



SMU

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Dear Faculty and Staff:

I hope you are having a safe, restful and productive summer. Whether you are teaching, conducting research, or preparing exhibits or performances, your contributions are vital and valued in our quest for even greater academic quality. Thank you for your ongoing commitment and support of this lofty but achievable goal.

As mentioned in the [final weekly](#) of the spring 2021 semester, my plan is to send these updates twice in the month of June and once in the month of July. 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 three categories: 1) Summer 2021, 2) Road to R-1 and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Summer 2021

- **The Mustang Strong website is the most up-to-date source of information regarding SMU's COVID-19 response** – Please continue reviewing the [Mustang Strong website](#) for information on SMU's COVID-19 response. Here, you can access the latest [campus announcements](#), review information on receiving and reporting the [vaccine](#), and monitor the latest data on [confirmed COVID-19 cases on campus](#).
- **COVID-19 reminders for July term** – See yesterday's [e-mail](#) from SMU Information for key reminders on maintaining a healthy campus during the summer.
- **Preparing for fall 2021: Canvas Teaching Expectations** – In case you missed it, please see this [message](#) from last week about expectations for Canvas utilization in fall 2021 and how they support SMU in Four, SMU's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that was a critical component of our SACSCOC reaccreditation this year.

Road to R-1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence

- **Informing decisions about open faculty positions** – This week, members of my Provost’s Office team and I met with the Deans to review a suite of data that will be used, both this year and moving forward, to help guide decision-making on which tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty lines to open for searches.

During the 2021–2022 academic year, we will use the data tools described below to allocate open faculty positions to the college/schools for tenure- and non-tenure-track faculty searches. We will also use portions of this data to identify 9-12 open faculty lines that will be reallocated toward strategic cluster hires in areas of strength that will accelerate our R-1 aspirations. As a reminder, we will conduct additional faculty town halls this fall to shape recommendations for additional cluster hires.

To align with this year’s faculty recruiting cycle, the Deans and I will meet for a half-day retreat on July 29 to review their recommendations and to authorize faculty searches for the coming year. Between now and that time, I have asked the Deans to review all of the data provided to them to inform their recommendations on how best to utilize faculty positions. Once those decisions are made, I will provide a list of all decisions about searches in my Friday update.

Paige Ware, Associate Provost for Faculty Success; Jim Quick, Associate Provost for Research and Dean of the Moody School; and Michael Tumeo, Director for the Office of Institutional Research, were instrumental in developing this data. I have asked them to work with the Deans between now and July 29 to resolve any remaining questions. Jim and Paige are also available, at the Deans’ discretion and request, to engage Associate Deans and Department Chairs for greater understanding as well.

As you will see, we have created several analytical tools to inform SMU’s faculty hiring decisions. One report is not sufficient to tell the full story. The hope is that, by reviewing a series of data, and coupling that analysis with a local understanding of faculty need that Deans, Associate Deans, and Department Chairs can provide, we will be able to make the most strategic resource allocation decisions. There are nine sets of data that were provided to the Deans on June 28 that we plan to use this year and refine in the years to come:

- **Open positions on unrestricted funds** – The total count of open faculty positions by line type (assistant, associate, full, visiting, clinical, lecturer, senior lecturer, faculty-in residence, adjunct), sorted by college/school. This report included the following sorting/filtering variables: financial officer, school/college, position description, position number, employee ID, name, home base org, prior employee (EE) name, prior EE term, account, fund, distribution, org with description, HR position budget, and actual salary approved in the budget for each position.
- **Student credit hours by full-time and part-time faculty** – All student credit hours taught in spring 2021 (undergraduate and graduate) by full-time or part-

time faculty. This analysis showed areas that might merit further examination if there is a large proportion of adjunct faculty. It does not provide information about reasons for higher proportions of adjunct faculty (e.g., clinical supervision, creative/performing arts specialists, industry specialists, etc.).

This file listed every instructor associated with every course from spring 2021.

