The University of Texas at El Paso
Centennial Commission Report
2014
The University of Texas at El Paso
Centennial Commission Report
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Foreword

"Your goal is not to foresee the future, it is to enable it."

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

As UTEP begins the countdown to its Centennial celebration in 2014, there will be many opportunities to review the university’s fascinating history. From our origins as the Texas State School of Mines and Metallurgy in 1914, we have moved into national leadership for achieving the balance between access and excellence that will be required for success in 21st century higher education. It is an exciting story, and we look forward to celebrating our many major accomplishments with members of the extended UTEP family—our students, faculty and staff members on the UTEP campus, and our alumni, friends and supporters in the Paso del Norte region and throughout the world.

The approaching Centennial also creates a context for planning UTEP’s future, a special opportunity to step away from the rush of daily business and consider what we would like UTEP to be and do by 2014. To help us develop that vision, we established a Centennial Commission in 2004, modeled after the highly successful UTEP 2001 Commission, which on the occasion of our 75th anniversary in 1989 helped us create a vision for UTEP in 2001. Like its predecessor, the Centennial Commission sought the perspectives of external stakeholders, in this case 100 UTEP alumni, friends and supporters from the Paso del Norte region and beyond. A special effort was made to invite the participation of some individuals who had had little prior association with UTEP to ensure that we weren’t thinking entirely “within the box.” The result was a diverse mix of outstanding individuals whose generous commitment of time and talent presented us with a broad range of perspectives to guide UTEP’s future development.

Chaired by UTEP alumni Larry K. Durham and Philip Martinez, the Centennial Commission was divided into 10 ten-member committees, each focused on a topic of special relevance to UTEP’s mission. UTEP faculty and staff members served as committee liaisons to provide easy access to institutional information and any other support that might be required. The charge to each committee was to create a vision for UTEP in 2014 and beyond from the perspective of the topic on which it was focused, and to offer specific recommendations about how best to move the University toward that vision between now and the Centennial celebration in 2014. Participants reported that committee proceedings were enlightening, sometimes provocative, and always lively. “Exciting” was the adjective most often used to describe the process.

Exciting too are the results of this work, which are gathered together in this Centennial Commission Report. Each of the ten chapters corresponds to the final report of one of the ten committees, and each captures not only the vision and recommendations of a specific committee, but the collective intellectual energy of its membership. Together, they present a multi-faceted vision of UTEP in 2014 and a robust set of recommendations to help guide the University toward achieving it.

Not surprisingly, the vision presented here bears some
similarities to the one presented in the 2001 Commission Report. For example, UTEP was encouraged in the earlier report to become more involved in outreach to the surrounding community, and there is similar encouragement expressed here. However, the expectations expressed in this volume are far more ambitious than those articulated 15 years ago because the baseline level of UTEP’s outreach to the community is so much higher today than it was in 1989. Working together with our external constituents, we have clearly raised the bar on expectations.

Another good example is the set of recommendations concerning graduate programs. In 1989, UTEP offered only one doctoral-level program, and the 2001 Commission strongly urged that the University secure authorization to offer more. Today, with 13 active doctoral programs, UTEP is again encouraged to increase the number of such programs, but there is added emphasis now on achieving both sustained alignment with regional needs, and greater national and international stature.

This Centennial volume also appropriately acknowledges changes in UTEP’s external context since the publication of the 2001 Commission report. A good example is the recently announced expansion of Fort Bliss and the potential industrial development associated with it, both of which offer UTEP opportunities to build capacity through new partnerships. Another is the rapidly rising demand for health care professionals in the Paso del Norte region and a growing expectation that UTEP will play a major role in their preparation, as indeed we have sought to do during the past several years. Today, more than 2,500 students are enrolled in such programs as Physical and Occupational Therapy, Speech/Language Pathology and Audiology, Nursing, Clinical Laboratory Science, Kinesiology, Health Promotion, and Pharmacy. In addition, UTEP has strengthened all of these health-related programs through successful competition for external funding for a broad range of health-related research projects. Reflecting this changed context, both external and internal, the Centennial Commission’s recommendations for health-related activity at UTEP are far more aggressive than could have been foreseen in 1989.

Overall, the vision of the members of the Centennial Commission is considerably bigger and bolder than the one articulated in 1989, because UTEP is a far more competitive institution today than it was 15 years ago. Expectations of us, both on and off the campus, are significantly higher. Several Centennial committees pointed out that the university’s current vision statement is too “tentative” and “modest” for today’s UTEP. According to the Graduate and Professional Development Programs committee, “UTEP is poised to become a top-tier university, uniquely prepared to address critical national and international issues through advanced research and educational programs, while at the same time serving as a powerful driver of regional economic and social development.” The U.S.-Mexico and International Programs committee predicts that “The University of Texas at El Paso will be a premier institution for international studies, programs and research with emphasis on Mexico, on U.S.-Mexico themes, and on international borders.” And, the Image committee concludes that “UTEP has increased in enrollment, extramural funding and academic stature during the past ten years…. [and] now enjoys a window of opportunity to become a preeminent bicultural metropolitan research university.” As we review UTEP’s Vision Statement, these facets of today’s UTEP—and words such as “top-tier,” “premier” and “preeminent”—will enter our collective thinking and vocabulary, thanks to the confidence that the Centennial Commission members have expressed in us.

Like its 2001 Commission Report predecessor, this volume will also serve as a rich resource for UTEP’s strategic planning. The vision and recommendations presented here will ensure that UTEP’s future development is aligned with the aspirations of our external stakeholders, both in this region and elsewhere. Paired with reports of three internal task forces (on Student Success, Campus Climate and Research), which served to define the baseline for planning in those critical areas, the vision contained in this report provides us with a clear destination toward which we will travel, and its recommendations a useful roadmap to reach it.

We thank all of the Centennial Commission members for their deep commitment to UTEP reflected in the time and talent that they dedicated to the Commission’s work. UTEP has made enormous progress during the past 15 years guided by the recommendations of the 2001 Commission, and we are confident that we will make even greater strides between now and 2014 as a result of the work of the Centennial Commission.

Diana Natalicio
President
Just nine years from now – in 2014 – the University of Texas at El Paso will celebrate its 100th anniversary! Much has changed at the university and in this region since UTEP’s founding as the State School of Mines and Metallurgy in 1914. The university has reached many heights and enjoyed many successes, and is poised for even greater success in years to come.

The future development of the university is of crucial importance to the Paso del Norte region. UTEP’s Centennial Commission was charged with developing a vision for the university in 2014 and a recommended roadmap for achieving it. We are honored to have served as the commission’s co-chairs.

The Centennial Commission’s 100 members, who come from across this region, the U.S. and Mexico, were drawn from a broad cross-section of external stakeholders. Nominations for the Commission were solicited widely – from individuals and organizations – and its membership reflects the diversity of the El Paso-Juárez region and beyond. In addition to UTEP alumni and supporters, a special effort was made to include community members with little or no previous contact with the university. Also targeted were young adults, who have a major stake in UTEP’s future.

The Commission was divided into ten committees which ranged in focus from Undergraduate Education to UTEP’s Neighborhood; the committee chairs form the executive committee, for which we served as co-chairs. The ten committees were asked to review and evaluate UTEP’s opportunities and challenges within their focal areas; to recommend long-range goals; and, where possible, to identify strategies to achieve them. A few topics were provided to stimulate dialogue, and chairs were encouraged to expand this list in response to committee members’ interests and priorities. Committee members were encouraged to think “outside the box” and to strive for ambitious goals.

After the Commission’s launch last October, the ten committees got right to work. Members made time in their busy schedules for meetings where they heard from experts, asked tough questions, brainstormed new ideas and finally drew up draft reports with evaluations and recommendations. Each of those reports comprises a chapter in this final document.

This Centennial Commission Report will serve as a catalyst for strategic planning on the UTEP campus, and for dialogues both on and off-campus.

Since last fall, we have been impressed by the dedication, commitment and innovative thinking of our fellow Commission members. As co-chairs, we thank them for their service to our university and our community. Their work will help our great university chart a path for its future. We are pleased to share the Commission’s work, and we invite the community to join us as we help UTEP reach even greater levels of success as it approaches its 100th birthday.
Today’s fourth-graders are reflecting on their future as the college freshman class of 2014 – UTEP’s 100th anniversary.
The University of Texas at El Paso
Centennial Commission Executive Committee

Co-Chairs
Larry K. Durham and Philip Martinez

Committee Members
A. F. Ayoub  Ginger Francis
Chana Burton  Debra Koch
Irene Chavez  Cindy Ramos-Davidson
Robert Durón  Lucinda Vargas
Richard Fleager  James R. Vasquez

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UTEP Liaisons
Tammie Aragon Campos, Joanne Bogart, Sandra E. Braham

UTEP has spearheaded efforts to establish partnerships across the regional community to develop and implement practices aimed at improving achievement among all students. The PreK-16 Educational Collaboration Committee was charged with investigating and making recommendations on initiatives to ensure that all students can prepare for, enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Areas addressed include: PreK-12 outreach initiatives, curriculum alignment, teacher preparation, EPCC partnerships, technology and professional development.
Introduction

The PreK-16 Educational Collaboration Committee was charged with examining a range of issues associated with the University’s partnerships and collaborations with institutions in the El Paso region serving students from preschool through undergraduate education. The goal of this effort is the improvement of educational opportunities and outcomes for students entering and graduating from UTEP. The committee reviewed and discussed the University’s collaborations with PreK-16 institutions, data regarding the preparation and achievement of students from their earliest years through university completion, and “best practices” in PreK-16 collaboration at other sites. The committee also prioritized issues that should be addressed during the next decade.

Findings

The strong partnership among UTEP and PreK-16 institutions across the El Paso region has yielded significant benefits for students at all levels. This partnership is built upon a shared vision that all El Paso students should have access to the highest quality education. This vision also guides the work of UTEP faculty in training new teachers and administrators and the University’s outreach efforts, particularly in support of students with the greatest needs. Finally, through the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence, the University supports region-wide PreK-16 reform efforts ranging from support for improved classroom instruction to changes in policies designed to support success for all students.

The PreK-16 Committee recognizes both the significant accomplishments of the University in promoting PreK-16 collaboration and the national recognition that effort has received. Building on these accomplishments, the committee recommends that, in preparation for the Centennial, the University should address priorities including improving opportunities for the preparation of entering students; improving the University’s graduation rates, which can be addressed through expanded collaboration with and outreach to educational partners (PreK-16); strengthening teacher and administrator preparation; and enhancing the effective use of technology.
Expanded PreK-16 Participation, Collaboration, and Access

UTEP serves as a national model in PreK-16 participation, collaboration, and access. As a leader in the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence, the University has brought together area superintendents, colleagues from the El Paso Community College (EPCC) and the Region 19 Education Service Center, and local business and civic leaders to focus on ensuring high academic standards and achievement throughout the El Paso community.

The University’s partnership with PreK-16 institutions is also represented by outreach programs including Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Gear-Up, which focus on improving students’ preparation for higher education, and the “Think College Now” Initiative, which supports the engagement of business and community representatives in promoting college preparation and works in conjunction with the Texas higher Education Coordinating Board-sponsored GO Center initiative. Other efforts include the work of UTEP and EPCC in reaching out to students across the community to recruit them to higher education, the shared articulation agreement between the institutions, and efforts to provide joint preparation for placement examinations. The University also shares data with area school districts, most notably through the high school profiles addressing students’ participation and success at UTEP.

Despite these shared successes in PreK-16 collaboration, there remain significant challenges to be addressed. Among the most important are the continued need for improved preparation for postsecondary education, as reflected in higher SAT/ACT and placement scores; better communication among UTEP faculty/staff and parents regarding the University’s outreach efforts; and improved facilitation and streamlining of the enrollment process at UTEP through collaboration with high schools and EPCC. Expansion of University outreach efforts could also facilitate increased participation.

The following recommendations of the PreK-16 Committee address priorities and opportunities for promoting enhanced PreK-16 participation, collaboration, and access, with the goal of ensuring the high academic achievement of all students in the El Paso area. The committee further recommends that the University define the area(s) for which it wants to be most known and recognized. The committee’s recommendations are that the University:

- Focus on and showcase “Access and Excellence” PreK through 16, with an emphasis on increasing opportunities for students to attend college while ensuring rigor in the curriculum.
- Increase attention to the community’s investment in students through programs such as “Think College Now,” led by the El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence to promote early preparation for postsecondary education.
- Promote stronger relationships between UTEP and high school counselors to prepare students for higher education.
- Increase collaboration with area school districts to share facilities—particularly in the rapidly growing eastern portion of the County—for teacher preparation and professional development and the expansion of outreach initiatives.
- Continue and deepen the partnership with EPCC to promote dual credit and shared recruitment, admissions, and exchange of data.
- Partner with EPCC in outreach to parents of children enrolled in Head Start. Speaking to parents early about postsecondary education can have a tremendous impact on the future of their children. In 12 to 15 years, children currently in Head Start may become UTEP students.
- Collaborate with EPCC and area districts to establish shared parent education programs that promote attainment of GED and bachelor’s degrees.
- Set targets and collect and report data on key educational transition points (e.g., preschool enrollments, 8th grade enrollments relative to high school graduates, EPCC graduates, and UTEP graduates with undergraduate and graduate degrees).
- Work with area school districts to enhance the role of counselors.

