

Division of Academic Affairs Extended Plan through 2012

Academic Goals

Goal 1: Promote academic quality by building a distinguished faculty, managing undergraduate growth, and developing the University's culture of research.

Intended Outcomes:

- **By expanding the full-time faculty, the University will lower the average class size, improve classroom performance, and provide a more conducive environment for research.**

Fall 2004, 753; Fall 2005, 800; Fall 2006, 842; Fall 2007, 931; Fall 2008, 1,005
These figures include department chairs/school directors.

- **The University will pay competitive salaries in order to recruit the best possible faculty.**

Average salaries increased at all ranks from FY 2007 to FY 2009: Professor \$82,539 to \$87,429 - 5.9%; Associate Professor \$66,224 to \$69,874 - 5.5%; Assistant Professor \$55,816 to \$58,981 - 5.7%; Lecturer \$53,182 to \$56,008 - 5.3%. These salaries were competitive and allowed Texas State to frequently hire first choice candidates, using CUPA median salary points by discipline and rank as salary starting points in negotiations.

- **The University will attract and retain highly competent faculty by providing annual merit increases based on performance.**

For FY 2008 and FY 2009, 3% merit pools were established to attract and retain highly competent faculty based on their performances. These merit increases were significant in increasing average salaries at all ranks, as noted in the section above.

- **The University will provide reasonable start-up costs in order to attract highly competent faculty and to provide the essential equipment to conduct research and attract external grants.**

For FY 2008 and FY 2009, \$2,925,772 in start-up funding was distributed to nearly 50 faculty members. An additional \$1,800,000 in start-up funding is conditionally committed to new faculty members for FY 2010. An additional \$4,000,000 has been allocated for start-up costs associated with the Materials Science and Engineering Program faculty.

- **The University will assure that space dedicated to research is producing publishable research and/or grants, and the University will seek to expand research space.**

Texas State has provided space in the basement of the Mitte Building to accommodate the acquisition of \$4,500,000 of molecular beam epitaxy (MBE) equipment donated by Freescale Semiconductor. The donation of equipment and availability of space have led to a \$4,000,000 grant from the Texas Emerging Technology Fund.

The research conducted in the MBE facility will support the growing Materials Science and Engineering Program. In addition, the fifth floor of the Mitte building has been finished to accommodate the Ingram School of Engineering.

An analysis of research space utilization was conducted for FY05, FY06 and FY07 within the College of Science. The analysis consisted of correlating proposal activity, peer-reviewed publications and research expenditures to the research space allocated to all faculty within the various departments in the College of Science. It is generally accepted that one measure of a University's productivity is determined by the grant expenditures and publications of its faculty and centers/institutes. The analysis was a seminal attempt by Texas State to quantify those parameters in the context of space utilization within the College of Science.

Due to the growing demands for research space and the recent establishment of the Center for Research Commercialization (CRC), Texas State is currently conducting a search for off-campus space to house the CRC and other research related entities that can function in an off-campus environment.

- **The University will require excellent teaching (40%), good research (40%), and sound service (20%), for promotion to Associate Professor.**

PPS 8.10, Tenure and Promotion Review, was recently updated to clarify expectations:

“Tenure and promotion are granted based on clearly documented evidence of high quality teaching, sustained peer-reviewed scholarly/creative activity and service. In addition, for those disciplines where applicable, external and internal funding activities, patents and/or commercialization of research will be considered.”

In addition, the Provost and Associate Provost have spoken to department personnel committees and new faculty concerning current expectations at Texas State. Departments have been encouraged to enhance or develop faculty mentoring and professional development programs. New tenure-track faculty participate in a year-long orientation program designed to acculturate them to Texas State and provide assistance geared to helping them organize and plan their professional activities during their probationary periods.

Most new tenure-track faculty are provided reduced teaching workloads during at least the first year, in order to help them successfully establish their teaching and research agendas.

