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August 26, 2022

Dear Faculty and Staff:

Welcome back to fall 2022 on the Hilltop! While Dedman Law and Cox graduate classes started last week, the fall semester began in earnest for most of you this Monday. I hope that everyone had a restful and productive summer and is prepared for another exciting academic year.

These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we work toward achieving the goals that fall within our four priority areas through 2025: 1) academic excellence/ *US News and World Report* top 50, 2) Research/scholarly creative excellence/ Road to R1, 3) 2016 – 2025 Strategic Plan, and 4) Inclusive Excellence.

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) Fall 2022, 2) Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2022:

- **Week one recap –**

- **Opening Convocation and Rotunda Passage** – On Sunday, August 21st, SMU welcomed our new first-year and transfer students to campus during our 108th Opening Convocation and Rotunda Passage. Recognizing that every undergraduate student at SMU has crossed through the Dallas Hall Rotunda, students had an opportunity to reflect on their passage to college and their intellectual and personal growth during their time at SMU. Click [here](#) to view the recording. Special thanks to President Turner for serving as this year’s featured speaker.
- **General Faculty Meeting** –The fall General Faculty Meeting took place on August 24th. Faculty Senate President Rob Frank gave the Faculty Senate’s report, and President Turner delivered the faculty address. For those who missed the significant news, President Turner [announced](#) a one-time, \$1,000 payment for all benefit-eligible faculty and staff on the SMU payroll as of August 22, 2022, to provide support during this inflationary period. Additionally, we recognized our newly tenured faculty members and gifted them with regalia during the event. Congratulations again to our newly tenured faculty!
- **Enrollment Update** – The first day of class preliminary headcount for the University totaled 11,948 – including 7,027 undergraduates and 4,919 graduate students. SMU welcomed 1,643 new first-year and 266 new transfer students to the Hilltop at Opening Convocation last Sunday. 32% of our first-year students and 48% of transfer students identify with traditionally underrepresented ethnic and racial populations. As a reminder, official enrollment numbers will change daily until the census capture date of September 7, 2022. You can view past years’ and preliminary 2022 data [here](#).

We are thrilled for a new class that aligns with our goals for both academic and inclusive excellence; however, we recognize the challenges a class as large as this one can add to your work as faculty and staff. We are working with the Deans and with Business and Finance to provide additional support, and have already committed

additional funds for the next four years to hire critical faculty and staff needed for this, our largest, academically strongest and most diverse class.

- **SMU's updated staff childbirth and parental leave policy** – Earlier this month, SMU announced changes to the University's parental leave policy for staff. Under the new policy, all deliveries are eligible to receive eight weeks leave (previously six weeks). Applicants can receive an additional four weeks leave through FMLA. Contact [benefitsu@smu.edu](mailto:benefitsu@smu.edu) for additional information.
- **Parking and transportation reminders** – As announced in my summer newsletters, SMU launched a new parking system this month. Last week, SMU Parking and ID services sent the [following message](#) with important reminders about parking and transportation options on campus. Thank you for your patience and flexibility during this time of transition, as we recognize that parking changes have posed challenges for many of you. Please continue to send your questions or comments to [newparking@smu.edu](mailto:newparking@smu.edu).
- **Expanded Options for Offering Mental Health Services for Students** – All SMU students now have access to on-demand teletherapy counseling and video appointments with a medical professional at Academic Live Care on their smartphone, tablet, or computer at no cost. These sessions can be accessed from students' dorms, homes, or on-the-go 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Please promote this resource in your classes as a way to ensure that the students in our community have access to preventative care and crisis support at all times. Visit [SMU Teletherapy](#) for additional information. In addition, if someone is in crisis at any time and needs to speak to an on-call counselor (24/7), they can call 214-768-2277 and select option 2.

- **Guidelines for the Use of Technology.** As a reminder, the approved use of technology [guidelines](#) have been posted online. An announcement about these updated guidelines was made on August 9th from the Provost's Office. For more information about the process by which these guidelines were developed, contact Faculty Senate President Rob Frank at [robfrank@smu.edu](mailto:robfrank@smu.edu). Faculty who would like to offer Zoom-based options for office hours can certainly do so at their students' request, as Zoom can be a useful and efficient mode for one-on-one office hours. However, because SMU is an in-person university, faculty will also provide the option for students to attend in-person office hours.

### **Road to R-1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence**

- **Council of Deans meeting recap** – Today, I hosted the annual full-day Deans' Retreat. My thanks to the Deans for committing their entire day, and to the Associate Provosts for joining us over lunch and for the afternoon session, to discuss our plans and priorities for the year ahead.