Teacher and Administrator Preparation and Retention

For more than seven decades, UTEP has been the key provider of teacher and administrator preparation across the El Paso region. This extensive history and the University’s partnerships with area school districts have resulted in strong collaboration and cooperation in producing the teachers needed to meet the region’s demands. The University’s success in training teachers who are bilingual, for example, has served the needs of the region and beyond.

The benefits of the University’s partnership with area
districts have extended beyond meeting the region’s demand for teachers. Innovative approaches to teacher training carried out through greater attention to the content knowledge and pedagogical skills of new teachers have not gone unnoticed by other teacher educators throughout the nation. Most recently, the University was one of only eleven institutions in the U.S. selected to participate in the Carnegie Corporation’s Teachers for a New Era program. Its goal is to expand and deepen connections between arts and science faculty and teacher education and build on the clinical approach first implemented in 1994 and required for all teacher candidates in 1996. This clinical approach places pre-service teachers in classrooms for periods exceeding traditional student-teacher requirements and brings faculty-led teacher preparation instruction from the university to the school site. Support for teacher preparation also extends to the University’s partnership with the El Paso Community College, which now offers a fully transferable associates’ degree in Teacher Education. In addition to preparing teachers to meet the growing needs of the community, the University has developed a strong program in administrator preparation. Increasing numbers of faculty and new leadership in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations provide an opportunity to strengthen a program that trains significant numbers of school and district administrators through master’s and doctoral programs.

Along with the accomplishments of UTEP’s teacher and administrator preparation efforts come challenges and opportunities to be addressed in the coming decade. In addition to building on the existing clinical approaches and further integrating arts and science content in the pre-service teacher curriculum, the University must address the challenges faced by students in completing teacher preparation programs, often as a result of scheduling concerns. Developing a stronger focus on clinical practice and strengthening content and pedagogical knowledge also require expanded research and development in the area of teacher preparation. While the expansion of research funding is important, limited discretionary funding may curtail faculty opportunities to build research and development programs focused on improved teacher and administrator preparation. Finally, incentives for teachers to participate in master’s programs are limited and must be addressed.

The following recommendations of the PreK-16 Committee address priorities and opportunities for recruiting, training, and sustaining high quality teachers and administrators who will support the educational attainment of students throughout the El Paso region and beyond. The University should:

- Promote the recruitment of teacher education candidates at UTEP through outreach efforts designed to recognize teaching as a valued profession.
- Work with area school districts to coordinate and expand induction and mentoring programs focused on teacher retention. This may include the expansion of professional development opportunities that provide graduate credit, as well as the expanded collaboration among UTEP faculty and school district administrators and teachers in providing content area and leadership support to new teachers and their school colleagues.
- Collaborate with area districts to establish Professional Development Schools on school sites, which could serve as remote facilities for UTEP program offerings and research.
- Work with school districts to design meaningful incentives for teachers to work toward master’s degrees.
- Expand partnerships with districts through mutually beneficial collaborative research at school sites and shared sponsorship of a speakers’ series focused on research findings of relevance to teachers and their school or district colleagues.
- Continue to build on the partnership established with EPCC through shared articulation agreements regarding the preparation of pre-service teachers.
- Promote and market the bilingual environment in the El Paso area as an opportunity to recruit and prepare bilingual teachers from across Texas and the nation.
- Study and define characteristics of a “new generation” of school principals—with a focus on leadership, motivational skills, and a broad view of educational issues—and incorporate lessons into the training of administrators in partnership with school districts through expanded clinical practice.
- Provide expanded leadership training for school principals through partnerships with businesses that support school leaders in promoting motivation and teamwork.
• Cooperate with area school districts in developing three- to five-year targets in the area of teacher and administrator preparation and retention.
• Solicit business community input on the needs of graduates of teacher preparation programs.
• Establish a doctoral program to engage area teachers and administrators in research and practice on characteristics of high quality teaching.

Effective Use of Technology to Promote Opportunities for Students—PreK-16

The PreK-16 Educational Collaboration Committee recognizes that the effective use of technology will be critical in the University’s efforts to promote PreK-16 collaboration in this new century. Connectivity among UTEP and other area educational institutions (PreK-16) already exists through the Orion Ring, Internet2, and broadband; the effective use of this connectivity will be critical, however. Currently, for example, UTEP and EPCC use the same student records system; and technology is used to share information and resources associated with curriculum and other priorities.

Concerns do, however, remain regarding the access to technology that many local students have—particularly as innovations and subsequent costs increase. Thus UTEP should lead the development of a coordinated PreK-16 strategy for the use of technology across PreK-16 education in the El Paso area. The following recommendations of the PreK-16 Educational Collaboration Committee address priorities and opportunities for expanding and improving the use of technology to promote PreK-16 collaboration. PreK-16 partners should:
• Increase and improve access to public school records through the electronic transfer of student records and transcripts, which is not currently possible.
• Establish shared data systems to track student records PreK-16 to measure both aggregate improvements in achievement and the impact of support provided through PreK-16 initiatives.
• Partner with business and industry to identify and develop strategies for more effectively using technology PreK-16.
• Promote universal participation (UTEP, EPCC, area districts) in the Orion network.
• Promote the “Technology Corridor,” to include area educational institutions, Fort Bliss, Biggs Field, White Sands Missile Range, and Sandia and Los Alamos National Laboratories.
• Continue to expand the use of technology to promote improved communication with students and enhanced distance learning programs.

General Committee Thoughts

In addition to the preceding recommendations, committee members shared a period of debriefing during which they offered their thoughts on the “big picture.”

• UTEP needs to “clearly define” what it wants to be the “best” in the world at, and all resources must flow into that idea. There should be a branding of key programs.
• The Principal is the most important position on a school campus—a concept that must be emphasized when it comes to creating long-term change. We may be able to incorporate more effective models of administrative preparation by partnering with business. Indeed, we must determine how to best create an administrative culture in our schools that promotes motivation and teamwork.
• Access may be our “Big Idea,” and UTEP should showcase its expertise in providing access. Access and Excellence should be meshed from grades PreK-16. Since Excellence is the other half of the big idea, we need to increase rigor throughout the PreK-16 pipeline while increasing opportunity. We must foster research on access and excellence.
• We need to establish a “community education” account that draws on the analogy of deposits and credits (what we put in is what we can expect to get out—long-term investments pay out over time).
• There must be an “all for one” mentality among UTEP, EPCC, and the public schools, with students as the focus. Perhaps another education summit might address this collaboration.
• Teachers aren’t trained to be managers; they learn by default. This is a detriment to our educational leader pipeline.
The Undergraduate Education Committee was charged with developing recommendations for specific actions to improve the quality of undergraduate education at UTEP. Members were asked to review and propose strategies to improve and strengthen existing initiatives in the following focus areas: access and admissions; developmental education; partnerships with the El Paso Community College; programs for honor students and high achievers; tuition, fees, financial aid and scholarships; student success and graduation rates; curriculum/program development; and technology and alternative educational delivery systems.
Introduction

The Undergraduate Education Committee focused on three main areas: (1) Student Access, (2) Curriculum, and (3) Student Success. The committee quickly discovered that these areas commonly overlap, allowing committee members to revisit ideas from multiple perspectives. Recurrent ideas are represented in the committee’s final report.

The committee reviewed a large number of documents provided by the UTEP Office of Admissions, Entering Student Program, Center for Institutional Evaluation, Research and Planning (CIERP), and other units on campus. The purpose of this review was to determine what current efforts to improve undergraduate education are occurring and where opportunities exist for additional and continued pursuit of excellence. Members of the committee organized a fact-finding visit to campus to learn firsthand about students’ undergraduate academic and extracurricular experiences. This visit included a tour of Miner Village and recreational facilities, followed by interviews with students in leadership roles on campus. On a second visit, committee members interviewed a cross section of UTEP faculty members, selected for their interest in and commitment to undergraduate education.

Recommendations

The committee generated a large number of recommendations in all three areas listed above. Over the course of discussion, four areas emerged as of highest priority for UTEP during the coming decade: (1) expanding student access through new models for course delivery; (2) creating or expanding opportunities for high achieving students; (3) increasing financial aid programs to support student success; and (4) developing connections to encourage students’ transition to the University.

- Expanding student access through new models for course delivery—Up to the present, UTEP has relied largely on traditional delivery methods for nearly all its undergraduate academic programs. But this strategy may be creating barriers to student success. The committee discussed at length alternatives to the current course and program formats and agreed unanimously that UTEP would benefit from creative and strategic thinking about how courses and curricula should be scheduled and delivered.
  - The expansion of El Paso to the east and northeast creates a challenge and an opportunity for UTEP. To promote access, the committee recommends the creation of one or more satellite locations to serve students who do not attend UTEP because of driving distance. These campuses could be modest at first, starting in meeting rooms in public libraries, at Fort Bliss, in space borrowed or rented from EPCC, or in under-used commercial space. For reasons of scheduling and driving distance, it may become feasible to purchase or lease more permanent space to create a presence in east or northeast El Paso. EPCC may serve as both a model for and a partner in this expansion. An alternative to satellite campuses would be the development of a mass transit system that would connect the main campus and the Texas Tech medical...
Satellite classrooms, condensed courses and instructional technology are among traditional learning alternatives recommended by the Undergraduate Education Committee.

• To attract students who work and have families (as is the case with many university drop-outs in El Paso), the committee recommends the development of courses and eventually entire programs that can be completed without disrupting students’ other life commitments. For example, short, compressed courses taught in the evening over three to six weeks rather than 15 weeks would serve this purpose. Summer, weekend, or evening programs would also provide greater flexibility. The committee further suggests that if these courses and programs have higher costs, higher tuition and fees might be appropriate for them.

• The committee recommends more focused use of instructional technology to extend the reach and increase the flexibility of academic programs. Achieving this goal will require improving students’ off-campus access to technology, a task that could be accomplished through satellite computer centers created in partnership with public libraries, EPCC, or Fort Bliss as well as through computer loan-out or rental programs. Funding could be sought from large foundations committed to the expanded use of technology.

• Creating or expanding opportunities for high achieving students—The committee dealt early and at length with developmental and transitional issues and learned that UTEP is making visible progress in meeting the needs of students who enter college with skill deficits and other barriers to their success. Transitional programs to help move students into university-level work are having a positive impact on success rates during students’ first year of study. However, the committee recommends increasing opportunities for those who have fewer starting deficits and could thus advance more quickly. To expand the appeal of UTEP to high achievers, the University should create additional programs that serve the specific needs of such students.

• The committee recommends that UTEP introduce an “accelerated curriculum” that would enable a student to finish an undergraduate degree in three years or less. This could be a powerful recruiting tool, allowing UTEP to build a new relationship with local educational entities and work with high school counselors to attract the top 10 percent of students who might otherwise choose to attend other universities. The accelerated program could be marketed as a “preparatory” curriculum for graduate study. Students could develop a personalized road map that incorporates UTEP’s accelerated curriculum into plans for post-graduate study. Incentives could be aligned with this curriculum, so that students would be eligible for scholarships and other benefits tied to their progress toward degree completion at an accelerated rate.

• The committee recommends that UTEP expand undergraduate research opportunities, enabling high achieving students to engage in research and in close collaboration with faculty at or near the beginning of their studies in their major field. Faculty will be expected to seek funding for such research experiences from public and private sources, enabling both faculty and students to receive financial rewards for work that is completed.

• Increasing financial aid programs to support student success—The committee recognized that academic success is not based solely on student intellect or ability. Given the
socio-economic status of the El Paso region from which UTEP draws the majority of its students, the committee recommends the creation of new and the expansion of existing programs that assist with students’ financial needs. These programs could remove some obstacles that might otherwise delay or prevent students’ completion of college.

- The committee recommends the creation of a scholarship program that encourages students to earn their degrees “on time.” Students who participate in this program would receive financial incentives to complete their degree within the time period deemed appropriate for that degree, without penalty for participation in cooperative or internship programs. This scholarship program would encourage, support, and reward students’ timely completion of degrees.

- Recognizing that the majority of UTEP students work, the committee recommends that UTEP expand opportunities for meaningful student employment on campus. In addition to providing financial support, on-campus employment of students in paraprofessional positions (e.g., undergraduate researchers, peer leaders, peer advisors, tutors) also facilitates the development of their leadership skills and connection to campus. The more flexible on-campus work schedule will support rather than impede students’ academic progress.

- In order to attract and assist students with children, the committee recommends additional support for on-campus childcare, increasing student access to childcare by expanding program capacity and subsidizing childcare costs for students who demonstrate financial need. The committee recommends exploring a programmatic link between on-campus childcare and the Early Childhood Program in the College of Education to see if this connection could assist with program expansion and cost.

- Developing connections to encourage students’ transition to the University—Recognizing that developmental issues are largely community-based, the committee recommends that UTEP further develop its external and internal connections to help students transition to the University.

