

## Weekly Update | March 24, 2023

Elizabeth G. Loba, Ph.D. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

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) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 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) Spring 2023, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

### Spring 2023

#### **A reminder to faculty and staff about upcoming religious holidays**

On Monday, Reverend Lisa Garvin, Chaplain and Minister to the University, sent a [message to faculty and staff](#) detailing upcoming religious holy days. Please take time to become familiar with these holidays, their importance, and possible impact on students. Ramadan began yesterday, March 23, and is projected to last until April 21. We encourage faculty to support students who need to miss class for religious observance in the coming weeks by making arrangements for students to access course materials and make up missed work in a timely manner. The dates for this academic year's religious holidays can be found in the University's [academic calendar](#).

#### **Honors and Scholars Interview Day 2023**

Thursday, March 23 and Friday, March 24, the [Honors and Scholars division](#) hosted 109 Hunt Leadership, Mustang, and President's Scholars program finalists and their guests at SMU. These finalists attended an informal dinner and reception on Thursday evening and are participating in a

full set of activities, including an interview and dinner today. Thank you to the 115 faculty, staff, and student volunteers for your time and energy spent creating and organizing these activities and welcoming the finalists so warmly.

### **Honoring Our Professors' Excellence (HOPE) Banquet announces 2023 SMU faculty award winner**

For the 26<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, Residence Life & Student Housing (RLSH) and the Division of Student Affairs have recognized SMU faculty who go above and beyond in helping students succeed both inside and outside the classroom.

This year, the HOPE Award was bestowed upon Professor Liliana Hickman-Riggs from the Department of Accounting in Cox School of Business for her unwavering dedication to her students and ability to ignite a passion for learning. Additionally, seven professors became “distinguished nominees” during the banquet as faculty who have been nominated five years or more by students. These professors are:

- Dr. Wayne Shaw, Robert B. Cullum Chair and professor in the Department of Accounting in Cox School of Business
- Professor Liliana Hickman-Riggs, adjunct professor in the Department of Accounting in Cox School of Business
- Professor Teresa Brentegani, senior lecturer in the Department of World Languages and Literatures in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- Professor Jennifer O'Brien, professor of practice in the Department of Chemistry in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- Professor Andrea Adams, senior lecturer in the Department of Chemistry in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- Dr. Rick Halperin, director of the Human Rights Education Program in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
- Dr. David Doyle, director of the University Honors Program in the division of Honors and Scholars, and director of the Dedman College Scholars Program in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences

Congratulations to the faculty for their hard work and dedication to our students; thank you to our students for taking the time to nominate faculty members and thank you to RLSH and Student Affairs for creating spaces to celebrate our esteemed faculty and encouraging leadership in our community.

### **Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction award**

Sponsored by the [Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies](#) and the [Office of Student Academic Engagement and Success](#), the Outstanding Graduate Student Instruction award recognizes exemplary contributions to the teaching of SMU undergraduates by graduate student instructors and teaching assistants. At least two awards, each including a \$1,000 prize, are made annually.

Many strong award nominations were received this year, indicative of the exemplary quality of teaching being done by graduate students across disciplines. This year's 2023 winners are:

- Meghan Beddingfield, Ph.D. student in the Department of Religious Studies in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, recognized for her stellar performance as course instructor and teaching assistant for multiple classes and for developing creative and impactful teaching exercises.
- Arvin Maghsoudlou, Ph.D. student in the Department of Art History in Meadows School of the Arts, recognized for his exemplary performance as course instructor and teaching assistant for multiple classes and for the overall professionalism of his teaching record.
- Austin Mullins, Ph.D. student in the Department of Physics in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, recognized for his leadership and innovation as head teaching assistant in his department.

### **Provost participating in informal conversations with college/school faculty this spring**

I have been enjoying visiting each college/school for informal conversations open to all their faculty this spring semester. The purpose of these meetings is to listen and to engage in conversation with no set agenda. Next week, on March 29, I will be meeting with faculty from Simmons School of Education and Human Development. In the month of April, I will be meeting with Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, Meadows School of the Arts, and Cox School of Business. Be on the lookout for information on subsequent visits, and I hope you will be able to attend.

### **Final Week for SMU's annual space allocation survey**

Today is the final week of the open space allocation survey. It is important for survey participants to notify the STABLE Space Management team when file changes are complete by submitting their survey. This final step for participants will help ensure we complete this important data gathering by month's end. Thanks, in advance, to survey participants for prompt attention to this important request.

