

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to announce that Simon J. Sheather has accepted my offer to become the next dean of the Gatton College of Business and Economics.

Subject to approval by the Board of Trustees, Simon plans to begin his work with us July 1.

Simon currently is professor and interim director of Texas A&M University's Institute of Data Science, as well as academic director of MS (Analytics) and Online Programs in the Department of Statistics. [The news release](#), which is being distributed more widely tomorrow, provides more detail about his outstanding career.

As many of you know who interacted with Simon during his visits to campus, he is an accomplished scholar, teacher and academic leader. He has won numerous awards during a long career as a teacher and scholar. And during his nearly 15 years at Texas A&M, he has created new programs and continued important work with industry and government developing practical predictive models using "big data."

I want to thank Interim Dean Skinner for his outstanding leadership during the past several months as well as the search committee, whose collective efforts have yielded such a positive result.

Simon is currently traveling abroad, but I know he is excited about joining such an outstanding academic home as the one at Gatton. I know you join me in welcoming him to our community and, like me, look forward to the incredible opportunities ahead for both Gatton and the University of Kentucky.

Thank you for all you do for Gatton and UK.

Regards,

David W. Blackwell  
Provost