

May 3

## Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dear Faculty and Staff,

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 this form](#). Suggestions received before noon on Tuesday will be reviewed and considered for newsletters are available [here](#).

Research and Scholarly/Creative Excellence, 4) Inclusive Excellence, and 5) News and Noteworthy.

## Spring 2024

### Recap: Board of Trustees meeting

Trustees.

*Committee on Academic Affairs*

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faculty, reviewed and approved by department chairs and deans, and now require board approval. ability to increase revenue, particularly through overhead recovery, as our research enterprise grows.

*Full Board meeting*

Academic Affairs. Additionally, the Board of Trustees provided special recognition and commendation to Carolyn Jeter, executive assistant to the provost, for her distinguished career of outstanding service to the University. After working at SMU for 36 years and supporting 11 provosts, Carolyn will be retiring at the end of the academic year. We wish her all the best in retirement.

### Dedication of the David B. Miller Business Quadrangle

At 11:30 a.m. today, members of the Board of Trustees, President Turner, Dean Matthew Myers of the Cox School of Business, and I joined with the SMU community in celebrating the dedication of the new and renovated David B. Miller Business Quadrangle. This two-year \$140 million renovation and expansion project has created the facilities needed to train students for an ever-more collaborative and

technologically integrated world and have positioned the Cox School for future generations of continued excellence.

### **Final provost monthly lunch for current academic year to occur next week**

On Monday, May 6, from 12-1 p.m., I will have lunch in the Faculty-Staff Dining Room in Umphrey Lee. This will be my last opportunity to host lunch during the current academic year as we take a pause over the summer months, but I look forward to reinstating these monthly lunches when we begin the fall 2024 semester.

I look forward to seeing as many of you who can attend on Monday and hope you will join me for a relaxed lunch and conversation.

### **Baccalaureate and May Commencement**

#### *Baccalaureate Service and Rotunda Recessional*

Baccalaureate Service and Rotunda Recessional will occur next Friday, May 10, 2024, at 5 p.m. in McFarlin Auditorium. The nondenominational ceremony will feature a special sermon by Reverend Lisa Garvin, SMU's chaplain, for undergraduate candidates and their guests. Following the service, students will participate in the Rotunda Recessional led by SMU faculty and alumni marshals.

#### *All-University May Commencement*

The All-University May Commencement will occur the following day, Saturday, May 11, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in Moody Coliseum. Participating faculty should assemble in academic dress no later than 8 a.m. in the Miller Event Center in Moody Coliseum. The faculty entrance is located on the north side of the building on Binkley Avenue.

This year SMU is awarding an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree to civil rights icon [Opal Lee](#), who led a national grassroots campaign that resulted in the 2021 establishment of Juneteenth, June 19, as a federal holiday.

Commencement speakers will be [Megha Tolia and Nirav Tolia](#), co-founding directors of the William S. Spears Institute for Entrepreneurial Leadership at the Cox School of Business.

-of-year academic ceremonies, [please click here](#).

## **Academic Excellence**

### **Highlighting the Class of 2024**

Stories about our extraordinary graduating senior students are taking over the front page of [www.smu.edu](http://www.smu.edu) during the spring 2024 graduation season. Ten undergraduates are featured with photos, videos, and written prose that capture their past four years and future plans, as they walk into the next part of their journeys as world changers.



## **Stephenson Distinguished Visitor Award won by Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences faculty member**

College of Humanities and Sciences has won the [Stephenson Distinguished Visitor Award](#) from [Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron \(DESY\)](#). Every year DESY, through the support of the [James D. Stephenson Fund](#), selects two internationally renowned scientists to visit and deliver a public lecture. Award winners will stay in Hamburg, Germany for four weeks to perform leading-edge research in the field of photon sciences.

-3:15

p.m. Central European Summer Time at DESY. A [description of the talk can be found here](#).

## **Inclusive Excellence**

### **SMU mourns civil rights leader and Perkins School of Theology alum**

The Reverend Cecil Williams, a long-recognized national civil and human rights leader who was [one of the five Black students to integrate SMU in 1952](#), died on April 22, at the age of 94.

represented the first voluntary desegregation of an educational institution in the South. The five graduated from SMU together in 1955.

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## **News and Noteworthy**

### **Faculty member from Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences discusses climate change research in leading European economics web publication**

Professor Klaus Desmet, Ruth and Kenneth Altshuler Centennial Interdisciplinary Professor in the Department of Economics at Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, and his co-author Esteban Rossi-Hansberg from the University of Chicago discuss their latest research on the spatial distributional effects of climate change in [VoxEU](#).

VoxEU is the \_\_\_\_\_ policy portal. VoxEU was created in 2007 to promote "research-based policy analysis and commentary by leading economists."

### **award winners**

Division of Music at Meadows School of the Arts; Kara Sutton, lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences; and Daniele Forlino, senior lecturer of Italian in the Department of World Languages and Literatures at Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences. Congratulations to these faculty members for their hard work and dedication to our students. Thank you to our students for taking the time to nominate faculty members and to RLSH and Student Affairs for creating spaces to celebrate our esteemed faculty.

### **Global, Online & Continuing Education (GOCE) establishes new non-credit generative AI program for SMU students and working professionals**

[Generative AI for Business Professionals](#), a new non-credit specialization from SMU Continuing and Professional Education (CAPE), began on April 18, with 16 students from various professional backgrounds including financial services, healthcare, information technology, and law. Several SMU undergraduate students seeking to build their skills for future endeavors also participated. In the six-week program, students learned how to use generative AI tools in a business context and apply their knowledge to a unique project or opportunity related to their own industry or interests. The Generative AI for Business Professionals course was developed and taught by Sharlene Jenner, a veteran CAPE instructor and Vice President of Engagement Strategy at [Abelson Taylor](#). The Generative AI for Business Professionals program will be offered again in fall 2024 and is open to SMU faculty, staff, students, and community members.

Sincerely,



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

