



## **Simmons School of Education Executive Board recap**

On Thursday, I joined Stephanie Knight, Leon Simmons Endowed Dean at Simmons School of Education and Human Development's fall 2023 Executive Board meeting. President Turner was called away on short notice; so, I provided a university-wide update focused on the dedication of Frances Anne Moody Hall, SMU's invitation to join the ACC in 2024, and upcoming fall events, such as the Tate Lecture Series, SMU's Celebration of Lights and December Commencement. I also gave an update on the *SMU Ignited* campaign, with gifts and pledges exceeding \$1.1 billion as of the September Board of Trustees meeting.

During my remarks on Academic Affairs, I reviewed SMU's undergraduate and graduate enrollment outcomes for fall 2023, updated board members on the 2024 *US News and World Report* rankings outcomes, and discussed some exciting advancements in research that will support our goals for even greater excellence, including: 1) the [\\$30 million gifts from the O'Donnell Foundation](#) to endow the O'Donnell Data Science and Research Computing Institute (ODSRCI) and to support the Initiative for Digital Innovation in Engineering and Computer Science, 2) [Neena Imam's recent appointment](#) as the Peter O'Donnell, Jr. Director of the ODSRCI, and 3) the Biden Administration's announcement that [SMU's proposal for a Texoma Semiconductor Hub](#) has been awarded official Tech Hub designation, making it one of 31 U.S. Tech Hubs to spark innovation and development across the country.

## **Faculty Senate meeting update on changes to Carnegie Research Classification**

During Wednesday's Faculty Senate meeting, Michael Harris, Professor and Department Chair in the Simmons School's Department of Education Policy and Leadership and Faculty Senate President, invited me to give a brief update on the changes announced this week to the Carnegie Research Classification system.

The [American Council on Education](#) (ACE, which now oversees the Carnegie Classification system) announced on November 1, that beginning in 2025, they will reduce the number of criteria utilized to determine R-1 from 10 to two: 1) \$50 million in research expenditures annually and 2) 70 research doctorates awarded annually. Using SMU's data from academic year 2022 – 2023, for example, SMU would have achieved R-1 status under these new criteria with \$58 million in research expenditures and 139 doctoral degrees conferred.

These changes will make for a more straightforward and transparent target for those institutions that have it in their mission to prioritize research and aspire to R-1 status. ACE does not anticipate a significant increase in the number of R-1 institutions as a result of these changes; however, there is still much we do not know. We will continue to monitor the situation and keep you updated as more information becomes available.

We do not anticipate the Carnegie Research Classification changes will have a significant impact on our goals for research. We will continue to pursue and expect to attain R-1 status.

## **Pass/fail grading option deadline moved to align with Withdrawal deadline**

The offices of Student Academic Engagement and Success (SAES) are pleased to announce that the pass/fail declaration deadline, which has typically aligned with the deadline to drop a course without academic record, has been moved later into the semester to align with the deadline to withdraw from classes and/or the University. As the University moves into future semesters, the



## Academic Excellence

### **Simmons Sport Management graduate program ranked #1 in Texas and #14 in the nation**

The Simmons School of Education and Human Development's Masters in Sport Management program has been ranked #1 in Texas, #3 among private universities in the U.S., #14 in the country and #18 in the world by SportBusiness. This London-based intelligence service provides data and analytics to the sports industry and uses its data expertise to evaluate the more than 200 post-graduate sport management programs that are considered highly prestigious among industry professionals.

This is the first time SMU's sport management program has submitted an entry to the SportBusiness Post Graduate Rankings, and we congratulate them on such a dynamic initial entry.

### **Top-ranking graduate program for video game development celebrates 20th anniversary**

The Guildhall, SMU's premier graduate-

## Road to R1: Research and Sch

Thank you to Dr. Kelyn Rola, Director of the Thrive Scholars Program, and Kathy Hubbard, Assistant Dean for Student Success and Inclusive Excellence at the Lyle School of Engineering, for overseeing and supporting this initiative in line with our goals for both academic and inclusive excellence.

### **Two members of Dedman School of Law accepted awards at the Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program's 2023 Pro Bono Awards event**

Dallas Volunteer Attorney Program hosted the 2023 Pro Bono Awards on October 27, to recognize outstanding legal professionals who serve the Dallas community by providing legal aid to those who otherwise might not have access.

Dedman School of Law Professor Joanna Grossman was named Lawyer of the Year. In the past year, she completed over 260 hours of volunteer legal work in the areas of probate and family law.

Laura Burstein, Director of Public Service at Dedman School of Law, accepted an award on behalf of the law school for Outstanding Virtual Clinic Sponsor. During the 2022-2023 school year, Laura organized and conducted 10 pro bono clinics that enabled law students to help over 500 clients in the DFW area.

### **Two Dedman School of Law students awarded prestigious scholarships from the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association**

The [Dallas Hispanic Bar Association](#) (DHBA) hosted its 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Noche de Luz on October 14. The annual gala brings together legal professionals and current students from around the DFW area to celebrate professional work and cultural heritage and to network. Winners of awards and scholarships distributed by DHBA are announced during this event.

Congratulations to Dedman School of Law students Valeria Villagomez and Karen Bulnes, who were each awarded Dallas Hispanic Bar Association scholarships!

## **News and Noteworthy**

### **SMU Vice President receives prestigious national recognition from National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)**

Dr. K.C. Mmeje, SMU's vice president for Student Affairs, has been named a recipient of the 2024 Pillars of the Profession Award by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Foundation. The award acknowledges remarkable individuals within the student affairs and higher education community who demonstrate exceptional contributions to both the profession and the organization.

Dr. Mmeje will be recognized along with his fellow honorees at the upcoming 2024 NASPA Annual Conference in Seattle by the NASPA Foundation Board of Directors.

Congratulations, K.C., on this incredible recognition and for all the work you do for SMU and our students!

## **Sport Management Alums and Intern living the dream with Texas Rangers**

Seven SMU Sport Management Program alums and one current student from Simmons' Department of Applied Physiology and Sport Management are working for the newly crowned World Series Champion Texas Rangers organization.

These eight Mustangs are working in various areas of the Rangers organization from corporate partnerships and new business development to sales and media marketing.

To alums Matt Nichols, Laci Taylor, Sydney Teske, Parker Johnson, Sam Gunning, Kent Yamamoto and Abby Casillas, and current student Louie Deckas, congratulations! I hope you have enjoyed this historic run.

## **Graduate Student Night at the SMU vs. North Texas football game**

The Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies is partnering with SMU Athletics to celebrate Graduate Student Night at the SMU football game against the University of North Texas on Friday, November 10, at 8 p.m. Graduate students will each have access to two free tickets to the game and will sit together in a reserved section. The ticket link has been sent to current SMU graduate students by email.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth G. Loba, PhD  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Southern Methodist University

<https://www.smu.edu/provost>

**World Changers Shaped Here**