



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

February 11, 2022

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for your interest in, and commitment to, advancing SMU's academic mission. These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we manage a safe, healthy and productive spring semester. 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](#).

Road to R1/Scholarly Creative Excellence:

- **Provost's Advisory Committee on Promotion and Tenure begins working next week** – The [Provost's Advisory Committee on Promotion and Tenure](#) is charged to advise SMU's Provost on the recommendations for tenure and promotion for 21 faculty whose dossiers are under consideration this year. This vital service role begins in earnest next week with an initial meeting to discuss process. From there, committee members will spend considerable time reviewing candidates' dossiers and deliberating collaboratively to provide their advice later this spring. My thanks to advisory committee members for performing this very important advisory role.
- **Reminder: Submit proposals for Clark-Hill strategic prioritization** – SMU has retained the services of Clark-Hill, PLC to work closely with the Office of the Provost and faculty to increase federal research funding.

They have developed a [template](#) for faculty to use when crafting proposals for earmarks or changes in research focus of a federal R&D agency. To be included for consideration in the FY 2023 budget development cycle, faculty proposals must be submitted to Jim Quick at (jquick@smu.edu) no later than **February 14, 2022**. Please follow the template closely in developing your proposal. We look forward to reviewing your ideas in collaboration with our Clark-Hill representatives.

Reminder: PBF 2023 Overview – To begin FY 2022, my office distributed nearly \$4M in discretionary dollars in June 2021 to the college/schools/libraries according to their performance on PBF's key performance indicators. See [here](#) for additional information about PBF FY 2022.

For FY 2023, and thanks in large part to the college/schools ability to generate additional revenue through programs such as Cox's online MBA, I am pleased to announce that we will be able to distribute up to \$5M in discretionary dollars. Working with the Deans, we are finalizing the key performance indicators for PBF FY 2023 and will share them in a future newsletter.

For PBF FY 2022, calculations and reporting were completed using an Excel spreadsheet. For PBF FY 2023, our plan is to produce a Tableau dashboard that is more user-friendly and can be shared more broadly and transparently. We will provide updates throughout the spring and early summer and plan to release FY 2023 funding to the college/schools in mid- to late-June 2022.

- **Key leadership searches underway**
 - **Peter O'Donnell, Jr. Data Science Institute Director:** Jim Quick, Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Research, will chair our search for the newly-endowed Peter O'Donnell, Jr., Director of SMU's Data Science Institute. WittKieffer will serve as our executive search firm. My office plans to invite and charge search committee members later this month.

- **Dedman Law Dean:** This week, our search consultant Chuck O'Boyle was on campus to engage key campus stakeholders as we seek to finalize the position description that will define our search. Thank you to Dean Collins and to the faculty and staff from the Dedman School of Law who were able to meet with Mr. O'Boyle.
- **Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer** - Click [here](#) to review the position profile that is guiding our search for SMU's new Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer. The search committee has reviewed our pool of applicants and has identified a slate of 5 – 8 candidates for airport interviews that will take place later this month. Finalist interviews are currently slated for late March/early April.
- **Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education**– Click [here](#) to review the position profile that is guiding our search for SMU's new Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education. Next month, the search committee will review our pool of applicants to recommend a slate of 5 – 8 candidates for airport interviews.

Spring 2022

- **Faculty and academic staff group to inform future responses to inclement weather** – Once again, let me offer sincere thanks to all of our faculty and staff for responding to another round of hazardous winter weather. In last week's Faculty Senate meeting, we heard many constructive ideas about how to best approach academic continuity during inclement weather. In response, I asked Faculty Senate President Pia Vogel to identify a group of faculty representatives who would work with members of the Provost's Office team to bring forward ideas that can help us moving forward. This week, and to broaden representation, I asked the Deans to identify both faculty and academic staff representatives from the college/schools/libraries to serve on this committee. The group had its first meeting today with Paige Ware, Associate Provost for Faculty Success. We look forward to providing additional updates in the days ahead and thank committee members, faculty and staff, for their service.

