

**Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi**

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

## **MISSION**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is an expanding, doctoral-granting, Hispanic-serving institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, creative activity and service. The university's location on the Gulf of Mexico and the cultural border with Latin America shapes its focus and provides the foundation for gaining national prominence. Engaging undergraduate and graduate students in a challenging educational experience within a supportive environment is the hallmark of its commitment to closing historical educational gaps and preparing graduates for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in the global community.

## **VISION**

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi is in the process of developing its vision statement.

## **CEO STATEMENT**

The university's strategic plan was developed from its mission statement, and the four priorities selected for the Compact are based on the overarching goals in the strategic plan. The four priorities selected for the Compact are: 1) Increase the university's enrollment in support of Closing the Gaps and the university's mission; 2) Increase the success of students in support of Closing the Gaps and the university's mission; 3) Acquire resources needed for expansion while being good stewards of resources; and 4) Increase the amount of externally funded research through a focus on location-related expertise.

The university's ability to serve South Texas and the state depend on its ability to continue growing its enrollment and programs as well as the physical plant to accommodate these. Maintaining the excellence that results in student success is crucial to our overall mission and our mission as an Hispanic-serving institution. Expanding our research agenda based on the special advantages of our location will contribute to our teaching and service missions. Finally, all of these must be accomplished within an atmosphere of fiscal responsibility in which our resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

**Priority #1: Increase the university's enrollment in support of Closing the Gaps and the university's mission.**

Link to Strategic Plan:

Expand the university's impact in size, scope and stature.

**1<sup>st</sup> Objective of Priority #1:**

- **Our long-term goal is to increase enrollment to 10,000 by 2015.**

Strategies:

- Added recruiter in Metroplex in fall 2007 and focused on targeted high schools and community colleges.
- Increase success of recruiters in Houston, Austin-San Antonio, and the Rio Grande Valley by focusing them on targeted high schools and community colleges during fall 2007 and early spring 2008.
- Increase transfers from Del Mar College through development of a joint enrollment program and a BAAS degree. The joint enrollment program will be developed during FY 2008 and implemented in FY 2009. The BAAS degree is under development and will be implemented in fall 2008, if approved by BOR and THECB.
- Establish regional P-16 Council and use work of P-16 Special Advisor on vertical alignment and College Readiness Standards to begin improving college readiness in the Coastal Bend. The Council and advisor will begin work during FY 2008.

Performance Measures:

- Enrollment increase of at least 1.5 percent annually during FY 2008 and during FY 2009.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- \$50,000 was added for the new recruiter in the Metroplex beginning fall 2007 from designated tuition.
- An additional \$75,000 annually from designated tuition has been budgeted for focused recruiting efforts.
- Received grants of \$36,000 from THECB for P-16 Council and Special Advisor.

Challenges to Success:

- Continuing tuition increases will hurt enrollment. We will continue to minimize tuition increases to the extent possible and will grow scholarship funds.
- A slipping retention rate will hurt our ability to grow. We are addressing this through the 2nd Objective of Priority 1.

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

- Information from Texas A&M on qualified non-admits earlier in spring semester.
- Cooperation from Texas A&M to establish an automatic admission policy similar to the one in the UT System.
- Cooperation from Del Mar College in establishment of joint admission program.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Objective of Priority #1:**

### **➤ Improve retention rate.**

#### **Strategies:**

- During fall 2007, establish task force to study reasons for fluctuations in retention rate and make recommendations. Some topics to be studied include learning communities, freshman experience, and advising.
- Begin implementing recommendations during spring 2008 and fall 2008.
- Develop a pilot project to improve retention and time-to-degree by offering an incentive of \$500 off the following fall's tuition to first-time freshmen in fall 2008 who complete 30 hours in their first academic year with a GPA of 2.5 or higher.

#### **Performance Measures:**

- Increase in retention rate of first-time, full-time freshmen from 59 percent to 65 percent from fall 2008 to fall 2009.

