



SMU

Steven C. Currall
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Office of the Provost

14 June 2016

TO: Rhonda Blair, Professor of Theater, Meadows School of the Arts
Courtney Caldwell, Cofounder & COO of ShearShare, Inc. (SMU Alumnae, 2000)
Joseph Camp, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering, Lyle School of Engineering
Martin Camp, Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, Dedman School of Law
Scott Davis, Associate Professor of Applied Physiology and Wellness, Simmons School of Education and Human Development
Robert Howell, Professor of Philosophy, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
Rita Kirk, Director of the Maguire Center for Ethics, and Professor of Corporate Communication and Public Affairs, Meadows School of the Arts
Joe Kobyłka, Professor of Political Science, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
Peter Moore, Senior Associate Dean of Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, Associate Dean for General Education, and Professor of Mathematics (Co-Chair)
Dayna Oscherwitz, Professor and Chair of the Department of World Languages and Literatures, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
Evelyn Parker, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Wesley Centennial Chair of Practical Theology, Perkins School of Theology
Mickey Quiñones, Corley Distinguished Chair in Organizational Behavior and Organization, Cox School of Business (Co-Chair)
Pia Vogel, Professor of Biological Sciences, Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences
Undergraduate Student, to be appointed by the President of the Student Senate

FROM: Steve C. Currall, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: General Education Review Task Force

In response to a Faculty Senate resolution passed in January 2016, I am asking you as members of the General Education Review Task Force to: (1) complete a study of the University Curriculum (UC), both UC-2012 and UC-2016, (2) formulate recommendations for improvements, (3) provide regular updates on progress to faculty and staff groups, and (4) present to me a proposal for a newly revised and refreshed general education curriculum by 30 April 2017. I further ask that, during the process of your deliberations, you engage in a dialogue with faculty and staff to receive comments and suggestions concerning the proposal and present a revised proposal no later than 16 February 2018.

I hope that approval by appropriate SMU deliberative bodies (e.g., Faculty Senate, full SMU faculty, Board of Trustees) will be completed no later than 31 May 2018, in time for the new curriculum to be launched no later than the autumn of 2020.

The motto of Southern Methodist University, *Veritas Liberabit Vos* ("The Truth Shall Set You Free"), epitomizes the ideals and tradition of an SMU education and is the guiding principle for general education at SMU. Both the wisdom to critically discern existing knowledge and the capacity to

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create new knowledge and understanding are hallmarks of an educated person and exemplify the personal character we seek to impart at the University. General education has emphasized learning to read, write, and think critically, while acquiring a basic understanding of the natural world and the diversity of human society in all its dimensions. The courses of the general education curricula aim to provide a solid and broad education that equips students to contribute to society while fostering an appreciation of, and respect for, the rapidly changing and complex world that surrounds them. General education not only prepares students for their major area of study and professional success but nurtures a life-long love of learning.

The work of the Task Force, along with the general education curriculum that it formulates, will enhance the mission and goals of the University as described in the Strategic Plan and approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2015. The curriculum should also reflect best practices and contemporary thought about how to achieve our mission and goals in the twenty-first century. You are not asked to begin from scratch. Rather you should work toward resolving shortcomings in the current UC including its complexity, lack of depth and coherence, resource constraints, weak alignment with our accreditation mandates, and cafeteria-style breadth requirements. Yet, you should also seek to preserve and/or strengthen the UC's focus on writing, foreign language instruction, recognition of experiences outside the classroom, science and technology literacy, integration with majors, and participation by faculty across the University. If it deems appropriate, the Task Force may develop a curriculum that is significantly different from the current University Curriculum.

