Introduction

There are two basic approaches to environmental analysis of a university's external environment: 1) the inside-out-approach where decision makers examine a limited number of specific trends or external factors and their effect on a set of strategic initiatives already seen as important to the institution's future; and 2) the outside-in-approach where decision makers first identify major trends and factors emerging across the environment and then determine which of them may be critical to the institution's future. [The Planning Resource Guide, 1999, p. 24]

SWT's environmental analysis utilizes both of these approaches in reviewing possible external opportunities and/or threats that could impact us. This report is divided into three parts- an internal environmental scan that addresses a university perspective of important environmental factors impacting initiatives, a collection of external environmental impact factors, and a traditional external scan.

To complete the university perspective, we gathered information from academic departments and colleges about initiatives and environmental factors impacting those initiatives to obtain a clearer picture of internal and external environmental factors perceived as important to academic departments and colleges. Colleges and departments identified three initiatives along with the internal (within the university) and external factors impacting those initiatives. The first draft was distributed to academic deans and academic/administrative vice-presidents to review with others in their division for additions and deletions. A thematic analysis of information received yielded four broad categories. They include enrollment management, external funding, program development, and university infrastructure.

The external environmental impact factors list is a collection of demographic information obtained from major written reports, electronic media, and major publications. This information is categorized by local, regional, state, and national demographics. In order to complete the external scan, materials were gathered from numerous sources, including print material, electronic media, and human sources. The information is contained in four categories, following the traditional STEP research model. The four categories include social, technological, economic and political impacts.

These three methods of gathering information provide us with 1) a look at our internal environment and how it affects department and college initiatives, 2) a university perspective of what external factors most affect our university, 3) a broad state and national perspective of the environment, and 4) a wide array of trends across the nation that could provide opportunities or threats for future planning.
Part 1: University Environmental Impact

Listed below are the four broad categories that emerged from a thematic analysis of information provided by academic departments, colleges, and administrative divisions. First, the general issue being addressed and its general impact on the university are briefly summarized. Following these statements are external and internal environmental factors that colleges perceive as having an important impact on department and college initiatives.

1. ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Issue: The Texas Coordinating Board adopted "Closing the Gaps" which includes a uniform strategy "to identify, attract, enroll, and retain students that reflect the population of this state." The state expects 500,000 additional students to attend institutions of higher education by 2015.

Impact: SWT student enrollment is expected to increase approximately 18% by 2010.

External

1) The overriding external factor impacting enrollment management is the state's "Closing the Gaps" initiative which will cause SWT to remain in a "growth mode" for the foreseeable future during a time of no projected additional funding.
2) The Texas Coordinating Board supports growth; however, it is unclear what kinds of "concrete" support will be offered to universities meeting the state's growth mandate.
3) A depressed economy may affect students' chances to go to college, therefore impacting SWT's ability to meet the growth mandate.
4) Demographic growth of minority populations in Austin/San Antonio corridor will push diversity enrollments higher, assisting us in meeting the minority targets.
5) "Closing the Gaps" contains initiatives for minority recruitment that may positively impact SWT's diversity goals.
6) The projected growth at the community college level may translate to more transfer students entering SWT, therefore, increasing the demand for upper level classes and additional support services.
7) Enrollment may be impacted with the country at war.
8) Enrollment will be impacted by the implementation of UT-Austin's enrollment cap and increased competition in this region from other competitors such as Texas Tech, UTSA, A&M-Kingsville.
9) A depressed economy generally increases enrollment. Non-traditional students and people who feel they need to re-tool their skills for new jobs will seek additional education.
10) The military presence in the I-35 corridor offers new enrollment possibilities, but the support infrastructure will need to change so there are more flexible class hours and days and extended office hours for support services.
11) Collaborative offerings and reciprocity course agreements between SWT and other
colleges may help to address "Closing the Gaps" issues.
12) Lack of significant scholarships funds greatly hinders the development of a better academic profile of entering students.
13) SWT may become a Hispanic Service Institution (HSI) due to escalating numbers of Hispanic students in Texas.
14) "Closing the Gaps" success targets will require SWT to retain and graduate more Black and Hispanic students.

Internal

1) Enrollment controls in some colleges could "redirect" students to other colleges, causing larger than expected enrollments in some departments.
2) Accredited colleges have changing requirements such as enrollment caps, FTE/SCH ratios, staffing requirements, and assessment standards that lead to high costs and greater time and effort on the part of faculty and staff.
3) Growth in graduate programs will likely increase state funding.
4) Enrollment caps for majors may result in more minors in certain departments.
5) Internet courses and other alternative methods of delivering courses may assist in managing on-campus enrollment.
6) There is a lack of resources for academic support services that will accompany larger enrollments such as academic advising, student learning assistance and testing services.
7) High SCH/FTFE targets will become a barrier to the delivery of quality programs and to developing new programs and research centers.
8) Lack of effective marketing strategies for graduate programs may inhibit efforts to increase graduate enrollment.
9) As student enrollment and academic programs increase, there is an increasing need for adequate facilities to successfully meet needs, with little or no increased funding.
10) The changing demographics of SWT students that brings about diverse student attitudes, values, and opinions will affect faculty/student interaction.
11) With the growth in two-year colleges, there will be more competition to recruit and engage diverse students.
12) Impending retirements will cause a need to look for faculty diversity to match our student population.
13) The growth assumption of an 18% growth in enrollment by 2010 may be too low.
14) As we develop better methods to increase retention, growth will occur causing the need to determine what our target retention rate is as we determine enrollment projections and campus capacity.
15) Satisfaction in service areas will decrease as enrollment increases because service areas are currently stretched to capacity.
16) Development officers can assist in external funding for both academic programs and student support services.
17) Increased collaboration between academic and student affairs may assist in pooling resources for more effective services to students as well as out of class learning opportunities.
18) Transition programs such as Paws Preview and Bobcat assist with student retention and success.
19) Support services may be needed for distance learning students and programs.  
20) As students become negatively affected by internal program enrollment caps and students seek to find meaningful careers, more attention to these issues by advisors, faculty, and Career Service staff will be needed.

2. EXTERNAL FUNDING

Issue: Currently there is a downturn in the national economy and a shortfall in state funds allocated for higher education.

Impact: Due to the downturn in the national economy and the shortfall in state funding, SWT will need to rely more heavily on alternate sources to fund initiatives such as funded research opportunities, grants, donor contributions, and partnerships with the private sector.