#### **Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:**

- Not addressing the fluctuation will negatively impact formula funding and tuition.
- Resources required depends on the recommendations made by the Task Force, and will be determined when the recommendations have been received.
- The pilot project is estimated to have a cost of \$125,000, but not until FY 2010. This would be covered by designated tuition and for eligible students by designated tuition set-aside.

#### **Challenges to Success:**

- A new provost started October 1, and it will be necessary to help him focus his attention on this priority very quickly.
- Although the quality of students as defined by entrance test scores and placement tests has not changed, we are exploring anecdotal evidence that we have more students who need more coaching for success.

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

- Internal to the university: integration and collaboration among the student support systems, such as tutoring and learning center, advising, learning communities, etc. is needed.
- Learn from the good practices of other similar institutions within and outside the A&M System, such as UT-Pan American, that have successfully addressed retention issues.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Objective of Priority #1:**

- **During FY 2008 and FY 2009 expand the academic program offerings to address needs of the region and state.**

#### Strategies:

- Develop proposals, which includes study of student demand and market demand for graduates, and obtain approval from BOR and THECB, if need is documented during development of the proposal, for:
- A bachelor of applied arts and sciences (BAAS) degree to be implemented by fall 2008.
- A master's degree in communication to be implemented by fall 2009.
- A joint doctoral program in marine biology with TAMU and TAMU-G and UT-Austin to be implemented by fall 2009.
- A bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering to be implemented by fall 2009.

#### Performance Measures:

- Successful establishment of the degree programs shown through proposal development process to have demonstrated need by the target dates for each.

#### Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- The only degree program anticipated to begin in FY 2008 or FY 2009 is the BAAS. It will not require additional faculty in this or the next fiscal year, but it is anticipated that an adviser may be needed in FY 2009, which would require \$50,000 from institutional funds.
- Neither the master's degree in communication nor the bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering are anticipated to require additional resources until fall 2009 (FY2010).
- The joint marine biology program may require minimal travel resources for proposal development during FY 2008 because it involves multiple institutions, but electronic communication will be utilized as much as possible. It will also involve the expenses of a site visit (which will be shared among the institutions) either in late FY 2008 or in FY 2009. An estimate of A&M-Corpus Christi's share of the cost is \$5,000, from institutional funds.

#### Challenges to Success:

- Achieving BOR and Coordinating Board approval for the programs, which we will address by developing a quality proposal that documents student demand, market demand, resources needed and sources of funding.
- Obtaining the needed resources as identified in each program proposal.

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

- For the BAAS degree, collaboration is needed with Del Mar College and the approval of the Board of Regents and the Coordinating Board.
- For the marine biology Ph.D. collaboration is needed from within the A&M System and with the UT System as well as approval from the Board of Regents and the Coordinating Board.
- For the engineering degree, the cooperation and support of The Texas A&M System, the Coordinating Board, and Texas A&M-Kingsville are needed.

**Priority #2:**

Increase the success of students in support of Closing the Gaps and the university's mission.

**Link to Strategic Plan:**

Provide students with excellent instruction in challenging undergraduate and graduate programs advance intellectual competencies and perspectives and develop disciplinary knowledge and expertise. Attract, retain and graduate a diverse and highly qualified student body consistent with the University's mission as a Hispanic-serving institution.

**1<sup>st</sup> Objective of Priority #2:**

- **Short-term goal: Increase the average number of semester credit hours taken by undergraduate students. Long-term goal: Improve the 6-year graduation rate.**

**Strategies:**

- During FY 2008 advisors will encourage students to increase the number of semester credit hours they take and to take advantage of our flat-rate tuition.
- During FY 2008, conduct an in-depth analysis of how financial aid packages can be structured to maximize full-time enrollment, and in turn improve retention, average SCH/semester and 6-year graduation rates, and in FY 2009 implement an Affordability Initiative based on analysis of outcomes.
- Retention strategies (Priority 1, Objective 2) will eventually also have an effect on graduation rates.

**Performance Measures:**

- Short-term: Increase average semester credit hours taken per student by 1.5 percent from 12.5 per semester to 12.7 per semester by FY 2009.
- Long-term: Increase in 6-year same institution graduation rate from 37 percent to 40 percent by FY 2012.

**Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:**

- Increasing SCH by 1.5 percent will generate \$435,000 in tuition.
- Hiring a consultant for financial aid analysis will require \$10,000 from institutional funds during FY 2008.

**Challenges to Success:**

- Improving financial aid and scholarships. We are addressing scholarships through our ongoing Achieve sponsorship program and the capital campaign. Financial aid is a national issue.
- Students who work twice as much as the national average and who are also almost twice as likely to be taking care of a family member.
- For the long-term goal, one factor to consider is that only 1/3 of graduates started with us as first-time, full-time freshmen, which is the cohort measured by the graduation rate.
- College attendance patterns, e.g. students attending multiple institutions and stopping in and out.

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

- Understanding best practices at successful institutions in and out of the A&M system.
- Assistance from the System and the community in improving financial aid at the state and federal level.
- System participation in determining uses of Governor's Incentive Funding for higher education.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Objective of Priority #2:

- **Increase the total number of degrees awarded, and increase the number of degrees awarded to Hispanic students and the degrees awarded in the high need field of nursing.**

### Strategies:

- Continue strategies from Priority 1, Objective 1, to increase enrollment, including that of Hispanic students
- Continue strategies Priority 1, Objective 2, to improve retention and graduation rates for all students
- Hire additional nursing faculty so more qualified students can be admitted and still comply with State Board of Nursing's 10:1 requirement. For every 50 nursing students we admit, hire two additional faculty
- Continue the successful initiative in nursing that assists at-risk and minority students in achieving success.

### Performance Measures:

- Increase in total degrees awarded from 1,904 in FY 2007 to 1,950 annually in FY2009
- Increase in degrees awarded to Hispanic students from 616 in FY 2007 to 635 annually in FY 2009.
- Increase in nursing graduates of 10 percent, from 149 in FY 2007 to 165 in FY 2009.

### Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- As additional students are enrolled, additional faculty will be required. Added enrollment will generate funding to cover faculty, e.g. every 50 new nursing students generates about \$190,000 in tuition revenue.

### Challenges to Success:

- The same challenges as for increasing graduation rates in Objective #1 of Priority 2.
- Nursing formula multiplier went down this year and is scheduled to go down again in Spring '09 for Fall '09.
- Nursing excellence funding is distributed after the fact, the amount varies, and it can't be counted on to continue. These facts make it difficult to use for faculty, which is a major need. However, we can use it to hire in the short-term in order to generate increased enrollment and ensuing formula dollars.
- Competition for nursing faculty, which we offset by offering competitive salaries.

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

- Timely information from Texas A&M on all qualified non-admits
- Help from the System and cooperation from Texas A&M to establish an automatic admission policy similar to the one in the UT System.
- Learn from the good practices of other institutions within and outside the A&M System that have successfully addressed retention issues.
- Assistance from System in working with Formula Advisory Committee to revisit the cost basis of the nursing formula.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Objective of Priority #2:**

- **Maintain high pass rates on licensing exams for nurses and teachers, thus fulfilling an important role in providing for state needs.**

Strategies:

- Continue the numerous strategies which have been successfully implemented in nursing and teacher education programs to obtain consistently high pass rates. Examples include careful tracking of students to identify weak areas, mentoring, tutoring, and licensing exam preparation.

Performance Measures:

- Pass rates of at least 95 percent on licensing exams for nurses and teachers.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- No new resources required, except incrementally as number of students increases.

Challenges to Success:

*Nursing*

- Plan is time and people intensive, but success has shown the investment is worthwhile to continue.

*Teacher Education*

- Adjustment to new testing vendor and state, State Board of Educator Certification and Texas Education Agency mandates.

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

N/A

**Priority #3:**

**Acquire resources needed for expansion while being good stewards of resources.**

**Link to Strategic Plan:**

Expand the university impact in size, scope and stature. Manage financial, physical, technological and human resources efficiently and effectively. Build and sustain mutually supportive relationships with the surrounding community and other stakeholders.