- **The University will assure the maintenance of essential instructional and research equipment.**

Additional M&O funds were allocated to academic departments in FY 2008 and FY 2009, in part to cover costs associated with maintaining essential instructional and research equipment. The Office of the Provost also directly supports departments by providing limited funding as necessary.

Texas State has employed a variety of methods for supporting service contracts on essential instructional and research equipment. Three years ago a percentage of the total service contract need was paid towards equipment that was supported by grant money. Based on that historical record, additional money was placed in the maintenance and operating budgets of the departments where the equipment resided. In addition to that activity for maintaining existing equipment, the Office of the Associate Vice President for Research and Federal Relations has instigated an equipment matching plan whereby 3 or 5-year service contracts are paid for by the University at the time of purchase of new equipment. Finally as Texas State develops service centers, equipment maintenance costs will be factored into the fee structures.

- **The University will expand competitive internal grants to encourage research, scholarship, and external grants.**

The University administers the Research Enhancement Program each year to support research and scholarship in all disciplines. In many disciplines, there are legitimate opportunities to leverage the internal grant into external funding while for others the REP is a primary source of funding. In FY06, the total available funds were increased from \$290,000 to \$350,000. In FY07-09 additional funds were added from captured residual (unexpended) balances bringing the total available funds to approximately \$370,000. Over the past four years the total number of proposal submitted has increased from 88 to 128.

The University created a new presidential research leave program and awarded a total of \$100,000 to support five faculty for full year leaves in FY 2009.

- **The University will manage rapid enrollment growth in undergraduate programs by providing additional faculty to such programs and/or by allowing very popular programs to initiate higher entrance requirements.**

Coupled with allocating faculty positions based on strategic planning initiatives, which sometimes includes new positions for new programs approved due to enrollment demands in specific disciplines, the Provost Office reviews enrollment growth in each department before allocating additional new faculty positions. Since FY 2006, approximately 80 new full-time faculty positions have been allocated to departments experiencing rapid undergraduate enrollment growth.

- **The University will support and expand successful faculty development initiatives.**

In FY 2008, \$1,240,316 in start-up funding was distributed to 30 faculty members and \$1,555,456 in funding for 23 faculty members was committed for FY 2009. An additional \$1,800,000 in start-up funding was conditionally committed to new faculty members for FY 2010. An additional \$4,000,000 was allocated for start-up costs associated with the Materials Science and Engineering Program faculty.

The Provost and Associate Provost spoke to department personnel committees and new faculty concerning expectations at Texas State. Departments were encouraged to enhance or develop faculty mentoring and professional development programs in addition to the year-long Academic Development and Assessment orientation program.

Most new tenure-track faculty were provided reduced teaching workloads during at least the first year, in order to help them successfully establish their teaching and research agendas.

The Departments of Academic Development and Assessment and Professional Development sponsored a variety of faculty development initiatives in 2007-2008 including:

Development for *New Faculty*. Professional Development organized the half-day orientation for all new faculty, coordinating presentations from all divisions and providing a continental breakfast. Academic Development and Assessment organized orientation activities for new faculty and hosted the New Tenure-Track Faculty Orientation and luncheon. New tenure-track faculty continued their faculty development through their first year at Texas State in the Program for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. The program consisted of eight monthly half-day sessions with additional material conveyed through a TRACS site. Both the Program for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the corresponding TRACS site were organized by Academic Development and Assessment. Upon their completion of the program, participants were awarded \$800 in travel funds to further develop their instructional endeavors.

Development for *All Faculty*. Academic Development and Assessment sponsored a variety of faculty development opportunities each long semester. Programs promoted teaching excellence, research skills development, and mentoring relationships. Fulbright opportunities were also promoted and spotlighted through the Fulbright representative, Fulbright faculty development programs, Recognition of International Education Celebration, and a Fulbright website. Professional Development coordinated nineteen workshops on research and external funding topics during FY 08, three of which were new offerings. In addition, workshops were held on legislative updates, the use of pivot tables, and SACS-related updates.

Development for *New Chairs*. A New Chairs Orientation was coordinated by Academic Development and Assessment and the Associate Provost to address common issues faced by new chairs.

