



SMU

Office of the Provost

September 4, 2020

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 to ensure a safe and healthy fall 2020 and advance the goals of SMU's strategic plan. 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 two categories: 1) Fall 2020 and 2) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2020

- **Fall 2020 undergraduate enrollment update** – As of September 4, we have 1,533 first-year undergraduate students (target, 1,526) and 299 transfers (target, 290). Returning students totaled 4,908 bringing us to a total of 6,470 undergraduates (48 above target). Numbers are likely to change daily until the September 8 census capture date, but we remain well positioned. Thanks to all of you, SMU's faculty and staff, for the support and preparation required to serve our students, and special thanks to the Division of Enrollment Services for their outstanding recruiting efforts this year!
- **Faculty Town Hall follow-ups** – Thank you to all who joined me during this week's Faculty Senate meeting for a virtual Town Hall for faculty on September 2. Among the questions submitted in advance, below are two that I would like to highlight.
 - **Road to R1** – In response to a question concerning what steps I will take to build the necessary infrastructure and support for SMU to grow to be a tier-one research institution, I first acknowledged some of the recent steps SMU has already taken to support research, such as: ManeFrame II, establishing a research seed fund, and launch of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. In terms of immediate priorities, I'm working with my team of deans and associate provosts to develop plans for improvements in data acquisition and utilization to create clear and transparent policies/processes that

incentivize research excellence, and to help guide data-driven decision-making to determine specific areas for strategic investment. My focus will be on helping SMU advance in our ambitions toward Research One while maintaining our commitment to outstanding undergraduate education, artistic and creative contributions, and world-class professional degrees. I plan to provide high-level plans on how we will advance in these areas to the Board of Trustees during the September meeting, and will share additional information and engage faculty to further inform these plans during the fall 2020 semester.

- **Meeting with additional faculty/staff** – I admire and appreciate the ways you all have learned to work and engage during the COVID-19 era. I regret that the current nature of work has limited my ability to meet more of our great faculty and staff face to face. At the invitation of the deans, I have been able to make initial visits to some of our academic units, but I would welcome the opportunity to meet with additional departments over the course of the next few months. I would ask interested departments to work through their department chair/dean to facilitate. Hearing from you and engaging in dialogue is important to me and will better inform our direction in pursuit of the goals articulated in SMU's strategic plan.

- **Key takeaways from universities that started class before SMU** –

- Notre Dame developed a comprehensive fall 2020 plan that included required surveillance testing from all students prior to return. Despite rigorous and excellent planning, Notre Dame was forced to return to remote learning after experiencing a series of outbreaks. It seems that these outbreaks were the result of off-campus student engagement.
- TCU has also experienced a rapid and high number of positive cases. Administrators attribute this rapid rise to large student gatherings at residence halls and off-campus events.

SMU is mindful of these occurrences and is working hard with student organizations to mitigate the risk of a similar outbreak. I am proud of the great work our student leadership has done to communicate and engage with our entire student body in upholding the values of our Pledge to Protect.

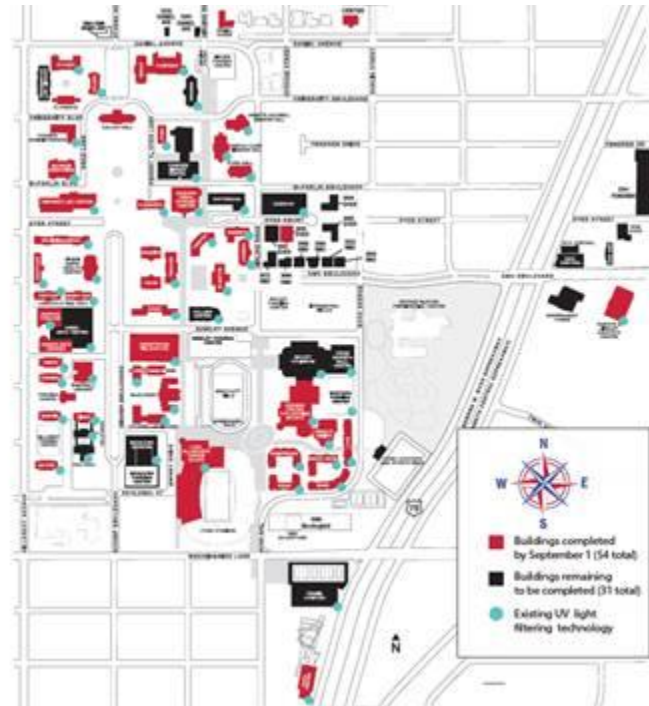
- **COVID-19 website updated case count display** – SMU has updated its [COVID-19 reporting page](#) with a dashboard and additional reporting details for greater transparency, including isolation capacity levels and quarantine numbers. Individual active and non-active cases continue to be listed as well. The page will continue to evolve as needed.
- **MERV-13 filter installation status** – In previous messages, I communicated an estimated completion date of August 31, for the

