





# Academic Excellence

## history

SMU Dedman School of Law recently welcomed the highest credentialed class in its history. The Class of 2027, the 100th first-year law class to start since the law school's founding in 1925, comprises a remarkable, diverse group of students with strong academic backgrounds and real-world experience.

The 228-student class has a median LSAT score of 165 (scored out of 180) with a median GPA of 3.86. These students represent 87 different undergraduate institutions from 23 states. Twenty-six identify as first-generation college students and 30% identify as racially/ethnically diverse.

Read more about the [incoming class and Dedman Law rankings here](#).

# Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence

## Meadows School of the Arts professor named Wallach Chair by esteemed Chamber Music Society

The [Chamber Music Society \(CMS\) of Lincoln Center](#) has announced that Chad Hoopes, professor of practice in violin in the Division of Music at Meadows School of the Arts, is the new holder of its Susan S. and Kenneth L. Wallach Chair.

This honorary position, which comes with a monetary award, is bestowed upon artists who exhibit extraordinary musicianship and service to CMS and to chamber music as an art form. CMS has also remarked that they are proud and grateful for everything that Professor Hoopes does to engage audiences with the beauty of his chamber music performances.

Professor Hoopes will hold the position for a three-year term beginning with the 2024-25 season and concluding at the end of the 2027-28 season.

# Inclusive Excellence

## Student Academic Engagement and Success requests SMU faculty and staff survey participation to inform support structures

Student Academic Engageme



*Chancellor Simon Mak and Dean Jalili at Universal AI University hoisting the SMU flag.*

### **Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences professor appears in multiple national media outlets as expert on the role of religion in public education**

Mark Chancey, professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, has recently appeared in national media outlets such as the *New York Times*, *NPR*, *CNN*, and the *Washington Post*. Professor Chancey has been selected by these outlets for his expertise on religion in public education, and particularly, for his work reviewing a proposed curriculum in Texas that uses Bible stories as central content.

Professor Chancey has recently given television interviews on [KFDW](#), [NBC Top Story](#) (story starts at 35:01) and [CNN](#). He has also provided interviews and statements on this topic for media outlets such as [The Dallas Morning News](#), [Chron](#), [MSN KENS-TV San Antonio](#) and [The Forward](#).

### **Perkins School of Theology hosted Fall Convocation 2024, *Faith in a Digital Age***

The [2024 Fall Convocation at Perkins School of Theology](#) brought 90 attendees to campus to discuss “Faith in a Digital Age.” The event took place on November 14–15, and drew clergy, engaged laypersons, community leaders, and members of the Perkins and SMU community.

Guest lecturers Cole Arthur Riley and Noreen Herzfeld presented insights exploring the ways AI might affect the ways human beings express their spirituality and connect with their faith communities. Artist Jennifer Monet Cowley created art on-site during the two-day program, which also featured breakout sessions, panel discussions and dedicated time for worship.

