

b. SMU is officially R1! The news was formally announced last week: SMU is the only R1 institution in Dallas, one of 17 (out of 18) ACC schools; 96% of the Power Four Schools are also R1. There is a marketing plan underway: February, local press coverage, SMU websites, social media; March-April, National Press, DFW billboards, paid social media, video clips, DMN Editorial Board interview; May, Provost Report, additional video, web, and social media content. Provost Lobo expressed gratitude for the thousands of people who contributed to this achievement.

i. FS concern: How confident are we that this distinction is sustainable? Provost Lobo said we are very confident about the 70 doctorates awarded annually. However, we must focus on research expenditures; we need an average of \$50M/year (we had a \$53M average for the assessment) and, in 2024, \$62.4M. Large pools would be helpful and we need large interdisciplinary grants. We believe we can reach \$100M in the next five years, but we must breakdown disciplinary silos.

4. Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies Update: Alan Itkin, Assistant Dean,:

a. Alan Itkin, Senior Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs and Chief of Staff, shared updates on the Moody School, including successes including foundation funds, Moody Hall (hosts offices, classrooms, space for graduate students, and events), enhanced visibility and reputation (naming of the school and building has increased visibility), hosting the annual meeting of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools in March, and has dedicated focus on graduate programming (Research is now a separate unit). Current challenges the School faces include not having a business manager to oversee Moody Hall operations and budget constraints (the current budget, which was proposed in 2018, does not allow hiring personnel now necessary but unforeseen seven years ago). Applications have increased by 21% (does not include Guildhall; will be included in the future), and the recruitment efforts targeting DFW continue (led by SMU Marketing). Unfortunately, stipend levels continue to be lower than those of our peer and aspirant cohorts. Still, Moody School is leading a pilot program to use federal work-study to increase stipend levels. It continues to guide students in applying for external fellowships such as Fulbright, NSF, and PEO. Though there won't be one this spring, the School hopes to continue the tradition of hosting a hooding ceremony for doctoral students. Additionally, there are two programs to recognize and encourage mentoring: Moody Outstanding Mentor Awards, which is a collaboration with CTE (inaugural year awardees: Kevin Gunter, MinJun Kim, Tim Salmon, Candace Walkington) and Doctoral Peer Mentoring Program, in which third-year doctoral students mentor first- and second-year doctoral students—particularly for first-gen and underrepresented students (mentors trained, have flex dollars for coffee). Also, a new Postdoctoral Advisory Committee (the first

meeting was in December 2024) is working to draft policies, guidelines, and procedures to hire and support postdocs and is currently working on vacation time. It is worth noting the postdoc population has increased from 50 to 75 in the last three years.

- b.** Robin Poston, Dean of the Moody School and Associate Provost for Graduate Education, shared the current state of SMU's graduate online education. Compared to peer/aspirant institutions, we have fewer programs and students (580 at SMU and 3K at Baylor, for example); more programs may be needed and there is an opportunity to have greater regional/state-wide impact. Typical students of these online graduate programs are local and currently employed full-time; most seek advancement in their current industry/company (top five employers include PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, JP Morgan Chase Bank NA, Southwest Airlines, Raytheon Co., and AT&T Inc). There are ten active programs this spring. Though SMU owns the course content, most of these programs use vendors, which assist with course production and

- a. Dayna explained the importance and details of SMU's upcoming SACSCOC five-year review, scheduled for March 2027. This midterm review is intended to prove an institution is in good standing with the US Department of Education, a requirement to receive Title IV funding. Unlike the 73 standards used for the 10-year review, the five-year review only includes 22, of which four are "core standards," failing any of the core ones results in automatic failure. Also, the stakes are higher for the midterm review because, unlike the 10-year review, which allows four attempts to show compliance, the five-year review allows only one attempt. Dayna's office has started reviewing existing policies, program assessments, and other necessary paperwork/evidence to show compliance in collaboration with an external consultant. Some of the weakest areas include units where inherited practices are at odds with the standards or policies may be missing. Dayna asked faculty to ensure their departments are assessing and documenting general education and academic programs (learning outcomes, evidence there are being assessed, and that a plan exists for improving these outcomes); we must show proof of these activities for the last two academic years (2024-26).
 - i. FS concern: Would the Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness be able to assist departments that don't have assessment committees? Dayna said they are happy to help, and each department should know what it is teaching, how it is being measured, and how the program is improving.
7. Honoring President Turner and Gail Turner: David proposed two separate resolutions to work on the language at the next FS meeting. The motion passed.
8. AOB:
 - a. David reminded everyone about the Climate Survey and asked FS to encourage colleagues to complete it. The survey closes on Feb. 28.
 - b. Future guests: Brad Cheeves and the two incoming deans will join the next FS meeting (deans on Zoom).
9. Meeting adjourned: 4:48 p.m.

Submitted by Lourdes Molina