- **Throughout the planning period, the University will improve the infrastructure that supports our faculty, staff, and students in a variety of areas including facilities, information technology, development, and research administration and support.**

Item will be addressed in the appropriate division’s progress reports.

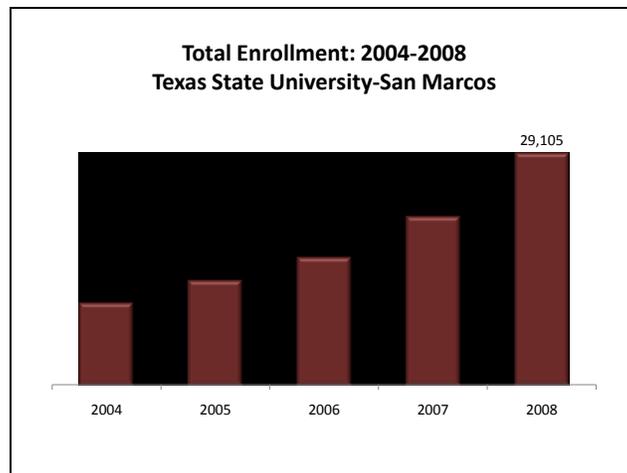
Goal 2: Expand access to public university education in the surrounding area and in extended settings and contribute to the economic development of Texas.

Intended Outcomes:

- **The University will respond to the “Closing the Gaps” initiative by continuing to increase enrollment.**

2004: 26,783
 2005: 27,129
 2006: 27,485
 2007: 28,121
 2008: 29,105

Texas State has experienced steady growth over the past five years. Total enrollment has grown from 26,783 in 2004 to 29,105 in 2008—an increase of 8.7%.



- **The University will grow the Round Rock Higher Education Center with the addition of a second building, more programs, and more students.**

We currently offer nine undergraduate programs and eleven graduate programs at RRHEC. Enrollment growth has been steady, with 1,523 students enrolled in fall 2008. A new Bachelor of Science in Nursing program will begin fall 2010 and will be housed in a new, state-of-the-art building designed for the nursing program. Texas State plans to offer a variety of health related degrees at RRHEC, provided that funding for new buildings is

available. Austin Community College is building a new campus adjacent to RRHEC that is eventually expected to enroll more than 10,000 students. Based on demand, Texas State will coordinate with ACC on the addition of new undergraduate programs at RRHEC. We will also offer health related programs that complement those provided by ACC and the new Texas A&M Health Science Center, also located nearby.

- **The University will seek to provide instruction, particularly at the graduate level, at the Northeast Lakeview College being developed in northern San Antonio.**

Texas State maintains good relations with Northeast Lakeview College (NLC), located at Kitty Hawk Road and Loop 1604 in San Antonio, and we are continuing to explore opportunities there. Northeast Lakeview College officially opened its campus in August 2008 with four new buildings. Once all nine buildings are completed, the campus will have over 365,000 square feet of academic and learning space, which may be utilized by Texas State to deliver graduate level programs.

- **The University will offer web-based programs and other distance education programs, particularly at the graduate level, where there is an identifiable market or need for a program that is within the University's capacity to deliver.**

Texas State offers fourteen distance education programs, with an emphasis on creating quality programs that fill a clear societal and/or employment need. Online programs allow for increased access and open the doors for education to a diverse student population that may not be able to complete all coursework in a traditional setting. Examples of such programs include the Master of Social Work (MSW), Master of Arts in Technical Communication, Master of Arts and Master of Education in Secondary Education, Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences, and Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management (HIM). In particular, the online MSW has experienced tremendous demand. Only two programs can be earned entirely online (MSW and HIM). Most programs utilize a hybrid approach at the course and program level, where there is personal interaction/face-to-face coursework in combination with electronic communication/online courses.

