



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, 2) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 3) 2016 – 2025 Strategic Plan, and 4) Inclusive Excellence.

If you have suggestions for what we should include in future communications, please submit your ideas through our story form via the button below. Suggestions received before noon on Tuesday will be reviewed and considered for publication in that week's Friday newsletter. Others will be held until the following week.

[Submit your story](#)

Previous newsletters are [available here](#).

Today's update falls into four categories: 1) Spring 2025, 2) Academic Excellence, 3) Road to R1: Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, and 4) News and Noteworthy.

Spring 2025

Announcing SMU's eleventh President

On January 7, 2025, David B. Miller, chair of the SMU Board of Trustees and co-chair of the SMU

As the current president of The University of Texas at Austin – our state's premier public flagship university and one of the leading research universities in the world – Dr. Hartzell has developed the experience and vision that will help propel SMU to even greater heights. We look forward to his arrival

and remain incredibly grateful to President Turner for envisioning, implementing and sustaining the vision that has brought us thus far.

You are invited to read more about Dr. Hartzell's background and what others are saying about this remarkable moment in SMU's history [online here](#).

Welcome back to the Hilltop

Welcome back to campus! I hope you all were able to rest and enjoy the break with loved ones and are excited about the upcoming spring term. As per recent custom to start the spring term, Texas weather has greeted us all with a snap of chilly, wintry weather.

Thank you to the faculty teaching undergraduate January term courses as well as to our graduate/professional faculty whose classes are already in session for the flexibility and support you have shown in response to this week's weather conditions. Please see [this message](#) for important reminders regarding Jan term specific guidance.

As a reminder to all faculty and staff, particularly should similar weather conditions occur in the weeks ahead, please refer to the [SMU Aware website](#) for information on SMU's response to adverse weather events.

Finally, for faculty currently preparing for spring 2025 class instruction, please review this [letter I emailed](#) on January 7 outlining expectations of required syllabus statements, including a compulsory Generative-AI use statement, and resources for technology-enhanced instruction.

Happy New Year!

Reminder: Center for Teaching Excellence's 2025 Spring Kickoff

SMU's Center for Teaching Excellence (CTEk.9 (ng)-1206 426.12 Tm[R]6 xC- s-1206 426.12 Tm[R]2 (n)5

Professor Lovin will be the 14th person to receive the award since its inception. He joins SMU's own Charlie Curran, professor emeritus, who received the award in 2017. SMU is one of only two institutions to have two faculty members earn this award; the other institution is Yale University.

As past president of the SCE, Steve Long, Cary M. Maguire University Professor of Ethics, will have the honor of awarding the Lifetime Achievement to Professor Lovin.

Two Meadows School of the Arts graduate students hand-picked for Dallas Contemporary's North Texas (DCNTX) Graduate Student Program

Taylor Cleveland and Sharmeen Uqaili, MFA students from Meadow School of the Arts' Division of Art have been selected as part of the [Dallas Contemporary's](#) (DC) newly launched [North Texas \(NTX\) Graduate Student Program](#). This new initiative is focused on providing mentorship and networking opportunities for the 13 hand-selected students in the inaugural cohort.

Learn more about [Cleveland, Uqaili, and the DCNTX program here](#).

December 2024 Doctoral Hooding Ceremony held in Frances Anne Moody Hall Auditorium

On Friday, December 20, 2024, Dean Robin Poston of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and myself hosted a new ceremony for SMU; a hooding ceremony for recipients of doctoral degrees across SMU schools and colleges. Thirty-one recipients of Ed.D., D.L.S., D.Min., and Ph.D. degrees were hooded by their faculty advisors at the ceremony. I delivered remarks along with three student speakers: Yasamin Fozouni, Ph.D. in computer science; Jasmine Liu, Ph.D. in physics; and Cheryl Scramuzza, Doctor of Liberal Studies. The ceremony was hosted in the Frances Anne Moody Hall Auditorium with a reception afterwards in the Moody Hall Atrium. This ceremony promises to be an excellent new tradition at SMU.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Southern Methodist University
<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