In addition, the new revised curriculum should:

- Ensure that SMU's curriculum is a source of distinctiveness and competitive advantage relative to peer and aspirational universities
- Reflect changing demographics and diversity of the U.S., the region, and the international college-ready population
- Enhance students' ability to pursue multiple majors and/or minors
- Reflect the need to accommodate transfer students
- Incorporate SMU's residential commons as an integral part of the University's educational mission
- Leverage our location in the north Texas region
- Accommodate honors programming to attract and stimulate the aspirations of high-achieving students
- Promote the increasing desirability of engaged learning, service learning, international study, undergraduate research, and internship experiences
- Allow for more robust and workable curricular assessment
- Foster students' exploration of their ethical, faith-based, and humanitarian growth
- Be feasible within current and anticipated University resources (e.g., with SMU's current faculty).

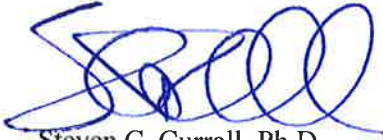
This memo includes three appendices: (1) a matrix showing stakeholder affiliations of Task Force members, each of whom has a formal vote in the group's proceedings, (2) a list of "Consulting Members" of the Task Force who will attend Task Force meetings and provide valuable input into the deliberations, yet do not have a formal voting role, and (3) an Advisory Group who will be updated on a regular basis and invited to comment on preliminary drafts of the new curriculum.

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Your work on the Task Force is imperative to the future success of our University. Thank you for your dedication to this vital task.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SCC', with several loops and flourishes.

Steven C. Currall, Ph.D.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

David B. Miller Endowed Professor

Professor of Management and Organization

Professor of Psychology

Professor of Engineering Management, Information, and Systems

SCC/cwj

Members	Associate Dean General Education: Peter Moore	Dedman III Lab Science: Pia Vogel	Academic Policy Committee: Robert Howell	Dedman I Humanities: Dayna Oscherwitz	Dedman II: Joe Kobyłka	Meadows Communication Arts: Rita Kirk	Meadows Visual & Performing Arts: Rhonda Blair	Lyle School: Joe Camp	Cox School: Mickey Quiñones	Simmons School: Scott Davis	At-large: Martin Camp (Dedman Law)	At-large: Evelyn Parker (Perkins)	Alumnus: Courtney Caldwell	Undergraduate Student to be appointed by the Student Senate President:
Key Stakeholder Groups			✓	✓										
Dedman College I			✓	✓										
Dedman College II					✓									
Dedman College III	✓	✓												
Meadows School I (Visual & Performing Arts)							✓							
Meadows School II (Communication Arts)						✓								
Academic Policy Committee			✓											
Educational Program Committee						✓								
University Curriculum Committee	✓							✓						
Cox School of Business									✓					
Lyle School of Engineering								✓						
Simmons School										✓				
Dedman School of Law											✓			
Associate Dean/General Education	✓													
Faculty-in-Residence						✓					✓			
Previous General Education Review Committee									✓					
Perkins School of Theology												✓		

**CONSULTING MEMBERS OF
GENERAL EDUCATION REVIEW TASK FORCE**

Assessment and Accreditation: Patty Alvey

Central University Libraries: Elizabeth Killingsworth

Engaged Learning: Susan Kress

Student Affairs: Steven Rankin

Advising Center and Schools Linked in Negotiating Guidelines: Ellen Richmond

Office of Information Technology: Michael Robertson

Institutional Effectiveness: Michael Tumeo

Athletics: Susan Vollmerhausen

Division of Enrollment Services: Wes Waggoner

Brooke Guelker (Staff to the Task Force)

**ADVISORY GROUP TO
GENERAL EDUCATION REVIEW TASK FORCE**

To benefit from the point of view and expertise of various stakeholders in the University community who might not otherwise be explicitly represented, the Task Force will keep a running list of advisors. The Advisory Group will consist of individuals from the community who will be invited to one or more meetings of the Task Force at relevant points in their deliberations. Continued input from a wide range of sources is important to the success of the Task Force, and its members, or the SMU community at large, are encouraged to suggest additions to this group by writing the chairs of the Task Force.