- **The University will develop new academic programs that are particularly needed for the economic development of Texas.**

All new academic programs must proceed through a rigorous internal process, including an analysis of job market need, student demand, and enrollment projections. Most of this data is derived from economic forecasts and industry growth in Texas and the nation. Proposals must also demonstrate the ability to attract students on a long-term basis, produce graduates who would have opportunities for employment, and not unnecessarily duplicate existing programs at other institutions. For example, the university has invested in and received external financial support for degree programs in engineering and the sciences that produce both graduates/future employees and applied research that spurs economic and business development.

- **The University will develop market initiatives that inform Texans and those outside or state of the opportunities at Texas State.**

Texas State has a well-developed marketing program designed to build public awareness of and appreciation for the University. Over the past two years, a variety of marketing initiatives have been employed to enhance the University's academic reputation including:

- Developing a new logo and tagline;
 - Standardizing the official University colors;
 - Redesigning all business communication materials;
 - Developing graphic identity guidelines;
 - Replacing all campus signage and placing banners in prominent locations (San Marcos and RRHEC);
 - Redesigning the website and bringing a uniform look and feel to all departmental sites;
 - Developing a uniform publication design and engaging departments to adopt the look and feel;
 - Offering campus training programs to help departments meet their design needs;
 - Purchasing advertising in Texas Monthly and Hispanic Magazine;
 - Producing thirty-second television advertisements for use during NCAA football and basketball telecasts;
 - Purchasing radio advertising in the Houston metro area;
 - Deploying billboards in San Marcos, Austin and San Antonio;
 - Placing advertising in the Austin Bergstrom International Airport;
 - Developing graphic designs for the Texas State bus fleet that include full-wraps for some that serve as "rolling billboards";
 - Providing marketing materials to middle schools and high schools that are promoting the "Closing the Gaps" initiative;
 - Purchasing advertising for RRHEC in local newspapers;
 - Leading the effort to design and write the University's case statement for the capital campaign; and
 - Developing merchandise to build public pride in the University—limited edition prints and holiday ornaments.
- **The University will improve its Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid and Scholarships in order to attract more students and higher achieving students to Texas State.**

Over the past two years, we have increased our merit scholarship program in order to compete for top students in Texas. Our Assured Scholarship program provides awards ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000 per year for outstanding students based upon their high school rank and standardized test scores. We also offer scholarships valued at \$10,000 per year for National Merit Finalists and \$2,000 per year scholarships for National

Hispanic Scholars. The total annual cost of these awards is in excess of \$400,000 and will grow to approximately \$1.4 million in four years.

To aid recruitment, we have added a total of two regional admissions counselors in Dallas-Ft. Worth and a third counselor in Houston. The investment for these three new positions and the associated operational costs totals over \$125,000 per year.

- **The University will continue to form collaborative research agreements with private and public sector partners that contribute to workforce and economic development.**

Texas State recently established the Center for Research Commercialization to assist faculty in their efforts to work with industry and other public sector partners as well as to assist faculty with commercializing intellectual property (IP) they have created. In addition, the Nanomaterials Application Center and the Institute for Environmental and Industrial Science continue to provide collaborative opportunities for faculty to work with industrial partners.

The Office of Technology Commercialization provides assistance to faculty with nondisclosure agreements, evaluation of IP, and filing of patent applications.

The Office of Proposal development assists faculty in forming mutually beneficial partnerships with off-campus entities. The goal of the partnerships is to develop proposals which will lead to substantial funding opportunities.

Goal 3: Provide a premier undergraduate experience built on programs in a student-centered learning environment with clearly defined student learning outcomes and a rigorous level of academic challenge.

Intended Outcomes:

- **The University will require that each program collects data on its students' performance on the program's learning outcomes and use such information to improve the program.**

In 2007-2008 during the second year of formal outcomes assessment, all academic programs provided a program mission statement, a minimum of five of learning outcomes, two methods for assessing each outcome, corresponding results, an action plan for each outcome, and evidence of improvement.