External

1) The downturn in the national economy, including stock market loses, will affect SWT donor contributions.
2) State and federal shortfalls may limit availability of grant funds.
3) "Closing the Gaps" may provide research infrastructure funding that benefits SWT.
4) Federal funding prioritizes opportunities for science and technology grants and research.
5) If there is a decrease in federal funding, it will impact students' ability to pay.
6) There is competition for state appropriations and special items with other Texas institutions and systems.
7) Institutions being able to set their own tuition may negatively impact the ability for students to attend schools of choice and affect minority and 1st generation student enrollment goals.

Internal

1) Internal competition across colleges restricts the ability of some colleges to solicit funds from many agencies and foundations.
2) The culture of faculty and many administrators is not conducive to external fund raising. In addition, there is no special training for individuals involved with external relations and development efforts.
3) There is competition within the university from other SWT colleges that have formed their own "friends" type of support groups, as well as other established fund raisers, such as the Bobcat Club and the University Annual Fund Drive.
4) There is potential in developing networks with alumni in order to improve funding efforts.
5) Faculty roles and responsibilities in fund raising efforts are unclear.
6) Faculty workloads undermine faculty's willingness to devote time to developing grant applications.
7) Numerous departments are forming partnerships with the private sector to assist in
providing quality programs.

7) Currently, grant administrative procedures are unclear and burdensome.
8) The lack of dedicated grant writers for SWT hinders the development of outside funding.

3. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Issue: SWT will have increased student enrollment and changing student educational needs and demographics. In addition, SWT is moving toward Doctoral Intensive status.

Impact: Colleges and departments will need to review current curriculum in order to revise current programs and create new programs addressing these needs.

External

1) Demographics indicate a great need for a larger educated workforce than Texas is currently producing. Therefore, there will be an increased demand to provide education to constituents by developing new and modifying existing programs.
2) SWT is located in a growth corridor, which will assist in recruiting students at all levels.
3) SWT has a good in-state reputation in many program areas.
4) The depressed economy may create potential for larger graduate enrollments due to persons deciding to return to college to become more competitive in the job market.
5) There is an emphasis on undergraduate rather than graduate enrollment in "Closing the Gaps."
6) Competition with "for profit" educational delivery systems and area universities will impact the development of new programs and degrees.
7) The University of Texas' plan to limit enrollment may impact demand for our traditional and pre-professional programs.
8) A more competitive job market and more vocationally oriented students will require more skills-based degree programs.
9) Growing demand from public and private sectors for students with advanced degrees will stimulate enrollment, as well as provide a more competitive job market.
10) The "Closing the Gaps" initiative for research will prompt colleges to develop new programs and research centers.
11) The demand for teachers in the K-12 system will impact the College of Education with increased enrollment growth.

Internal

1) Many SWT programs are popular and have outstanding reputations.
2) SWT has hard working, innovative faculty and staff willing to address student needs.
3) There will be increased graduate scholarship dollars for Fall 2003 that will aid in student recruitment.
4) SWT has the ability to deliver programs in non-traditional formats via technology.
5) There are opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration.
6) Lack of clearly defined and agreed upon ratios of undergraduate to graduate programs in academic departments causes confusion about where to put program revision and creation emphasis.
7) There is limited funding to meet enrollment demands.
8) The changing nature of enrollment necessitates the development of new academic programs.
9) Faculty turnover due to retirements and attractive competitive offers may impact the ability to deliver quality programs.
10) Although there is commitment to quality doctoral programming among academic colleges, administrative support for doctoral faculty lines is unclear.
11) Many departments are depending on adjunct faculty to cover departmental growth, possibly detracting from the quality and prestige of some programs.
12) Dual campus expectations cause inconsistent curriculum alignment with main campus.
13) Lack of recognition of graduate faculty contributions to teaching and thesis direction makes faculty work in graduate programs seem undervalued.
14) Competition with other programs within SWT for space inhibits program growth.
15) There is lack of funding for support services for growing enrollments, including academic advising, the Student Learning Assistance Center, the Academic Skills Program, and the Testing, Research-support and Evaluation Center.
16) Each academic unit has a responsibility to promote its activity/accomplishments to students, parents and high schools.
17) Expectations of need for support services are unclear for RRHEC.
18) Continued increase in adjunct faculty could mean a decrease in faculty involvement with the living/learning environment in the residence halls and outside of the classroom learning experience.
19) Resources may need to be redirected to engage transfer students due to the growing numbers of these students.
20) As NSSE has been gaining credibility in higher education, there will be an increased focus on excellence in undergraduate education.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE

Issue: The University’s infrastructure is the underlying foundation of the organization and an important factor in determining the success of any university initiative. SWT’s growing student population and new initiatives are occurring with little new funding to sustain the university infrastructure.

Impact: Colleges and departments will need to assess the ability of the SWT infrastructure to support initiatives as part of their strategic planning.

External

1) SWT’s desire to improve its national recognition, its U.S. News and World Report
rankings, and its NSSE outcomes may necessitate smaller freshman classes, with no increased funding.
2) The infrastructure of San Marcos does not support the enrollment growth at SWT.
3) The THECB/Legislature will need to make provisions for expanding facilities to meet enrollment projections of "Closing the Gaps".

Internal

1) Rapid changes in technology result in lack of maintenance and funding for new equipment.

2) As a result of the "Closing the Gaps" initiative, SWT does not have adequate facilities to support new programs and growing enrollment, including classroom space, office space, and space to conduct research. There are too few faculty positions to handle the increase in enrollment at all levels. Currently adjuncts are being used to cover growing enrollment.
3) Student financial support, in the form of scholarships, travel money, and student organization assistance is low.
4) Staff to support departmental initiatives is limited.
5) University budget constraints may limit departments' ability to deliver quality programs.
6) There is a lack of training for faculty to understand, develop, and implement student learning outcomes.
7) Although online courses are encouraged, financial support for time and effort is lacking.
8) Although there is a commitment to adding Ph.D. programs, financial support for graduate students is limited.
10) A large amount of funds are spent to become in compliance with code requirements (e.g., ADA, fire safety, etc.), which, in turn, reduces the funds available for new construction and other projects.
11) From 1996 to 2005, SWT is spending 38.3% of HEAF funds for new construction and only 27.5% for major repairs and renovation, which will impact future HEAF allocations.
12) Delivering quality programs at three campus sites and on-line during a time of budget shortfalls and no projected increased funding will create huge challenges.
13) The State budget shortfall may limit SWT's ability to attract and retain a high quality faculty.
14) The University space deficit constrains support for grant initiatives.
15) Estimated space needs, faculty needs, and budget needs to accommodate a projected enrollment of 29,224 within three years is escalating (figures forthcoming)
16) Limited out-of-state tuition waivers restricts SWT's ability to recruit graduate student employees and lessens national visibility.
17) Rates from Physical Plant to improve or remodel facilities to accommodate growth are not always reasonable.
18) More housing may be needed for student growth.
19) There will be a need for additional parking and transportation systems to
accommodate the increase in student population.
20) Deferred maintenance is a problem with inadequate funding to alleviate the poor condition of buildings and facilities on campus.
21) "SWT's ageing central MIS systems are inadequate, making it difficult to support much needed business process changes and fully embrace modern web enabled "self-service" capabilities."

