



2022-2023

# UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION & ACADEMIC SUCCESS



# Letter of Introduction

Dear SMU Community,

As we approach the end of another academic year, I want to take a moment to reflect on our establishment, accomplishments, and growth as the newly-formed Undergraduate Education and Academic Success (UEAS) team within the Office of the Provost's Division of Student Academic Engagement and Success. When we started this journey together in July 2022, we were like the new kids on the block, unsure of what lay ahead and what challenges we would face.

But just like those new kids who work hard to prove themselves, our new team worked tirelessly to establish ourselves as a top-performing team serving the SMU community. We have taken on new challenges, learned new skills, and pushed ourselves to be the best we can be. While most of the UEAS composite offices and initiatives were not new to SMU but were newly unified, like the Office of General Education, SMU in Four, or the First-Generation Initiative, we also established the new University Testing Center this year. We proposed new programs like the Mustang Scholars Program four-year curriculum, completed NASPA's Scholars First Network on behalf of SMU, and adoption of a first-generation institutional definition. We also added four positions to serve our campus community.

And I am proud to say that our hard work has paid off. This year, we have achieved so much together. We refreshed policies, petitions, and our web presence to be more transparent in our work with our campus constituents. We authored internal operation documents, gathered student input to guide our work, expanded student outreach programming, and much more.

Even as new kids, we have demonstrated that we can tackle any challenge and deliver exceptional results. But we are not done yet. We have set high standards for ourselves and will continue to work hard to exceed them. As we move forward, let's remember that we are still the new kids on the block in some ways - there is always more to learn, new challenges to face, and new heights to reach.

As we look to the next academic year, we are excited to welcome the Office of Student Success and Retention to our area. We will continue to explore more automation, make data-informed changes to our practices, and demonstrate our student-centered disposition in our work together.

So we will stay focused, find our synergy together, and continue to prove our contributions to student success on the Hilltop. I am excited to see what we will accomplish next year as we enter our sophomore year on campus.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Dustin Grabsch".

**Dustin Grabsch, Ph.D.**

Assistant Provost for Undergraduate  
Education and Academic Success

**\$ 5,518.85**

**scholarship**  
First Generation Initiative

**1308**

**cc petitions**  
Office of General Education

**2902**

**scantron usage**  
University of Testing Center

**152**

**number of contacts**  
Mustang Scholars

Undergraduate Education and Academic Success is a branch within the Office of the Provost's Division of Student Academic Engagement and Success which oversees a wide range of academic support and engagement offices and initiatives.

Our 2022 – 2023 offices and initiatives included:

- First-Generation Initiatives
- University Testing Center
- Office of General Education
- Mustang Scholars Program
- SMU in Four

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# First - Generation Initiative

The First-Generation Initiative (FGI) is a hub for SMU students who are the first in their family to go to college. We offer signature programs, events, resources, and individual support to first-generation students. Through an extensive campus network, FGI provides Holistic Support to address potential academic, cultural, or financial barriers arising during the college experience.

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Totals
<b>First-Generation Initiative</b>											
Blogs/Listserv/Instagram Posts	4	8	5	3	0	5	12	13	9	3	62
Student Outreach	37	38	37	11	12	33	62	64	110	10	414
Events	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	7
Number of Contacts	37	38	37	248	12	33	42	84	53	16	600
Scholarship/Award	\$500	\$3,500	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,518.85	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,518.85
FGA Collaboration Events	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	5
FGA Collaboration Number of Contacts	32	19	9	14	3	14	9	15	21	6	142

## August

- Welcome (Back) Reception was a success with 92 attendees and great feedback from faculty/staff and students. Awarded five students \$100 gift cards to Barnes and Noble.
- Established the Book and Tech Fund (number details to follow) to support first-generation students in purchasing costly academic supplies. The SMU Student Senate reached out to FGI to use our Book and Tech Fund in their research process for creating their own.
- Updated the initiative website layout and information;** added features like an integrated events calendar and blog.