The 2007-2008 school year was the first year that General Education outcomes assessment was tracked through on-line system. Each General Education component provided a mission statement, a minimum of two of learning outcomes, two methods for assessing each outcome, corresponding results, and an action plan for improvement for each outcome. Programs were at various stages levels of development in the assessment process but all provided necessary information.

The Dean of University College, the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness, and the Director of Academic Development and Assessment provided

assistance through visits with academic departments, instructions, reminders, workshops, consultations, and oversight of the reporting website.

- **The University will require all programs to measure student retention and graduation data.**

As outlined in the Academic Affairs PPS 2.13, all academic programs participate in the academic program review process every five years. Programs participate according to the Academic Program Review calendar. As part of the self-review process, departments interpret and respond to program data provided by the Office of Institutional Research. Information related to retention and graduation includes the following:

- A. Admission scores, retention rates, and annual graduation rates
- B. Number of undergraduate students on probation and suspension
- C. Number of students who changed majors to majors to outside the department
- D. Number of majors
- E. SCH trend(s) for the program, the major(s), and the core course(s), if any
- F. Number of degrees awarded

- **The University will improve advising by increasing the number of advisors and the quality of their services.**

The number of professional academic advisors was increased to 62 from 37, improving and reducing the student to advisor ratio from approximately 650:1 to 400:1. PPS 3.01, Undergraduate Academic Advising, was recently revised to include expanded definitions of job responsibilities and process for evaluating advisors.

- **The University will support and encourage a variety of retention strategies including supplemental instruction, freshman interest groups, and improvements in the University Seminar.**

Texas State has a multi-pronged approach to retention that incorporates a variety of services and support mechanisms in both academic and student affairs. This approach has yielded an impressive freshmen-to-sophomore retention rate, exceeding 75 percent for the last five freshmen cohorts. Texas State's retention rate is among the top six for all Texas public institutions, including the University of Texas, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University and others. Supplemental instruction is widely available and is managed through the Student Learning Assistance Center as well as department and college-level programs. US1100 is required of all entering freshmen students and recently, focus groups of former students provided a number of workable suggestions for improving the course and its outcomes. Finally, the university's forthcoming Quality Enhancement Plan (part of SACS) will include recommendations for advising, professional development, and other areas that are linked to student persistence and retention.

- **The University will support and improve the Common Experience.**

The Common Experience brings students together to read and engage with a powerful text, explore related themes in University Seminar classes, write responses and reactions to the text in writing courses, participate in related symposia with scholarly panels, hear renowned and respected speakers address the topic, see films related to the Common Experience theme, explore the experience by way of the fine arts, engage in informal discussions in residence halls and coffee shops, and extend the exploration via the avenues of their own choosing.

For entering students, the Experience starts even before they enroll. The Common Experience summer reading book is distributed during New Student Orientation and students are encouraged to start reading it and to become involved by way of the Common Experience website. But Common Experience casts an even broader net, involving faculty, the San Marcos community which houses the University, and others interested in participating in a broad intellectual consideration of a different world-scope topic each year. These topics emerge from the competitive ideas of our own faculty, staff, and students which provides a dimension of ownership and increased involvement.

Each year the Common Experience focuses on an important topic designed to generate a campus-wide dialog. The 2007-2008, Common Experience theme of “Water—A River Runs Through Us” included John Graves’ memoir *Goodbye to a River*, which recalled his canoe trip down the Brazos River in the 1950s. Major events included public presentations by environmental advocate Erin Brockovich and Nobel Peace Prize winner Dr. Norman Borlaug Major, an outdoors screening of the film “The Unforeseen” at Sewell Park and the along the San Marcos River, musical performances that included an event with students from the internationally renowned Juilliard School in New York’s Lincoln Center, and art exhibits hosted by the Texas State University Art Gallery. The City of San Marcos officially co-sponsored several events.

Some of the other topics have included hate, courage, protest and dissent, and civic responsibility and the legacy of LBJ.