**1<sup>st</sup> Objective of Priority #3:**

- **Obtain land needed for expansion in FY 2008 and begin master planning process once acquired.**
- **In FY 2009 begin implementation of master plan**

**Strategies:**

- Work with Mayor, City Council members, city staff and friends of the university to obtain donation of nearby land in fall 2007.
- Obtain approval of Board of Regents by December 2007.
- Award master planning contract within 60 days of acquisition.
- Conduct master planning process that includes input of neighborhoods, faculty, staff, and students during spring and summer 2008.
- Begin implementation of master plan during FY 2009.

**Performance Measures:**

- Acquisition of land from city and approval of Board of Regents by December 2007.
- Master plan contract awarded within 60 days of land acquisition.
- Completed master plan by end of summer 2008.

**Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:**

- Master planning contract will require approximately \$75,000 from institutional funds in spring 2008.
- After land is transferred, reallocation of existing resources will be needed to provide maintenance and security during FY 2008 and FY 2009.
- Additional resources needed in FY 2009 will be determined during master planning process

**Challenges to Success:**

- City politics
- Results of Phase II environmental study
- Continued growth of enrollment and programs

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

- Cooperation of Mayor, City Council and city staff
- Collaboration of friends of the university
- Support of System legal and real estate in developing gift agreement
- Approval of Board of Regents
- A&M System assurance to city that it supports university expansion (already received)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Objective of Priority #3:

- **Having already completed a feasibility study and campaign case statement, launch by January 2, 2008, the quiet phase of a capital campaign with priorities of scholarships, program enhancement, faculty enhancement and capital projects.**

#### Strategies:

- Develop leadership of sub categories (alumni, foundation, business, etc.) and secure leadership gifts.
- Through follow-up with firm that conducted feasibility study, identify major donors and target major gift requests.

#### Performance Measures:

- The total campaign goal is \$25 million by 2012. The short-term goals are \$8.5 million by end of FY 2008 and \$15 million by end of FY 2009.

#### Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Added one new development position in FY 2008 at a cost of \$50,000 from designated tuition.
- Cost of hiring firm will be approximately \$90,000 for FY 2008, but this will be paid for through A&M-Corpus Christi Foundation funds.

#### Challenges to Success:

- The history of giving among our alumni group because the university has changed its name four times since its inception and has a young alumni base. For the long-term we are addressing this by developing a culture of giving with current students and developing the alumni relationship with recent graduates. In the short-term, we are working with friends of the University for donor support.
- Donor resources are limited in South Texas – various charitable organizations repeatedly target the same members of the community to donate to their fundraising efforts. We address this challenge through our relationships with donors in the community and by looking beyond South Texas.

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

- Establishing the help of community and business leaders is essential to the success of this campaign.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Objective of Priority #3:**

- **Continue to maintain low administrative cost ratio (as reported and defined in State Accountability Report).**

#### Strategies:

- Grow enrollment at least 1.5 percent annually for FY 2008 and FY 2009 while maintaining the current level of administrative support
- Continue to review administrative operating costs for efficiencies, such as contracting the bookstore to a third party.
- During summer and fall 2007 implemented more “on-line” processing and distribution opportunities to reduce personnel and paper costs, such as on-line refund processing for students, use of Time-raq for student and other bi-weekly payrolls, use of software in receiving to track package delivery, and software to manage contracts.

#### Performance Measures:

- Administrative cost ratio, as reported and defined in State Accountability Report, below 10 percent.

#### Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Committed additional annual student recruitment expenses of \$75,000 from designated tuition in FY2008 and in FY2009.
- Contracting the bookstore to Barnes and Noble resulted in a net profit of \$329,000 in FY 2007, as compared to a loss of approximately \$250,000 in previous years. It also reduced other administrative costs such as payroll, accounting and purchasing needs. It is estimated that a profit of \$350,000 annually can be sustained. Also, the reduced administrative costs will continue. The profit is dedicated to paying off the deficit accumulated from previous bookstore operation and to general budget obligations.
- On-line processing initiatives are expected to avoid \$100,000 in administrative costs during FY 2008 and subsequent years.