- The committee recommends that UTEP strengthen outreach to middle, high school, and EPCC students and their parents to prepare students to transition to the University. Recommendations include (1) expanding efforts to invite students to the UTEP campus; (2) providing programs that advise students and their parents about course requirements and academic expectations; and (3) providing placement test workshops and content review to help increase student performance on college placement tests. In addition, prospective students and their parents should be advised about scholarships and other forms of financial aid, so they can know how they are going to pay for college. High school guidance counselors also need to be involved in these efforts.

- The committee recommends that UTEP expand its partnerships with high schools and EPCC to address developmental issues prior to students’ enrollment at UTEP. Co-enrollment opportunities with EPCC should be expanded for students requiring additional developmental coursework.

- The committee recommends that UTEP expand the number of university seminars and learning communities to help students transition to college and promote student, faculty, and curricular connections.

Nearly 20,000 students enrolled at UTEP in fall 2005 – a testament to the university’s commitment to access and excellence.
This committee was responsible for assessing the needs and demands of postgraduate studies. It was to make recommendations to improve and encourage the growth of master's and doctoral level education and to enhance programs that improve job performance and career opportunities. The committee's analysis will include evaluation of: doctoral program needs and the demands of the regional community, other graduate and professional certificate programs, infrastructure requirements, research support, workforce linkages, and continuing professional education. It also analyzed the feasibility of pharmacy, architecture, law, and medicine programs at UTEP.
Introduction

The Graduate and Professional Development Programs Committee was charged with examining a wide range of issues associated with advanced educational opportunities in the El Paso region, including development of doctoral, master’s, and certificate programs that meet regional workforce, infrastructure, and research needs and that provide continuing professional education opportunities to the region’s population. The Committee reviewed the current state of graduate and professional education and research at UTEP, looked at approaches to graduate/professional education at other universities, developed and implemented a pilot survey of regional employers, and met periodically to examine strategies for the development of graduate and professional programs over the next decade.

Findings

UTEP is poised to become a top-tier university, uniquely prepared to address critical national and international issues through advanced research and educational programs, while at the same time serving as a powerful driver of regional economic and social development. During the past 15 years, the University has made substantial strides in the development of master’s and especially doctoral degree programs. These programs provide vital opportunities for people in the region and draw extremely talented students from elsewhere in the United States, Mexico, and other countries. In addition, professional education programs successfully address important regional workforce needs. By 2014, graduate education will be much more the norm for preparation in a wide range of fields, and UTEP must be prepared to meet that challenge and demand. There are a number of areas in which UTEP might develop new programs, but it is critical that the University continually reevaluate its offerings so that its graduate and professional programs can address needs and opportunities as they arise. The decisions that are made during the next several years concerning academic and professional program development will largely shape the UTEP of 2014 and determine whether or not UTEP will realize its potential as a major research and educational institution in the U.S.-Mexico Border region.

The Committee members identified two broad objectives:

• The development of UTEP graduate and professional programs must be closely linked to current and potential regional workforce needs and economic development goals.
• There should be a strategy in place to ensure that UTEP’s new and existing graduate programs become nationally and internationally recognized to establish UTEP as a world-class university.

Key Objectives

• UTEP will be a nationally recognized leader in graduate programs relating to the U.S.-Mexico border (broadly defined to include cross-cultural and international issues).
• As a major minority institution, UTEP will be at the forefront
nationally in the creation of graduate education opportunities for Hispanics and other minorities and will be regarded as a national leader in higher education issues related to diversity and inclusion.

Recommendations:

- Promote interdisciplinary programs such as environmental science, border health, and international business that address key fields from the perspective of UTEP’s strengths.
- Aggressively pursue partnerships with other universities and institutions such as Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACyT) to build strength in border-related programs.
- Introduce courses and certificate programs related to the border (including foreign language study) to complement and enhance existing programs across the disciplines.
- Develop model programs to encourage Mexican-Americans and other minority students to pursue graduate education.
- Consider securing the services of a consulting firm or external advisors to determine the program areas that should be emphasized and the best strategies for achieving excellence and recognition.

- UTEP doctoral programs (and master’s programs in key areas) will achieve national recognition for excellence.

Recommendations:

- Recruit the faculty now who have or will have the qualifications to bring national recognition to graduate programs by 2014.
- Consider the reorganization of academic and research programs into new units to promote collaboration and facilitate branding.
- Plan and launch a broad campaign for national and international prominence, particularly in research and graduate programs.
- Focus capital fundraising activities on creating endowments to support graduate fellowships and research professorships.
- Create an external advisory board or committee to assist in evaluating programs and in developing plans for the initiation of new programs. The Board might be made up of representatives of existing College advisory boards and include other appropriate members, such as graduate administrators or faculty from other institutions. Attention should be paid to building ongoing links with critical corporate partners.
- Introduce a sufficient number of doctoral programs to guarantee UTEP recognition as a research university.
- Be competitive with other graduate programs in funding and other resources provided, in order to recruit outstanding students nationally and internationally.

- UTEP will be recognized in the El Paso-Cd. Juárez border region, in Texas, and in the Southwest as a key driving force for building a knowledgeable and highly skilled workforce to create and sustain economic and social development.

Recommendations:

- Establish a culture of dynamic creativity and flexibility in the provision of advanced educational opportunities, including integrating professional and graduate education, providing licensure and other professional certifications and training, and experimenting with non-traditional course timing and delivery formulas.
- Undertake an “environmental scan,” in collaboration with regional employer groups, to ascertain program needs.
This should be repeated in some form on a regular basis, possibly every four years.

- Lead an alliance of employers and higher education institutions in the region, including southern New Mexico and Cd. Juárez, to provide a coordinated response to advanced workforce needs.
- Pursue partnerships, both regionally and beyond, to develop new programs and enhance existing ones. Potential partners include other universities, major laboratories, and corporations with parallel or complementary interests. Potential local partners include Texas Tech, Fort Bliss, El Paso Community College, and universities in Chihuahua.
- Consider strategic academic/professional program development in some key areas, such as urban planning (where there is currently a certificate program), construction management, human resources, hospitality, border health, health professions, software engineering, and homeland security.
- Substantially increase awareness of UTEP programs among employers and potential students.

- Advanced education efforts will complement and enhance UTEP’s research initiatives, including border security, international business, health disparities, environment, education, and emerging technologies.

Recommendations:

- The creation of a four-year medical school in El Paso represents a very important opportunity for collaboration and for the development of joint and linked programs in health-related areas, including joint M.D.-Ph.D. programs. Plans should be made to capitalize on this opportunity.
- Projected rapid growth of Fort Bliss represents an important opportunity for the development of graduate programs, research activities, and a variety of partnerships. Plans should be made to capitalize on this opportunity.
- The development of professional schools, such as law, pharmacy, or urban planning, might be desirable for the growth of the University, if there is demonstrated community support and sufficient resources are available to create programs of the highest quality.
- The development of doctoral and research master’s programs should be closely linked to defined University research objectives and should support regional economic development where possible.
Health professions education and health and biomedical research are top priorities at UTEP. The charge of this committee was to evaluate and develop recommendations regarding regional health professions program needs in relation to regional demand, health research priorities, and public health issues. It also evaluated and provided recommendations with regard to Texas Tech’s proposed medical school and explored opportunities for partnerships with EPCC, UACJ and other regional institutions.
Introduction

The Health Professions Education/Health and Biomedical Research Committee was charged with recommending goals for the following two areas:

- Health professional workforce needs for the region
- Regional health research priorities and public health

The committee first reviewed the data related to health professionals in the areas of nursing, pharmacy, and medicine, focusing both on current needs and on future market demands. Although the shortage of health professionals is not limited to these three categories, the committee limited the scope of its review to those focus areas.

Critical Issues—Health professional workforce needs for the region:

- The average age of El Paso nurses is 47.
- The average age of El Paso pharmacists is 57.
- The average age of El Paso physicians is 56.
- The small number of nurses entering and graduating from local programs at UTEP and EPCC is insufficient to meet the need.
- The greatest number of baby boomers will reach retirement age in 2015, placing significant strain upon the health care delivery system.
- A reduced number of nurses are immigrating to the U.S. since 9-11.
- Health futurists like Ewe Reinhardt from Princeton predict an exacerbation of the serious shortage that now exists. It is the condition of a “perfect storm”—fewer nurses, a greater number of elderly ill, fewer hospital beds available, fewer physicians, greater availability of health technology (e.g., implants such as knees, hips, hearts, discs, defibrillators, anti-spasticity devices, etc.), higher cost pharmaceuticals, and diminished reimbursement for health care providers.
- The physician ratio analysis demonstrates a significant need for Primary Care physicians (Family Practice, Obstetrics/ Gynecology, Pediatrics, and Internal Medicine); for specialists in areas such as Nephrology, Cardiology, Gastroenterology, Endocrinology, Dermatology, Neurology, and Infectious Diseases; and for surgeons with specializations in areas such as Neurosurgery, Urology, General Surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, and Cardio Thoracic and Vascular Surgery.
- Family nurse practitioners, who can provide up to 80% of primary care, are in short supply.
- The cost of medical malpractice insurance has had a negative impact on health care providers.
- The seamless border between El Paso and Ciudad Juárez expands the health care service area and creates unique health-related exposure risks.
Luis H. Urrea II and Jimmy W. Janacek discussed critical issues and recommendations for the future of health professions education.

Recommendations—Health professional workforce needs for the region:

- Additional funding to hire faculty in UTEP’s School of Nursing and the Pharmacy Program is critical as not all qualified applicants can be admitted due to shortages of faculty created primarily by low salaries compared to the private sector.
- Greater use of distance learning classrooms is needed to compensate for the shortage of qualified faculty.
- The accelerated nursing program should be implemented and expanded.
- UTEP and EPCC should place a high priority on providing scholarships to high school students planning to enter University/College programs in nursing and pharmacy.
- UTEP should support the implementation of the four-year medical school at Texas Tech Health Sciences Center—El Paso.
- UTEP should implement a high school/UTEP/medical school acceptance program similar to the one in place at UTMB Galveston.
- UTEP should expand its existing College of Health Sciences outreach to area magnet schools to counsel and recruit students to health professional careers. This initiative may be similar to the Texas Scholars Program, but with the focus on health careers.
- All private practitioners in the region should be surveyed to ascertain their views of the Medical School and the Regional health care model.
- The state legislature must provide increased funding for health care training programs in order to expand capacity and allow for the higher costs of providing these programs. Such funding should especially target high-demand occupations such as nurses, pharmacists, physicians, dentists, nuclear medicine technologists, and radiology technicians.
- The legislature should provide compensation to health care program faculty that is competitive with the wages they could earn outside of teaching. This will help break through the major barrier of expanding health care education programs—the lack of qualified faculty.
- All stakeholders—including the University—should advocate for continued aggressive tort reform to reduce medical malpractice insurance costs.
- UTEP should support the economic development of the city to create a strong market that will financially sustain health care providers. Such economic development will be an important retention tool for graduates of any of the education programs—nursing, medicine, pharmacy, etc.
- All stakeholders should continue to support collaborative initiatives among the area’s higher education facilities, including UTEP, Texas Tech, EPCC, the Universidad Autónoma de Cd. Juárez (UACJ), the UT-Houston School of Public Health, Sul Ross State University, and other regional partnerships.

Critical Issues—Regional health research priorities and public health

- There is no centralized database cataloging active and completed research projects on either side of the border—in either El Paso or Cd. Juárez.
- There is a lack of structured collaboration among the various parties engaged in health care research, including UTEP, Texas Tech, private physicians, private hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, biomedical agencies, R. E. Thomason General Hospital, William Beaumont Army
Teresa M.F. Limberg and Irene Chavez discussed health professions education issues, including collaborative initiatives to boost the quantity and quality of professionals in the field.

UTEP students are highly recruited into biomedical and other health science fields in the region and across the nation.

Medical Center, private employers, the El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District, state agencies, and federal agencies.  
- There is little structured collaboration between entities in Cd. Juárez and those listed above, even in research on classic Border-related health issues.  
- Those conducting research must deal with and meet the requirements of a variety of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs).  
- Throughout the country there is a significant lack of Hispanic-based health research.

Recommendations—Regional health research priorities and public health

- A centralized repository of all research projects—both closed and active—should be established to maximize resources, prevent duplication, and build upon known outcomes.  
- The database project could be managed by the Hispanic Health Disparities Research Center or by the Center for Border Health Research.  
- The board of directors to manage the collaborative should include UTEP, EPCC, Texas Tech Health Sciences Center-El Paso, the UT-Houston School of Public Health, the El Paso City-County Health and Environmental District, William Beaumont and Thomason Hospitals, the private hospitals, a member of the County Medical Society, a representative of area medical manufacturers (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, Ethicon, etc.), the International Border Health Commission-El Paso, etc.  
- The Greater El Paso, Hispanic, and Black Chambers of Commerce should collaborate with other stakeholders to promote and capitalize on El Paso’s prime location for Hispanic-based research as a way to attract biomedical research firms and major University players from throughout the United States. Such research could become another economic engine for El Paso.  
- The Chambers and the news media should develop an awareness campaign about health-related research projects, their outcomes, their benefits, their contributions to the overall health of Hispanics, and their economic contribution to the City of El Paso.
U.S. - Mexico Border and International Programs

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Joe Alcantar, Jr., Lillian Esparza Hinojos, Felix S. Fernandez, Maly Fong, Michael M. Miles, Henry Quintana, Jr., Gabriela Quirarte, Andres Sandoval, Arthur Wiener

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UTEP’s binational location on the U.S.-Mexico border and its historical link to the Kingdom of Bhutan place the University’s academic programs, research and service efforts in an international context. This committee was charged with exploring opportunities to develop international partnerships that take advantage of UTEP’s unique geographic location. It provided recommendations on areas including: cooperative academic and research collaborations, Mexican student enrollment, study abroad programs, and other international program opportunities.
Introduction

UTEP's border location and its historical link to the Kingdom of Bhutan place its academic programs, research, and service efforts in an international context. The committee explored opportunities to further international relations and determine the anticipated needs of the U.S.-Mexico border region in the next decade. Recommendations are provided in areas including academic and research collaborations, community outreach, Mexican student enrollment, and other international programs.

