

May 14, 2021

Dear Faculty and Staff:

I hope you have found these new

increased infection. We also transitioned many student activities, including fraternity and sorority recruitment, to virtual offerings. Just as we were settling in to the spring semester, the

shared priorities. Their willingness to collaborate in new and time-consuming ways this year strengthened the case for our Academic Affairs budget this year. I know that this was a new approach for SMU and that there is justifiably some ambiguity and concern about how we will go about the process of determining future resource allocations. Knowing already that we will

During the April 30 faculty Town Hall to discuss 3-5 areas of academic distinction for which the ability to hire additional clusters of faculty would set SMU apart as world-class in several fields, some faculty expressed concerns about the focus on only STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) and encouraged us to expand the conversation beyond STEM to include STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Math). Following the Town Hall, I received many thoughtful emails with recommendations along similar lines. In response, I plan to offer a Town Hall early in the fall 2021 semester that is focused more heavily and centrally on the sciences, and we will include opportunities to bring forward ideas around strategic planning and visioning, both across the short- and long-term goals at SMU. We will share more information as plans materialize.

In the meantime, I would like to emphasize continuity for all faculty, in the hopes of dispelling concerns that have come to me through these recent conversations. All faculty at SMU, not just faculty in disciplines that have conventionally been more aligned with research metrics associated with R-1 Carnegie distinction, will continue to have their scholarly and creative

Campaign 3.0, and we can now look forward to the excitement and energy that comes with such an important endeavor.

2025! Our planned undergraduate enrollment next fall is 1,530. Thanks to the tremendous efforts of our Deans, the College/School recruiters and the Division of Enrollment Services, under the leadership of Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Dr. Wes Waggoner and Dean of Undergraduate Admission Elena Hicks, we look to be on track to meet, and possibly modestly exceed, our enrollment target. Some noteworthy data points on next

- underrepresented groups
 - This is a 13% increase in those numbers over last year
 - This includes a 32% increase in those identifying as Black/African American
 - And, a 21% increase in those identifying as Hispanic/Latinx
- 10.3% of the deposits are from students who qualify as Pell-eligible (This is an increase of 38 over last year, for a total of 170.)

It has been a hard year, full of new and diff