



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

May 27, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your interest in, and commitment to, advancing SMU's academic mission. Barring the need for more frequent communication during the summer, my plan is to send one update in the month of June, one update in the month of July and to resume a regular newsletter cadence to begin the fall 2022 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](#).

Spring 2022

- **Leadership announcements** – This week, to conclude the spring semester, I was most pleased to make the following announcements concerning key academic leadership appointments.
 - **Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education** – On Thursday, we introduced [Robin S. Poston](#) as the next Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education effective August 15, 2022. Dr. Poston comes to SMU from the University of Memphis where she has

served as Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School since 2018.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the search process. I would especially like to thank the members of the search committee, chaired by Tom DiPiero, dean of Dedman College for their service. As a reminder, Renee McDonald will serve as *ad interim* Dean of the Moody School and Associate Provost for Graduate Education until Robin's arrival in August.

- **Dean of the Dedman School of Law** - Today, we introduced [Jason P. Nance](#) as the next Judge James Noel Dean of the Dedman School of Law effective August 10, 2022. Professor Nance comes to SMU from the University of Florida where he has served as Associate Dean since 2018.

Thank you to the members of the search committee, chaired by Matt Myers, dean of the Cox School of Business, for their service and to the Dedman School of Law community members for their diligent work to complete the search process this spring. Tom Mayo will continue to serve as the law school dean *ad interim* until Jason's August arrival.

- **Dean Stephanie Knight, Simmons School of Education, extended for five years** – As [announced](#) on Monday, Stephanie Knight, Dean of the Simmons School of Education and Human Development, has received a five-year extension of her decanal contract. To inform the reappointment decision, letters requesting feedback were sent to the faculty and administrative staff of Simmons; to SMU's senior administrators (e.g., President's Executive Council, Deans); to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees' Committee on Academic Affairs; and to the Chair, and Past Chair, of the Simmons Executive Board. Those

solicitations did not preclude others from providing feedback. Please join me in congratulating Dean Knight on her reappointment.

- **Data Science Institute Director *ad interim* and Special Advisor to the Provost** – Finally, Peter Moore, Associate Provost for Curricular Innovation and Policy, has been appointed as the Peter O'Donnell Jr. Director of the Data Science Institute *ad interim* effective June 1.

Road to R1/Scholarly Creative Excellence:

- **SMU's NVIDIA/DGX SuperPOD now operational** – After a long wait, on-boarding began this week for SMU's new NVIDIA DGX SuperPOD. Our High-performance Computing (HPC) support team initiated the process of migrating several projects to the new system.

Initial SuperPOD on-boarding projects will focus on developing workloads in the areas of artificial intelligence/machine learning, molecular dynamics, and GPU algorithm development. In the weeks ahead, additional on-boarding and training will be provided. As we launch the SuperPOD, we are also excited to announce that a contract has been completed to build the next generation HPC environment: ManeFrame III (M3). To learn more about M3 plans, the SuperPOD and other exciting HPC updates, please access the most recent CRC newsletter [here](#). Thanks to this incredible CRC/OIT partnership, the table is truly set for game-changing computational research at SMU!

- **SMU leaders go to Washington D.C. in June to discuss earmarks** – The Office of Research, working in coordination with SMU faculty and in consultation with executives from Clark Hill – SMU's federal government relations advisors – has identified several federal funding opportunities earmarked for the federal FY 23 budget that align with SMU faculty members' research strengths. To advocate for SMU's faculty proposals, Clark Hill is arranging a visit to Capitol Hill for SMU

leadership June 13 – 16. During these meetings in Washington D.C., we will have the opportunity to meet with members of Congress (Senate; House) and represent SMU's strengths prior to the finalization of FY 23 budget allocations.

- **SMU/Bush Institute post-doctoral program update** – Thanks to the 12 faculty teams who submitted responses to our request for proposals (RFPs) for our new post-doctoral program with the Bush Institute. Jim Quick, Associate Provost for Research and Dean of the Moody School, and I met with representatives from the Bush Institute yesterday to review submissions. I hope to announce next year's three recipients within the next few weeks.

- **Key leadership searches underway:**
 - **Vice Provost for Research (VPR) and Chief Innovation Officer (CIO)** – We are making plans to bring an additional candidate to campus in June. Be on the lookout for further information and how to participate in the campus Vision Talk. Thank you to Suku Nair for agreeing to serve as Associate Provost for Research *ad interim* until a Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer is appointed.

 - **Lyle School of Engineering Dean** – The search committee for the permanent dean will be appointed and charged at the start of the fall 2022 semester and Sam Holland, Dean of the Meadows School, will chair the committee.

News and Noteworthy:

- **A time of sorrow and grievance for the people of Uvalde** – This week has wrought senseless, horrific death – made even more personal to many of us because it transpired within a school and within our state.

As educators and, for many of us, parents, the grievance we feel for the people of Uvalde is made even more acute. Yesterday, both Chief Diversity Officer [Maria Dixon Hall](#) and University Chaplain [Reverend Lisa Garvin](#) offered reflections that I would encourage you to read. In a world in which examples of hate and rage continue to abound, may we all strive to extend peace and love to all humankind.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth G. Lobo', written in a cursive style.

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Southern Methodist University
<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

World Changers Shaped Here