- **The University will construct an undergraduate building specifically dedicated to retention of undergraduate students.**

Funding in the amount of \$47.7 million is available to construct the Undergraduate Academic Building. Programming and schematic design are completed. The Design Development Documents are targeted to be approved by the Board of Regents in August 2009. Construction is estimated to begin January 2010 with completion in January 2012. The following departments are scheduled for occupancy in the building: Student Learning Assistance Center, Athletics Academic Center, Texas Success Initiative

Program, University College Advising Center, College of Liberal Arts Advising Center, Political Science and Sociology.

- **The University will develop an Honors College to better attract and engage high achieving students. Gene Bourgeois – Include the improvements/increases in students and courses.**

The University Honors Program continued to grow with the number of students in the program rising from 710 to 868 students over the 2007-2008 academic year and the number of students enrolled in honors courses increasing from 210 to 284. The program offered 32 courses during the fall and spring semesters. These were taught by 30 faculty and included 8 new honors courses. An honors independent study option began in Fall 2007 and is increasing in popularity. The second installment of the Undergraduate Research Forum in fall 2007 included a symposium on water and more than forty undergraduate presentations. Honors student and accounting major, Roxanne Moralez, was elected to the National Collegiate Honors Council Board of Directors as one of five student members.

- **The University will provide approximately \$1.4 million in new annual merit-based awards to attract high achieving students. Likewise, the University will seek private gifts to extend the number of merit-based awards in the University.**

Our new merit scholarship program has completed its second year and the results are very encouraging. The new scholarships have helped Texas State compete more effectively with peer institutions and have brought a larger number of high ability students to our campus. In 2004, 2005 and 2006 we enrolled an average of 38 freshmen with SAT scores of 1300 or higher and a class standing of top 15%. In 2007 and 2008, the first years of our Assured Scholarship program, we enrolled an average of 97 such students—a net average gain of 59 high ability students per year.

If we are to make additional progress, however, we must raise endowment funds. Not surprisingly, academic scholarships are one of the capital campaign's primary goals. If we are successful, Texas State will be able to increase the number and amount of our awards to become even more competitive

- **The University will develop a Quality Enhancement Plan and Project as required by SACS.**

A campus-wide effort was implemented to involve the university community in choosing the topic for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP co-chairs visited approximately twenty-five groups and held two open forums to explain the nature of the QEP, as well as gather suggestions for topics. Mass e-mails were sent to gather input from the university at large. A QEP website was also developed to provide general information and record history of the development of the QEP. A QEP Team was convened to narrow possible topics for the focus of the Quality Enhancement Plan. The

committee met several times and concluded with a brief synopsis for six proposed themes. The proposed themes were presented to the President's Cabinet at their summer retreat where the final topic was chosen.

Goal 4: Expand educational opportunities, emphasizing doctoral program development and applied scientific and technical programs that address critical state and regional needs.

Intended Outcomes:

- **The University will implement the doctoral programs for which it has planning authority including Math, Math Education, Criminal Justice, Computer Science, Physical Therapy, and Health Service Management.**

Texas State has implemented the following doctoral programs: Math Education and Physical Therapy. The doctoral program in Math, which was originally submitted with the Math Education program, was withdrawn from consideration in fall 2007. The PhD in Criminal Justice is in the final stages with the Coordinating Board staff, which includes a peer-review site visit in late March 2009. Based on this review, we are hopeful for a positive recommendation and approval at the July 2009 Coordinating Board meeting. At this time, the plans for doctoral programs in Computer Science and Health Service Management are pending and will require a new analysis of resources, demand, and related factors.

- **The University will explore the feasibility of offering doctoral degrees in a number of programs and will seek preliminary authority for those doctoral proposals that can: (1) establish demand for the program, (2) demonstrate capacity to offer a program with high quality, and (3) detail how the program can be cost effective.**

We submitted preliminary authority requests to the Coordinating Board in fall 2008 for doctoral programs in developmental education and materials science and engineering. Feedback on the developmental education program has been positive and we expect Coordinating Board approval for preliminary authority in April 2009. To date, no formal feedback on the materials science and engineering proposal has been received. We anticipate that full degree proposals will be submitted to the Coordinating Board by summer/fall 2009.