Part 2: External Environmental Impact

The following list of external environmental impact factors includes demographic information collected from major local, regional, state, and national reports that could affect our future decisions. Sources were reviewed and summarized into brief bullets. The information is categorized by local, regional, state, and national impacts. A list of sources is included for more detailed review is included.

1. LOCAL

According to the Census, Hays County's population changed 49 percent from 1990 to 2000. The county's population was 65,614 in 1990 and 97,589 in 2000, an increase of 31,975. In 2000, the median age was 28.4 years versus a statewide average of 32.3 years and a national average of 35.3 years. (Hays County Profile, retrieved January 29, 2003)

According to the Census, 35,718 people in Hays County were enrolled in school in 2000. Countywide, 84.7 percent had a high school diploma or higher and 31.3 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. The equivalent statewide figures for a high school diploma or higher and a bachelor's degree or higher were 75.7 percent and 23.2 percent, respectively. (Hays County Profile, retrieved January 29, 2003)

SWT on-campus arrests for liquor violations fell from 381 in 1999 to 143 in 2001, yet SWT still has one of the highest alcohol-related arrest rate per student among large Texas public universities. Texas A&M University had 144, Texas Tech had 103, the University of Texas at Austin had 84, the University of North Texas had 8, and the University of Houston had 3 liquor-related arrests of students on campus in 2001 [see http://ope.ed.gov/security/Search.asp]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Increase in first-time freshman retention from 60% in the late 1980's to 77% today, and improvements in transfer student retention, will increase the number of students who remain at SWT until graduation and will result in more rapid enrollment growth. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Traffic congestion and parking are major problems for SWT students entering and leaving San Marcos as indicated by numerous surveys of students. SWT enrollment has grown by 3,723 from 21,302 to 25,025 in ten years, while on-campus parking spaces have grown by 2,748 spaces from 8,781 to 11,529 over the same time period. The 2002 Community Outreach Survey conducted by the City of San Marcos found that traffic was the biggest concern of local citizens. On a scale of 1=poor to 4=excellent, the only survey
items with an average rating of below 2 (i.e., fair) were downtown parking (1.71), traffic control signs and signals (1.81), and street maintenance (1.95). San Marcos traffic control was rated "poor", by 48.7% of respondents, more than any other survey item. The San Marcos Department of Environment and Engineering is currently working with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Kimley-Horn consultants to synchronize traffic signals at intersections in San Marcos [see "news" at http://ci.san-marcos.tx.us/]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

SWT continues to have a need for marketing. The 2000 SWT Image Survey shows the ratings that over 7,000 students, faculty, alumni, community leaders, prospective students, former students, parents, and guidance counselors gave SWT in the areas of academic reputation, admission standards, quality of students, quality of graduates, quality of faculty, geographic location, career preparation, social reputation, affordability, friendliness, and relationship with the San Marcos community on a GPA-like scale of 0=poor to 4=excellent. Employers of SWT graduates (3.11), alumni (2.82), parents (2.81), and transfer students (2.81) had the most favorable opinions of SWT in comparison to other Texas colleges and universities. SWT faculty (2.36), graduate students (2.45), and juniors/seniors (2.59) had low opinions of SWT in comparison to other Texas schools. Opinions seemed to decline as student classification increased. Prospective transfers (2.94) and employers (2.90) had the highest opinions of SWT academic reputation while faculty (2.40) and high school students (2.49) had the lowest opinions of SWT academic reputation. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Educational preparation at nearby feeder schools may be unable to provide well-prepared students to SWT in the future unless the schools improve. TAAS pass rates for San Marcos CISD, Hays ISD, and Seguin ISD are below Texas averages as are mean SAT scores [see http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/]. High schools from these districts account for 3 of the top-5 feeder high schools for SWT over the past 10 years. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

2. REGIONAL

Recent population increases, coupled with the 2.5 percent population growth forecast for 2003, will prompt expansions in state educational institutions and school districts. (Angelou Economics, p. 4)

Four technology sectors that are forecast to have a measurable impact on new jobs and investment for the Austin Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) include: Nanotechnology which is expected to become a $1 trillion industry by 2015; Bioinformatics; Wireless technologies; and Clear Energy. (Angelou Economics, p. 13)

Austin MSA's median family income has risen to $59,400, the highest of any major metro in the state. It's population has the largest share of 25 to 44 age group in Texas. The percentage of its population with a bachelor's degree is significantly higher than the national average for metropolitan areas, with Austin MSA having 36.7 percent versus
26.6 percent nationally. (Angelou Economics, p. 14)

The Austin-San Antonio Region ranks among the top five fastest growing areas in the United States. It comprises 14.6 percent of the state's population. If current trends continue, the Region will double in size by the year 2020. This tremendous increase in population will present itself as a major challenge to leaders in both the public and private sector arenas who face the task of planning for the needs of this influx of population. (Greater Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council, 1998, p. 1)

The population of Texas is projected to double in the next 30 years and become increasingly Hispanic; the Austin-San Antonio Region is no exception to this trend. Over the next 20 years, persons of Hispanic origin will increase from 36 percent to 44 percent of the Region's population. Currently, the educational attainment levels of Hispanics and African-Americans lag the statewide averages significantly. As these populations grow and become more important to the workplace, a method of achieving high levels of quality education and training for all ethnic groups is needed. (Greater Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council, 1998, p. 9)

