



**The University of Texas-Pan American
Strategic Enrollment Management Plan
2010-2015**

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I. Executive Summary

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) is a university management philosophy which attempts to achieve the maximum enrollment consistent with the resources available for that level of students'/customers' needs and consistent with the university's other goals. For a university like UTPA, the stated goal of achieving a doctoral status and its presence in an area with a great need for higher education means that its enrollment goals must recognize the need for more, better-prepared students entering at the freshmen and undergraduate transfer level. In addition, because of its doctoral status study goal, the university must prepare an increasingly larger percentage of its students for graduate study. In a region that is defined by a large population of families with low socio-economic status and low educational attainment, the university has a social obligation to increasingly encourage more public school students toward higher education. Such an increase in a well-educated populace, with UTPA's efforts already making a positive difference, will ready the South Texas region for enhanced economic activity and improved quality of life.

This Strategic Enrollment Management Plan complements the university's mission, vision, and stated goals while remaining sensitive to the university's geographic location. UTPA's Strategic Enrollment Management Plan consists of seven major parts, all inter-related in their parts and sum:

- An Access Plan, which demonstrates the University's efforts to encourage more young people of South Texas to prepare for, and enroll in, an institution of higher education. Because of the large population of non-college going potential students, as well as the large percentage of people with little exposure to even public school education, UTPA must continue to expand its efforts to work with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the University of Texas (UT) System, Texas Business and Education Coalition (TBEC), area P-16 Councils, public schools, families and students, in order to help create a college-going culture in South Texas. These efforts include events to attract schoolchildren to the campus and a program which offers on-campus university enrollment for selected high school juniors and seniors, as well as other strategies which will be outlined in the Access portion of the SEM plan. For this region, access initiatives and P-16 initiatives are a vital part of SEM;
- A Recruitment Plan, which outlines the process by which the university begins to market to and actively select college-prepared students, not just in the Rio Grande Valley, but throughout Texas and Mexico. This plan capitalizes on the P-16/access efforts in the South Texas region, while recognizing that higher admissions standards necessitate recruiting well-prepared students in other Texas and Mexico markets. Additionally, the university must also work with community colleges to ensure better transition for transfer students and work with university seniors to transition them more readily into graduate programs;

- An Integrated Marketing Plan, which reflects the dual objectives of recruiting students and establishing name recognition in various, diverse markets in Texas and Mexico. This portion of SEM utilizes a wide variety of media to “tell the story of UTPA,” including print, radio, television and consistent, integrated postal and electronic mailings to pre-prospects and prospective students. The marketing plan should be well-coordinated with the recruitment goals of the university, as well as with other stated goals;
- An Academic Plan, which recognizes the changing nature of the University—a transformation into a learner-centered research institution with an increased focus on graduate level education, including doctoral education, in selected high need areas and advancing our global perspectives and outreach;
- A Financial Plan, which reflects the university’s need to control costs for low income students while providing resources to support these same students toward successful careers. Like all of SEM, the Financial Plan recognizes that the bottom line is student enrollment and student success;
- A Retention Plan, which recognizes both the importance and the difficulty of engaging more students in both collaborative efforts with faculty, as well as in co-curricular events and activities. The university commitment to work-study opportunities for many students remains a critically-important factor in a primarily commuter student population. Retaining more students until they progress into the discipline specific portion of their curriculum is also a major part of any SEM; and
- A Graduation Plan, which not only encourages more timely graduation for both undergraduate and graduate students, but provides resources to make this a reality.

A university is noted, at least in part, by the successful students who graduate and pursue their careers. Satisfied students who understand graduate requirements and work to complete those requirements can be the best promoters/recruiters for their Alma Mater. Aiding students in their completion of work and in their ties to the university is an important part of the SEM plan.

The Enrollment Management Council (EMC), comprised of senior administrators and key staff representing all university departments, will continue to meet every six months to review, monitor, and assess the objectives and strategies outlined in the SEM Plan. In addition, the EMC will be reconvened on an ad-hoc basis to review portions of the SEM Plan, depending on the needs of specific areas, in order to make timely and necessary adjustments to the plan.

II. Introduction

The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA), a nationally recognized Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), strives to become a learner-centered research institution. In order to develop a strategic enrollment management plan that will advance its mission, the university and the UT System must understand the demographic, economic and educational factors prevalent in the population served by UTPA.

Mission

The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) serves the higher education needs of a rapidly growing, international, multicultural population in the South Texas Region. The University preserves, transmits and creates knowledge to serve the cultural, civic, and economic advancement of the region and the state. The University provides students advanced instruction in academic programs offered through innovative delivery systems that lead to professional certification, and baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees. Through teaching, research, creative activity and public service, UTPA prepares students for lifelong learning and leadership roles in the state, nation and world community.