- **The University will review the feasibility of a number of new master's degrees and graduate certificate programs and will seek approval of those that best show demand, quality, and cost effectiveness.**

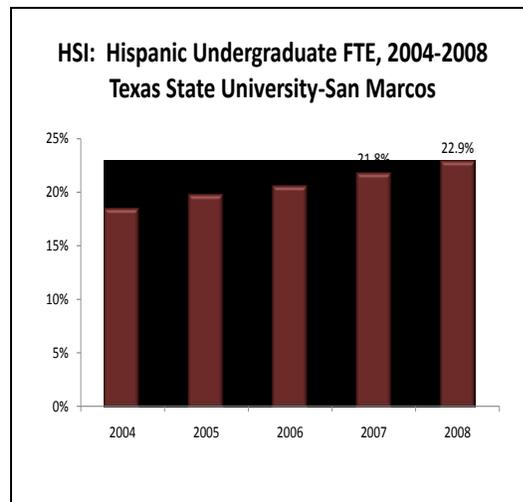
All new programs must justify need and student demand. Several new master's degrees and certificates being developed include art education, autism, behavior disorders, engineering, learning disabilities, theatre, diversity studies, and agribusiness. Additionally, a current master's program is planned to be divided into two new programs: adult education and developmental education.

Goal 5: Enrich our learning environment by attracting and supporting a more diverse faculty and student body.

Intended Outcomes:

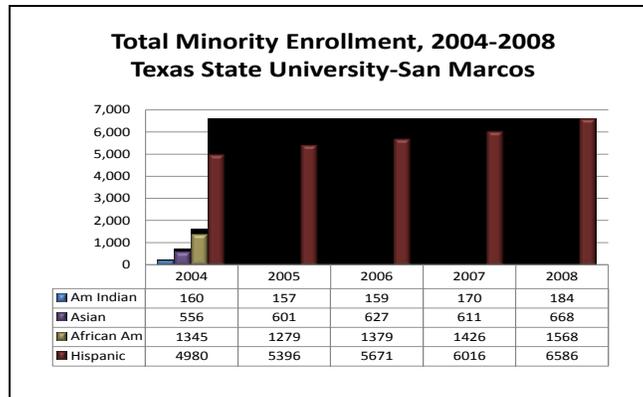
- **The University will seek to be a Hispanic Serving Institution by 2012.**

Over the past five years, we have made steady progress in our efforts to achieve Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) status. In the fall of 2008, full-time Hispanic students represented 22.9% of the undergraduate students; and if our present enrollment trend continues, we expect to achieve HSI status by fall 2011 or 2012.



- **The University will seek to increase enrollment and retention of students from all minorities.**

Between fall 2004 and fall 2008, Texas State's total enrollment experienced marked increases in each of the minority classifications. American Indian enrollment grew from 160 to 184—an increase of 15%. Asian and Pacific Islander enrollment rose from 556 to 668—an increase of 20%. African American enrollment increased from 1,345 to 1,568—an increase of 16.6%. Finally, Hispanic enrollment grew significantly from 4,980 to 6,016—an increase of 21%.



- The University will expand the number of minority faculty by encouraging minorities to apply for open positions and by continuing our Target of Opportunity Program.**

The percentage of non-White full-time faculty members (African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American, and Other) increased to 26.12% in Fall 2008 from 21.73% in Fall 2006 and 17.30% in Fall 2004. The number of African-American faculty has more than doubled since Fall 2004, to 32 persons in Fall 2008, whereas the number of Hispanic faculty has increased to 87 in Fall 2008 from 57 in Fall 2004.

The Office of the Provost funds “Target of Opportunity” positions for tenure-track faculty in order to diversify the full-time faculty (eight in Fall 2006, seven in Fall 2007 and six in Fall 2008).