UTEP is committed to providing quality higher education to a diverse student population. It has taken advantage of its close proximity to Mexico to enhance programs that capitalize on its border location by building strong interdisciplinary programs and research collaborations among faculty, institutions of higher education, and industry, especially in northern Mexico. Given its unique relationship with Ciudad Juárez and the rest of Mexico, themselves gateways not only to the rest of Latin America but to Europe and Asia as well, UTEP is ideally situated to become a renowned locus for international studies and research. Within this framework, the following is the committee’s vision for UTEP’s stature by its centennial year of 2014:

• The University of Texas at El Paso will be a premier institution for international studies, programs, and research with emphasis on Mexico, on U.S.-Mexico themes, and on international borders.

To fulfill this vision, we anticipate that in the next decade UTEP will need to consolidate and continue to build upon existing programs, while at the same time creating new opportunities for innovative, synergistic initiatives.

Background: Existing Programs

The foundation for turning this vision into reality is strong, as UTEP has developed extensive activities in U.S.-Mexico and other international arenas. These span all areas of the University, including academic disciplines, outreach, service, and student activities. As of Fall 2004, UTEP enrolled 1,854 students of Mexican nationality, a number that constitutes approximately 10 percent of our student body and approximately 13.9 percent of all Mexican students in the U.S., the largest concentration of Mexican students in any U.S. university. It should also be recognized that there is a significant but uncounted number of U.S. citizen students born to Mexican parents and raised in Mexico who are a part of the UTEP community. These students are another link between Mexico and UTEP. Many pursue careers in the U.S. with unique insight into the international environment.

At the undergraduate and graduate levels, UTEP offers academic programs focused on Mexico, U.S.-Mexican interactions, and other international areas. Important recent additions include the Ph.D. in History emphasizing the Borderlands, the interdisciplinary M.A. in Latin American and Border Studies, the Ph.D. in Environmental Science, the Ph.D. in International Business, the Ph.D. in Composition and Rhetoric with cross-cultural emphasis, and the M.F.A. in Bilingual Creative Writing. UTEP is actively pursuing closer integration of its programs with the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez and
other regional universities through the program Building Higher Education on the U.S.-Mexico Border.

Research and teaching on Mexico, U.S.-Mexico themes, and international topics are organized through several specialized campus units—e.g., the Center for InterAmerican and Border Studies (CIBS), the Center for Law and Border Studies, the Center for Environmental Resource Management (CERM), the TransBoundary Water Institute, the Office of International Programs, and the Center for Research on Hispanic Health Disparities—and through most academic departments. The University currently has 27 convenios with Mexican and other international universities and agencies, including governments.

These activities, while impressive in their range and depth, are the result primarily of individual initiatives and are relatively uncoordinated and not well known regionally or nationally. There has been an insufficient formalized effort to coordinate, to publicize, to seek opportunities for integrative actions, or to plan strategically in this area. Thus, we regard the present situation not as an end point but rather as a base to build on to fulfill the vision articulated by our committee, a vision that will maximize UTEP’s strategic advantages in its border location, its binational reach, its bicultural composition, and its majority Hispanic student population.

Recommendations

The committee offers the following recommendations for making the University of Texas at El Paso a premier institution for international studies, programs, and research with emphasis on Mexico, on U.S.-Mexico themes, and on international borders:

I. Coordinating Entity

- There must be a clear institutional commitment to the creation and continuance of a coordinating entity that spans all colleges and all existing and new centers.
- This entity should have the structural capacity to advocate for, initiate, nurture, guide, and actively promote all international activities, whether in existing administrative units or in areas new to the institution.
- This entity should have as its charge the facilitation of strategic planning within existing and new programmatic endeavors and of cross-disciplinary program development.
- This entity will incorporate community input through an advisory board comprised of international community leaders and students.

II. Existing International Initiatives

- Existing convenios should be inventoried and evaluated for their efficacy in creating excellence in international initiatives and, if need be, discontinued.
- Existing international programs and initiatives should also be inventoried and evaluated for their efficacy in creating excellence and, if need be, reconsidered and reconfigured.
- The University must commit to supporting and publicizing existing international initiatives.
- The undergraduate and graduate curricula must be internationalized across disciplines.
- Study abroad must become a major University priority.

This would be accomplished by:

- Increasing funding
- Creating a diverse menu of study programs
- Incorporating study abroad into major requirements whenever possible
- Developing clear agreements between institutions/ departments regarding transfer credits to enable and encourage study abroad
- Fostering the study of second and third languages in K-12 education, to better prepare students for study abroad

The number of UTEP students studying abroad should represent 10 percent of the University’s student population by 2014. (Currently it is approximately half of one percent [.005], even under the most generous definition of “study abroad.”)

- While the implementation of traditional models of study abroad needs to be expanded, UTEP should also develop new models based on relationships with nearby Mexican and other international institutions, so that increased numbers of students and faculty may participate and other collaborative activities can be developed.
- As UTEP moves toward Research I status, and in order for the international dimension to make a greater mark across all disciplines in the University, research expenditures on Mexican, U.S.-Mexico, and international studies must be at least tripled over the next decade.

III. Foreign Student Enrollment

- Building on its established base, UTEP must actively recruit students from abroad in order to make this campus a truly international community.
- Primary to this effort must be raising Mexican graduate student enrollment by at least 50 percent of the current enrollment through active on-site recruitment and new convenios.
- Formalized collaborative teaching and research between UTEP and foreign (especially Mexican) institutions of higher education should become a major recruitment tool for building graduate student enrollment in fields related to
Mexico, the border, and international studies.

- UTEP must commit to the strategic development of cross-disciplinary Ph.D. programs in these fields, to recruit top students and faculty from both the U.S. and internationally.
- UTEP should pursue both state- and externally-funded mechanisms to provide competitive TA/RA support as a strategy to recruit foreign students.

IV. New Synergies

- The development of programs and activities that integrate Mexican and Mexican-American students should be reinforced. This will provide a truly international experience that both enhances student achievement and leads to cross-border understanding and community development.
- Traditional academic “silos” must be actively broken down to facilitate research and curricular synergies across disciplines and University units.
- These synergies should include, but not be limited to, the following areas, which are listed in no particular order of importance:
  - Engineering
  - Biomedical research
  - Science
  - International business and cross-border trade
  - Demographics
  - The environment
  - Technological and legal aspects of security
  - Technologies of and for the future
  - Translation studies
  - Cultural and linguistic competencies
  - Cultural and artistic programs
- Departments not presently engaged in international research and teaching should be encouraged to collaborate with departments that are.
- UTEP should encourage and support synergies between the Consulates and cultural agencies on both sides of the border.

V. Executive Education

- In order to extend UTEP’s Mexico and international impact, the committee recommends programs to involve the entire range of bi-national actors in the community with campus international activities.
- UTEP should become a model for executive education by creating an Institute of International Executive Education. The Institute would, among other things, provide short-term courses and seminars designed specifically for the needs of executives and other leaders on both sides of the border. These courses should include, but not be limited to, comparative cultures of management and business; comparative civics; and comparative linguistic and cultural competencies in the professions (health, law enforcement, business, the media, etc.)
- This program should serve executives and leaders from throughout the U.S. through web-based courses or intensive seminars at UTEP.
- Executive education programs should be developed and marketed as important revenue generators for the University, especially given the large presence of Fortune 500 firms in the area.

VI. Outreach

- Outreach efforts should be fully integrated into the mission of all UTEP programs related to Mexico, the border, and international studies.
- Included in outreach activities should be the local community, schools, arts agencies, and businesses.
- Joint activities between UTEP/El Paso and Ciudad Juárez should be established as a way of furthering bi-national synergies.

The U.S.-Mexico Border and International Programs Committee of the University of Texas at El Paso’s Centennial Commission believes that by 2014 UTEP will be a premier institution for international studies, programs, and research with emphasis on Mexico, on U.S.-Mexico themes, and on international borders. This will be accomplished by the creation of the coordinating entity, which will have as its charge the implementation of the stated recommendations.
Regional Economic Development

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J. Michael Adkins, Artemio F. De La Vega, Steve Hoy,
Susan A. Melendez, Carolyn L. Mora, Cecilia Mulvihill,
Tommy L. Poe, Francisco S. Uranga, Jorge Vielledent

UTEP Liaisons
Barry Benedict, Frank Hoy, Dennis Soden

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Front Row: Carolyn L. Mora, Cecilia Mulvihill, Susan A. Melendez, Cindy Ramos-Davidson
Second Row: Frank Hoy, Barry Benedict, Tommy L. Poe, Jorge Vielledent, Steve Hoy,
J. Michael Adkins, Dennis Soden

UTEP’s role in the economic development of the El Paso/Juárez region through its graduates and programs has been consistent and rising since the University’s creation in 1914. This committee was charged with defining plans for UTEP’s future contribution to: entrepreneurship, business development, and technology transfer and commercialization. Members also explored local environmental issues as well as collaborations with Fort Bliss, NMSU, Texas Tech and UACJ.
Introduction

The Regional Economic Development Committee was charged with creating an action-driven plan to position UTEP as the focal point for research, training, and educational advancement and support in key business market sector areas important for long-term (by 2014) regional economic development. Formed in October 2004, the committee developed a set of eight key questions about the region’s economy by 2014 and about UTEP’s role in economic development:

1) What will the new economy look like and how will it be different from the “old” one?
2) How can we ensure that the future economy embraces the increasingly diverse populations of our urban, rural, regional, and international areas?
3) Where’s the money? How can we provide the capital needed for economic development? Can strategies such as credit enhancement, venture capital, and securitization be enhanced to expand economic development financing and build new high-growth business enterprises?
4) Will the concept of Smart Growth take hold to promote prosperity, quality of life, and an enhanced sense of community?
5) How can we develop and maintain a comprehensive planning process? Where would such a process start, who would be included, how broad should the focus be, and how can we keep our planning momentum alive?
6) How can we balance economic growth with the preservation of our natural resources so that we secure a high quality of life for the community and binational region? Is conservation-based and socially responsible development a viable option for our region in 2014?
7) How can we foster the growth of small companies that have the flexibility and streamlined style of management that can adapt to fluctuations and rapid changes in technology?
8) How can we take advantage of globalization to ensure that our community is seen as a forward thinking regional/border community?

Over the course of six months, the committee invited the following local industry leaders to serve as guest speakers, providing insight into and information on current economic initiatives:

• Dr. Frank Hoy—Center for Entrepreneurial Development, Advancement, Research and Support (CEDARS) (entrepreneurial development)
• Dr. Dennis Soden—Institute for Policy and Economic Development (IPED) (regional and international research, data analysis)
• Mr. Hector Holguin—E-Holguin Group (advanced technology initiatives)
• Dr. Richard Rhodes—El Paso County Community College (specialized technical training and educational support)
• Mr. Martin Aguirre—Upper Rio Grande @ Work (workforce development)
• Col. Byron Greenwald—Fort Bliss (state of Fort Bliss and its expansion needs)
Committee members developed ways to position UTEP as a leader and catalyst in regional economic development.

- Dr. Manny De La Rosa—Texas Tech Health Sciences Center (school of medicine and its long-term vision)
- Mr. Bob Cook—Regional Economic Development Corporation (industry recruitment and expansion)
- Mr. Ed Archuleta—Public Service Board (water and environment needs)
- Ms. Lucinda Vargas—Plan Estratégico de Cd. Juárez (Juárez, Mexico vision and action plan)

Committee members participated in monthly roundtable meetings with these speakers, focusing on the community's current and long-term needs. The committee’s task was to develop consensus, vision, key initiatives, and strategies in core market sector areas to better position UTEP for leadership in regional economic development. Over the course of its meetings, the committee considered the following external forces that will have a great impact on local, regional, and international economic development:

- Global Competition—which has forced certain market sectors (e.g., manufacturing, agriculture, and service industries) to diversify and re-think their industry sectors, enhancing productivity and developing higher-value added products and services.
- New Technologies—which have been creating new opportunities in communications, computers, biomedical technologies, space, defense, and high-tech security industries.
- Defense Spending—which has stimulated growth nationwide and which will have a major local impact as Ft. Bliss continues to grow and experience an increased need for educational support and talent. Additionally, research support will be needed in aerospace, electronics industries, and high-tech defense security initiatives.
- Demographic Changes—particularly the growth of our Hispanic and elderly populations, leading to new demands for consumer products, real estate, retail trade, health care, and other consumer services.

