March 19, 2021

Dear Faculty and Staff:

These weekly updates will serve as a tool to keep you informed and engaged with SMU's Academic Affairs division as, together, we work to advance the goals of SMU's strategic plan and continue to move SMU forward and upward. If you have suggestions for what we should include in future communications, please send your ideas to this <u>email address</u>. Previous newsletters are available <u>here</u>. Today's update falls into three categories: 1) Road to R-1 and Research/Creative Excellence, 2) Spring 2021, and 3) News and Noteworthy.

SMU'S Road to R-

- Phase 1B in Texas <u>was expanded</u> to include individuals who teach or are staff members in K-12 schools, day cares, or preschools.
- As of this week, <u>individuals who are 50 years old and older can now sign up to</u> <u>receive the vaccine</u> under new Phase 1C rules.

If you are unsure which phase you fall into, <u>the eligibility survey on the Mustang</u> <u>Strong vaccine page</u> may be a helpful resource for you. If you qualify now, check with your primary care doctor, participating pharmacy or county website to sign up for the vaccine. <u>You can view a list of helpful resources and vaccine portals here</u>.

For those interested in tracking how many individuals in the state have received the vaccine, the Texas Department of State Health Services provides information through their website. National numbers are available through the CDC.

Planned reduction in isolation capacity on campus **SMU is reducing its isolation** capacity from 147 to 131 units while maintaining the flexibility to quickly add more if needed. The change comes amid reduced COVID-19 cases on campus, and to accommodate a small number of students disp

Change in COVID-related restrictions for some residential housing and student events Late last week, Student Affairs eased restrictions for some residential housing and student events. Here are some highlights:

- Guest Policy Update: Students living in the Residential Commons and upperdivision housing are now allowed to have guests in their residential facilities with some conditions. Students with questions about what this change means are encouraged to contact their Residential Community Director for locationspecific guidance.
- Student Events at Yellow: Student events now follow yellow designation. This
 means certain indoor activities for student events are now allowed with
 proper social distancing and COVID-19 protocols. <u>All yellow designation details
 are available on the Student Affairs website</u>. The student event category
 range red, orange, yellow, green is separate from the overall University
 Operational levels, but aligns closely with them.

Request to complete mid-semester feedback surveys <u>Mid-Semester Feedback</u> enables faculty to fine-tune a course that is already in progress. Gathering this type of feedback sends a message to students that you care about their success in the course.

To assist you, the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) has created two editable midsemester feedback instruments which consist of mid-semester related questions. These instruments are available as downloadable PDFs, Canvas Quizzes, and Qualtrics surveys. Additional information, including detailed instructions for accessing and creating a mid-semester feedback survey, is available on the <u>CTE website</u>.

Information about textbook and course resource adoptions We are excited to announce the launch of a <u>new portal</u> using the SMU ID for sign-on to place textbook and course materials orders: Barnes & Noble College Adoption & Insights Portal (AIP).

We highly recommend this 2-minute overview (dick <u>here</u>) to see a quick demo of the AIP Portal. May and Summer terms are already loaded into the system; all fall classes should be loaded by early next week.

This new portal, replacing FacultyEnlight, is very easy to use; you have options to readopt from past course adoptions, navigate through the adoption process with easily searchable databases, build course packets for non-textbook resources, or simply indicate that you will not be using materials for a particular course.

Access the portal from this <u>link</u> that uses single-sign on with your SMU ID and password:

- Discover affordable alternatives to traditional course materials like Open Educational Resources (OER)
- Meet the deadline of April 2nd for submitting course materials for May, Summer, and Fall 2021 terms.

Important reminder: SMU is required to communicate all book and course materials adoptions to our bookstore partner to ensure SMU's compliance with Senate Bill (SB) 810 – the law relating to how the university provides information on course material (e.g., textbooks, packets, open educational resources) to our students. <u>Many of our students are on financial aid packages that rely on our partnership with the SMU Bookstore</u>, which is <u>committed to supporting our students in obtaining the most affordable options, including many Open Educational Resources and other low-cost solutions.</u>

Reminders from previous Friday updates:

 Guidance for staff who are able to schedule vaccine shots during working hours – SMU encourages you to schedule a time to get your COVID vaccination as soon as you are eligible and can find one. While you are not required to take vacation/sick leave to get your vaccine duringcrr. T4.02 397.9r. T4000092 r 11.048 to AMCID 29>BDC q0.00/F2 s 170000912 0

consultation with Jessica Dixon Weaver, Associate Professor of Law in the Dedman School of Law and task force chair, w composition. Look for more information in April.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth G. Loboa Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Southern Methodist University