Texas State has initiated a summer fellowship for minority doctoral students from other universities to come to Texas State and collaborate with our faculty on research projects. Through this experience, doctoral students become acquainted with Texas State and our faculty. Hopefully, some will wish to return to Texas State upon completion of their doctoral degrees. We brought six fellows to campus this summer as well as in 2007, after hosting three fellows in 2006.

The university provides extensive orienting and mentoring activities for new minority faculty that total in excess of thirty hours of seminars across the first year at Texas State.

- The University will encourage minority students to transfer from community colleges to Texas State through the continuing improvement of our articulation and transfer policies.**

To encourage transfer students to complete their education, a program has been instituted with Blinn College to retroactively award AA/AS degrees to former Blinn students currently attending Texas State. The program allows Texas State to report their current Texas State courses and grades back to Blinn each semester until the student completes enough course work to qualify for their AA/AS degree. The awarding of the degree by Blinn College serves as an added encouragement for the student to persist and graduate

from Texas State. Similar agreements are being developed for the Austin Community College and San Antonio College systems.

Each fall, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions sponsors a conference for community college leaders to discuss transfer issues and respond to questions or concerns from the community colleges. These programs have helped us improve communication with the community colleges and to strengthen our working relationships.

In consultation with our faculty, the Office of Curriculum Services supports a web-based course articulation system which is available to all prospective students. The system allows students to easily verify, on a course by course basis, the credits they should take at their Texas community college in order to transfer. Hundreds of other courses from selected four-year institutions also are online. This service reduces student stress and unnecessary cost by helping them take the correct courses for their intended major.

During the past year, we also invested in the success of our students by adding additional academic advisors. A total of twenty-five full-time advisors were added—an increase of 67% in the advising staff. This reduced the advisor/student ratio from 650:1 to 400:1. The smaller case load will make it possible for advisors to spend more time with students and improve student outcomes.

- **The University will support efforts to diversify the curriculum.**

We remain committed to assuring that our curriculum will reflect multicultural content and diverse perspectives. In 2005-2008, after curriculum revisions and review, 71 courses received multicultural curriculum endorsement, including general education core curriculum courses such as Communication 1310, English 1310, and English 1320. There were an additional 18 courses transformed during the May 2008 Institute that are in progress for final approval, of which two are from the general core—History 1310 and 1320. This will bring our total to 89 over the four year period. By defining standards for evaluating multicultural courses, providing Multicultural Course Transformation Institutes, and tracking our progress, we are making substantial progress toward our goal of assuring that our curriculum will reflect multicultural content and perspectives.

- **The University will support the recruitment of international students, particularly graduate students, and support study abroad opportunities.**

The Office of Study Abroad Programs, in cooperation with the Office of Financial Aid, has initiated four new affiliation agreements with the following providers: Kulkucan (Mexico), American Institute of Foreign Study (AIFS, worldwide), AustraLearn, (Australia and New Zealand), and International Studies Abroad (ISA, Latin America and Europe). The Office of Study Abroad Programs, in cooperation with the International Office, has initiated the following reciprocal exchange agreements: Universite Catholique de Louvain (Belgium) and Berufsakademie Mosbach University of Cooperative Education (Germany), where participation is open to both undergraduate and graduate students. The offices are currently working on agreements with Universite de Haute

Bretagne, Rennes 2 (France), Kookmin University (The Republic of Korea), and on updates to the University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands) agreement. In addition to assisting with reciprocal exchange agreements the International Office has been providing recruitment assistance to the Texas State Intensive English Program (TSIE), which enrolls both undergraduate and graduate students. Graduate level students in the TSIE bridge program often enter graduate degree programs at Texas State.

CONCLUSION

We conclude this Academic Plan as we began, firm in our commitment to balance a complex variety of goals that include helping the State reach its goal of *Closing the Gaps* in participation, success, excellence, and research; providing a premier undergraduate experience for students from across Texas and beyond; addressing the special needs of the surrounding Austin-San Antonio region; further expanding opportunities for graduate education; conducting research to expand the knowledge base in many academic disciplines, and serving as a major resource and an economic engine for the State.