The committee anticipates that a number of market sector areas will evolve in response to these external forces, enhancing the region’s opportunities in 2014.

Recommendations

The Regional Economic Development committee has made recommendations in the following areas: Information Technologies, Biomedical Research, Defense Security and Space Industry, Business and Professional Services, and Environmental Innovations.

- Information Technology
  - Expand current technology and related programs to enhance technology transfer, research, and commercialization.
  - Develop a Rapid Fire Technology Council made up of local, regional, and international technology businesses, key educators, and students to ensure ongoing and long-term advancements in technology, particularly in areas related to cross-border and security initiatives.
  - Develop a mentor/protégé private sector support program with local, regional, and international technology businesses to enhance the employability of students upon graduation.
  - Encourage the expansion of current initiatives in the areas of software development, telecommunications, computer design, system integration, and electronics that have the greatest potential for start-up business and job creation.
  - Continue to provide aggressive international and national benchmarks for UTEP’s information management and
technology curricula, challenging students not only to reach their full academic potential but to exceed their own expectations of their abilities to contribute to global technology industries.

• Biomedical Research
  • Establish key curricula for biomedical research and commercialization, including nano-technologies, medical instrument design, medical supplies, and high-tech medical equipment and instruments.
  • Encourage teachers, professors, and health care professionals to partner with local, regional, and international medical centers, hospitals, and teaching hospitals in addressing the need for professionals in key health care-related occupations.
  • Establish and sustain UTEP as one of the top national research universities in biomedical research and border health-related issues.
  • Develop an aggressive, community-wide campaign to publicize the uses of the biomedical technologies that could be created through technology transfer and the development of a biomedical incubator or a biomedical research center of excellence.
  • Continue to expand the current collaborative efforts among the Colleges of Engineering and Health Sciences and the Department of Biological Sciences.

• Defense Security and Space Industry
  • Create partnerships with Fort Bliss, White Sands Missile Range (WSMR), and Holloman Air Force Base for long-term training needs in the areas of high-tech security, missile design, and defense instrument development for border communities in cooperation with homeland security.
  • Support current military initiatives in acquiring new aerospace, security, and defense training missions at Fort Bliss and WSMR that can be used as a model for other border communities.
  • Partner with key space and defense security industries in research and outreach.
  • Establish an on-site Launch Pad Learning Center (LPLC) at Fort Bliss and WSMR to capitalize on military requirements for advanced learning in defense-related areas for current enlisted service men and women.
  • Expand the concept of the on-site Launch Pad Learning Center to offer Fort Bliss military civilians expanded opportunities for advanced degrees.

• Business and Professional Services
  • Expand the current focus in the College of Business Administration on the free enterprise system and entrepreneurial development to other colleges (Liberal Arts, Engineering, etc.)
  • Continue to enhance the capacity of CEDARS as the key connection to on-campus entrepreneurial networking by providing encouragement, best practices, and a "real life 101" curriculum to all on-campus aspiring entrepreneurs.
  • Expand current IPED initiatives in economic forecasting, international market analysis, and private sector market research as the go-to source for local, regional, and international border development business information.
  • Enhance opportunities for UTEP students to interact with business executives and CEO’s who can provide lifelong learning experiences related to real-world business.
  • Support a proactive collaboration that facilitates the creation of value-added jobs through sustaining and expanding current business enterprises by providing information on key business trends nationally and internationally.
  • Recruit faculty from diverse disciplines, including those who have had business ownership and other entrepreneurial experiences.
  • Prepare and support a long-term strategy to implement a Hospitality Management degree that will address the needs of the tourism and entertainment sector, enhance the region’s quality of life, and complement economic development activities.

• Environmental Innovations
  • Enhance UTEP’s current partnership with the Public Service Board/El Paso Water Utilities so that the University’s intellectual resources can be used to find new ways of meeting the region’s demand for usable water.
  • Through key partnerships with institutions in Juárez, Chihuahua, and Mexico, identify innovative ways to improve air quality.
  • Develop environmental testing platforms that will attract federal funding for air- and water-related research and development initiatives.
  • Research innovative ways to use the sun as energy for business and industry use.

The Committee believes that the strategies outlined above will position UTEP as the leader, coordinator, and key catalyst for the economic development of this region.

Committee members believe global competition, defense spending and demographic changes will enhance the region’s economic development through 2014.
With significant growth in enrollment expected over the next ten years, UTEP must plan for its growth in cooperation with area hospitals, Kern and Sunset Heights neighborhoods. Members considered the potential impact of growth on UTEP’s physical facilities, student housing, central campus, traffic circulation, and parking.
Introduction

The UTEP’s Neighborhood Committee was charged with identifying and exploring prospects and challenges for positive and progressive University relations as the campus develops. The committee was asked to recognize opportunities and forecast the impact of significant growth in the campus population on a constrained area.

To surface recommendations, the committee examined the current nature of adjacent neighborhoods, business sub-populations, and public infrastructure and of UTEP’s campus physical infrastructure and population. Growth projections and facility plans for UTEP were presented and discussed.

Committee members’ expertise and diversity of interests provided a strong foundation for evaluation and projection. Areas such as architecture, urban planning, city government, land development, construction, law, engineering, grass-roots organization, and small business were represented on the committee, many of whose members were residential or business neighbors or both.

Each committee meeting focused on a theme significant to the University’s neighborhood impact and relations—Transportation and Movement, Quality of Life and Land Use, Housing and Community Development, and Economic Development. The results were cross-tabulated, organized, and reduced to a set of concise recommendations for consideration and action.

Results and Recommendations

The zones most directly affected by UTEP are found in the Sunset Heights, Rim, Rio Grande, Kern, and Mission Hills areas. The impact zone is generally bounded by Brown Street and Franklin Mountain State Park on the east, I-10 on the south and west, and Executive Drive on the north. The committee labeled this collection of distinct but related neighborhoods, businesses, and public spaces the “University District.”

After the focused theme meetings, the committee assessed the opportunities and challenges for University-Neighborhood relations and development in two distinct zones—the integrated campus-neighborhood and the extended University District.

• The Integrated Campus-Neighborhood—In general, the committee recommends that the University factor connectivity between the campus and the adjacent neighborhood into its development plans. Taking an integrated approach to developing the campus with neighborhood and public infrastructure could yield a range of benefits including reduced traffic congestion, increased attractiveness for potential students and faculty, reduced crime, increased support from neighborhood businesses and residents for University construction and expansion, expanded housing options for a growing student population, and the ability to attract and retain top faculty through desirable housing options and quality-of-life features. Proactive planning, development, and public relations will encourage advocacy on behalf of the University from its adjacent neighborhood stakeholders.
• The Extended University District—An overarching recommendation of the committee is for the University to work actively and consistently with its adjacent business and residential neighbors to coordinate development and increase the viability of the entire District. The committee recognized the University’s unique ability to convene and facilitate positive participation from the full range of affected stakeholders.

   Benefits of coordinated development include increased support for the expansion of the University’s physical plan and programs, an increase in businesses that are attractive to and support students and faculty, reduction of urban blight, reduction of development costs for shared public infrastructure, increased traffic control, improved safety, and reduced crime, to name a few.

   Within each of the two zones, the committee surfaced both broad and very specific opportunities and challenges. The final work of the committee was to sort and reduce all the opportunities and challenges to a more concise list corresponding to both zones (the Integrated Campus-Neighborhood and the Extended University District). The committee’s recommendations are organized into four major categories: Land Use, Transportation and Movement, Public Relations and Partnerships, and Implementation.

• Land Use
  • Revisit the University Master Plan with linkages integrated to the University district.
  • Implement Form Based zoning to promote mixed-use and transit-oriented development and connectivity to the areas, while integrating business and entertainment.
  • Evaluate centralization of peripheral facilities.
  • Identify and construct recognizable campus gateways.
  • Develop design strategies that reinforce the “University District” (e.g., public realm, streetscapes, buildings, signage, benches, vegetation).
  • Create and connect a network of open spaces, including pedestrian-friendly corridors.
  • Evaluate adjacent undeveloped properties for expansion.

• Transportation and Movement
  • Develop and implement a Transportation Plan addressing parking, transit, pedestrians, and campus links within the Integrated Campus and Expanded University/Neighborhood District.
  • Construct parking garages to concentrate peripheral parking and increase capacity.
  • Encourage the development of a pedestrian oriented inner campus.
  • Collaborate with the Texas Department of Transportation and the City of El Paso on arterial and interstate access to the areas.
  • Coordinate pedestrian crossings with vehicular traffic at the campus periphery.
  • Work with the City of El Paso on traffic calming measures in high pedestrian, off-campus corridors.
  • Work with Sun Metro to support the establishment of a bus terminal and promote community and University use through incentives.
  • Create and connect pedestrian and bike paths to link UTEP with its adjacent neighborhoods.
  • Emphasize pathways that reinforce and utilize the natural landscape—arroyos, outcrops, native vegetation, panoramic views.
  • Promote carpooling, bicycling, and Park and Ride for students, faculty, and staff.

• Public Relationships and Partnerships—Develop a specific Public Relations plan for the University District implemented by an Office of Neighborhood Relations to:
  • Actively strengthen interaction among University District groups (e.g., neighborhood development associations, business development associations, the University).
  • Partner with businesses to recruit out-of-town students to UTEP and El Paso.
  • Educate property owners on the benefits of Form Based planning and development to gain buy-in and participation.

• Implementation
  • Create a University District Council to include neighborhood, business, medical, and University representatives.
  • Create the Office of Neighborhood Relations to support, facilitate, and implement the goals of the University District Council.

Addendum—Office of Neighborhood Relations

Following submission of the above recommendations, the committee offered an addendum expanding on the idea of the Office of Neighborhood Relations suggested in the “Implementation” bullet. Successful implementation of the recommendations improves dramatically if someone is charged with direct responsibility for working on desired outcomes. A defined point of contact has numerous advantages, including visibility, advocacy for the University, liaison between related stakeholders and the University, and a consistent presence with government agencies.
(e.g., TXDoT, MPO, City Planning), to name a few. While the office appears to fit best within Institutional Advancement, the committee recognizes that other highly visible locations within the University may be equally or better suited to its success.

The charge of the Office of Neighborhood Relations will be to act as the catalyst and support for the University District Council, creating positive interaction between UTEP and its neighbors in three areas—business-related, recreation/quality of life-related, and neighborhood-related:

- **Business Related:**
  - Encourage service learning activities in the University District (e.g., trail development).
  - Create packets and conduct orientation for realtors.
  - Develop a public relations campaign and approaches for active engagement of adjacent neighborhoods and businesses.
  - Create information packets on UTEP for businesses to use.
  - Coordinate and offer a Lyceum Series on the role of urban planning in economic and community development.
  - Develop a “Design Studio” as a storefront for economic development.
  - Actively place students in local internships to stimulate entrepreneurial interest.
  - Survey students to identify “gaps” in adjacent businesses.
  - Post neighborhood rental opportunities on the UTEP website.
  - Recruit out-of-town students to increase UTEP’s resident population since a 24-hour student population increases business opportunities.
  - Identify gaps within the Entertainment Zone (e.g., movie theaters, art galleries) and work with Economic Development to encourage desirable businesses.

- **Recreation/Quality of Life Related:**
  - Enhance weekend and off-peak access to campus attractions (e.g., recreational facilities, museum, trails, Chihuahuan Desert Gardens, library).
  - Develop a sculpture garden in Charlie Davis Park to showcase UTEP artists. The garden would be another unique attraction that takes advantage of the campus setting.
  - Create Park Walk trails with signage along the trail and maps for guests (e.g., those staying at the new hotel).
  - Print maps of paths and walking tours or make PDF versions available on the UTEP website.
  - Actively promote use of recreational facilities, entertainment and education options within adjacent neighborhoods.
  - Assemble a neighborhood packet to be given to all new hires at their orientation.
  - Develop and promote weekend activities to highlight the campus (e.g., 5K races, bicycle races).
  - Sponsor movies on the lawn (Charlie Davis Park?) and invite adjacent neighborhoods. Student organizations could sell concessions as a fundraiser.
  - Promote sports camps with neighborhood associations to develop loyalty for women’s and Olympic sports.
  - Develop a University District neighborhood packet with UTEP information, Alumni Association membership benefits, education/recreation/entertainment offers, etc.
  - Increase signage for educational purposes (e.g., plant tours, geology and geography, campus history and architecture, directory kiosks).