No students can be adequately prepared for the workplace and life unless they have pervasive exposure to contemporary technology within the teaching and learning environment. Both hard costs and soft costs are a significant challenge to the traditional education establishment. Responses to these challenges must be initiated within the Austin-San Antonio Region in order to significantly increase its competitive advantage. (Greater Austin-San Antonio Corridor Council, 1998, p. 10)

Increases in admission standards and possible enrollment caps at U. T. Austin and Texas A&M will make it increasingly difficult for SWT students to transfer to these institutions. New undergraduate transfer enrollment at U.T. Austin has not increased in the past 10 years [see http://www.utexas.edu/academic/oir/statistical_handbook/02-03/], while a 13% increase in their undergraduate enrollment has occurred. New undergraduate transfer enrollment at Texas A&M University has declined over the past 10 years while total undergraduate enrollment has increased 14% [see http://www.tamu.edu/opir/reports/]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Without intervention, rapid population growth in counties from which SWT historically draws over 30% of its students will lead to rapid enrollment growth at SWT in coming years. Assuming that net migration is one-half of what it was from 1990 to 2000, the Texas State Data Center estimates the population of the Austin-San Marcos MSA will exceed the San Antonio MSA population sometime between the year 2020 and 2030. If the net migration rate of 1990-2000 remains the same far into the future, the Austin-San Marcos MSA population may exceed that of the San Antonio MSA after 2010 [see Table 9 at http://txsdc.tamu.edu/tpepp/presskit/]. Population growth in Williamson County, more courses at the Round Rock Higher Education Center (RRHEC), and rising gasoline prices may result in rapid growth at the RRHEC. Williamson was the 19th fastest growing county in the U.S. between 1990 and 2000 with a 79% increase in population [see http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/tablist.html] (SWT Institutional
Movement toward greater enrollment in community colleges will continue to increase the percentage of SWT students who enter as transfers instead of first-time freshmen. New undergraduates who entered SWT were 52% transfers in FY 1992 and 61% transfers in FY 2002. SWT bachelor's degree recipients who entered SWT as transfers has increased from 55% of FY 1992 graduates to 62% of FY 2002 graduates (source: SWT database). The preliminary copy of "Enrollment Forecasts 2002-2015" released by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) predict 2.9% annual growth at Texas public universities and 4.5% annual growth at Texas public community colleges through the year 2005. Thereafter, the expected growth rates are 0.8% annually at Texas public universities and 1.3% annually at Texas public community colleges from 2005 through 2010. THECB projections are conservative by design to discourage over-building of facilities at colleges, so growth rates are likely to exceed their predictions. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Enrollment from regional high schools in the San Antonio-Austin area, that have historically been major feeder institutions for SWT, should continue to bolster enrollment of well-prepared first-time freshmen (e.g., TAAS pass rates for New Braunfels, Austin's Bowie, and San Antonio's Churchill high schools exceed Texas averages as do their mean SAT scores [see http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/]. Top feeder high schools in the Austin-San Antonio corridor account for the majority of SWT first-time freshman enrollment. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

SWT's proximity to U.T. Austin (30 miles) and Texas A&M (120 miles) may be disadvantageous for the recruitment of students under the Texas Top 10% rule. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shows that Texas A&M and U.T. Austin rank 1 and 2 in the percent of their students enrolled from the top 10% of high school graduating classes while Southwest Texas State University ranks 21st, below institutions (e.g., Angelo State, Lamar, Sam Houston, Tarleton State) with lower admission standards [see http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/pdf/0464.pdf]. The Texas Top 10% rule may be ineffective in diversifying college campuses in Texas [see http://www.texastop10.princeton.edu/]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

3. STATE

The aging faculty population will be of great influence to colleges and universities over the next few years. According to statistics from the Coordinating Board, nearly 48 percent of faculty members at the state universities are older than 50. If all of them retired by 2015, there would be 7,000 new positions available. (Raghunathan, July 28, 2002)

The Texas Labor Market Information Department recently completed its 2000-2010 employment projections. Employment in Texas is projected to increase from 9.7 million to 11.5 million over the 2000-2010 period. This will impact the national economy because Texas ranks second in population and labor force. Texas is expected to outpace the projected national annual average of 1.4 percent, increasing by an average of 176,146
jobs per year for the projection period. The Services industries will account for more than half of all new jobs. Business Services, Health Services, and Educational Services will account for over 70 percent of this growth. (Cantu, November 2002, p. 3-4)

7.1 percent of the nation's population resided in Texas in 1995 (ranked 2nd largest among the 50 states and Washington, D.C.), compared with 7.3 percent in 2000 (ranked 2nd), and 8.1 percent in 2025 (ranked 2nd). (U. S. Bureau of the Census, retrieved October 4, 2002)

According to an annual survey of institutions by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Texas senior colleges and universities in 1997 reported a total of $244.5 million in accumulated deferred maintenance, of which $27.4 million was characterized as "critical". THECB policy requires institutions to reduce critical deferred maintenance to zero. Of the $244.5 million in deferred maintenance, heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning problems represent 33 percent; repairs to roofs, floor coverings and windows, 29 percent; and plumbing and electrical problems, 17 percent. Fourteen percent is needed to address safety and other issues, and 7 percent to address legislative and mandated requirements, mostly associated with retrofitting buildings to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. (Nusbaum, January 24, 2002)

Although data from the 2000 Census has been available for over a year, the United States Census Bureau recently released more detailed Texas social and economic data. This new information is based on a sample of about one in six American households. Findings indicate several pertinent figures. The percentage population growth (41 percent growth rate) in Austin exceeded that of each of the other five largest Texas cities between 1990 and 2000, as well as Texas as a whole (23 percent). Austin was the only one of the state's largest cities in which white persons still constitute a majority (53 percent, compared to 52 percent in Texas) of the population. Both household median income ($42,689) and family median income ($54,091) in Austin exceeded median incomes for each of the other large cities in Texas and for the state overall ($39,927 and $45,861, respectively). More than 3 million individuals (3,117,609) in Texas lived in poverty in 2000. More than one million (1,162,141) of these were children. Just under one fourth of the state's over-25 population (24.3 percent) had not graduated from high school. (Texas Portraits, September 20, 2002)

By 2025, non-Hispanic Whites would comprise 46 percent of Texas' population, down from 58.2 percent in 1995. Non-Hispanic African Americans would comprise 12.8 percent, up from 11.7 percent in 1995. Non-Hispanic American Indians, Eskimos, and Aluet would comprise 0.3% in both 1995 and 2025. Non-Hispanic Asians and Pacific Islanders would increase from 2.2 percent in 1995, to 3.3 percent of the 2025 state population. Persons of Hispanic origin are projected to increase from 27.6 percent in 1995 to 37.6 percent in 2025. (U. S. Bureau of the Census, retrieved October 4, 2002)

