

Texas A&M University-Commerce

**Compact with The Texas A&M University System
FY 2008 – 2009**

MISSION

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides a personal educational experience for a diverse community of life-long learners. Our purpose is to discover and disseminate knowledge for leadership and service in an interconnected and dynamic world. Our challenge is to nurture partnerships for the intellectual, cultural, social, and economic vitality of Texas and beyond.

VISION

Texas A&M University-Commerce will be recognized as a premier regional university, distinctive for high expectations, a nurturing environment, and innovations in the enhancement of learning to produce graduates who distinguish themselves in their chosen careers and as active, contributing members of society.

By focusing on access, participation, and success of students in quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs, Texas A&M University-Commerce will become the University of Choice for those seeking a higher education in the Northeast Texas area. As a result, Texas A&M University-Commerce will be recognized for the creation of partnerships and initiatives that promote intellectual, social, environmental, economic, and cultural advancement of the region and state.

While cherishing our rich heritage in teaching and service, we will place a renewed emphasis on research, innovation, and outreach. We will hold excellence as the standard for admission, performance, and graduation. We will be a university community of integrity that celebrates life-long learning, welcomes accountability and seeks to benefit society.

CEO STATEMENT

(Preamble to the 2007 Strategic Plan)

Our university is at a defining moment in its history. We look to the future cherishing the best of our traditions developed over our 118 year heritage. We move into a future where student qualifications and performance become a focus; where faculty teaching and research skills are more critical than ever; where we hold each other accountable and integrity is a priority; where programs emphasize excellence; where our techniques for constructing knowledge take on new and innovative forms; where we address funding and resources in ways we never have before and where we relentlessly tell the story of a wonderful University.

(President's Planning Directive)

We have just completed a new University Strategic Plan. To implement our plan this year we will begin a new annual planning process for A&M-Commerce. Our intent is to be continually planning for a three (3) year period. That is, we will be implementing a rolling 3-year plan where each department and division in the University will be projecting their programs, staff, facilities, and equipment needs. After the plan is fully implemented we will

conduct regular reviews to determine progress against our plan. The annual plan will be compliant with the applicable elements (goals) and objectives of our new University Strategic Plan. The term “element” was used in our planning process, and can be thought of as the major overarching goals of the plan.

The annual planning cycle will normally kick-off at the beginning of the spring semester with a set of planning guidelines from the President’s Office. Each college and division will tailor and apply these guidelines to all departments under their purview. Departments will then formulate their three-year plan and submit it to the dean of their respective college or division. Deans and Vice Presidents will conduct presentations from department heads and directors and consolidate the plan into a college or division plan. These plans will then be submitted to the President and presentations will be made by Vice Presidents and deans to the Planning Implementation Team. The Planning Implementation Team will make final planning recommendations to the President. The final approved plan will be issued by the President after necessary adjustments and reviews within the Office of the President.

While all elements and objectives of our Strategic Plan are important and every unit should strive to address as many needs as possible, the elements (goals) and objectives listed below will be our highest priority for FY 2008 and FY 2009. These priorities were set by President Keith McFarland as the major areas of emphasis for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009. Thus, when making key decisions on resource allocations, financial and personnel, these five elements (goals) will provide our guide. This planning cycle we will place an emphasis on the following areas (specific references to the Strategic Plan are noted):

Faculty and Staff Salaries	Element: Faculty & Staff	Objective 2
Retention	Element: Students	Objective 4
Increase Enrollment	Element: Resources	Objective 1
Admission Standards	Element: Students	Objective 2
Review of Marketing	Element: Marketing	Objective 2

All of these areas are included in this Compact, either as priorities or strategies within a priority.

Priority #1: Attract and retain outstanding faculty and staff who are committed to student success, development of knowledge and service.

Link to Strategic Plan:

- 2007 University Strategic Plan, Goal Number One: *We will attract, retain and value outstanding faculty and staff who are committed to student success, development of knowledge, and service.*
- Objective 2 of Goal Number One: *We will ensure that faculty and staff salaries, for both current and new employees, are highly competitive and at a level that will attract and retain outstanding individuals committed to the successful implementation of the vision, mission and values of the university.*

1st Objective of Priority #1:

- **To ensure that faculty salaries at A&M-Commerce are competitive within Texas, for both new hires and current faculty members.**

Strategies:

- Increase faculty salaries for all faculty ranks in both FY08 and FY09.
- A 5% merit salary increase was implemented in October, 2007, for FY08; with additional increases planned for FY09 (5% contingent on continued enrollment increases). Funding came from a budget pool set aside for this purpose.