- **Student-faculty ratio calculated by: a) major and b) student credit hours**
– These ratios were calculated, by department, based on headcount information for all undergraduate and graduate majors, using the formulae below that are also used for SACSCOC purposes.

For majors:

$$\frac{[(\# \text{ of FT majors}) + (\# \text{ of PT majors}/3)]}{[(\# \text{ of FT faculty}) + (\# \text{ of PT faculty}/3)]}$$

For Student credit hours:

$$\frac{[(\# \text{ of UG credit hours taught}/12) + (\# \text{ of GR credit hours taught}/9)]}{[(\# \text{ of FT faculty}) + (\# \text{ of PT faculty}/3)]}$$

Taken with the student credit hour analysis data described above, this file provided information for each school to calculate student-faculty ratios. The file breaks down student credit hour ratios into graduate and undergraduate hours taught by either part-time or full-time faculty for spring 2021. Double majors appear in both areas as head count.

- **10-year enrollment trends by major** – This report provided the headcount of all majors each fall from 2010-2020. It is meant to provide numerical, but not contextual, information about the ebb and flow of enrollments over a ten-year timeframe. It presents numbers by plan, which parses into BA, BBA, BS, etc. Note: For departments offering multiple degrees (e.g., Econ-BA and Econ-BS), the data were presented on separate lines, and also displays plans that have unique specialization areas (e.g., English BA, English with Creative Writing Specialization BA) on separate lines.
- **Healthy size** – This file showed comparisons between SMU and a number of peer and aspirational universities (with and without medical schools). It calculates the average number of students per program (undergraduate and graduate) and the average number of faculty per degree program. It provides a summary of our ratio compared to our aspirational cohort (without medical schools).
- **Seats offered in the Common Curriculum** – This file provided two sets of information at the department level of the number of sections and the number of seats that support the CC (foundation and breadth classes). One set includes lab sections; the other excludes lab sections. This is useful for demonstrating solutions to supporting the CC by increasing the number of departments that offer to tag courses and participate in the CC.
- **Faculty diversity** – The dashboard draws on data from the fall census and can be filtered by a number of variables using a Tableau dashboard to provide visibility.

- **Theoretical-to-actual course coverage** – This file examines the theoretical number of sections taught within a department each year as calculated by the number of full-time faculty (TT and NTT). The theoretical coverage was calculated using the SMU workload policy with these estimates: 2:2 for tenure line faculty and 3:4 for non-tenure line faculty. This assumed some, but not all, of the normal variance that can be attributed to the following (non-exhaustive examples): in-load reduction for administrative roles (chair, center/institute director, program director); in-load reduction for research-intensive faculty with and without external funding; in-load increase for non-active research faculty; reduction for all types of faculty leaves). Contextual interpretation is required, as this is a high-level overview only.
- **Analysis of strategic cluster hire opportunities** – This folder contained conversations from the spring town halls to discuss cluster hires, proposals/suggestions for cluster hires received after the town halls, and additional information related to R1 priorities, including an analysis of research expenditures/research space ratios.

We will announce open faculty searches for academic year 2021–2022 following the July 29 half-day Deans retreat.

- **Increased transparency and alignment in Promotion and Tenure guidelines** – In this year and with a focus on maintaining academic continuity and excellence, we are pleased that faculty whose scholarship and performance were impacted by the pandemic have had options open to extend their tenure clock by a full year. A number of faculty chose to maintain their regular promotion and tenure clock. At the General Faculty meeting on Wednesday, August 25, we will look forward to congratulating 19 faculty who were promoted this year: 7 to Associate Professor with tenure and 12 to Full Professor.

Over the summer, the Deans and their appointed academic leadership teams are working with the Associate Provost for Faculty Success to review ways in which the promotion and tenure process can be made more transparent and aligned across the university. They are reviewing a number of recommendations that reflect input gathered in this past year from the Deans, the Provost Promotion and Tenure Committee, and the Chair of the Faculty Senate for Ethics and Tenure.