Average tuition and fees for higher education in Texas ranks 43rd nationally in comparison to other states [see http://www.txstate.edu/ir/BOR02/BORIndex.htm]. (SWT

The conservative nature of enrollment forecasts, and their role in the space projection model used by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, may hurt SWT's ability to build the facilities to accommodate more students. For example, the "Enrollment Forecasts 1997-2010" projected that SWT would enroll 22,857 students in Fall 2005. With SWT enrollment already at 25,025 in Fall 2002, we will greatly exceed the earlier projection. Because SWT is currently the second most efficient Texas public university in classroom space utilization and the most efficient in usage of laboratory space [see http://www.theceb.state.tx.us/reports/pdf/0447.pdf], underestimates of future growth may hurt SWT more than other universities. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Pressure to help Texas meet "Closing the Gaps" goals may make it difficult for SWT to curtail enrollment growth, and may even require SWT to grow at a faster rate than already predicted. Under growth rates projected by the Texas State Data Center in counties that contribute about 70% of SWT enrollment, SWT will exceed 29,000 students by Fall 2005. If SWT is forced to absorb its share of a "Closing the Gaps" shortfall, then SWT enrollment may grow more rapidly [see http://www.theceb.state.tx.us/AdvisoryCommittees/HEP/0096.htm]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Diversity should increase at SWT as the Texas Hispanic population rapidly grows, but may lag further behind the percentage of Hispanics in the population. Hispanics will be the largest group in Texas by 2020 [see figure 2.5 at http://txsdc.tamu.edu/download/pdf/TxChall2002Summary.pdf]. However, lower incomes [see figures 4.1 and 4.2] and the lower quality of secondary schools due to the funding of Texas public education by property taxes may make accessibility a problem for Hispanic and students of other minority groups. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

SWT ranks 32 of 34 Texas public universities in general revenue funds appropriated per semester credit hour [see http://www.txstate.edu/ir/BOR02/BORIndex.htm]. Formula funding rates for predominant disciplines at SWT are low—Liberal Arts and Education courses (not including practice teaching) have the 2 lowest funding rates of all disciplines in Texas and account for 46% of the SCH taught at SWT. Business Administration has the 4th lowest funding rate in Texas and accounts for an additional 13% of the SCH taught at SWT. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Health Services have some of the highest funding rates—SCH in these fields has not increased as a percentage of the total at
Because faculty salaries are paid largely from the General Revenue earned through the Texas formula funding system, and SWT generates some of the lowest funding rates in the state, it is difficult for SWT to compete with salary levels at comparable Texas and national universities. In FY 2002, the SWT average salary for full professors ranks 18 of 34 Texas public universities [see http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/cfbin/ArchFetch.cfm?DocID=0466&Format=HTML]. Among the national peers SWT uses for comparative studies, the mean SWT salary for full professors is about $13,000 below the overall mean of peer & aspirant universities, and the lowest of all the individual peer and aspirant universities [see http://www.txstate.edu/ir/swtreports/Peers2001.xls]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

4. NATIONAL

According to a report released by the American Council on Education, minority enrollment has risen by 3.2 percent between 1998 and 1999. The number of bachelors degrees awarded to minority students rose by 5.8 percent, while the number of masters degrees received by minority students rose 8.1 percent and the number of doctoral degrees rose 2.5 percent. Overall, African Americans and Hispanics are still lagging behind their white counterparts, and Asian-Americans continue to outpace others students in several areas. (Young, September 27, 2002, p. A54)

Change in SACS criteria for accreditation will require an effective planning and evaluation process to look at student learning outcomes. There will not be as many "must" statements; the number of "core requirements" will decline; and institutions will be able to define compliance to a greater extent. Data will be presented up front rather than embedded in a textual report and a sentence or two will indicate whether compliance, partial compliance, or non-compliance exists for each core requirement. For partial and non-compliance, a brief explanation of how full compliance will be achieved shall be given [Source: Dr. Donna Wilkinson, Associate Executive Director of Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, General Session Featured Speaker at 2002 Southern Association for Institutional Research conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

It is possible that immigration restrictions after 9/11 are slowing international enrollment. Over the past 3 years, SWT enrollment has grown by 3% (1999 to 2000), 5% (2000 to 2001), and 6% (2001 to 2002). Enrollment by international students grew by 24 percent (1999 to 2000), 19% (2000 to 2001), and 9% (2001 to 2002) at SWT [see http://www.irp.txstate.edu/fb/et/index.htm]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Part 3: External Scan

The following environmental scan was conducted using a formal system of
systematically reviewing an assortment of print materials, electronic media, and human sources for information. The collected material was then categorized using the STEP model: social, technological, economic, and political. Sources were reviewed and summarized into brief bullets. This material was gathered for the purpose of identifying external trends that serve as possible opportunities and/or threats that may affect SWT. A bibliography is included for further reference of information provided.

1. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Faculty

As a result of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's "Closing the Gap" program, there will be an increased need for assistant and associate professors in higher education. A recent study conducted by the Texas Association of College Teachers indicates that Texas might need nearly 20,000 more faculty by the year 2015. (Raghunathan, July 28, 2002)

A growing trend in American higher education today is the hiring of part-time and non-tenure track faculty members due to reductions in public funding and tightening budgets. Compensating part-time faculty is less expensive and allows for more flexibility, depending on current demands. Over the past 10 years, the number of non-tenure-track faculty has grown while the population of tenure-track faculty has decreased. This trend could lead to serious deficiencies in the future. "It is imperative that colleges and universities begin shaping their organizational and cultural foundations so that when the senior tenured faculty begin to leave their positions, the transition to a more diverse and junior professoriate will not result in a diminished capacity to provide students with a quality education while advancing the frontiers of knowledge." (Caison, Dec. 2002-Feb. 2003)

Today, nearly 50 percent of college courses nation-wide are being taught by adjunct faculty. Because these instructors are not "permanent" and don't even have offices on campus, the quality of the student's education suffers greatly. There is little time for interaction among the two outside of the classroom. (McArdle, Dec. 2002)

