



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

May 20, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

As many of you know, Jim Quick, Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education, will step down and begin his planned (and hard-earned) sabbatical on June 1, 2022. Dean Quick came to SMU after a distinguished, twenty-five year scientific career with the United States Geological Survey (USGS). He assumed SMU's newly-created position of Associate Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies in July 2007 and, over the past fifteen years, has provided vital leadership to establish SMU's current footprint in research, high performance computing and graduate studies.

Under Jim's leadership, SMU progressed from R3 to R2 in the Carnegie Classification of Research Universities and launched the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. In this, his final year, SMU's faculty have set records for research awards at \$45.7M as of April.

In recognition of Jim's tremendous workload and the importance of strong leadership in the areas of research and graduate studies, SMU launched two national, external searches this past fall for his replacements with the following positions: 1) Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer and 2) Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education.

While these two searches are currently active, I am hopeful to announce new hires in the weeks ahead. However, and until we have identified permanent replacements, I am pleased to announce the following appointments *ad interim*.

Renee McDonald, Dedman College's Senior Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs and Professor of Psychology, will serve as Dean *ad interim* of the Moody School of

Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education *ad interim*. Her appointment is effective June 1. Renee joined the Dedman College faculty in 2003, was Associate Dean for Research from 2011 – 2014, Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs from 2014 – 2016, and has been Senior Associate Dean for Research and Academic Affairs since 2017. For the past two years, she has been a Provost Faculty Fellow, working in collaboration with Dean Quick and the other Deans, to consider opportunities for SMU to strengthen its research and scholarly impact. Most importantly for her role as Dean *ad interim* of the Moody School, her deliberations have included considerations about the impact that graduate education can have on our research and academic quality ambitions.

Suku Nair, Director of the AT&T Center for Virtualization and University Distinguished Professor in the Lyle School of Engineering's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, will serve as Associate Provost for Research *ad interim*. His appointment is effective June 1, 2022. He joined Lyle's faculty in 1990, was the Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering from 2008 to 2016 and is the founder of SMU's Cyber Security program. He is an internationally recognized authority on cyber security and reliable computing and communication. As founding director of the AT&T Center for Virtualization, he has provided a critical resource in Dallas as the city continues to evolve as a global information technology hub.

Please join me in congratulating Drs. McDonald and Nair on these appointments, and Dean Quick on his longstanding contributions to research and graduate education at SMU.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth G. Loba', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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

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