success, and SAES is providing on-going support to faculty and students. This week, we reached out to a small group of 20 faculty with students in the actively monitored group to help further troubleshoot in those particular classes. We will continue to gather feedback and bring forward recommendations to the leadership team about upcoming decisions on further use of this attendance platform. For questions, please contact facultysuccess@smu.edu.

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.