Curriculum

According to a study conducted by researchers at Regis University and the University of Missouri at Kansas, non-traditional students who leave college before graduating cite "time" and "money" as their biggest reasons for leaving. If colleges offered more weekend classes and improved their advising processes, more adult students could complete their degrees. (Notebook, The Chronicle of Higher Education, p. A53)

According to a recent report by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, curricular reforms are needed. Aside from access to post-secondary education, the assurance of a "quality education" is needed. Recommendations include: helping students become intentional life-long learners; requiring students to apply their learning to the real
world; eliminating the "artificial division" between liberal arts and pre-professional education; and creating a closer alignment between schoolteachers and college educators. (Smallwood, October 11, 2002, p. A14)

A paper recently released by the Carnegie Corporation of New York suggests a major revamping of teacher education. It calls for "teaching to be treated as a modern, clinical profession, complete with two-year 'residency' programs." Colleges should provide graduates in education with coaches and academic-content mentors in order to more closely tie education schools to universities and strengthen the curriculum. (Fogg, October 4, 2002, p. A16)

The NCAA governing board for Division I approved new academic standards for athletes entering college in August 2003 or after. The new rules allow athletes with top high school grades to qualify for university sports even if they have low test scores. But, athletes already in college will have to make better progress toward their degree in order to remain eligible to compete. The goal of these new standards is to improve low academic performance of athletes without locking them out of college based solely on their standardized-test scores. The new rules will force coaches to recruit athletes who are capable of meeting the new standards. (Lederman and Suggs, November 8, 2002, p. A38)

According to a not-yet-published survey conducted by the Sallie Mae Foundation, 17 percent of colleges and universities report sharply higher student interest in at least one of six college-major categories. Driven by recent national events, as well as hit television shows, many students are choosing majors that offer solutions to society's ills. Sixty percent of survey respondents reported an increased interest for criminal justice/forensic science; 38 percent for health-related majors; 24 percent for social studies; 16 percent for faith-based studies; 14 percent for international studies; and 6 percent for aviation. (Clayton, November 19, 2002)

Contract education involves corporations contracting with colleges and universities to educate new and current employees. This concept has been around for a long while, but at a time when "dollar-conscious corporate America is cutting back on its own educational endeavor," it has moved to the forefront of the higher education arena. A few years ago colleges took about 3 percent of the market, but today they corner up to 20 percent and that is just the beginning. The continuing education arena has now become central to the future of the university. Currently, the corporate education market is worth an estimated $60 billion. Today, there are at least 90 million adult learners in the U.S. Importantly, work-related and personal enrichment programs account for almost 85 percent of that market. This is a key income-generating opportunity for higher education at a time of budget cuts and lost subsidies. Colleges and universities should grab the opportunity "before corporate American regains the footing to institute (and reinstitute) its own corporate education efforts." (Angelo, November 2002)

A report released recently by the Futures Project at Brown University, indicates that an increasingly competitive higher-education market is putting colleges under pressure to neglect their public mission. Providers of for-profit higher education and other
competitors are eating into the profitable sectors of the market that colleges have traditionally tapped to subsidize their less-profitable endeavors. As a result, some college leaders say they are in a position of having to focus more of their attention on profitable programs in order to keep their institutions afloat. (Schmidt, October 18, 2002, p. A28)

Students

According to the latest National Survey of Student Engagement, transfer students are less engaged in academic work and college life than those who enrolled as freshmen. The reason could be because many colleges offer the bulk of orientation and similar programs during the freshman year, so students who enroll later miss out. (Notebook, The Chronicle of Higher Education, p. A55)

The recent results for the National Survey of Student Engagement indicate that "students who experience diversity - that is, those who attended diverse institutions or participated in diversity-related activities, such as assignments that incorporated diverse perspectives - reported higher levels of engagement than other students. (Notebook, The Chronicle of Higher Education, p. A55)

A study by the U.S. Department of Education reveals that older women with families and jobs are more attracted to undergraduate distance-education programs than members of any other group. (Carnevale, November 8, 2002, p. A33)

According to a report issued by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, "state plans that guarantee public-college admission to students who graduate at or near the top of their high school classes are not themselves adequate to improve the representation of minority students at public colleges." Policies such as these that have been implemented over the past few years have failed to improve the number of underrepresented students admitted to public colleges. The report urges states and public colleges to complement these policies with "academic outreach and support programs, more aggressive recruitment of minority students, and greater use of 'holistic admissions standards that allow participation by students who have unrealized potential.'" (Hebel, November 29, 2002, p. A21)

High school students are feeling so much pressure from parents, peers, educators, and even themselves about colleges and applications, that they are molding themselves into the 'perfect college applicant' at an early age. By participating in "extracurriculars" that don't interest them or by volunteering for many social activities because they would look good on the college application, passion and love for learning are getting lost in the process. According to a survey released by the Higher Education Research Institute, many students arrive on college campuses with mental- or emotional-health problems, but even those who consider themselves well adjusted can lose confidence during freshman year. Some observers believe colleges should make some changes in order to alleviate some of the pressure. For example, they could step back from the "early decision" application process. (Clayton, December 24, 2002)
While the number of Hispanic students attending college has shown substantial increases and is expected to continue to rise, only 20 percent of Hispanics ages 18 to 24 were enrolled in college in 2000, which is well below the national average. Hispanics make up about 12.5 percent of the nation's population. Parents cite family income as a major obstacle to Hispanic college success, while students point to a shortage of role models. "Once Hispanic students arrive at college, the obstacles they face fall into three types - financial, academic, and social. Programs need to be made available to help students overcome academic and social barriers. (Williams, October 2002, p. 30-34)

2. TECHNOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

The U.S. House of Representatives has given final approval to a bill (HR 3394) authorizing greater spending for research on protecting computer networks from potential terrorist attacks. The bill authorizes $902.8 million for the study of computer security, much of which would be conducted at colleges and universities. These institutions would use grants to expand research projects, develop collaborations with other institutions and businesses, and create undergraduate and graduate programs in computer security. (Read, November 29, 2002, p. A29)

New legislation (HR 2215) was approved recently by Congress. This bill "includes a provision that would ease the copyright law for online education by amending the Copyright Act of 1976. The provision would allow online-education instructors to use excerpts from recordings of dramatic literary and musical works - like plays, musicals, and opera - on course Web sites without seeking permission from the copyright owners." In essence, it levels the playing field between online and traditional classrooms. (Carnevale, October 13, 2002, p. A36)