installation of MERV-13 filters in all campus buildings. Due to supply issues, the Office of Facilities Planning and Management anticipates needing an additional week to complete installation on the remaining 31 campus buildings without MERV-13 filters. For those buildings currently without MERV-13 filters, Facilities has, in the interim, installed new MERV-10 filters. The image below provides an update on the current MERV-13 installation status as well as information on all buildings with ultraviolet light filtering technology.

SMU DALLAS INDOOR AIR FILTERING MAP

Buildings Remaining for MERV13 Filter Upgrade

2701 Fondren Drive	6210 N. Central Expressway
3004 Dyer Street – Beta Theta Pi	Crum Basketball Center
3004 SMU – Beta Upsilon Chi	Crum Lacrosse and Sports Field
3005 Dyer Street – Sigma Alpha Epsilon	Dawson Service Center
3022 SMU – Kappa Sigma	Deidman Life Science Building
3041 Dyer Street – Service House	Fondren Library Center
3050 SMU – Sigma Phi Epsilon	James M. Collins Executive Education Center
3058 SMU – Alpha Epsilon Pi (old BETA)	Meadows Museum
3064 SMU – Phi Gamma Delta	Moody Coliseum
3072 SMU – Phi Delta Theta	Owen Arts Center
3200 Daniel Avenue	Patterson Hall
3216 Daniel Avenue	Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Hall
5538 Dyer Street	Selecman Hall
5539 SMU Boulevard	SARU Tennis Complex
6116 N. Central Expressway – Expressway Tower	Underwood Law Library
6200 N. Central Expressway	



- **Onsite support/help during the fall 2020 semester** – I would encourage all faculty to review and even print out a copy of OIT’s [faculty support plan](#) during the first few weeks of the semester.

Starting last week and continuing this week and next, Associate Provosts Sheri Kunovich and Paige Ware are hosting 30-minute touchpoint meetings with academic leadership teams (deans, associate deans, chairs) to help elevate any questions or concerns that are arising from students and faculty so that we can address them together and help one another in our efforts to ensure a successful fall semester. These meetings are scheduled from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. on Fridays (August 28, September 4, and September 11).

- **Supporting students who personally disclose their positive COVID-19 results** – If you have students who choose to disclose information about testing positive for COVID-19, but you have not received any notifications from either Sheri Kunovich through the Office of Student Academic

Engagement and Success or from Mindy Sutton in the Office of the Dean of Students, please fill out a [CCC form](#). Students are required to alert SMU through this form if they test positive through a test not administered at SMU. If they do not take this step, our support teams in the Office of Student Affairs do not know to reach out to them. You can help expedite support for our students by filling out a CCC form. Please know that SMU works directly with the Dallas County Health Services, so we will learn about every case within the county that is tied to SMU, but that information might not be as immediately available as our own numbers. See this [FAQ](#) for guidance on COVID-19 related notification protocols.

- **Student testing at the Dr. Bob Smith Health Center** – The Health Center provides testing to all currently enrolled students. Students are asked some screening questions (see below) as part of this process, and the team is working to make sure students do not view these standard screening questions as a deterrent, since they will test any student who requests it. Their team has been meeting weekly since July to prepare for the arrival of students on campus and the increased demand for COVID testing. They have been reviewing CDC guidelines for testing, quarantine, and isolation and updating our policies and procedures accordingly. They have also increased our staffing and clinic flow to accommodate the increased demand for COVID testing.