Performance Measures:

- Average salary for each faculty rank (assistant professor, associate professor, professor), ranked by institution, by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, for all public senior higher education institutions, will move one position each year on state rankings for FY08 and FY09 (A&M-Commerce currently ranks below the median, for all three academic ranks.)
- Goal is movement toward the median salary ranking, for each of the three academic faculty ranks.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Funding for salary raises comes from tuition increases for FY 2008 of \$17 per semester credit hour. (Total amount of raises for FY 2008 = \$746,083)
- Tuition and fees will not be raised in FY 2009.
- Additional raises in FY 2009 are contingent on enrollment increases. (5% raise = \$848,680, on projected enrollment growth)

Challenges to Success:

- A primary challenge to moving up in the state salary rankings is that the other state institutions may also increase salaries at the same rate as A&M-Commerce. Thus, while there may be significant salary increases at A&M-Commerce, the statewide rankings may not change dramatically.
- Enrollment must continue to rise to provide additional financial resources.
- Efforts must be continued to improve retention of current students.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Support from the Texas A&M System to aid in securing an increase in funding for faculty and staff salaries, as well as increase in benefits funding.

2nd Objective of Priority #1:

- **Improve retention of full-time faculty members.**

Strategies:

- Reward faculty and staff who demonstrate excellence in teaching and recruiting, retaining, and graduating our students, as well as research and scholarly activities (University Strategic Plan). These criteria will be used for faculty evaluations in both FY08 and FY09.

Performance Measures:

- Increase in fall-to-fall retention rate of full-time faculty members. (Faculty members who retire during the year will be removed from the base for calculation).
- Retention for full-time faculty members was 87.5% from Fall 2005 to Fall 2006.
- Goal for Fall 2007 to Fall 2008 retention is 90%.
- Goal for Fall 2008 to Fall 2009 retention is 92%.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- The 5% salary pool that was set aside for FY 2008, and increases tentatively planned for FY 2009, will be distributed by merit, based upon elements set forth in the strategy above.
- Total merit pay increase for FY 2009 planned is \$848,680.
- Funds for pay increase will come from continued enrollment growth.

Challenges to Success:

- Faculty evaluation processes must incorporate the elements in the strategy above
- The Provost's Office is currently working with the academic deans and Faculty Senate to revise both faculty evaluation and tenure processes to incorporate these elements.
 - Elements being discussed include differentiated staffing, and revised requirements for tenure.
- Enrollment must also continue to increase to provide funding for subsequent salary increases.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Faculty retention could be enhanced by additional Texas A&M System programs that recognize and acknowledge excellent teaching, service and research/scholarly activity at member institutions
- Additional cooperation with the ASE program (recruiting Academy members).
- Faculty exchange with other A&M System member institutions
- Partnerships with A&M System agencies, such as Agricultural Extension Service.

3rd Objective of Priority #1:

- **Recruit and retain staff and professional employees who are dedicated to supporting the goals of student success, development of knowledge and service.**

Strategies:

- Ensure that staff salaries are competitive with other state institutions of higher education with similar missions, for both new hires and current employees, by continuing to monitor staff salaries, and make adjustments when necessary. Staff salary studies will be done in spring semester, 2008, and spring semester, 2009. Adjustments have been made in the previous two years.

Performance Measures:

- Overall increase in staff salaries, at all levels (target is 5% for both FY08 and FY09).
 - The internal benchmark for these measures will be FY 2006 salaries with comparisons made each year to the previous year.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Funds must be set aside to provide adjustments (FY08 and FY09).
- All new hires will be made at competitive rates (beginning FY08 and ongoing).
- Funds for staff salary adjustments were \$90,000 for FY 2008.
- A 5% merit staff salary increase for FY 2008 was funded by the \$17 sch tuition increase. (\$1,243,681)
- Staff salary increases for FY 2009 are contingent upon continued enrollment growth. (\$1,015,000)

Challenges to Success:

- Financial resources supported by tuition and state funding must continue to rise – thus enrollment and semester credit hour production must continue to rise.
- Greater competition for employees from the private sector as business interests expand from the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex area.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Need for market-based salary studies from comparable markets.
- Need for A&M-System member institution staff salary study for comparison between System institutions.
- Continue increasing numbers of graduates to increase incentive funding

Priority #2: Increase our freshman to sophomore retention rate by two percentage points.