- **Information on new guidelines and policies for online learning** – Since May 2020, SMU Global and Online (GO) and the Office of Curricular Innovation and Policy have worked with stakeholders across campus to establish University-wide guidelines and policies around online learning. From these efforts the University is now implementing new Course Modality Definitions, Training Requirements for Online Faculty, and Online Program and Course Development Processes.

Please see my [message](#) from yesterday for specific information about these changes.

- **COVID-19 health and safety reminders**

- **Testing resources** – SMU currently provides three testing resources for benefits-eligible employees, their spouses, and dependents who are seeking COVID-19 testing.
 - **On-campus option:** MyLabsDirect provides on-site PCR testing for COVID-19 at no cost from 9:00 - 11:00 am Monday through Friday at a drive-up parking site at Expressway Tower, 6116 North Central Expressway. [Schedule an exam](#) at Expressway Tower.
 - **At-home tests:** SMU's health benefits Provider Blue Cross Blue Shield is covering the costs of "at-home tests."
 - **Urgent Care for Families:** Convenient no-cost COVID-19 testing is available at nine DFW Virtual Care for Families locations. The closest testing center to the SMU campus is minutes away on the corner of Preston Rd. and Forest Ln. They are open 7-days a week and results are typically available same day. [Schedule an appointment](#) at a Virtual Care for Families facility.

Go to this Mustang Strong website [employee testing page](#) to see a full list of options for a COVID-19 test as well as step-by-step scheduling instructions.

- **Continue reporting positive tests** – As a reminder, if you test positive (including using an at-home kit), please report the results to your supervisor and complete the [SMU Health Reporting Form](#).
- **N-95 masks available through your Dean or Vice President** – N-95 masks were delivered last week to the college, schools and Vice President's

offices. Faculty and staff who need masks should [consult their Dean's office point person \(found here\)](#) or Vice President's office staff for additional instructions.

- **Consult Mustang Strong for most up-to-date guidance** – Please continue consulting the [Mustang Strong website](#) regularly for the latest information, as our pandemic response is dynamic. As we have since fall 2020, we will use our COVID-19 operations plan to adjust our response as needed.

News and Noteworthy:

- **Video game software patented for age-related macular degeneration research** – Last month, BALANCED Media Technology, in partnership with the Retina Foundation of the Southwest (RETINA) and SMU, [announced](#) a patent-pending medical imaging technology that uses automated software and a video game to provide standardized, accurate, and precise identification of ocular diseases including age-related macular degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of visual impairment in the world. This patent filing was a direct result of a \$2.5M grant from the W.W. Caruth Jr. Foundation at Communities Foundation of Texas to researchers from RETINA and SMU's Lyle School of Engineering. Congratulations to Dean Marc Christensen and the Lyle School of Engineering researchers, particularly Dr. Corey Clark, for conducting such future-facing and impactful research at the intersection of artificial intelligence, virtual reality and machine learning.
- **Research and Innovation Week coming March 28 – April 1, 2022** – Research Days is SMU's annual showcase and celebration of the outstanding research our graduate and undergraduate students conduct. This year, Research Days will become [SMU Research and Innovation Week](#), with events organized by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, the Office of Engaged Learning and the Office of National Student Fellowships taking place March 28-April 1, 2022.

Please encourage students who are conducting research under your supervision to be a part of this exciting event by participating in the poster

sessions: the [undergraduate poster session](#) will be held on Tuesday, March 29th, from 3:00 - 6:00 pm, and the [graduate student poster session](#) will be held on Wednesday, March 30th, from 2:00 - 5:00 pm. Both events will take place in the Hughes-Trigg Student Center Ballroom. This is a great opportunity for students to share their research with the SMU community, and to compete for cash prizes. Students can find more information, as well as the link to register for the poster sessions on the [Research and Innovation Week website](#).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth G. Loba', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

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

World Changers Shaped Here