



September 9, 2022

Dear Campus Community -

Welcome back for the fall semester! We've completed the first year of SMU's [Quality Enhancement Plan \(QEP\), SMU in Four](#), our comprehensive initiative to improve four-year graduation rates and retention. Thank you all for your contributions on important aspects of the QEP. We could not do it without you after all, retention is a collective effort. We write with updates on the initiative as we look ahead to year two.

**Leadership & Membership:** First, the initiative is now co-directed by Dr. Molly Ellis, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Office of Faculty Success, and Dr. Dustin Grabsch, Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education & Academic Success.

Next, in preparation for the new year, [we would like to share the year-two membership rosters for all SMU in Four pillars/teams](#). For the 2022-2023 Academic Year, the chairs of each SMU in Four Pillars and Teams are:

- Early Alert Pillar: Dr. Sue Bierman & Audryanna Reed
- Academic Advising: Josh Beaty
- First-Year & Gateway Courses: Dr. Paige Ware
- Faculty Steering Committee: Dr. Paige Ware
- Student Steering Committee: Dr. Dustin Grabsch
- Technology Team: Curt Herridge
- Assessment Team: Dr. Molly Ellis
- School Implementation Teams: Dr. Sheri Kunovich

**Join Us for a Progress Presentation:** We will all gather at key moments throughout this five-year initiative. Our first will be the SMU in Four Year-One Progress Presentation for the SMU campus community on September 28, 2022 from 3:30 – 5:00 pm. [Please RSVP and join us in the Hughes-Trigg Student Center Auditorium](#). We will update the campus on our progress and goals for year two.

[RSVP](#)

**Undergraduate Degree Planner is Coming:** To aid undergraduate [Common Curriculum](#) students in their progress toward degree, the SMU in Four Technology Team is developing a new tool called HighPoint Degree Planner within my.SMU. This tool will help students and advisors develop and sequence a personalized path to on-time graduation. HighPoint Degree Planner will not only benefit students and advisors but will aid academic departments in data-driven course scheduling and seat capacity planning. The new tool will launch to students on the Common Curriculum in November 2022.

In preparation, SMU in Four School Implementation Teams will be asked to work with academic departments to verify their degree plans within the HighPoint system. Instructions will be sent to department chairs (or a designee) to verify in September/October. Training and support sessions will be provided to the campus community and by request. [Read more about the Common Curriculum HighPoint Degree Planner.](#)

If you would like to stay abreast of updates related to SMU in Four, [we invite you to subscribe to our blog](#) or [check out our updated website](#).

Sincerely,

**Molly Ellis**

Director of Strategic Initiatives

Office of Faculty Success, Office of the Provost

**Dustin Grabsch**

Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education & Academic Success

Student Academic Engagement & Success, Office of the Provost