In the fall, panels focused on the “Road to Tenure” and the “Road to Full Professor” will be co-hosted by the Associate Provost for Faculty Success and various school/college designees. These efforts are aimed at greater clarity and transparency around the promotion and tenure process at SMU.

- **Reminders from previous Friday Updates:**
 - **Performance-based funding (PBF) for fiscal year 2022** – In consultation with the Deans over the past academic year, my office developed a performance-based funding model to inform and promote the transparent distribution of discretionary

funds annually from the Office of the Provost to SMU's academic units. Please see the first [summer 2021 update](#) for a detailed review of fiscal year 2022 (June 2021 – May 2022) results.

- **Clarity and transparency in workload documents** – SMU is committed to developing and approving department-level and unit-level workload documents that make our SMU policies clear and transparent at the unit level, which will be a critical step in helping us reach our BUF goals around greater transparency and equity and our research and creative impact goals for R1.

See the first [summer 2021 update](#) for a more detailed update, but our goal remains to approve and post final department-level workload policies early in the fall 2021 semester. As we continue this work, click [here](#) for a preview of those documents that are close to full approval. We will let you know when more documents are finalized and posted to our website.

News and Noteworthy:

- **Update on the common curriculum and assessment of general education** – The Office of General Education would like to thank the members of the Council on General Education, the Writing Board, the members of the Common Curriculum faculty committees, the SMU Admissions team, the Division of Enrollment Services and the Office of the Registrar, the University Advising Center, and faculty and staff and the Records Offices of each college and school for all of their work bringing our new curriculum into existence. SMU successfully completed the SACSCOC review of general education and assessment this year as a result of our accelerated implementation of the [Common Curriculum](#) as well as the introduction of post-hoc (juried) assessment. Click [here](#) for a detailed update on our progress and my thanks to Dayna Oscherwitz, Assistant Provost for General Education and Professor of French, and Peter Moore, Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy, for their leadership.
- **Gerald J. Ford Research Fellowship and Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Award presentations** – Ford Fellowships are given annually to SMU faculty based on the significance of a faculty member's scholarly contributions and future research plans. The Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor Award recognizes SMU faculty each year for their commitment to and achievements in fostering student learning.

Beginning in May and concluding this week, I have been able to recognize this year's recipients through a series of surprise visits to their classrooms, personal zoom calls and departmental meetings. Congratulations to our 2021 Ford Research Fellowship and Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Award recipients!

- 2021 Ford Research Fellowship Recipients
 - Alejandro Aceves, Ph.D. – Professor of Mathematics in Dedman College's Department of Mathematics

- Joseph Camp, Ph.D. – Associate Professor in the Lyle School of Engineering’s Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
- Heather Deshon, Ph.D. – Professor, Department Chair and Director of Undergraduate Studies in Dedman College’s Roy M. Huffington Department of Earth Sciences
- Xin-Lin Gao, Ph.D. – Professor in the Lyle School of Engineering’s Department of Mechanical Engineering
- 2021 Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Award Recipients
 - Maxime Foerster, Ph.D. – Associate Professor of French and French area chair in Dedman College’s Department of World Languages and Literatures
 - Steven Lindquist, Ph.D. – Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Asian Studies in Dedman College’s Department of Religious Studies
 - Rebekah Miles, Ph.D. – Susanna Wesley Centennial Professor of Practical Theology and Ethics in the Perkins School of Theology
 - Carolyn Smith-Morris, Ph.D. – Professor of Anthropology in Dedman College’s Department of Anthropology
- **Simmons faculty member receives national award** – Congratulations to Dr. Peter Weyand, Glenn Simmons Endowed Professor in Applied Physiology and Biomechanics, of the Simmons School. As a part of the American Society of Biomechanics’ annual conference, he will receive the Hay Award, recognizing “originality, quality, and depth of biomechanics research that addresses fundamental research questions relevant to extraordinary demands imposed in sport and exercise.”

Sincerely,



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



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