Vision

The University of Texas-Pan American is the premier learner-centered research institution in the State of Texas. We actively engage businesses, communities, cultural organizations, educational organizations, health providers and industry to find solutions to civic, economic, environmental and social challenges through inquiry and innovation.

Goals

- Provide students a quality educational experience that enables them to complete their educational goals in a timely fashion.
- Become an outstanding research institution, emphasizing collaborative partnerships and entrepreneurship.
- Enhance UTPA's engagement with the community to meet challenges and maximize opportunities.
- Collaborate with K-12 schools to enlarge the pool of applicants who are personally prepared and academically qualified for higher education.
- Infuse Inter-American and global perspectives throughout the University community.
- Optimize institutional effectiveness and efficiency consistent with high quality organizational standards.

Profile of the Rio Grande Valley

Demographic Profile: The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) region is comprised of four counties—Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr and Willacy. It is one of the fastest growing areas of

Texas. Its population increased from 968,369 in 1990 to 1.2 million in 2008, a 24% increase. Population in the region is projected to more than double by 2050.

Economic Profile: Historically, agriculture has been the predominant component of the Rio Grande Valley's economy, but now the region is becoming more urbanized and its economy more diversified. The trade and service sectors of the economy have been responsible for much of the economic growth in the Rio Grande Valley region over the past two decades in terms of both revenue and employment. Manufacturing is also an important sector of the economy, primarily in the fast-growing areas of Brownsville-Harlingen-San Benito and McAllen-Edinburg-Mission. The most important factor in the expansion of the region's manufacturing sector has been the growth of the *maquiladora* industry in Mexico. Manufacturing growth in Reynosa and Matamoros, Mexico creates corresponding employment increases on the Texas side of the border. This manufacturing trend is expected to continue and NAFTA has had a significant impact on the growth of the *maquiladoras*.

Some of the largest employers in the Rio Grande Valley include public schools, hospitals, health care agencies, restaurants, food stores, and social service agencies. The service industry accounts for 30 percent of the total economy, followed by local government (26%) and trade (21%).

Many of the industries generating large numbers of new jobs in the RGV region will be driven by population growth. This growth will continue to drive the need for more government and school district workers. There is a continued shift toward expenditures on consumer services such as restaurants, health services, and amusement expenditures. Many of the industries supplying these services employ a large number of people; so even modest growth in the demand for these industries can result in sizable job growth. Construction will also add more jobs. Also fueling strong overall growth will be services provided to business, including personnel supply services, legal services, management and public relations and miscellaneous business services. This growth will serve to aid businesses involved in trade with Mexico and will help existing firms continue a trend of outsourcing jobs. Increased trade with Mexico will continue to fuel growth in trucking and warehousing activity.

In 2007, the Valley's unemployment rate was 6.6%, about 2 points higher than the State's rate of 4.4%. The general economic downturn has hit the Valley as well as the State. Unemployment is 11.4% (November 2009), higher than Texas at 7.9% and the nation at 9.4%.

The picture is not rosy when looking at the per capita income and poverty rates. According to Census data, the per capita income in the Rio Grande Valley region is \$10,091, which is less than half the state per capita income of \$19,617 (2000). The region's poverty rate is 34.3%, more than double the state's poverty rate of 15.8%.

Educational Profile: A major contributor to low per capita income and high poverty rates is the vast difference in the levels of educational attainment among the adult population.

The percentages of high school graduates (51.3%) and college graduates (12.6%) in the Rio Grande Valley are distinctly lower than those of high school (75.7%) and college graduates (23.2%) in Texas as a whole (2000).

Increased population in the Valley is also showing an increase in the number of students enrolling at institutions of higher education in this region. There was an enrollment increase of 88% in higher education institutions in the RGV from 2000 to 2009. With these institutions progressing towards meeting the state's "Closing the Gaps" goals, the college educated population will increase and lower the poverty rates in the region over the next decade.

III. UTPA Profile

Enrollment History

UTPA experienced very healthy growth patterns for several years prior to its implementation of admissions standards in the fall of 2005: a 33.5% growth rate from Fall 2000 to Fall 2004. Then enrollment remained in the 17,000's until a nearly 5% increase in Fall 2009. The university's commitment to becoming a learner-centered research institution in the next decade necessitates a more rapid growth pattern with better-prepared students entering at the undergraduate level. These more successful students can then be encouraged and mentored to continue their enrollment as graduate students at UTPA upon completion of a bachelor's degree.

The university is also committed to supporting the statewide "Closing the Gaps" campaign which promises a total of 1,650,000 students by 2015: an increase of 35% since 2005. UTPA's "Closing the Gaps" targets are 20,000 students by 2015 and 22,000 by 2020.

