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Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost

September 2, 2022

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 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

- **Strategic workshops for collaboration** – In partnership with my office, a team from the [Master of Arts in Design and Innovation](#) (MADI) program is working to better understand how spaces and places (including departments and physical buildings) are currently being used across campus collaboratively so that we might design a strategic structure that helps reach the university's broad range of academic and research aspirations.

Our goal is to design a structure for collaboration across the university. To do so, we want to better understand how collaboration is currently happening across campus as well as areas of opportunity for future improvement.

MADI ran eight workshops this spring with strong participation from across campus, but we are particularly eager for more faculty and staff voices to be represented in their work. Over the next four weeks, the MADI team will offer twelve additional days of workshops to capture your feedback. Please join them for one workshop (in-person and zoom options available) by registering [here](#) for the date and time that best fits your schedule.

In-person workshops will include lunch and snacks (gluten-free and vegetarian options available in between in-person workshops for those who register) and will be hosted in the Hughes-Trigg Student Center with specific room assignments to come. Virtual workshops will be held over ZOOM with a specific link upon RSVP. For more information or if you have questions, please send an email to madi@smu.edu.

Thank you in advance for your contributions. We will take what we have learned from each workshop to inform a strategic process for future engagements and collaborations across the university – particularly those pertaining to campus spaces and places – and will share our findings in future newsletters.

- **Report on spring 2022 survey of faculty workload procedures** – I would like to thank the members of the [President's Commission on the Status of Women](#) (PCSW) for their collaboration with the Office of Faculty Success in creating a survey and helping to analyze survey results to understand faculty experiences with the development and use of our unit-level workload procedures. The PCSW discussed their recommendations with President Turner last month and a copy of that report is available [here](#).

In response to the PCSW's request for continued attention toward ensuring equity and transparency in our workload procedures, I have allocated

discretionary dollars into my office's performance-based funding to the schools/college to support the work of a Task Force on Equity and Transparency in Workload made up of representatives from each school/college. My thanks to the following faculty who have been appointed by their Dean to serve in this capacity: Tom Carr, Dedman College's Associate Dean for Curriculum and Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics; Bill Dillon, Cox School of Business Senior Associate Dean and Herman W. Lay Professor of Marketing in the Department of Marketing; Barbara Hill-Moore, Meadows School of the Arts Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Voice; Tim Jacobbe, Simmons School Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning; Tom Mayo, Senior Associate Dean of Dedman School of Law; Dinesh Rajan, Department Chair and Professor in the Lyle School of Engineering's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering; Hugo Magallanes, Perkins School of Theology Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Christianity and Cultures; and Corinna Nash-Wnuk, Meadows School of the Arts Associate Dean for Academic Planning and Finance

This task force has been charged to review and respond to the feedback generated from the spring 2022 survey of faculty workload procedures, support the development of a systematic approach to collecting information about faculty in-loads with respect to teaching, research and service, and serve as a liaison for faculty questions and concerns about workload equity and transparency.

- **University Testing Center Operational for Fall 2022** – Since 2018, SMU has been having conversations around establish a testing center that serves the broader SMU student community. To guide these conversations, we formed Provost Office Testing Center Strategic Committee. Working with the University Space Committee, space was identified in 2021 to establish the University Testing Center (UTC) in the basement of Clements Hall (G15).

[On August 22, 2022, a three-phased opening of the center began.](#) In phase one, most accommodated testing - for students with testing

accommodations approved by [Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies \(DASS\)](#) – will be proctored by the center. The test proctoring process and the reservation of testing seats remains the same within [DASS Link](#).

In spring 2023, phase two will pilot the expansion of services to student athletes during their sport's competition season. The final phase, contingent upon space usage and demand, will be to add placement testing, evaluation services. [A handful of other campus test proctoring services will remain operational and resources to instructors](#). Learn more about the new testing center, eligibility for testing, policies, and booking processes at smu.edu/testing.

- **Faculty support available to build professional websites on people.smu.edu** – [People.SMU](#) allows faculty, staff, students, and SMU organizations to quickly and easily build and customize websites. Faculty members can have one individual site and multiple additional sites to facilitate academic, teaching, or research needs.

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) offers a [WordPress consultation service](#) to help faculty create professional sites. [Click here](#) for more information on the service and to book an appointment with a consultant.

- **Reminder: Parking and transportation changes** – As announced in my summer newsletters, SMU launched a new parking system last month. SMU Parking and ID services sent the [following message](#) in mid-August 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.
- **Reminder: 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.

Road to R-1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence

- **Dedman College faculty member receives \$1.19M earmark grant from the Department of Justice (DOJ)** – Congratulations to Elizabeth Wheaton, Senior Lecturer in Dedman College's Department of Economics, who will serve as PI for the DOJ's \$1.19M grant in support of the SMU Human Trafficking Project. With this funding, the SMU Human Trafficking Project will collect human trafficking literature and data through the SMU Libraries' extensive online resources that can be used for research, analysis, and policymaking. In addition, the team will continue to build [Humantraffickingdata.org](#), a database of federal human trafficking cases.
- **Key leadership searches underway:**
 - **Lyle School of Engineering** – Last week, I launched [the search committee](#) for our next Dean of the Lyle School of Engineering. My thanks to committee members for their service and to Sam Holland, Dean of the Meadows School of the Arts, for agreeing to chair this committee.

The search will be assisted by Greg Esposito, Partner at Isaacson, Miller. Greg focuses primarily on higher education leadership roles in public and private institutions, including presidents, provosts, vice presidents, deans, and directors. Since joining Isaacson, Miller in 2010, he has completed several university leadership searches, filling president, chancellor, provost, and a variety of dean roles. His work has

included several dean searches for business schools, colleges of veterinary medicine, and schools of engineering.

We are in the process of scheduling a kickoff meeting for the search committee and will continue to provide regular updates in subsequent newsletters.

News and Noteworthy

- ***Dallas Morning News covers Lyle School of Engineering faculty member's research on infrastructure inequity in Dallas*** – The [Dallas Morning News](#) (DMN) featured the research of environmental engineering expert Barbara Minsker, Bobby B. Lyle Professor of Leadership and Global Entrepreneurship in the Lyle School of Engineering's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, in a story about infrastructure inequity in Dallas. The DMN editorial board cited her research in an editorial calling on the city to invest in the infrastructure deserts identified in her research.
- ***Announcing Bishop Michael McKee as the Perkins School of Theology Interim Dean*** – In response to Dean Craig C. Hill's planned retirement effective December 31, 2022, I recently announced to Perkins faculty that [Bishop Michael McKee has agreed to serve](#) as Dean of the Perkins School of Theology ad interim effective January 1, 2023. He will serve until a permanent dean has been named. Bishop McKee's appointment was informed by meetings this summer with the Perkins Executive Board, faculty, staff and students, and I wish to thank everyone for their thoughtful feedback and recommendations.
- ***Springboard: Monthly Cohort Brunches for New Faculty:*** I encourage faculty who are new to SMU within the last 1-3 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 brunches 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.

In closing, allow me to extend well wishes for a happy Labor Day weekend. Thank you for all you do for SMU!

Sincerely,

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

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Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern Methodist University
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World Changers Shaped Here