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Subject: Weekly Update - August 28, 2020
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Office of the Provost

August 28, 2020

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 to ensure a safe and healthy fall 2020 and advance the goals of SMU's strategic plan. 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 2020, 2) Mythbusters, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

Fall 2020

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two weeks of class to assist. In addition, the ATSDs will also be responding to AV startups calls. I would encourage all faculty to review and even print out a copy of this reference guide for a compiled list of OIT's [faculty support plan](#) during the first few weeks of the semester.

For the next three weeks, Associate Provosts Sheri Kunovich and Paige Ware will host optional 30-minute touchpoint meetings with academic leadership teams (deans, associate deans, chairs) to help elevate any questions or concerns that are arising from students and faculty so that we can address them together and help one another in our efforts to ensure a successful fall semester. These meetings are scheduled from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. on Fridays (August 28, September 4, and September 11).

Contact tracing update – To help protect and inform the SMU community, we have deployed two new tools this week for monitoring the health of students, faculty and staff – a COVID-19 Symptom Checker and Contact Tracer.

- o If you are not feeling well or not sure if you should be on campus, you can use the [COVID-19 Symptom Checker](#) at any time. The survey will help you to determine if you are currently experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19. After answering a few questions, the checker will provide guidance for your next actions, and based on the results, you will receive further instructions. You should have also begun receiving automated emails this week with instructions on how to complete your “Mustang daily symptom check.”
- o The PathCheck contact tracing app is available on the Apple and Google store. Visit this [blog post](#) for additional information and

greater time for feedback from the college/schools, Peter and his team will run an updated version of the algorithm used in fall 2020 to build the spring 2021 schedule, which should be published mid-October. Enrollment for spring 2021 will open on November 16.

Masks/facial coverings required indoors as well as outdoors when social distancing is not possible – SMU is requiring that everyone on the SMU campus wear a face covering over the mouth and nose in all public indoor spaces. This requirement – in accordance with the latest local ordinance – includes classrooms; building entrances and exits; lobbies and lounges; as well as in hallways, stairwells, restrooms and elevators. SMU strongly encourages the use of multi-ply masks instead of other types of face coverings. Faculty can require students in the classroom to wear face masks versus other types of face coverings. Face coverings are not required outdoors, in private spaces such as inside an office or partitioned cubicle for employees, or inside an individual residence hall room for students, unless you are unable to maintain safe social distancing (6 feet). To preserve your health and the health of others, you should follow these same protocols both on and off the SMU campus.

University position on masks/face shields behind plexiglass/podium shields – Questions have arisen about the relationship among plexiglass shields, face shields, and masks for faculty who are teaching on campus. The University position is that either a mask or a face shield is required for faculty when teaching. The plexiglass shields at the podium offer additional protection, particularly when faculty prefer to teach with a face shield in lieu of a mask. However, the plexiglass shield at the podium is not sufficient on its own.

Face shields do not offer the equivalent protection of face coverings over the mouth and nose. However, due to the vocal aspects of classroom instruction, a face shield is an acceptable substitute for faculty members to wear while teaching as long as the instructor also adheres to the other required safety standards, such as staying behind the plexiglass at the podium and maintaining appropriate social distancing. SMU has added plexiglass barriers to podiums, provided face shields and coverings, and distanced desks and lecterns to accommodate faculty in conducting their instructional duties. Faculty can also wear a face mask in addition to, or in lieu of, a face shield, for added protection.

We know that utilizing face shields and masks may present additional challenges in terms of teaching. If you believe that adding a lav microphone would assist you, please reach out to your academic technology specialist. Anti-fogging wipes or sprays might make face shields more comfortable during your classes. If you have other suggestions or ideas for ways we can assist, please do not hesitate to reach out to your chair or dean. Thank you so much for all you are doing for our students in this very unique semester.

Please know that students are required to wear face coverings in classrooms. If additional accommodations such as a face shield are

needed, students should work with SMU's Disability Accommodatic & Success Strategies for available options. Understanding multi-ply face masks provide the best protection, SMU strongly encourages the use of multi-ply masks instead of other types of face coverings. Faculty can require students in the classroom to wear face masks versus other types of face coverings.

Student-athlete support– The student athlete support units, Center for the Academic Development of Student-Athletes (ADSA) and Student Athlete Academic Services (SAAS), have begun using a new, more efficient, software. Starting this summer, faculty began feedback requests for student-athletes from a system called Teamworks. Moving forward, all athlete communications regarding faculty feedback and travel letters will come from this system. Please see the below snapshot as an example of Teamworks to eliminate any concerns it may be a phishing attempt.



Resource for students requiring disability accommodations – DASS (Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies) is the office that provides support services and accommodations to undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities. DASS uses an online portal to receive students' requests and share letters of accommodation with professors securely and electronically. Please go to the [DASS Link](#) to view your students' letters. DASS is also available for limited virtual proctoring, if you have explored all options (technology, departmental

support) to virtually monitor the student with testing accommodation. Instructions for using the DASS Link can be found [here](#). For more assistance, call the office directly at 214-768-1470 or join a [Zoom faculty drop-in session](#) on September 9 from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. with DASS staff. They are happy to help!

Accommodations for international students living in different time zones – We appreciate faculty efforts to build VIRTUAL courses with the recommendation of 33% synchronous participation, as that will help ensure that students can have real-time contact. OIT has created [FAQ](#) for many questions.

This recommendation was made with the understanding that, in the unique context of the fall 2020 semester, some international students would need additional accommodations, particularly if they live in time zones that would otherwise mean participating in the middle of the night. We encourage you to consider the following accommodations if and as students request them:

- o Continue to run your class as you have planned it—please don't think you need to create a separate experience for international students; however, in that approach, below are a few accommodations that you can make for international students who live in time zones that are prohibitive for taking the class in real time:
 - Ask your international students to watch the synchronous recordings. There are several pedagogical options to ensure students are engaged and are accessing the information: a) create embedded Panopto Q&A within the recording for them to respond to; or b) create a parallel assignment for them to answer a series of questions about the synchronous recordings. Make yourself available to international students by encouraging office hours in ways that accommodate their time zones. A little outreach can go a long way to help them feel supported.
 - Encourage your international students to visit [AsstEC](#) for support, as they offer virtual tutoring until 10:00 p.m. CST (Sun-Thurs).
 - Reach out to the CTE, other colleagues, and your ATSD for additional ideas.

Reminder: upload syllabi into SMU's password-protected archive – Faculty are reminded to upload your syllabi into SMU's online syllabus library before September 4. The syllabus library is only accessible by members of the SMU community and is password-protected. It is a resource for SMU students and should be considered internal-use only. Any other use of this resource is prohibited. Faculty who are unable to upload their syllabus are encouraged to complete this task in coordination with their department administrator.

Messaging to Students

- o The Division of Student Affairs published their 2020–2021 event [guidelines](#) last week, which will govern student groups recognized by or affiliated with SMU (either formally or informally).
- o In last week's [email](#) to students, Associate Provost Sheri Kunovich

provided students with some final reminders before the start of school year on topics such as:

- o Where to go on the first day of class.
- o How to find their Red/Blue assignments. Note the University's official [Red/Blue calendar](#) is also available for print/download.
- o How to reserve Zoom Spaces.
- o This week's Mustang Strong [newsletter](#) focused on how students can still develop and maintain lifelong connections through socially distanced events and get-togethers.

Faculty and staff needing child care support

- o The Childcare Working Group invites faculty and staff to join a [Facebook group](#)

and police departments as IT services are engaged. For your general awareness, regular SMU email services do allow senders to recall, to

Sincerely,

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