In order to develop and sustain a growth pattern, designed to swell graduate ranks and meet the "Gaps" goals, UTPA decided in 2006 to develop a university-wide plan and commitment to foster growth. In that year, a university-wide Strategic Enrollment Management Council was appointed by the president to develop a plan to lead the university toward an integrated enrollment management model by 2010.

Even before this university's commitment to enrollment growth, the university in 1999 had developed a limited enrollment management model in the Enrollment and Student Services Division, tied to the Division of Academic Affairs at several points and with shared objectives and strategies. Indeed, the university initially experienced growth in both new students and in persisting students. New freshmen, who had numbered 1,823 students in Fall 2000, grew to 2,737 by 2009—a 50.1% growth rate. Freshmen retention, which stood at 56% for the 1999 Entering Freshmen (EF) cohort has improved to 74.3% with the Fall 2008 EF cohort.

Enrollment Demographics

UTPA is the 10th largest university in the state and the fifth largest in the UT System. UTPA ranked 32nd in the top 100 list for America's Best Public Colleges. This list included only 6 public universities from Texas (*Forbes*, August 2009). The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education lists UTPA among its top 100 best U.S. colleges for Hispanics. UTPA offers 57 bachelor's and 57 master's degree programs. At the doctoral level, the institution offers PhD's in International Business and Rehabilitation Counseling, an EdD in Educational Leadership and two cooperative doctorates: one in Pharmacy with UT Austin and one in Spanish with the University of Houston. UTPA educates the most Mexican-American students in the nation, is 2nd in the nation in the number of bachelor's degrees, and 3rd in the number of master's degrees awarded to Hispanics (*Hispanic Outlook 2009*).

For Fall 2009, UTPA boasts a total enrollment figure of 18,337 students coming from 34 different states, although the majority (96.6%) come from Texas. Of the total student population, 2,390 (13.5%) are graduate students. Figure 1 reflects UTPA's headcount enrollment figures from Fall 2000 to Fall 2009.

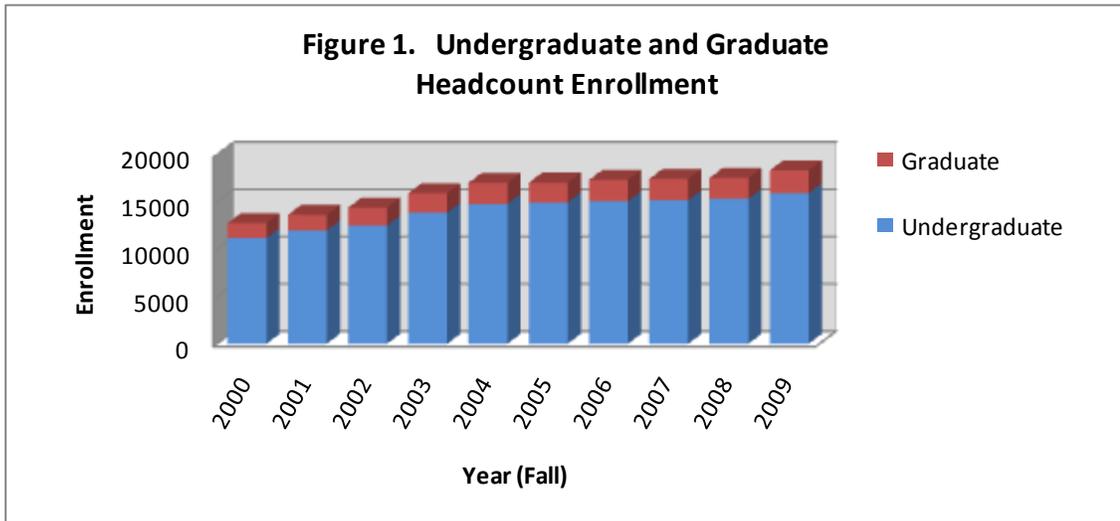
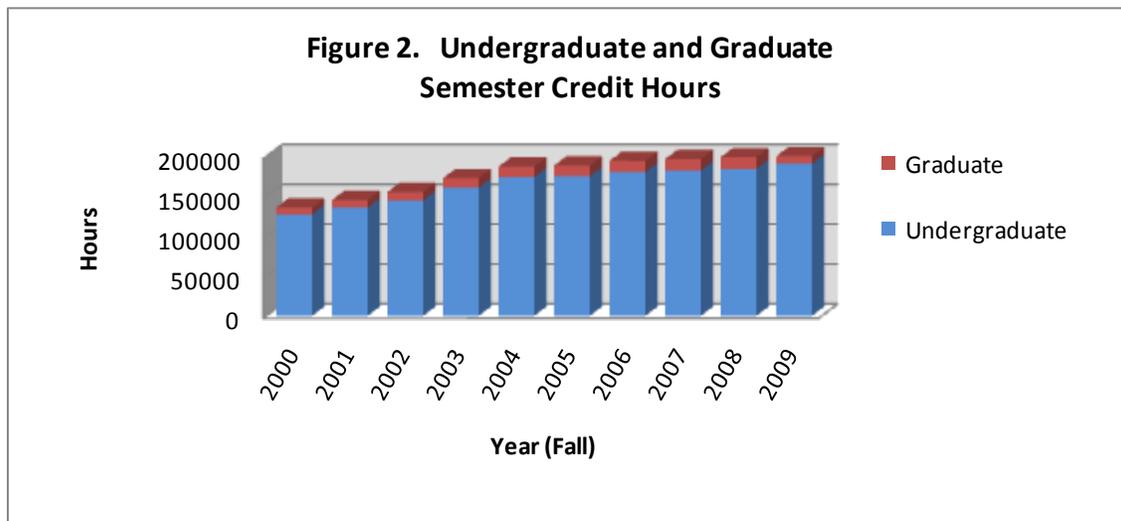