In a recent survey of 2,054 college students, 79 percent stated that use of the Internet has had a positive impact on their college experience. Three-fourths said they used the Internet more than the library when searching for information, while 68 percent said they subscribed to academically oriented mailing lists. Only 6 percent said they had taken an online course for credit. Students appear to be looking for supplements to traditional instruction. (Online, The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 27, 2002, p. A47)

The U. S. Department of Education recently issued a final regulation to kill a financial-aid restriction. The regulation required higher-education programs that did not operate in a standard semester, trimester, or quarter system to offer a minimum of 12 hours of coursework a week if their students were eligible for financial aid, which impacted the development of innovative online programs. The rule is being replaced with a regulation that says institutions must offer at least one day of instruction a week to qualify for aid. (Carnevale, November 15, 2002, p. A36)

A recent survey conducted by the Campus Computing Project indicates that the economic downturn and state-budget cuts have led to further slashes in computing spending for both public and private colleges. One-third of respondents said their budgets for academic computing had fallen for the current academic year. Fifteen percent stated these
budgets had dropped by 5 percent or more. This year 31 percent reported declines in the administrative computing area as well, with 12 percent reporting cuts of 5 percent or more. However, many institutions appear to be protecting funds for development of online systems for administration and e-commerce. More colleges now are able to accept credit card payments on their websites (41 percent compared to 28 percent last year). Sixty-eight percent reported having some sort of wireless network and 13 percent said they would start operating such a network this year. (Kiernan, October 11, 2002, p. A38)

The CEO and founder of Capella University reports on the success of the regionally accredited online institution's degree programs and the implications toward the future of online education. This kind of learning serves an "important and highly diverse population" who would otherwise not be able to attend a typical college for a variety of reasons. There is a growing tide of learners of this type and as a result online learning "may become the classroom of the future." According to a survey by e-Brain, 73 percent of online adults would consider taking an online class. Other studies indicate as many as 80 percent of the nation's 1,000 largest corporations have implemented online training. He indicates "e-learning is here to stay and will improve considerably through the coming decades." (Shank, October 2002, p. 24)

After some major false starts, e-procurement systems are now off and running. Despite a few major company collapses and demises, many procurement systems products and application service providers have become successful. The most successful systems directly pipe purchase transactions directly through an institution's accounts payable system. The most striking characteristic of e-procurement is the drastic shortening of the cycle time from order to receipt of goods, as well as the opportunity to create substantial savings in the cost of running a college or university. It is now possible to set goals for reducing the administrative cost of acquisitions, lowering prices paid for goods and services, monitoring purchasing practices, and reducing errors and waste. (Warger, October 2002)

3. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) would be forced to significantly scale back the number of new grants and projects it finances next year - including a crash program to counter bioterrorism - if Congress fails to pass a budget for the agency for the 2003 fiscal year. President Bush's budget proposal for 2003 would complete the doubling of NIH's budget, lifting it to $27.3 million. NIH and university officials fear that the increase may be delayed well into the 2003 calendar year, or may never come if Congress simply gives up trying to pass a 2003 budget. Either outcome could wreak havoc on the NIH's grants, because the agency promises most grant recipients multiple years of financing. (Brainard, October 25, 2002, p. A28)

Legislation (HB 1799) calls for an analysis of higher education opportunities by region, particularly for geographic areas of the state most likely to experience the greatest need as a result of population growth, distance from other educational resources, and various other factors. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has drafted a response to
This bill which resulted in a plan designed to identify potential higher education delivery gaps at Texas' public universities so that the higher education community can work together to identify and establish the most critical programs necessary to meet Texas' higher education needs. The plan identifies programs that are in high demand on a statewide basis for each region. It also identifies which of these programs are not available in each region. In addition, key issues identified in this plan include anticipated shortfalls in faculty and facilities across the state, and the potential expansion of distance education programs to alleviate demands on facilities while interest in a new program is developed. (Gardner, October 4, 2002)

The nation's colleges and universities are bracing for a wave of students to hit campuses over the next decade. This influx is propelled by an increase in the number of births throughout the 1980's and is expected to produce the largest high school and college enrollments in U.S. history. The projections indicate that the biggest high school class (an estimated 3.2 million students) will graduate in 2009. The federal government projects public and private college enrollments will increase a total of 13 percent from now until 2012, adding 2.1 million students to the 15.6 million enrolled in the fall of 2002. Colleges will have to rethink enrollment policies, expand services, and scramble for housing and class space, as well as find funds to pay for it all. As a result, tuition and fees, which already outpace inflation, will continue to rise. Spending is already needed now for dorms, equipment and additional teachers. (DeBarros, January 2, 2003, p. 1A)

According to a survey conducted by the Center for the Study of Education Policy, at Illinois State University, in spending plans that states adopted for the 2002-03 fiscal year, aggregate appropriations for higher education rose only 1.2 percent. In total, 35 states increased spending on higher education, 13 states cut spending, and two states - North Dakota and Pennsylvania - made no change at all. Overall, Texas increased spending by 1.5 percent. The Texas State University System increased spending by 2.4 percent. (Arnone, December 13, 2002, p. A28-A30)

A survey conducted by the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University, which tracks state general-fund appropriations for higher-education needs other than construction, found that, in aggregate, the states had spent about $63.6-billion for such purposes this fiscal year. That represented a one-year increase of $743-million, or 1.2 percent, down from a total annual increase of 4.7 percent two years ago. Adjusted for the current annual inflation rate, aggregate state appropriations for higher education sank by 1.2 percent in 2002-03. (Arnone, December 13, 2002, p. A28-A30)

In an unusually blunt assessment of the financial problems in higher education, a new Standard & Poor's report predicted that colleges and universities might "consolidate in large numbers or close as they struggle against stagnant levels of financial resources and substantially higher levels of debt." At least 31 colleges have closed since 1997, 18 of them four-year undergraduate institutions. There have been nine mergers of colleges since November 2000. (Van Der Werf, December 13, 2002, p. A34)

The forces of change are reshaping the physical landscape of America's colleges and
universities. Administrators are balancing compressed needs to repair and renovate old buildings at a time when new construction for research and increased technological services are on the cutting edge for attracting qualified faculty and students. (Nusbaum, January 24, 2003)

