

Narrative Bio: Renee McDonald, Ph.D.

Current position: Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Psychology
Dedman College of Humanities and Sciences, Southern Methodist University (SMU)
SMU faculty member since 2003; Associate Dean since 2011

Education: M.A., Ph.D., University of Houston, Psychology (Clinical)

Key leadership roles and responsibilities. I have had strategic or principal responsibilities to advance the college in the following areas: Faculty: Aid departments in becoming more strategic in faculty hiring, developing and implementing faculty mentoring policies, and developing systematic guidelines for evaluating candidates for tenure and promotion. Curriculum: Facilitate and support faculty in revising and developing new programs to increase majors and enrollments, optimizing curricular offerings, and developing online courses. Experiential learning and student success: Partner with the career center and departments to increase internship and other experiential opportunities for students. Enhance student career readiness, identify and engage with students at risk for academic difficulties, and reduce attrition. Research and graduate education: Administer the Dean's Research Council grant program, a donor-funded program I developed to support faculty research. Work with departments to strengthen doctoral student recruitment and reduce attrition and time-to-degree. Administer the Dean's Graduate Fellowship program, which I developed to help programs recruit the strongest applicants. Develop new professional master's programs. Community engagement: Oversee the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship program, which provides fellowships for graduate students from 8 North Texas universities to develop and evaluate service projects in partnership with community agencies. Other: Strengthen undergraduate recruitment, increase alumni engagement, and foster meaningful donor relations.

Selected accomplishments. (1) Strengthened academic programs: Program revisions more than doubled the number of majors in two humanities programs. A major expansion of an interdisciplinary pre-health program is under way. (2) New academic programs: Minors in neuroscience, cognitive science, and international film studies were developed. An interdisciplinary social science major that meets regional labor needs, a novel American Cultures major with a global component, and an interdisciplinary minor in non-profit studies are in development. (3) Graduate education: Contributed to the creation of university graduate fellowships and the prioritization of doctoral student support in the university and college strategic plans by conducting a comprehensive analysis of doctoral programs. Added two master's programs; another is in development. (4) Research: Established and maintained strong donor support for the Dean's Research Council (DRC) grant program. DRC awardees have garnered over \$11 in federal funds (including NIH, NSF, and NEH) for every DRC dollar awarded. The DRC has received its first endowed gift, and in addition to their DRC support, 3 DRC donors now also provide annual research support to individual departments. (5) Online courses: Oversaw creation of online courses in 5 departments. Revenue for one set of courses is anticipated to exceed \$1m/year via summer offerings. The college's standards and procedures for online course development are now adopted by units outside the college. (6) Career readiness: Worked with the career center to design a modular online course that increases the scale of career center services, its reach in the college, and student access. Developed *Dedman Edge*, a program to enhance students' technological skills. (7) Community engagement: Developed and maintained support for the Schweitzer Fellowship program. Funded by donors and foundations, the program provides services in over a dozen local community organizations each year. (8) Interdisciplinarity: Advocated for and worked with others to develop a policy for provost-approved "affiliate faculty" courtesy appointments in programs outside the primary department. (9) Student success: Developed a system for early identification of students at risk for academic struggles. Re-designed procedures that improved placement of international students in first-year writing courses. Currently serving as chair of provost's task force to identify best practices to enhance international students' college experience. Helped doctoral programs develop systematic annual student review procedures.

Research: My research has focused on understanding outcomes of youth violence exposure and developing effective interventions to help youth exposed to violence. This work has been conducted with community partners, including criminal justice, child welfare, and domestic violence agencies in the U.S. and Sweden. This research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and several foundations.