## September

- Funded \$150 to the Human Rights Program to support the Afro-Latin Fest; HRP advertised FGI on t-shirts in return.
- FGA Fall Kickoff: Supported FGA in their annual Event to supply first-gen students with school supplies.
- Assisted SMU Continuing and Professional Education (CAPE) in facilitating the **AT&T Data Science Scholars Lunch and Learn.**

## October

- Finalized and routed a proposal to establish a First-Generation institutional definition to aid reporting and identification of first-gen students.
- Distributed a newsletter on First-Generation Association's behalf to the newly created first-generation student listservs.
- Hosted a Meet the Director event on October 19, 2022, to facilitate connections between students and new initiative leadership.

## November

- **First-Gen Fest** on November 8, 2022, featured 22 resources/organizations and had approximately 221 attendees associated with SMU and 330 overall on Dallas Hall Lawn.
- FGI hosted a visit for 100 high school students taking classes at DCCCD; Students took a tour, had an informational session about applications and financial aid, spoke to current SMU students about their experiences, and attended First-Gen Fest.
- NASPA Featured SMU's First-Gen Fest on their website: <https://firstgen.naspa.org/events/southern-methodist-university-s-first-generation-college-celebration>

## December

- FGI website was updated with current resources, such as The Career Closet and The Shop.
- **First-Gen Proud Allies** have grown to 62 supporting faculty and staff this semester

## January

- Partnered with Hegi to help educate them about first-generation students and market their internship program to first-generation students.
- Awarded approximately \$1,518.85 to 8 students for the Book & Tech Fund in Spring 2023.

## February

- Launched a new signature event series called First-Gen Feature. Our first guest speaker was Miss Texas 22' and Alumna Averie Bishop 19' 21'.
- Our [\*\*First-Gen Proud Allies have grown to 73 supporting faculty and staff\*\*](#) after a new call in the Provost's weekly Friday update.
- FGI often supports students with projects to raise awareness and support student success. This month, FGI supported three journalism students with academic projects about first-generation college students.

## March

- Hosted our first First-Gen Proud Allies Faculty & Staff Mixer to celebrate our support network and discuss upcoming opportunities with 20 faculty and staff members.
- FGI conducted Midterm Progress Report outreach to XX first-generation students with two or more grade deficiencies to connect with campus resources.

## April

- Successfully hosted our second annual First-Gen Graduation Celebration with 78 attendees.
- Collected feedback from a few graduating seniors regarding their SMU experience to make improvements to our program.
- Applied to the First Scholars Network in an attempt to further expand the First-Generation Initiative.

## May

- Created detailed templates for event planning and organization to ease the process in the future.
- Created and organized 11 pages in Wiki.smu detailing department operations for continuity and congruence purposes.
- Explored external programs to organize our books for the Book & Tech Fund; Created an account with an online library to support the continuation of the program.



# Office of General Education

The Office of General Education (OGE or GenEd) provides campus-wide leadership in undergraduate education and administers the general education policy enacted by the Council of General Education. SMU's educational philosophy is that intellectual and professional excellence rises from the solid foundation of a liberal arts education. General education provides an intellectual foundation consisting of the broad outlines of human knowledge, a context for discipline-specific study, and a framework for lifelong learning.

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Totals
Office of General Education											
Blogs/Listserv Posts	3	7	2	6	0	8	9	9	5	2	51
GEC Petitions	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
UC Petitions	57	45	24	31	62	57	15	16	20	65	392
CC Petitions	228	163	112	166	137	184	127	191	234	319	1861
Advising Meetings	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outreach Advising Events	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	2	0	17
Number of Contacts	7	4	7	4	7	36	24	40	17	10	156

## September

- Kicked off Council on General Education meetings for Fall (9/9, 9/30, 10/21, 11/11, 12/2) semester under the new chair Peter Kupfer's leadership.
- Performed bulk [Degree Progress Report updates for 991 students for Quantitative Applications](#) based on successful completion of ECO 1311
- Merged CC and UC phone numbers to create one phone number for General Education (8-6168)

## October

- Hired and trained [two new undergraduate degree counselors](#) Brittaney Wilson (Meadows School of the Arts) and Dallas Forbes (Lyle School of Engineering).
- Established Office of General Education website (smu.edu/gened) to house Council on General Education business, course proposal forms, and advisor resources.