- **Neighborhood Related:**
  - Encourage e-mail sign up for Calendar of Events to promote knowledge of the range of campus activities.
  - Encourage linkages from neighborhood websites to UTEP’s site.
At the heart of an international metroplex, UTEP has unique opportunities to provide the community with expanded prospects for an enhanced quality of life. This committee was charged with exploring the diversity and quality of cultural offerings, entertainment activities, intercollegiate athletics and recreational events, museum exhibits, library programs, and lifelong learning opportunities.
Introduction

Since 1914, UTEP has provided El Paso and the region with intellectual and cultural resources that have enhanced the quality of life of students, members of the UTEP family, and the community at large. UTEP’s academic programs in the visual and performing arts enhance these quality of life resources and provide students with venues to share their talents. Many people in the area remember the first time they saw the Nutcracker in Magoffin Auditorium or attended a men’s basketball game in the Don Haskins Center. They take advantage of the art galleries and the musical events on campus and enjoy tailgating before Miner football games. Older adults attend classes where UTEP professors share their knowledge and experience. Miner athletic teams generate a spirit that unites the El Paso community.

As we look toward 2014, UTEP has the opportunity to expand the resources that enrich the quality of life of students and the community. To help shape its recommendations, the committee developed the following definition of quality of life: “Integrating the community and UTEP for the enrichment of the region by providing excellence, equity, and access through intercollegiate athletics, performing and visual arts, museums, and continuing education.” The committee’s recommendations follow four guiding principles:

I. Strengthen the educational pipeline: UTEP should create degree programs and performance opportunities that are relevant to El Paso’s future economic development, so that local students will remain in El Paso and work in fields that enhance quality of life.

II. Market to the right audiences: UTEP should promote its resources to recruit students and market its intellectual, cultural, and performing arts programs to the entire community, both young and old, taking note of a potentially large retirement community.

III. Develop partnerships: UTEP should develop partnerships with community cultural and arts organizations to provide educational and programming opportunities.

IV. Strive for excellence in intercollegiate athletics: UTEP should enhance its programs to provide students and the El Paso community with athletic events that enrich quality of life.

The committee’s recommendations in these four areas follow below

Recommendations

I. Strengthen the education pipeline
   • Create an opera degree program in the Department of Music to take advantage of the popularity of opera in the El Paso/Cd. Juárez region.
   • Create a hotel/restaurant management degree program in the College of Business Administration to include a culinary program emphasizing Southwestern and Mexican foods.
   • Create a film degree program and a technical program to train theater technicians in the Department of Theatre, Dance and Film.
   • Create an art history degree program in the Department of
Art and consolidate works of art currently housed in various buildings across campus into one building for study and care.

II. Market to the right audiences
• Create a program of visiting professorships in the performing and visual arts to bring nationally known talent to UTEP.
• Expand Center for Lifelong Learning and Continuing and Professional Education programs that are relevant to the needs of adults and retirees and build a new library building/annex to accommodate extended services.
• Create a monthly “Lyceum” lecture program and market it throughout the community.
• Enhance the Centennial Museum through expansion and incorporate a Children’s Museum.

III. Develop partnerships
• Construct a performing arts complex, including a conference center with a multi-use theater (500 seats) to accommodate the UTEP Dinner Theatre and other community events.
• Consider a public/private partnership to develop a retirement complex close to campus to take advantage of University resources.

IV. Strive for excellence in intercollegiate athletics:
Areas of enrichment include conference affiliation, sports programs, facilities, football game atmosphere, and miscellaneous recommendations.
• Conference Affiliation (currently a member of Conference USA)
  • Continue membership in an elite (Top 60 Division I-A conference to provide four to five bowl game opportunities, a long-term and financially lucrative regional and national television agreement, three to six NCAA post-season opportunities for men’s and women’s basketball, and conference championships for all sponsored sports programs.
• Sports Programs (to be implemented by 2014)
  • Baseball—based on UTEP’s regional location and “citywide” interest in baseball (high school programs, El Paso Community College, professional baseball, baseball academy). Possible facility partnerships may be available within the city.
  • Swimming and Diving (Women)—based on “citywide” interest in swimming and diving (high school programs, private swim programs) and Title IX legislation. Sharing facilities with the current UTEP Swimming and Fitness Center is a possible option.
  • Bowling (Women)—based on the relatively low start-up cost of implementing a program, “citywide” interest in bowling (league bowling), Title IX legislation, and the possible availability of a state-of-the-art facility near the UTEP campus.
  • Equestrian (Women)—based on the relatively low start-up cost of implementing a program and on strong potential community support and access to both a facility and horses. Title IX legislation is also a consideration.
  • Rodeo (Women)—based on local interest and Title IX legislation. Additional research is needed.
  • Competitive Cheerleading (Women)—based on a current nationally recognized UTEP Cheerleading Squad and the possibility of developing a competitive UTEP Cheerleading Team. Title IX legislation is also a consideration.

• Facilities (New Construction and/or Improvements)
  • Conduct a feasibility study to determine location, building components, and cost of a Men’s and Women’s Basketball Practice Facility. (Priority)
  • Conduct an on-campus dining facility to provide meal plans for student athletes.
  • Conduct a feasibility study to determine the size, scope, and cost of the following additions or improvements to the Sun Bowl Stadium:
    • Luxury suites
    • Club section with chair backs
    • TV monitors at concession stands and upgraded concession stands to provide greater customer service
    • Additional seating—in the event that the UTEP football program continues its progress and thus generates more fan interest both locally and regionally
    • Natural grass—in order to attract potential international soccer matches. However, associated costs and/or resources (e.g., maintenance, water) and a limited use requirement for a grass field may limit the feasibility of this option.
  • Conduct a feasibility study to determine the size, scope, and cost of the following additions or improvements to the Don Haskins Center (Priority):
    • Luxury suites
    • Additional seating (15,000 to 18,000 total seats suggested), in the event that the UTEP football program continues their progress, creating more fan interest both locally and regionally. Additional seating would allow UTEP to host NCAA Basketball Tournament games and other special events such as concerts.
    • TV monitors at concession stands and upgraded concession stands to provide greater customer service
    • Upgraded arena lighting to provide greater fan entertainment
• Additional office space for Men’s Basketball, Don Haskins Center, and Special Events staff
• Secure a space for the football team to meet as one unit.
• Upgrade the Baltimore Field/Football Practice Facility (lighting, storage, an additional practice field).
• Upgrade the Kidd Field stadium seating and offices, to include a cover over both the track and stands, helping to eliminate sun exposure.
• Construct an on-campus tennis facility for use by UTEP students, the UTEP women’s tennis program, and the El Paso community (e.g., tennis camps).
• Expand UTEP’s Athletics Administrative offices to accommodate current and future growth in the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. These offices could be built as part of the men’s and women’s basketball practice facility.

• Football Game Atmosphere Enhancements
• Develop a Mesa Street Block Party by closing off Mesa Street and/or working with the City to construct a tunnel under Mesa Street for pedestrian traffic. The area on Mesa Street from Baltimore Street to University Avenue could be named the “Mine Shaft District,” as is done on other university campuses.
• Improve the transportation system to ease access to the Sun Bowl:
  • Coordinate efforts with Sun Metro to offer centralized pick-up and return for UTEP home football games at such places as Cielo Vista and Sunland Park Malls.
  • Organize on-campus shuttle system/customer service carts to take fans from one side of Sun Bowl Stadium to the other as well as to provide transportation to the stadium from parking lots that are not within walking distance.
• Enhance merchandise stands and locate them throughout the stadium.
• Extend the marching band’s activities prior to entering the stadium (e.g., performance on campus for tailgaters) and provide the band with additional scholarship assistance.

Mark Heins worked with other committee members to develop recommendations to expand resources that enrich the region’s quality of life.

• Miscellaneous Recommendations
  • Increase UTEP’s athletics budget to $25-$35 million per year so that UTEP can become a Top 25 Intercollegiate Athletics program. In order to achieve this goal, UTEP must become a consistent 40/10 program (average fan attendance of more than 40,000 fans per home football game and more than 10,000 fans per men’s basketball game).
  • Develop a Community Steering Committee to assist in the implementation of all initiatives and recommendations.
  • Develop satellite Miner Shop(s)/Ticket Centers throughout El Paso (e.g., East, Northeast) that would sell UTEP merchandise and tickets for all UTEP-sponsored events.
  • Explore a possible “tie-in” (both at the conference level and individually) with the Sun Bowl football game.
  • Host first and second round games of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament.
  • Host the conference men’s and women’s basketball tournaments.
  • Explore the possibility of creating UTEP’s own men’s and/or women’s basketball tournament as a potential source of revenue.
  • Develop elite team camps and/or tournaments to attract prospective students from all areas of Texas and the United States.
  • Schedule competition in all sports programs with Top 25 teams as well as with the following regional teams—University of New Mexico, New Mexico State, BYU, Baylor, Texas Tech, Texas A&M, UT-Austin, Arizona, and Arizona State.

The Sun Bowl Stadium is among UTEP’s many venues that provide entertainment and add to the quality of life in the El Paso region.
This committee was charged with defining UTEP’s image on a local, state, national and international level. The committee was responsible for providing recommendations for effectively reaching constituencies and accurately portraying UTEP’s many successes to the region and the nation.
UTEP’s image is about more than this astonishing silhouette visible at dusk – it’s a complex combination of impressions and attitudes that the public holds about the University.

**Introduction**

In 1990, UTEP published its Diamond Jubilee Commission Report, which was the product of a group of distinguished citizens celebrating the University’s 75th anniversary and recommending changes for its next 10 years. The report of UTEP’s 2001 Committee on Image discussed challenges faced by the University in creating and maintaining a positive image, in part because its image is integrally related to public images of El Paso. The committee recommended that UTEP:

- Enhance its communication with off-campus constituencies
- Clarify its admissions policy concerning “open admissions”
- Work with other area institutions to address the educational needs of the region
- Give greater visibility to its programs and people who have achieved national prominence
- Develop programs that take advantage of UTEP’s location
- Encourage college-going among its constituents
- Expand doctoral degree program offerings
- Find ways to seek input on a regular basis from community groups and organizations so that UTEP is more responsive to their needs

Now, in 2005, UTEP can report that the University has:

- Improved its communication with multiple constituencies
- Developed an important message that UTEP’s mission embodies both access to and excellence in the education it offers
- Improved its external communication by enhancing the depth and breadth of work undertaken by the University Communications Office
- Developed academic and student support programs that fit its location and demographics
- Improved its recruitment efforts
- Increased the number of doctoral programs it offers
- Continued to create networks of positive relationships with community, discipline-specific, and national foundations and corporations.

The 2005 Centennial Commission Committee on Image, therefore, found an improved image of UTEP as perceived by alumni, community leaders, and academic organizations at regional and national levels. Just as UTEP is moving to higher-level stature as a research and teaching university, so too must its efforts to create and sustain an improved organizational image move to a higher level of quality.

**Scope of the Committee’s Work**

The Centennial Commission Committee on UTEP’s Image collected and reviewed information about the University’s self-image and perceptions of the University held at the local, state, national, and international levels. The Committee:

- Reviewed promotional materials used by UTEP in general and by Intercollegiate Athletics in particular.
- Heard a presentation by President Diana Natalicio about UTEP’s contemporary image, based on its vision, mission, and institutional goals.
Committee members learned how impressions and attitudes toward the university are formed through personal experience and interpersonal and mediated communication.

The Notion of Image

An organization’s image is a complex combination of impressions and attitudes that people have about the organization. Even though an organization like UTEP may develop a coherent vision, mission, and goals, it is difficult to control all the experiences, impressions, and attitudes that a wide variety of people will have about the institution. The image of UTEP held by many alumni is driven by their experiences in a particular major, by their past and current interest in the football or basketball programs, or by whether they live in El Paso or another city. UTEP’s image among people in the El Paso community who never attended the University may be affected by the graduates they have hired, their own collegiate experiences at other universities, their neighbors who may work at or attend UTEP, or other factors. Among UTEP students, the University’s image is affected by which major they are pursuing and their interactions with faculty, staff, and other students. Among faculty, images are affected by their perceptions of UTEP compared to other universities where they have taught and where they earned their advanced degrees. How UTEP is perceived by El Paso area high school teachers and counselors is affected by their interactions with UTEP recruiters and admissions personnel, whether or not they attended UTEP, the perceived quality of people they know who graduated from UTEP, etc.

Accordingly, there is no single image of UTEP or any other university, even though the institution may work diligently to advertise its achievements, publicize its philosophy, and inform high school students, teachers, and counselors about its fine faculty and facilities. Nevertheless, UTEP can develop a consistent message, a thread or theme that runs through its stated mission, values, and goals, that can capture the essence of the University.

An organization’s image is formed through personal experience; interpersonal communication, such as conversations with friends; and mediated communication, such as TV news reports, brochures, and website information. Creating or modifying an organizational image is a long-term project. It can be done by creating and controlling the amount and type of information disseminated about an organization. It is important to understand that while mass media may be effective in creating awareness of and knowledge about an organization (e.g., UTEP has a good football program), interpersonal communication is more effective in persuading people to give money to or enroll in the University.