## **Road to R1/Scholarly and Creative Excellence**

### **Research and Innovation Week**

This week we have hosted an exciting series of events that collectively unite to create [Research and Innovation Week](#). The festivities aren't quite over yet as the Meadows School's MFA students will present and display their theses exhibition tomorrow, Saturday, March 25 from 4-6 p.m. in the Pollock Gallery located inside Expressway Tower.

On Monday, I was delighted to introduce [Taylor Shead as the keynote speaker](#) at the dinner following her talk. A recording of the keynote talk is [available here](#).

Thank you to Dr. Suku Nair, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer, and all faculty who participated in the [graduate education panel held](#) on March 23. A recording of the panel is [available here](#).

Congratulations to our poster session winners, and to all the participants who provided inspiring, representative samples of the great work happening on campus. You can find the full list of

undergraduate award winners [here](#), and graduate student and postdoctoral scholar award winners [here](#). Thank you again to the faculty judges and all who participated.

A special thank you to the Moody School and team who took the time and effort to coordinate this week of events and made it such a success. And thank you to those who came to support our colleagues and students.

### **Reminder: Request for Proposals – SMU/Bush Institute post-doctoral program**

The Office of the Provost, in partnership with the [George W. Bush Institute](#), is pleased to announce the second year of supporting new post-doctoral fellowships with the goals of encouraging collaborative research between SMU and the Institute and increasing the number of post-doctoral fellows at SMU. Under this program three post-doctoral positions will be funded annually; [please see the RFP here](#).

All SMU tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to submit proposals and to serve as Principal Investigators (PIs). All faculty, including non-tenured and non-tenure-track faculty, may serve as co-PI on proposals and awards. Proposals must be submitted by **April 14, 2023**, to [provost@smu.edu](mailto:provost@smu.edu) in 11-point or greater font and not exceed two, 8.5. x 11 pages in length.

### **Key leadership searches underway**

#### **Peter O'Donnell Jr. Data Science Institute Director**

The search committee, chaired by Dr. Suku Nair, Vice Provost for Research and Chief Innovation Officer, is scheduling regular working committee meetings with their next step being to develop the position description that will inform the search. Be on the lookout for additional information in subsequent newsletters. Continued thanks to Peter Moore for serving as Data Science Institute Director *ad interim* until our new director arrives.

## **News and Noteworthy**

### **The Cary M. Maguire Center for Ethics and Public Responsibility (Maguire Center) announces 2023 recipient of the J. Erik Jonsson Ethics Award**

On Tuesday the Maguire Center presented the [J. Erik Jonsson Ethics Award](#), named in honor of the public-spirited former mayor of Dallas, to Peter S. Brodsky. The Maguire Center selects individuals for this award whose careers should be recognized, honored, and modeled and who epitomize the spirit of moral leadership and public virtue. Mr. Brodsky was selected for his passion for public service and his work bettering the Dallas community, specifically improving education, access to social services, thoughtful urban development, and ending homelessness. Special thanks to Rita Kirk, professor of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs in the Meadows School of the Arts and Milliam F. May Endowed Director of the Maguire Centre, and Candy Crespo, adjunct professor of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs in the Meadows School of the Arts and Associate Director of the Maguire Center, for their outstanding leadership.

## **Lyle School of Engineering faculty member awarded the American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) George W. Housner Structural Control and Monitoring Medal**

Nicos Makris, Addy Family Centennial Professor in Lyle School of Engineering's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, was selected by [ASCE's Engineering Mechanics Institute](#) for "his contributions to passive and semi-active structural control from supplemental energy dissipation and rocking isolation to pioneering development of electroheological dampers and health monitoring and condition assessment of fluid dampers." He will be awarded the medal at the [2023 society's Engineering Mechanics Institute Conference](#) held in Atlanta, Georgia, in early June.

## **SMU Debate Team wins multiple medals at International Forensics Association Tournament in Tokyo, Japan**

On March 13-14, Dr. Ben Voth, Director of Debate and Speech and associate professor in Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, escorted students Kaleb Simes, Eric Ryan, Hailey Hazen, and Davis Lynn [to compete in Tokyo](#) and won more than 60% of their debate rounds, making it to the International Public Debate Association tournament's quarterfinals at the varsity level. SMU Debate is currently in Boise, Idaho competing at the International Public Debate Association tournament's national championship. We wish them the best of luck and congratulate them on their success this season.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Southern Methodist University

<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

**World Changers Shaped Here**