## November

- Facilitated meetings with SMU Abroad and SMU Intersession offices to establish inter-office agreements to clarify working relationships.
- [Degree Planner was launched for undergraduate Common Curriculum](#) students to use to plan either their first two years (pre-majors) or their 4-year plan (declared majors) in my.SMU.
- [General Education notified Common Curriculum students about the Writing in the Major requirement](#) not being tracked on their Degree Progress Report but within the academic program assessment progress.

## January

- Kicked off Council on General Education meetings for Spring (1/27, 2/17, 3/10, 3/31, 4/21) semester.
- The Office of General Education had an audit of University Curriculum (UC)-tagged courses offered or scheduled for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 terms, respectively. We collaborated to add missing tags for students to receive the intended credit.

## February

- General Education and the Registrar's Office [completed AP credit auto-populate on Degree Progress Reports](#) for students entering Fall 2022 and later.
- Raffle winners were announced for students who had completed their Degree Planner on [January 27](#) and [February 10](#).
- Enacting the vote for the Council on General Education, [the Office of General Education waived Community Engagement and Civics and Individual Ethics graduation requirements](#) for COVID-19 undergraduate student cohorts between Fall 2020 and Spring 2022.

## March

- Due to the [HighPoint Degree Planner adoption campaign](#), 1,201 students completed their Degree Planner for all remaining terms to graduation, while 1,484 students completed their Degree Planner for the Fall 2023 semester.
- Thanks to the Department of World Languages & Literature and the Department of English, [the Office of General Education was able to hold seats in Literary Analysis and Interpretation \(LAI\)-tagged courses](#) to encourage 317 students to complete the requirement in fall 2023.

## April

- Brittaney Wilson transitioned to a [new full-time role in the Office of General Education](#).
- Peer Academic Leader program - a diverse group of undergraduate students with the common goal to help students better understand the general education requirements, utilize academic resources, and navigate academic challenges - transitioned to the Office of General Education.
- Twelve Peer Academic Leaders were selected for the 2023 – 2024 academic year.

## May

- Last audit was completed for COVID-19 undergraduate student cohorts between Fall 2020 and Spring 2022. The Office of General Education waived Community Engagement and Civics and Individual Ethics graduation requirements for 46 students.
- General Education office submitted updates for the General Education and Admission sections for the 2023-2024 SMU Catalog. A new Common Curriculum External Credit Policies Table was also created for the Peruna Passport.

# University Testing Center

The University Testing Center (UTC) offers a range of services and support to assist with educational, career, and personal goals. Our services are available to all SMU students, including those with accommodations, student-athletes, and non-athletes. We provide testing for academic credit, makeup exams, and professional certification. We strive to engage the local community and SMU students through credit-by-exam (CLEP) and other academic tests. Our policies adhere to the National College Testing Association (NCTA) standards to ensure exam integrity, accessibility, and professionalism for both examiners and examinees.

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	Totals
University Testing Center											
Blogs/Listserv Posts	5	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	18
Number of Tests	0	128	124	128	151	0	122	148	104	128	1034
Student-Athlete Testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Testing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Accommodated Testing	0	128	124	128	151	0	122	148	104	128	1034
Scantron Usage	0	224	159	202	698	0	237	371	315	696	2902
Testing Irregularities	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	9
"Test Needed" Requests to Faculty	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	21	26	22	105
Test Clarification Requests to Faculty	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	19	10	50	100

## August

- The University Testing Center [opened on August 22 in the Clements Hall Basement, G15.](#)
- [Testing Coordinator Lauren Horton was trained and hired](#) to open the new University Testing Center.
- Hosted the first-annual University Testing Center Open House during the First Five, programming to expose new students to campus resources.
- [Three Testing Assistants were hired and trained](#) to aid with academic testing demand.