See below for a recap of the meeting's primary agenda items:

- **Faculty searches FY 2023** – With 52 new faculty searches to launch in the coming weeks (which are in addition to re-launching unfilled searches rolling over from last academic year), a group of seven faculty administrators, one from each school/college, has been designated to work with the Provost's Office, IAE, and Diversity Office to strengthen our business processes around faculty recruitment and communications. Associate Provost for Faculty Success Paige Ware joined the Deans for a discussion about future plans for this academic year.

Look for workshops and resources in the coming weeks that will be required of all chairs of faculty searches and the administrative support staff associated with each search. These workshops will focus

exclusively on the business processes associated with searches and are designed to enhance efficiency as we build time-saving tools into the process.

- **Building on Lessons Learned from FY 2022** – Maria Dixon Hall, Chief Diversity Officer, reviewed key learnings from FY 2022's faculty searches. As a reminder, last year we introduced process changes, including mandatory training, to promote greater diversity, equity and inclusion within the faculty search process. Working with Maria, this year and moving forward, we hope for continuous improvement and even greater outcomes in line with our goals for inclusive excellence.
- **Equity and Transparency in Workload Procedures** – Paige Ware updated the Deans on next steps for confirming and strengthening transparency and equity in SMU's workload procedures. With support from Performance-Based Funding, a Working Group with representatives from each of the Schools/College will meet bi-weekly in this academic year. This group will review faculty feedback from the spring survey on Workload Procedures, which was the result of joint efforts between the President's Commission on the Status of Women and the Office of Faculty Success. In addition, they will work with faculty and department chairs in their areas to ensure that faculty efforts dedicated to teaching and research/creative activity are supported, and that service across department-, school-, and University levels is transparently and equitably distributed.
- **Leveraging value for strategic priorities** – Wes Waggoner, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, facilitated a discussion amongst the Deans about ways to optimize SMU's aid structures in line with SMU's academic goals and strategic priorities.
- **Three-year budget planning** – To begin our planning conversation during the retreat, Ernie Barry, Associate Vice President for Budgets

and Finance, reviewed SMU's consolidated financial statements and FY 2022 Operating Budgets with the Deans.

From there, we continued conversations that began this summer around revenue sources and strategic areas of investment for FY 2024 – 2026. Having better projections, across multiple years, for revenue, expenses and strategic investments will inform our planning efforts as we strive to meet our goals for greater academic quality. Conversations around three-year budget planning will continue in September, and we plan to share specific details, once finalized, early in the fall 2022 semester.

- **Update on *SMU Ignited*** – Brad Cheves, Vice President for Development and External Affairs, shared an update on *SMU Ignited*, SMU's \$1.5B capital campaign that launched in September 2021.
- **Carnegie Classification/American Council on Education (ACE) partnership and anticipated changes** – Michael Tumeo, Director of the Office of University Decision Support, updated the Deans on the new partnership between the Carnegie Classification System and ACE and the potential impacts this merger will have on Carnegie's assessment in both 2024 and 2027.
- **US News and World Report (USN&WR) Analysis and Strategy** – Michael Tumeo concluded the meeting by sharing a 10-year assessment of USN&WR rankings to identify the strategies taken by high-performing universities who made significant jumps both into and within the USN&WR top 50. His analysis affirmed SMU's strategy to focus on the following in our quest for top 50 status: 1) student excellence, 2) retention/graduation, 3) social mobility/access, and 4) expert/peer assessment.

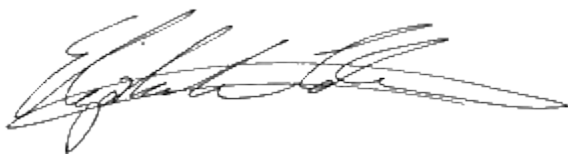
## News and Noteworthy

- **Cox faculty member elected fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA)** – Marcus Butts, Associate Professor of Management in the Cox School of Business and of Psychology (by courtesy), has been elected as an APA fellow on the basis of evaluated evidence of his outstanding contribution in the field of Psychology.
- **Springboard: Monthly Cohort Brunches for New Faculty** - I encourage faculty who are new to SMU within the last one to three years to look into [Springboard](#) – a new faculty development opportunity at SMU organized by the Office of Faculty Success. The Springboard is open to all faculty who joined SMU in 2019 or later, inclusive of all career tracks, including pre-tenure, tenured, teaching and professional (i.e., non-tenure) lines.

This cohort-based program meets for monthly brunch with topics drawn from [the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity \(NCFDD\)](#) Core Curriculum webinar series: establishing work/life balance, increasing productivity around research and scholarly/creative excellence, enhancing teaching quality, improving self-efficacy around the promotion process, and building a network of people and resources across campus.

Again, welcome (and welcome back) to all of you, our incredible faculty and staff. This academic year is poised to be a great one. Thank you for all you do for SMU!

Sincerely,



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**World Changers Shaped Here**