Link to Strategic Plan

2007 University Strategic Plan, Goal Number Two: *We will attract, retain and graduate the best students – committed to and capable of life-long learning.* Objective 4 of Goal Number Two: *We will institute a comprehensive campus-wide retention program.*

1st Objective of Priority #2:

- **To increase the retention rate of freshman to sophomore students.**

Strategies:

- A campus-wide retention program will be developed and implemented in FY08. This program will be comprehensive and involve all aspects of the University.
- We will develop a comprehensive and coordinated new student orientation program (University Strategic Plan). Fully implemented for fall semester, 2008.
- An Honors College Program has been implemented for fall semester, 2007, with over 50 freshman students who meet high academic standards and have demonstrated high levels of engagement – admitting 50 new freshman every year, in four years this college will have app. 200 undergraduate students at all levels.

Performance Measures:

- First-time Full-time freshman retention rates, as measured by both the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Legislative Budget Board. Goal is two percentage point increase for each of the next two years (FY 2009 = 61%; FY 2010 = 63%).
- Internal total freshman class fall to spring retention rate, cohort including ALL freshman students (not just FT-FT). Goal is one percentage point increase for each of the next two years. (FY 2008 cohort = 84%; FY 2009 cohort = 85%).

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Additional funding has been allocated by the Provost's Office to develop a comprehensive and coordinated new student orientation program. (\$25,000 for each of the next two years)
- Funding has already been allocated for the new Honors College. (FY08 = \$600,000; FY09 = \$1,100,000). Future plan is to fund Honors College with formula funding generated by additional students recruited and retained in this College.

Challenges to Success:

- Financial issues after the freshman year result in some students enrolling for their sophomore year at the numerous community colleges in our area.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Creation of and participation in member institution retention task force by the A&M System and A&M-College Station personnel to help determine the appropriate steps and programs to improve retention in member institutions.

2nd Objective of Priority #2:

- **Recruiting freshman students with higher levels of college readiness.**

Strategies:

- In FY08 we will review, revise to strengthen if needed, and enforce the admissions standards of the University. Criteria for admission will include class rank and entrance scores. Provost's Office will lead this process.
- As previously noted, an Honors College Program with separate academic and engagement standards has already been established. (FY08 and ongoing).
- Increase recruiter training and salaries (FY08).

Performance Measures:

- Admissions criteria will reflect either college readiness and/or the need for individualized education plans for undergraduate students.
- Average ACT and SAT entrance scores for new freshman students will increase.
 - ACT: FY09 = 21.0; FY10 = 21.5
 - SAT: FY09 = 990; FY10 = 995
- Improved THECB FT-FT retention and four year graduation rates.
 - Retention Goals: FY09 = 61%; FY10 = 62%.
 - Four Year Graduation Goals: FY09 = 20%; FY10 = 22%.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- FY08, Salary funding for recruiters (\$60,300 in salary adjustments and one new position).

Challenges to Success:

- Marketing and recruitment efforts must be directed to students that meet the University's academic standards.
- When establishing revised admissions standards, a balance must be reached between our traditional role of providing an educational experience to underrepresented (and often under-prepared) populations and academic rigor. Achieving this balance is critical for the University to fulfill its mission.
- Level of college readiness of Texas high school students,

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Dissemination of an annual report of admissions standards for all A&M System institutions would assist member schools in reviewing admissions standards and aligning them to institutional missions.
- Joint recruitment brochure for all A&M System member institutions.
- Partnerships with area School Districts to help with college readiness programs.
- Adoption of the College Readiness Standards being proposed.

Priority #3: Increase our fall to fall student enrollment by 500 students.

Link to Strategic Plan: 2007 University Strategic Plan, Goal Number Two: *We will attract, retain and graduate the best students – committed to and capable of lifelong learning.*

Objective 1 of Goal Number 2: *We will develop and implement a coordinated and focused student recruitment program.* 2007 University Strategic Plan, Goal Number Four: *We will increase revenue from a variety of sources.* Objective 1 of Goal Number 4: *We will increase qualified student enrollment.*

1st Objective of Priority #3:

- **We will increase fall undergraduate enrollment by 250 students and graduate enrollment by 250 students for both FY2008 and FY2009.**

Strategies:

- Increased numbers of recruiters who will implement a targeted recruiting plan (FY08).
- Target recruiting toward the large number of community college graduates in our service area (beginning FY08 and continuing through FY09).
- A new marketing plan will be implemented (by September 1, 2008) that will target specific segments for recruiting (see Priority #4).
- Continued campus improvement (ongoing).