## October

- University Testing Center [receives National College Testing Association Certification's Certified Testing Center recognition.](#)

## November

- In partnership with the Office of Information Technology, security camera installation was completed in the entry locker area of the testing center.

## December

- In partnership with the Academic Development of Student-Athletes (ADSA), student-athlete testing was offered Sunday, December 11, from 11 – 6pm to support competition travel.
- [New Testing Assistants hired](#) for the Spring 2023 semester.
- Developed an SMU Giving Day request for University Testing Center to bring nature inside the testing labs.

## January

- The University Testing Center hosted its second Open House on Wednesday, January 25, for the SMU community with refreshments and facility tours from 2:00–4:00 pm.
- Hosted a photo shoot on Tuesday, January 24, featuring SMU students as part of a 2023 marketing initiative for the center. Photos will be used for updating the UTC website and other materials throughout the spring semester.

## February

- Began plans for a scheduling software transition from Simplicity Accommodate to Register-Blast targeted for June 1. The new software will facilitate testing services for SMU athletes and non-SMU community members beyond the DASS students it currently serves.
- Planned for a new full-time Testing Coordinator to onboard by April 15. The new coordinator will replace Lauren Horton who will graduate in May with an MS in Cybersecurity.
- The new plaque commemorating the University Testing Center as a Certified Testing Center



## March

- Participated in [SMU Giving Day](#) to solicit \$4,000 in funding for a beautification project.
- Began monthly tracking of “tests needed” and “requests for clarification” inquiries to instructors for testing appointments to preform a needs assessment for practice adaptations.

## April

- We began reviewing the accuracy of test requests for the Spring 2023 final examination period (test length, date, etc.).

## May

- Proctored 128 final exams, 23 less than finals in December 2022 (151)
- Process 696 Scantron forms for faculty
- 2022-2023 testing activity: 1034 tests proctored, 2902 Scantron forms processed and scores reported to faculty, 200+ email inquiries to faculty (February through May) for tests needed and test proctoring clarifications due to incomplete instructions (not including email threads/responses and phone calls)

UTC will relocate to the Loyd Center during the renovation of the Scholars’ Den set to begin in late May. Our anticipated return to the Clements Hall is mid Fall.

# Mustang Scholars

The Mustang Scholars Program makes an SMU education accessible by combining it with other awards to ensure that SMU tuition and fees are fully covered. Our Mustang Scholars attract highly achieving Dallas County area students. Upon acceptance, students will participate in a close-knit, all-encompassing community experience throughout their four years at SMU that provides a sense of belonging, civic engagement opportunities, and support for scholarly academic excellence.

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Totals
Mustang Scholars					
Blogs/Listserv Posts	1	0	0		1
One-on-Ones	2	31	9	32	74
Events	2	4	3	2	11
Number of Contacts	41	53	18	40	152

## August

- Hosted a Welcome Event where tech packages (e.g., laptop, iPad, stylus) were distributed to the Class of 2026 Mustang Scholars cohort.
- Hosted the First Monthly meeting and scheduled regular academic success coaching meetings with students.

## September

- Hosted the first annual Fall Retreat entitled The Corral, where new and returning Mustang Scholars were invited. Leadership, identity development, and academic development
- Hosted the first annual Family Weekend Dinner, where first-year scholars invited their families for dinner at Meso Maya.
- Planned and offered a resume-building session with students to explore internships and

## October

- Established the Mustang Mentors program, where upper-class Mustang Scholars are paired with first-year students in the program.
- Co-hosted a Meet the Director event between the First-Generation Initiative and the Mustang Scholars Program.
- Submitted a Mustang Scholars Four-Year Curriculum proposal to define the experience for future scholars.

## November

- A joint mentor and mentee social were offered, and planning an end-of-fall semester event commenced.
- Successfully transitioned the [Mustang Scholars Program](#) to the Honors and Scholars area of the Division of Student Academic Engagement and Success.







