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Provost and Vice President (nd)-8.4 nd, Ph, PDear 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 aScholarly/Creative Excellence, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2022

- x Executive board meetings this week – Yesterday, President Turner, Vice President for Development and External Affairs Brad Cheves and I joined Deans Knight and Jeffcoat in meetings with their units' executive boards.
 - o Simmons School of Education and Human Development – For this meeting, I updated Board members on SMU's – and Simmons' –

recent accomplishments in two of our four priority areas for Academic Affairs: 1) academic excellence and 2) research excellence. I concluded my remarks by introducing SMU's two newest deans – Jason Nance, Judge James Noel Dean of the Dedman School of Law, and Robin Poston, Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and Associate Provost for Graduate Education.

- o SMU Libraries – For this meeting, I updated Board members on SMU's recent accomplishments toward greater academic excellence and concluded with introductions of deans Nance and Poston.

hope to make support for these initiatives a key component of the current SMU Ignited Campaign.

- o Best Colleges for Undergraduate Teaching – I am pleased to share that SMU ranked 34th in USNWR’s ranking of Best Colleges for Undergraduate Teaching. Schools on this list were ranked based on votes cast by top college administrators for putting a particular focus on undergraduate teaching.
 - o Best Colleges for Veterans – I am also pleased to share that SMU ranked 41st in USNWR’s ranking of Best Colleges for Veterans. Schools in this list are ranked based on their participation in federal initiatives helping veterans and active-duty service members pay for their degrees.
- x Place-based Community Engagement Symposium October 3 and 4: Join [Engage Dallas](#) in partnership with [Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute](#), [Center for Teaching Excellence \(CTE\)](#), [Office of General Education](#), and [Residence Life and Student Housing](#) for a symposium featuring Dr. Erica Yamamura and Kent Koth - authors of [PlaceBased Community Engagement in Higher Education: A Strategy to Transform Universities and Communities](#)

The authors will distinguish place -based community engagement as a strategy that prioritizes a campus-wide and education-centered approach, compared to other individual/office -level (e.g. service learning pedagogy) and economic (e.g. anchor institution) strategies. Plus, learn about how faculty, staff, and students at SMU can connect to Engage Dallas and build our collective capacity for community engagement on the Hilltop. [Learn more about the program sessions, dates/times, and RSVP.](#)

- x SMU offers active shooter training resource – Please review this [6-minute video](#) and consider showing it in your classroom followed by a short discussion about safety procedures. A warning that viewer discretion is

advised should precede the showing as some students may find the information alarming.

Advanced Studies has been able to set aside funding this year for two initiatives aimed at helping our Ph.D. students finish their degrees and launch successful careers.

- o Moody School Doctoral Completion Grants are intended to help SMU PhD students defend their dissertations and complete their degrees in the Fall 2022 or Spring 2023 semester.

The search committee's kickoff meeting took place on Tuesday, September 27. I will continue to provide regular updates in subsequent newsletters.

News and Noteworthy