In order to assess UTEP’s image in 2005, the committee took note of several dimensions of organizational image:

- The degree to which an organization is responsive to its community
- The quality of an organization’s employees
- The quality of an organization’s management
- The quality of an organization’s products
- Customer satisfaction
- The degree to which an organization is innovative
- The degree to which an organization’s constituents are confident about its future
- The degree of clarity in an organization’s internal and external communications
- The degree of clarity in an organization’s mission and goals

Members of the committee assessed many dimensions of UTEP’s image, including:

- The responsiveness of its curriculum to El Paso’s goals for economic development
- The preparedness of its graduates to succeed in their chosen fields
- The adequacy of its facilities
- The degree to which it compares favorably with other universities
- The degree to which it is perceived as an exceptional university within its community and region and on a national and international basis
- The degree to which its graduates are prepared to compete effectively in the global marketplace

Present Efforts to Improve UTEP’s Image

Before seeking comments about UTEP’s image from a variety of constituencies, the committee reviewed current
The committee also requested a meeting with Dr. Natalicio to elicit her thoughts about UTEP’s image. Among the observations she shared with the committee were the following:

- Because most UTEP students come from El Paso County, the image of UTEP within its own region is critical.
- The distribution of UTEP alumni is diffuse—high concentrations are found in Houston, Dallas, and Austin, and in several cities outside of Texas. UTEP has attempted to build visibility among alumni through NOVA.
- The decision to join Conference USA will have a positive impact on UTEP’s image in Texas. More individuals throughout the state will begin to learn about UTEP and El Paso.
- The best vehicle for creating a positive image of UTEP among students is the Internet. Improving UTEP’s websites is critical in the future—they must be easily navigated and “updatable.”
- The biggest challenge to UTEP as it creates its public image is its location in El Paso. The city and UTEP must work together to improve El Paso’s image. The city should promote UTEP as a “quality institution serving the next generation of leaders.” The University is one of the city’s most important assets. Increasingly, UTEP’s graduates will be educated professionals and members of commissions, boards, and other groups supporting and contributing to the community.
- UTEP’s image should emphasize its value as a source of Hispanic engineers and other professionals in a variety of fields. Many companies and corporations are searching for the bicultural and often bilingual perspectives these individuals can offer.
- Based on an excellent faculty recruited from across the nation, an increasing number of doctoral degrees, and improved facilities, prospective students should perceive UTEP as an institution of choice, not as a “fallback alternative” to universities outside the region.
- In many respects, UTEP has a more positive image outside of El Paso than inside the city. This is a common notion found in many parts of the country: “if it’s local, it can’t be good.”
- UTEP cannot be immodest as it continues to develop and sustain its image as a high quality university.

**Assessment of Image: Results of a Preliminary Survey**

The committee believes that assessing UTEP’s image should be an ongoing affair. To begin this effort, a survey was developed by committee members and posted on UTEP’s website. Committee members contacted small groups of individuals (alumni, high school teachers, business people, professionals, etc.), asking them to access and complete the survey. As of March 2005, more than 100 individuals had responded to the survey.

Thirty-five percent of the respondents were between the ages of 35 and 55; 21 percent were between the ages of 26 and 34; 13 percent were between 56 and 65 years of age. Fifty-two percent of the respondents were male; 45 percent were female. Fifty-three percent of the respondents were Anglo; 35 percent were Hispanic; 2 percent were African-American, and the rest did not answer this question. Sixty-four percent of the respondents live in El Paso, while 20 percent reside elsewhere in Texas. Other respondents lived in a variety of other states, including New Mexico, California, Colorado, Illinois, and New York. The professional groups represented in the survey were mainly in accounting, law, banking, insurance, and marketing. Retired individuals and students also were responders. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents were not enrolled in an educational institution when completing the survey, but 51 percent had baccalaureate degrees and 18 percent had master’s degrees. Thirteen percent of the respondents had attended college for some period of time. Fifty-four percent of the respondents did not graduate from UTEP, while 43 percent were UTEP graduates. However, 60 percent had attended UTEP at some point. Eighty-six percent had never served in the military.

The following statements were included in the survey to assess respondents’ images of UTEP:

- “I would send my child to UTEP.” (67% agreed or strongly agreed; 16% disagreed.)
- “UTEP is my first choice/recommendation as a university.” (31% agreed or strongly agreed; 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed; 26% did not answer or had no opinion.)
- “I would hire a UTEP graduate.” (89% agreed or strongly agreed.)
- “UTEP receives the same level of funding for its students as do all universities in the University of Texas System.” (53% disagreed or strongly disagreed; 14% agreed; 29% had no opinion.)
- “UTEP is a good community partner.” (78% agreed or strongly agreed; 16% had no opinion.)
- “Athletics is an important part of UTEP’s image.” (86% agreed or strongly agreed.)
- “UTEP’s curriculum is responsive to the local community’s goals for economic development.” (51% agreed or strongly agreed; 34% had no opinion.)
- “UTEP has an experienced, tenured faculty committed to education and research.” (59% agreed or strongly agreed; 32% had no opinion.)
- “Students who attend UTEP primarily represent the El Paso
region.” (83% agreed or strongly agreed; 10% had no opinion.)

- “Students choose to attend UTEP for these reasons. . . .” (Respondents were asked to choose two reasons—46% gave “location” as their answer; 38% responded with “financial” reasons; 7% gave “course of study” as their answer.)

- “UTEP graduates are well prepared to succeed in their chosen field.” (71% agreed or strongly agreed; 20% had no opinion.)

- “UTEP’s facilities are adequate for its programs.” (61% agreed or strongly agreed; 25% had no opinion; 10% disagreed or strongly disagreed.)

- “UTEP compares favorably to other institutions of higher learning.” (59% agreed or strongly agreed; 23% disagreed or strongly disagreed; 14% had no opinion.)

- “I participate in UTEP or UTEP alumni-sponsored events.” (54% agreed or strongly agreed; 27% disagreed or strongly disagreed; 11% had no opinion.)

- “UTEP is viewed as an exceptional educational institution in the local community.” (63% agreed or strongly agreed; 17% disagreed; 15% had no opinion.)

- “UTEP is viewed as an exceptional educational institution in the region.” (56% agreed or strongly agreed; 23% disagreed; 17% had no opinion.)

- “UTEP is viewed as an exceptional educational institution nationally.” (59% disagreed or strongly disagreed; 19% agreed or strongly agreed; 18% had no opinion.)

- “UTEP is viewed as an exceptional educational institution internationally.” (36% had no opinion; 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed; 17% agreed or strongly agreed.)

- “UTEP is a source of pride for me.” (66% agreed or strongly agreed; 20% had no opinion; 9% disagreed or strongly disagree.)

- “UTEP is poised to compete globally in the 21st century.” (42% had no opinion; 35% agreed or strongly agreed; 19% disagreed or strongly disagreed.)

- “UTEP prepares its graduates to compete effectively in the global marketplace.” (32% had no opinion; 36% agreed or strongly agreed; 21% did not respond to this question; 8% disagreed.)

The survey also included open-ended questions. These questions and a sample of responses are provided below.

- “UTEP is best known for these academic areas: (Please name two).” The two most frequent responses were business and engineering.

- “UTEP is not well known for these academic areas: (Please name two.)” Several disciplines were listed by respondents, but the most frequent response was “No Response.”

- “When you think of UTEP, what is the first image, word, or phrase that comes to mind?” The most frequent responses were basketball, El Paso, and No Response.

- “What kinds of outreach programs should UTEP offer to high school students?” Sample responses include:
  - Academic fairs
  - Alumni presentations on campus and off campus
  - Camps for visiting high school students
  - Classes in the high schools taught by UTEP professors
  - Financial aid workshops
  - Math and science

- “What kinds of outreach programs should UTEP offer to individuals pursuing graduate degrees?” Sample responses include:
  - Career fairs
  - Intern programs in local businesses
  - Online degrees
  - Fellowships

- “Any additional comments or suggestions.” Sample responses include:

UTEP’s ties to the Himalayan Kingdom of Bhutan are visible in more than its architecture, including these ceremonial flags on the lawn of the Centennial Museum.
ambivalence felt toward UTEP by some of its constituents. For instance, a large majority of respondents (67%) said they would send their child to UTEP. However, 40 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that UTEP is their first choice as a university compared to 31 percent who indicated it would be their first choice. Eighty-nine percent said they would hire a UTEP graduate, but the respondents indicated that the University is viewed locally and regionally as an exceptional educational institution, but not nationally or internationally. The two main reasons that respondents gave for attending UTEP were its location and its perceived financial value, not because of the courses of study it offers. Yet 59 percent indicated that UTEP compares favorably with other institutions of higher education. Forty-two percent of respondents gave no opinion as to whether UTEP is poised to compete globally in the 21st century; 54 percent had no opinion or did not respond to the statement “UTEP prepares its graduates to compete effectively in the global marketplace.” In some respects, therefore, the negative or unclear image of UTEP as a major, respected university at the national level still outweighs the positive image of UTEP as the source of excellent graduates. Negative perceptions are still influential, even when positive realities are experienced by those familiar with UTEP.

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It should be noted that the survey respondents were not, in the main, UTEP graduates, faculty, or current students. As is indicated in the recommendations provided below, a more extensive series of image assessments should be conducted by UTEP during the next few years.

Findings and Recommendations

Based on the responses to the survey and information provided to the committee during its deliberations, it offers the following major findings:

• UTEP has increased its public awareness and improved its public image in the past 10 years. The University is using multiple media forums to promote the institution and its programs.
• UTEP’s public image is more positive today than it was 10 years ago, due to a number of factors including a better understanding and use of print and electronic media (including the Internet); development of a variety of media products (e.g., brochures, videos, websites); and the dedicated efforts of Dr. Natalicio to improve and expand UTEP’s educational offerings, her tireless work and involvement in high-profile groups such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the National Science Board, and her unwavering commitment to UTEP’s mission of accessibility and quality in higher education.
• UTEP’s public image continues to be tied very closely to El Paso’s public image.
• A number of factors affect UTEP’s image to external audiences: the success of its sports teams; student/faculty accomplishments; perceptions held by and the comments of local, state, and federal officials; its relationship with the University of Texas System; graduation rates; time taken by students to complete baccalaureate degrees; and local media coverage, particularly by the El Paso Times. Such factors can be both positive and negative influences; they can be altered so that negative factors become positive ones for the University’s image.
• UTEP needs to do a better job communicating information about its individual colleges and departments. Alumni and students will often identify with a department or college before they identify with the University in general.
• UTEP’s Athletics Department, specifically its football and basketball programs, have been excellent sources of a positive image for the University.
• Many students in El Paso go away for a college education because they want the independence that comes from living away from home. Their choices are not necessarily related to the perceived quality of UTEP as an institution of higher education.
• Some residents of El Paso and Texas still equate UTEP with low academic standards and with being solely a “border school” and a commuter school, all of which are negative aspects of its public image.
• Alumni have a significant influence on UTEP’s image, particularly outside of El Paso.
• Within its own community and region, several of UTEP’s special programs have enhanced its image, e.g., Mother-Daughter Program, Law School Preparation Institute.
• UTEP’s faculty, staff, and students are all potential ambassadors for UTEP, through their actions and comments at conferences and conventions and their participation in community organizations.
• While there may be a variety of images about UTEP held by its various constituencies, the institution must have an overall theme that communicates its “unique selling point.”
• One positive public image of UTEP is that it is a unique university offering a bicultural, metropolitan educational experience that affords access and excellence simultaneously.

Finally, in response to its findings, the committee offers the following recommendations to improve UTEP’s public image—internally and externally—as it prepares for its Centennial:

• UTEP should conduct an in-depth analysis of its external and internal image through surveys and focus groups comprising its major constituencies, e.g., high school teachers and counselors; high school students; UTEP faculty, staff, and students; employers of UTEP graduates; members of the El Paso business, legal, and medical communities; and alumni. This assessment will be beneficial to University departments charged with promoting UTEP and its colleges
and departments, including University Communications, University Relations, Alumni Relations, Development, and others.

• UTEP's attempts to create a positive image should be guided by the notion that image matters—it provides a sense of pride, belonging, progress, and success.

• UTEP should develop a clear and consistent message that encapsulates its vision, mission, and key goals. This message should be communicated through integrated marketing.

• UTEP should create an image-making strategy that considers:
  • The rapid and increased growth of the Hispanic population along the Texas/Mexico border, and
  • The influence of Spanish-language and Hispanic media and marketing in Texas, along the border, and in major media markets throughout the U.S.

• UTEP should develop an advertising theme/slogan that reflects the institution's unique location, demography, and potential to educate the next generation of bilingual/bicultural leaders in the U.S.

• UTEP should develop a strategic plan to guide outreach to its alumni throughout the United States, Mexico, and Latin America.

• UTEP should develop or contract to provide advanced continuing education programs for professionals, including accountants, engineers, educators, etc.

• UTEP's academic departments should develop outreach programs to appropriate external constituencies, e.g., high school teachers, media professionals, accountants, engineers, criminal justice personnel, etc.

• UTEP should investigate the possibility of purchasing advertising banners on selected, high-profile websites.

• UTEP should take advantage of its new membership in Conference USA by aligning some of its public relations and promotional activities with media exposure at Conference USA game sites.

• UTEP should continue to develop specialized programs for different constituencies, such as the Law School Preparation Institute.

• UTEP should create an "El Paso Day" and other activities designed to bring members of the community to campus to see cultural and educational exhibits and demonstrations.

• UTEP should continue to develop a comprehensive database of all UTEP alumni and consider the creation of a "centennial project" through which alumni can be excellent ambassadors for the University.