#### Challenges to Success:

- Continuing enrollment growth of least 1.5 percent annually could be a challenge, but it will be addressed through both recruiting and retention efforts.
- Continued A&M System support for centralized services, such as legal counsel, and as outlined in the A&M System Member Services report.
- Rising insurance premiums are a challenge, but we will work with Risk Management to try to control.

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

- A&M System support of centralized services
- More collaborative efforts within the A&M System, such as purchasing compacts
- New financial/HR system for resulting efficiencies
- Coordination of an A&M System best practices group to share cost-saving ideas

**Priority #4:**

**Increase the amount of externally funded research, especially through a focus on location-related expertise.**

Link to Strategic Plan:

Increase and support research, scholarship and creative activity.

**1st Objective of Priority #4:**

- **Increase the number of faculty participating in externally funded research**

Strategies:

- Hold new faculty research orientation meetings
- Offer grant writing workshops on selection of sponsors and on budget preparation
- Provide faculty with set-up to funding announcements and search engines (through System when available)
- AVP for Research will meet with all new faculty each semester
- Use Texas Research Development Fund money as leverage for additional external grant funding
- Emphasize research in tenure consideration

Performance Measures:

- Increase in faculty participating in externally funded research of 5 percent in FY 2008 and in FY 2009.

Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- No new expenses anticipated.

Challenges to Success:

- Limited staff with grant writing expertise to assist faculty, which we will address by working with A&M's Office of Research Proposal Development and other grant writing workshop opportunities.
- Faculty workload can hinder time for grant writing, but we are addressing by buying out faculty teaching load more effectively through use of adjuncts
- An unknown, rather than a challenge, is how the system reorganization in the research administration area will affect our operations.

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

- Continued support from the System's federal relations and research groups
- Opportunities for collaborative projects within the System and outside of the System.
- Collaboration with expertise available through A&M's Office of Research Proposal Development.
- Continued collaboration across the System through the projects of the Graduate Deans' Council, including Pathways to the Doctorate programming.

## **2nd Objective of Priority #4:**

- **Increase research expenditures.**

### Strategies:

- Increase efficiency and timeliness of research administration, including monitoring expenditures of principal investigators and providing alerts on slow spending by adding staff.
- Increase proposal submissions and award through increased contact with external agencies by AVP for Research and faculty and staff visits to agencies
- Submit proposals to NIH programs (RISE and SCORE) for the first time
- Use Texas Research Development Fund as leverage for additional external grant funding.
- Identify one new research cluster in FY 2008 and one in FY 2009 for targeted development.
- Review administrative needs when parameters of System research administration operations are known.
- Return a portion of indirect costs to researchers to seed additional research efforts.

### Performance Measures:

- Increase research expenditures by 7 percent in FY 2008 and in FY 2009.

### Budget Impact and/or Resources Required:

- Added three positions in FY 2008, including post-award, compliance and technology at a cost of \$160,000 from Texas Research Development Funds.

### Challenges to Success:

- Limited staff with grant writing expertise to assist faculty, which we will address by working with A&M's Office of Research Proposal Development and other grant writing workshop opportunities.
- Faculty workload can hinder time for grant writing, but we are addressing by buying out faculty teaching load more effectively through use of adjuncts
- An unknown, rather than a challenge, is how the system reorganization in the research administration area will affect our operations.

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

- Continued support from the System's federal relations and research groups
- Opportunities for collaborative projects within the System and outside of the System.
- Collaboration with expertise available through A&M's Office of Research Proposal Development.
- Continued collaboration across the System through the projects of the Graduate Deans' Council, including Pathways to the Doctorate programming.

**Compact Review and Approval**

Date: November 2, 2007

TAMUS Member: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Signature: [ORIGINAL SIGNED BY]

TAMUS Member CEO: Flavius C. Killebrew  
President, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Signature: [ORIGINAL SIGNED BY]

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