In a milestone book entitled "A Foundation to Uphold," published in 1996, author Harvey Kaiser found that, based on a 1994 survey of 400 college and university facilities, American higher education has at least a $26 billion backlog of accumulated deferred maintenance (ADM) and an additional $6 billion in urgent needs. These backlogs threaten the ability of campus facilities to continue supporting educational missions. (Nusbaum, January 24, 2003)

There has been a continued reduction in State support for higher education and, as a result, a growing reliance on tuition and fees. (Abbott, January 24, 2003)

A recession in the national economy may mean fewer jobs for SWT graduates and higher enrollments as students seek to improve their earning power. Yet, funding for higher education will be tight [see http://www.highereducation.org/reports/cwrecession/cwrecession.shtml]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

4. POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

Governor Perry's recent political platform for reelection included four areas that would have an impact on higher education. He stated that he would provide funds to colleges to develop programs that focus on the recruitment, advising, and academic preparation of students who are first in their family to attend college. He proposed increasing state appropriations to the state's work-study program by $5-million. He wants to provide more money to the Virtual College of Texas so that it can offer up to 10 basic courses that could be transferred to most degree programs at public colleges in Texas. He would also like to establish a state-supported loan program to offer students up to $5,000 more in aid for college each year. (Government & Politics, The Chronicle of Higher Education, p. A30)

The U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee recently approved an increase of $614-million, or 13 percent, increase to the 2003 budget for the National Science Foundation. The bill would allocate $4.1-billion of the NSF's budget to research and $159-million to research equipment. (Borrego, October 25, 2002, p. A28)

Congress recently passed a bill that would create two new classes of visas for some Canadian and Mexican citizens who commute to study in the United States. The bill (HR 4967) would allow full-time and part-time students from Canada and Mexico who live near the American border to enter the U.S. to study without having to reside in the country. (Arnone, November 8, 2002, p. A24)

The Education Sciences Reform Act (HR 3801) was recently passed by Congress. Under
the new bill, the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement will be replaced by an autonomous Institute of Education Sciences, with the goal of infusing the beleaguered areas of federal education research with "scientific rigor". Congress believes this new institute is needed to end the current practice of following "one education fad after another," and instead to conduct rigorous, large-scale studies to determine the best teaching methods. (Morgan, November 8, 2002, p. A24)

Members of a House of Representatives subcommittee, at a recent meeting to assess the role of accreditation in higher education, largely criticized the country's 50-year-old accreditation system as failing to ensure academic quality, lacking accountability, and driving up both tuition and college costs. One representative has introduced a bill (HR 5501) to cut the tie between a college's eligibility for federal student aid to accreditation because it places "too much on a one-switch decision". One congressman at the hearing cautioned against a hasty condemnation of the accreditation process. (Morgan, October 11, 2002, p. A28)

The shift in control of the U.S. Senate and holding onto the House of Representatives by the Republican Party will have both immediate and long-term consequences for higher education. The biggest movement will be in the Senate, where new faces will take over leadership of several committees that are important to higher education. Some Republican lawmakers have been saying that they want to push for bigger changes, such as linking institutions' student-loan eligibility to their graduation rates, or examining the role of accreditation. (Borrego, Anne Marie, et.al., November 15, 2002, p. A23 and A26)

According to a key state-by-state "report card" on higher education released recently by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, States rated mostly C's and the average grades remained largely unchanged since the 2000 report. Results are organized into six criteria: student preparation, participation, affordability, completion, benefits, and learning. Performance in 2 categories fell off: affordability dropped from C- to D, and benefits, a measure of what a state gains by having an educated population, fell from B- to C+. Texas' scores were: Preparation - C+ (increased), Participation - D+ (increased), Affordability - D+ (decreased), Completion - C- (increased), and Benefits - C+ (increased). The overall conclusion is that "College opportunity in America is still at a standstill." (Margulies, October 11, 2002, p. A24-A25)

New federal rules recently announced require colleges to pay a fee to sign up for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service's program to track foreign students. Colleges must enroll in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (Sevis) by January 30, 2003. If they don't, they will lose their ability to enroll international students because they won't be certified to issue student-visa forms in Sevis, the only such forms the INS will accept after that date. (Arnone, October 11, 2002, p. A26)

According to Governor Rick Perry's "Priorities for Texans" plan, priorities include: education, transportation, technology, the Border, and health care. Regarding education, Governor Perry's "Creating Opportunities" higher education plan would create a $20 million grant program to enroll thousands of "first generation" students in college and
reorganize a popular college loan program to provide thousands of students with interest-free loans to earn their degrees. The Governor's higher education initiatives are centered on making higher education more accessible and more affordable to Texans. Governor Perry also has a detailed education plan that continues the improvements that have been made in Texas schools. Governor Perry's education plan: dedicates an additional $3 million to the Texas Beginning Educator Support System to provide essential mentoring support for teachers in the first and second years on the job; and calls for the creation of a Master Science Teacher program as one step toward making science a top educational priority in Texas schools. (http://www.governor.state.tx.us/issues/index.htm)

Over $200 million is earmarked in federal legislation for Hispanic-serving institutions. (Abbott, January 24, 2003)

The U. S. Supreme Court is hearing a case related to University of Michigan admission criteria that give an advantage to ethnic minorities applying for undergraduate school. In Gratz vs. Bollinger, the Supreme Court will be asked to determine whether (1) the University of Michigan may promote diversity by considering ethnicity in undergraduate admissions or (2) the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment disallows consideration of ethnicity in undergraduate admissions [see http://www.usdoj.gov/osg/briefs/2002/3mer/1ami/2002-0516.ner.ami.html]. (SWT Institutional Research, January 29, 2003)

Environmental Impact Factors

Sources Cited


Nusbaum, Nancy. E-mail correspondence dated January 24, 2003.


(September 20, 2002). Issue No. 1. Published by the Center for Public Priorities.


External Scan Sources Cited

Abbott, Dr. Michael L. E-mail correspondence dated January 24, 2003.


Carnevale, Dan. "Congress Eases Copyright Restrictions on Distance Education." The Chronicle of Higher Education. (October 18, 2002): A36.


Carnevale, Dan. "12-Hour Rule, Viewed as Limiting Distance Education, Expires." The


Gardner, David W., Assistant Commissioner for Planning & Information Resources at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Memorandum to public university and college presidents and chancellors, dated October 4, 2002.


Nusbaum, Nancy. E-mail correspondence dated January 24, 2003.

Online. The Chronicle of Higher Education. (September 27, 2002): A47.