UTEP has increased in enrollment, extramural funding, and academic stature during the past 10 years. It will continue to grow in all of these areas. Change is UTEP’s destiny, and its greatest challenge is its greatest opportunity. It must share its many stories with regional and national audiences, and it must do so aggressively. The University now enjoys a window of opportunity to become a preeminent bicultural, metropolitan research university. That is UTEP’s most important story, and it must be communicated clearly and strategically without delay.

The quality of the University is measured by its graduates – alumni who in turn can become excellent ambassadors for UTEP.
Alumni Relations and Development

Richard Fleager, Chair

Diane N. De Hoyos, Richard Gutiérrez, Sr., Jose Luis Gutiérrez,
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UTEP is dedicated to developing strong relationships with its alumni, supporters and friends. This committee was charged with recommending new platforms and channels that will allow us to effectively communicate UTEP’s message to all our various constituencies, including El Paso alumni, Mexican alumni and alumni in other regions of the U.S. It was also to determine fund-raising platforms and strategies, as well as a timeline and goals for the Centennial Campaign.
Introduction

The committee was charged with reviewing the activities of two important units in the Office of Institutional Advancement—Alumni Relations and Development—and making recommendations to optimize the work of these units to further UTEP’s academic mission and priorities. The committee found that two of the most pressing challenges are reaching multigenerational alumni and raising money to support all University programs.

Because of decreased financial support from the state legislature, it is essential to expand and increase support for University operations from alumni, community leaders, other individuals, corporations, foundations, and civic organizations, in terms of both financial contributions and the commitment of volunteer time. The Office of Institutional Advancement (OIA) is responsible for creating and advancing initiatives that forge a deep connection between UTEP’s message of “access and excellence” and key audiences and University constituencies, encouraging increased support of University departments and overall institutional objectives. Within OIA, Alumni Relations and Development create different appeals to and ways of approaching such key audiences.

To complete its assignment, the committee reviewed pertinent documentation and became well informed about the functions and responsibilities of the Alumni Relations Office/Alumni Association and the Development Office. After this review, two subcommittees were formed to review, evaluate, and provide recommendations for each of these units. After the two subgroups shared their information, an overall report was produced.

Alumni Relations Office and the Alumni Association

In 1999, the University’s Alumni Association (AA) submitted a proposal to the Alumni Relations Office (ARO) identifying ways in which both entities could work more closely with one another and develop a shared vision. Key components of this plan, which was approved by UTEP’s President Dr. Diana Natalicio included:

- Improving the long-term infrastructure for partnership between the ARO and AA to ensure the continuity of strategic planning and the implementation of all programs.
- Maintaining ongoing alumni programs.
- Establishing a dues-paying organization.
- Creating outreach programs (e.g., chapters, affinity groups).
- Evolving the Alumni Association into an organization that would be capable of financially sustaining all ongoing and future programs and activities.
- Establishing an initial three-year joint agreement among the ARO, AA, and UTEP that would outline financial contributions from the University to complete the ARO/AA goals as outlined in the plan.

The creators of this plan perceived it to be a living document that would be reviewed annually and modified based upon new opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, all of the partners...
involved in this endeavor strongly agreed that it was essential for the University to establish and maintain closer ties with entering students and alumni throughout their lifetimes. The committee believes that working with these constituencies will help build the future donor base needed to support all University programs.

The committee recognizes the outstanding work accomplished by the Alumni Association and its board when they decided to become a dues-paying organization. Based upon its current activity level, the Association is positioning itself to become a major resource for the University. As of March 2005, the Alumni Association had 2,706 dues-paying members, including 494 lifetime members and 2,212 annual dues-paying members. In addition, the Association provides a one-year complimentary membership to recent graduates and has implemented a system to convert them into dues-paying members.

The Alumni Board of Directors is responsible for the oversight of all Alumni Association activities. The seven-member Executive Committee (the president; the president-elect; the vice presidents for ways and means, membership, and public relations; the treasurer; and the secretary) oversees all Board activities and budget allocations and recommends actions to the Board.

Since the implementation of the 1999 Strategic Plan, major milestones have been accomplished. In FY 2000-01, the Alumni Association relied on UTEP to provide 37 percent of the income for programs and events. By 2003-04, the Association was able to fully support such activities. Because of the establishment of a dues-paying organization in 2000 and the generation of revenue through several affinity programs, the Alumni Association has built its revenue base to $200,000 to support and expand various programs and events, including Homecoming, class reunions, awards programs (Distinguished Alumni, Top Ten Seniors), athletic events (pre-game parties in various cities), and special events (Season of Lights). In addition, the Association has enhanced its efforts to build an Endowed Scholarship Fund, whose current market value is $232,000.

The Alumni Relations Office (ARO) oversees all alumni programming for the University. An integral role of this office is to assist the Alumni Association in the conceptualization and implementation of its goals and activities. Additionally, Alumni Relations provides a coordinating role with the Development Office by identifying, cultivating, and engaging alumni and friends in helping build the donor base for the University. The Alumni Relations Office is under the direction of an assistant vice president for Institutional Advancement charged with the supervision of all University alumni-related functions. The office has five full-time employees who are responsible for outreach.
activities, reunions (Homecoming, class, chapter and affinity reunions), awards programs (Distinguished Alumni, Gold Nuggets, Top Ten Seniors), and Alumni Association programming, including membership and chapter development. One individual receives minimal compensation from the AA to direct its Movin’ Miners travel program.

Over the past five years, the ARO and the Alumni Association have worked diligently to create chartered chapters in various regions across the country, including El Paso, Denver, Austin, Dallas, Houston, the San Francisco Bay Area, Juárez, and Chihuahua, Mexico. Affinity-based chapters have also evolved, including graduates of the Law School Preparation Institute and the Master’s Program in Public Administration (MPA). Other informal groups are found in San Antonio, New York, Hartford, Las Vegas (NV), and Washington, DC.

The ARO is the link between the AA and the University’s academic and campus-wide departments and programs. It will continue to facilitate interfaces between the AA and the various advisory councils, fundraising activities, and events sponsored by all University units. The Alumni database is maintained by the OIA Administrative Services unit. It contains information on alumni, friends of the University, donors, corporations, and foundations. There are currently 86,716 alumni in the database, with data on graduates, non-graduates, and scholarship students. The database includes current, reliable addresses for 93 percent (80,785) of the total.

Recent successes of the Intercollegiate Athletics Department (e.g., EV1.NET Houston Bowl game appearance by the football team; an appearance in the NCAA tournament by the men’s basketball team; conference championships or high conference placements in men’s and women’s track and women’s soccer; consistent national rankings for the women’s rifle team; and all-time attendance records at sporting events) have furthered alumni connections with the University. The recent move to Conference USA will provide the University with increased opportunities to compete in front of the large alumni bases located in Houston and Dallas.

**Development**

The University’s Development Office is responsible for non-research, private source fundraising. Within the structure of Institutional Advancement, the Development Office is the main fundraising unit. The office has 10 full-time employees, seven of whom are focused on individual giving. One employee is responsible for planned giving, while two employees cover corporate/foundation giving.

The Committee analyzed various donation levels and found that in the three years between 1994 and 1996, the Development Office raised approximately $8.9 million annually. Beginning in 2002, the amount grew to $16.3 annually, an 83 percent increase. In the past three years, there has been an impressive increase of 350 first-time gifts from alumni. The Development Office has introduced objective performance standards for gift officers to track donor contacts and proposal submissions.

The largest capital improvement program in UTEP’s history (totaling more than $45 million) is currently underway. Included in this program are a new engineering building, a bioscience research building, a new academic services building, and a softball field. Private donations have been an integral part of this program.

With annual research expenditures of more than $30 million, UTEP is continuing to establish itself as a research institution. Private foundations have contributed greatly to this effort. For example, the University received major grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Kauffman Foundation totaling more than $7 million.
UTEP has made significant progress in private gift donations in the past 15 years. The University employs a balanced approach to fundraising, including direct mail, telephone calling, grant writing, major gift cultivation, and planned giving. Structurally, the Development Office is a hybrid, being partly college- or program-based and partly centralized. In its report last year on UTEP’s research capability, the Washington Advisory Group acknowledged that UTEP’s development effort “has been surprisingly successful . . . considering the relatively depressed state of the regional economy.”

Recently, the University has been faced with mounting challenges with respect to state funding. The Texas Legislature decreased UTEP’s funding by $8.5 million (11.5%) for the 2003-04 fiscal year, and further reductions are likely. Confronted by many pressing societal issues, the Legislature is unlikely to increase its funding to keep pace with the University’s enrollment growth, further increasing the importance of Development to UTEP’s future success.

Recommendations

- The committee strongly believes that UTEP cannot reach its maximum potential without the active involvement, participation, and commitment of its alumni. Alumni are major stakeholders in the well-being of our University. They are the representatives of the University in all walks of life, they are advocates for the University, and they are our only lifelong constituency. Alumni are our University’s greatest single resource, and organizing UTEP alumni into a constructive and cohesive force is essential for UTEP’s continuing development.
- The committee recommends that the organizational infrastructure and resource management of the ARO and AA focus on programs, services, and volunteer opportunities that respond effectively to the needs of alumni and students. Both entities must offer programs and services at key points in the “student-to-alumni” lifecycle to encourage lifelong connections to the UTEP community, creating active pathways for a deeper commitment and support for the University.
- The University must begin preparing for its next capital campaign, which should have a goal of raising more than $200 million. In order to do this, the Committee recommends the creation of a long-range strategic planning task force to develop a fundraising model that will support future academic and athletic plans. This 12- to 24-month process should serve as a precursor to campaign organization. The strategic plan should include staffing recommendations, the possibility of involving University staff members outside of the Development Office, alumni database management practices, and travel and training needs.
- The University must continue to develop innovative ways of communicating with its alumni. In addition to getting involved for individual and/or social connections, today’s alumni expect the University to focus on lifelong learning opportunities, health and fitness interests, and family issues. The committee also recognizes the growing impact of the Internet and other virtual services on how we serve, support, and communicate with alumni, students, friends, donors, and funding sources. Thus, current communication strategies (e.g., postcards, NOVA, Horizons, e-mails, etc.) must be continually reviewed to ensure that they are the best means to communicate with all constituencies. In addition, pioneering educational programs should be considered such as an alumni college (e.g., development of lifelong learning projects by partnering groups such as the Alumni Relations Office, the Alumni Association, the Professional and Continuing Education Office, and Career Services). The committee believes that future success in engaging and involving alumni hinges on the University’s ability to communicate with and serve students and alumni with diverse interests, needs, and backgrounds.
- The committee recognizes that in the next eight years there will be more than 20,000 UTEP graduates. Thus, both the ARO and the AA must continue their efforts to encourage participation by students and graduates in alumni-related activities. Both entities should set goals that focus on programs, services, and volunteer opportunities that respond most effectively to alumni and students as a way of retaining graduates in the Alumni Association. To properly capture and track these graduates, better IT tools and research capabilities must be developed. This population is extremely mobile and can easily be lost if the University does not continually keep active e-mail accounts. The University must ensure that resources are available to support this task, since keeping track of recent graduates, retaining their interest in the University, and enabling them to understand University improvements will pay huge dividends as they mature and advance in the workplace.
- In conjunction with the Alumni Association, the Alumni Relations Office and the Development Office should conduct surveys of and focus interviews with alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends of the University to determine the most effective communication media and messages. This study should include suggestions for segmenting the population groups mentioned above, developing measures for analyzing the effectiveness of a particular communication campaign, and determining if the communication styles being employed create an emotional link to our audience.
- The Alumni Association must review its current board structure to determine if it can meet the changing needs of the University. Since UTEP’s colleges and the athletic department are interested in establishing closer ties to the Association, active committees below the board level may need to be formed. The integration of the Alumni Association into the fabric of the University will strengthen both the Association and the University. Alumni want to participate more heavily within the University and offer their services to various colleges and programs. As alumni become more closely tied to the University, semi-annual meetings among the Alumni Association’s Board of Directors, the various chapter presidents, and UTEP’s president are needed to
Developing excitement and interest in supporting UTEP begins even before students graduate, committee members say.

- The committee supports the efforts of the Alumni Relations Office and the Alumni Association to develop a major scholarship program to support students in their educational endeavors. Financial assistance by the Association and its chartered chapters is an effective way to impact a student’s life by encouraging academic excellence, recognizing achievement, and encouraging perseverance. This type of support also encourages students to value the importance of giving back to other students and the University.
- The committee believes that with the continued identification and cultivation of alumni, the present facility (the de Wetter Center) will not be able to accommodate the increased number of alumni and the growing expansion of alumni activities. Thus, the committee strongly recommends that a new alumni facility (center) be built within the next 10 years. This new alumni center should be located in an area that provides easy access for alumni and friends who are seeking information about the University and alumni activities and who are interested in participating in varied alumni programs.

Developing excitement and interest in supporting UTEP begins even before students graduate, committee members say.
The University of Texas at El Paso is deeply indebted to the members of the Centennial Commission for their generous commitment of time and expertise to this initiative.

Our faculty, staff, students and future students will be forever grateful to the Commission for its invaluable contribution to UTEP’s future.