Performance Measures:

- Increase fall 2008 undergraduate enrollment by 250 students and graduate enrollment by 250 students over fall 2007 numbers. (Goal for total enrollment – 9,500)
- Increase fall 2009 undergraduate enrollment by 250 students and graduate enrollment by 250 students over fall 2008 numbers. (Goal for total enrollment – 10,000)

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Continued campus improvement, including the completion of the new Student Center (under construction, \$29 million, financed by increases in student fees) and the new music complex (\$21,770,000 TRB approved and \$7,837,000 in additional funding from HEF and contributions).

Challenges to Success:

- Growth will not be across the board in all programs, which will result in reallocation of resources to provide support for areas experiencing the most growth.
- Continued competition from the many community colleges in the service area.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Coordination between A&M System member institutions, especially Texas A&M-College Station that would channel qualified students that cannot be accepted at the initial institution to other system member institutions.
- Coordination of marketing efforts to minimize marketing competition between system member institutions.

Priority #4: As a major component in achieving Priorities 2 and 3 and to allow the University to better achieve its total mission, we will develop a single, pervasive message and image.

Link to Strategic Plan:

- 2007 University Strategic Plan, Goal Number Five: *We will develop a single, pervasive message and image; market it using a global, multi-faceted strategy; and incorporate continuous evaluation to assure maximum effect and efficiency.*

1st Objective of Priority #4:

- **A single, pervasive message and image of the University that focuses on a single corporate message that is clear, concise and creative will be developed and implemented.**

Strategies:

- Targeted markets will be identified and data will be collected (through surveys and focus groups) from these market segments. (Spring semester, 2008)
- This data, along with demographic data and input from the University community, will be used to develop a coherent corporate message that is clear, concise and consistent. (Fully developed by September 1, 2008)

Performance Measures:

- A new marketing message and image will be developed by fall 2008.
- Specific measures and targets will be those outlined in Priorities 2, and 3: retention, graduation, enrollment, admissions standards (especially for targeted markets that will be determined in FY 2008) in FY 2009.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Additional funding allocated to develop and implement the new marketing plan. (\$450,000 each year for the next three years)

Challenges to Success:

- Achieving a consensus of “who we are” and “what we should be” as an institution.
- Developing a distinctive message that will be heard in a highly competitive higher education environment in our service area.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Coordination between member institutions to optimize each institution’s marketing impact and subsequent enrollment growth.

2nd Objective of Priority #4:

- **The new marketing plan will have the maximum impact on targeted segments.**

Strategies:

- Through an evaluation process, we will determine the most efficient and effective media to reach established regional markets and employ a variety of innovative and accessible media (including a redesigned website) to reach global, multi-generational, gender-specific, and ethnic-specific markets (see University Strategic Plan and 1st objective of this priority) with our new message and image. This process will be complete by end of FY08.
- Redesign the University website (FY08). A consulting firm will assist with this redesign.

Performance Measures:

- Specific measures will be increased enrollment for target segments for FY2009 (Targets to be determined during FY2008).

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Additional funding for FY 2009 and FY 2010 may be needed to be allocated based upon costs of specific media selected for targeted marketing. This will be determined as the marketing plan is developed in FY 2008.
- \$105,000 University website redesign, FY 2008.

Challenges to Success:

- Optimum media may be too cost-prohibitive, and a balance of obtaining maximum results from appropriate media and marketing strategies will need to be determined.
- Constant monitoring of results and efficiency will thus be critical to the success of this initiative.

Collaboration/Support Needed (Internal and External to A&M System):

- Additional marketing efforts by the A&M system, linking member institutions to the System, directed toward appropriate specific market segments.

Compact Review and Approval

Date: November 5, 2007

TAMUS Member: Texas A&M University-Commerce

Signature: [ORIGINAL SIGNED BY]

TAMUS Member CEO: Keith D. McFarland, PhD
President, Texas A&M University-Commerce

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TAMUS Chancellor: Michael D. McKinney
Chancellor, The Texas A&M University System