They offer 2 types of COVID tests:

1. The rapid test - also known as an antigen test - that is used for students who are currently experiencing symptoms of COVID with results revealed in about 20 minutes. This test can result in false negatives so all negatives are confirmed with the molecular test.
2. The molecular test - this is the gold standard test for detection of the virus and takes about 2-3 days to receive results. This test is appropriate for students with no symptoms but who may have been exposed.

Before testing is administered, providers at the Health Center need to meet with students via telehealth to determine the following:

1. Are they having symptoms? If so, what date did the symptoms start?
2. Did they have close contact to someone with COVID? If so, when was the date of last contact?
3. Do they live on campus or off campus?

From this telehealth visit, the provider receives the information necessary to order the appropriate test and provide students with proper guidance concerning their results and follow-up care. This information is also necessary for reporting requirements to the county and state health

departments. Recommendations for testing are continually evolving and the Health Center is adapting to those changes.

- **Zoom Space reminder** – As a reminder, we have set aside a number of [Zoom Spaces](#) across campus for undergraduate and graduate students to have a quiet place to participate in an online class. Reservations are required. OIT and SMU Libraries are actively monitoring Zoom Space utilization to be sure that we are meeting student demand.
- **Assessment of student learning in the new Common Curriculum** – As of spring 2020, we are no longer assessing SLOs in the UC. PLEASE do not import UC components into your Canvas course. We have adopted a new tool wherein the learning outcomes and rubrics will be pre-mapped to the Canvas courses in the Common Curriculum for faculty. Common Curriculum will be offered to entering first-year students beginning fall 2020. All current or returning students will remain on the University Curriculum. You can find the new student learning outcomes and rubrics for general education on the [Common Curriculum website](#).

If your UC courses have been approved to be included in the CC or if you would like to propose a course for the CC, please review the rubrics, as they outline the content criteria courses must contain as well as the relevant skills which students should be prompted to demonstrate via an assignment or exam. As a reminder, general education assessment will be conducted by a faculty committee during the summer. It is important that the assessment assignment that is designed is required for students to complete, and is collected in Canvas.

Instruction on the new and simplified process of identifying your assessment assignment in Canvas is forthcoming. We are currently working with OIT to help integrate both systems. Once completed, we will provide the steps and guides on how to make the link to your assessment assignment so that post-hoc committees are able to assess students' work. Assessment questions should be directed to: Dr. Ed Collins, assessment@smu.edu.

- **Reminder: University position on masks/face shields behind plexiglass/podium shields** – As mentioned in last week's [newsletter](#), the University's position, consistent with the Faculty Senate [resolution of June 24](#) is that either a mask or face shield is required for faculty when teaching, even if teaching behind a plexiglass/podium shield.

We know that utilizing face shields and masks may present additional challenges in terms of teaching. If you believe that adding a lav microphone would assist you, please reach out to your academic technology specialist. Anti-fogging wipes or sprays might make face

shields more comfortable during your classes. If you have other suggestions or ideas for ways we can assist, please do not hesitate to reach out to your chair or dean. Thank you so much for all you are doing for our students in this unique semester.

- **Accommodations for international students living in different time zones** – In the unique context of the fall 2020 semester, some international students might need additional accommodations, particularly if they live in time zones that would otherwise mean participation in the middle of the night. We encourage you to consider the following options if and when students request them:
 - Continue to run your class as you have planned it – please don't think you need to create a separate experience for international students; however, below are a few accommodations that you can make for international students who live in time zones that are prohibitive for attending the class in real time:
 - Ask your international students to watch the synchronous recordings. There are several pedagogical options to ensure students are engaged and are accessing the information: a) create embedded Panopto Q&A within the recording for them to respond to; or b) create a parallel assignment for them to answer a series of questions about the synchronous recordings.
 - Make yourself available to international students by encouraging office hours in ways that accommodate their time zones. A little outreach can go a long way in helping them feel supported.
 - Encourage your international students to visit [A-LEC](#) for support, as they offer virtual tutoring until 10:00 p.m. CDT (Sunday - Thursday).
 - Reach out to the [CTE](#), other colleagues, and your [ATSD](#) for additional ideas.
- **Reminder: upload syllabi into SMU's password-protected archive** – Faculty are reminded to upload syllabi into SMU's [online syllabus library](#) by today, September 4. The syllabus library is only accessible by members of the SMU community and is password-protected. It is a resource for SMU students and should be considered internal-use only. Any other use of this resource is prohibited. Faculty who are unable to upload their syllabus are encouraged to complete this task in coordination with their department administrator.
- **Faculty and staff needing child care support** –

- The Childcare Working Group invites faculty and staff to join a [Facebook group](#) they created, “SMU Childcare Connection,” that was formed to help connect SMU community members with one another and to expand the network of options available for interested parents.
- For staff with children attending K-12 schools that have extended their timeline for remote-only instruction, SMU will continue to offer flexibility and [options with some slight adjustments](#). Please continue to work with your supervisor to find the best solution that complies with the options currently offered to staff.
- **CTE videos now available from this year’s virtual teaching symposium** – CTE’s annual Teaching Effectiveness Symposium on August 21, was presented virtually this year and focused both on humanizing teaching in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and promoting inclusive teaching practices to ensure all SMU students are successful. [Videos](#) from this year’s virtual event are now available.
- **Spring schedule** – Associate deans, department chairs, departmental schedulers, and building schedulers will spend most of the month of September developing and submitting the spring 2021 schedule to the office of Peter Moore, Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy. Taking lessons learned from fall 2020 scheduling and with greater time for feedback from the college/schools, Peter and his team will run an updated version of the algorithm used in fall 2020 to build the spring 2021 schedule, which should be published mid-October. Enrollment for spring 2021 is currently scheduled to open on November 16.
- **Faculty/student survey on fall 2020 next week for early impressions on fall 2020** – Associate Provosts Sheri Kunovich and Paige Ware are developing a survey for a better understanding of early faculty and student impressions on the fall 2020 semester. The survey will be available next week as an optional way to provide feedback to identify early successes and to make improvements as we move forward.

News and Noteworthy

- **Faculty Fellows application process (reminder)** – The application process is underway for the inaugural cohort of Provost’s Faculty Fellows! All full-time faculty members can [apply](#), with a preference for tenured faculty or non-tenure track faculty. The application deadline is **September 18**, and questions should be addressed to Associate Provost for Faculty Success Paige Ware at pware@smu.edu.
- **Faculty-in-Residence application process (reminder)** – The Office of the Provost and the Vice President for Student Affairs are now [seeking faculty](#)

[candidates](#) for two Faculty-in-Residence (FiR) positions. The successful candidates will begin a three-year appointment in the fall 2021 semester.

- **Black Unity Forum Action Plan** – Following the schedule previously announced, the Black Unity Forum submitted its consolidated action plan on August 31. President Turner has assured the Forum of a response by September 30, and work is currently underway to meet this deadline. We look forward to sharing more information in the coming days and weeks.
- **SACSCOC 10-year reaffirmation report submission today, September 4** – After nearly two years of collaborative work by a broadly representative group of stakeholders, today we have submitted the required narrative and supporting evidence documents to affirm SMUs compliance on all items required in our 10th-year Reaffirmation Report to SACSCOC. Special thanks to Associate Provost for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Dr. Patty Alvey for her outstanding leadership.
- **New reporting structure for SMU-in-Taos, SMU Abroad, and Intersessions operations** – I am pleased to announce that David Lee, Ph.D., M.B.A. received a promotion within the Office of Curricular Innovation and Policy and, effective September 1, will serve as Assistant Vice President for Curricular Operations and Strategy. In this position, David will expand upon his previous role as Director of Intersessions to support the strategy and day-to-day operations for SMU Abroad and SMU-in-Taos as well. David will be focused on supervising the staff in each of these three areas, managing their budgets, liaising with the Education Abroad Council and the SMU-in-Taos Course Selection Committee to implement their academic programming, and monitoring/maintaining compliance through contract negotiation and development with third parties. While some SMU-in-Taos and SMU Abroad staff are currently on furlough, we do not anticipate staffing reductions as a result of this move once we are able to return to normal operations. Succeeding David as the Director of Intersessions will be Maeve Skidmore, Ph.D., who has been the Intersessions' Assistant Director for the past three years.

Sincerely,



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