Figure 2 below shows a different metric of the increasing enrollment trend by identifying semester credit hours taken from Fall 2000 to Fall 2009 for undergraduate and graduate studies.



Raising Admissions Standards

There is little doubt that the university could have continued to enroll increasingly large numbers of both under-prepared freshmen, as well as transfer students. However, in 2001, the attrition of large numbers of these students (Entering Freshmen at 37.5%; transfer students at 48%) mitigated against the university's efforts to enhance graduation rates. In addition, the developmental needs of these students required a large outlay of expensive services and programs that competed for research and graduate study resources. In 2001, over 40% of entering freshmen required developmental courses and special tutoring services. The rising cost of higher education also played a role in the decision to enhance admissions. Enrolling clearly-unprepared students, many of whom would need financial assistance, seemed counter-productive to our role of improving students' lives. The end result of such an open admissions strategy: a large number of students leaving the university without a diploma and a large personal debt.

In 2002, the university began development of admissions standards for the first time in its history for entering freshmen and transfer students. This new admissions plan, proposed by a faculty committee and approved by the administration, became effective in Fall 2005. This plan required a composite score of 15 on the ACT (or its equivalent on the SAT) and required a minimum GPA of 2.0 for transfer admission. The number of entering freshmen dropped to 2,434 freshmen in Fall 2005, (from 2,824 EFs in the previous Fall 2004), but coupled with the advent of retention strategies, such as the Learning Framework course and a revised advising program, this cohort was retained at a 73% rate; the rate for the Fall 2008 cohort was 74.3%. In addition, only 32% of this 2005 cohort required remediation courses, a rate which fell to 23.9% in the 2009 cohort. The EF cohort comparison between the first class required to meet admission standards (Fall 2005) to the current class (Fall 2009) is listed below.

	Fall 05	Fall 09
Count	2435	2882
Top 10%	475	515
Mean ACT	19.07	19.44
TSI Deficient	32.1%	23.9%

In its commitment to promote access to a university education and based on current data, UTPA recommended to the UT System Regents to revise its undergraduate admissions standards to include class rank. The revised standards utilize a sliding class rank scale along with test scores. The proposal was approved in June 2008 and will be implemented with the Entering Freshmen class for Fall 2009. The university will also review transfer students' academic progress and initiate strategies to assist in their persistence toward a degree.

IV. Access Plan

Overview

UTPA has historically enrolled students primarily from South Texas, but more specifically from the Rio Grande Valley area, consisting of the four-county southern tip of the state. With the introduction of South Texas Community College in 1993 and the increasing attention to graduate studies and research, the university could afford to raise standards, knowing that unprepared and under-prepared students could be admitted to and find educational opportunity at the community college. The problem, however, remained: how could the university encourage high schools in the region to better prepare students for a university curriculum?

Prior to 1999, the university had embarked on initial efforts to encourage rigorous course taking by students in the high schools; simultaneously, the university partnered with the Texas Business and Education Coalition and the area schools to foster the development and enhancement of the Texas Scholars program, which called for students to complete the Recommended High School Plan and Advanced Placement (AP) courses. UTPA has offered weeklong AP training workshops to South Texas teachers for several years. Approximately 400-500 teachers enroll in these College Board sponsored programs every summer. As a result, AP test taking has increased, and the number of scores submitted to UTPA has risen tenfold since 1997. In 2009, UTPA ranked 7th in the state in the numbers of students reporting AP tests for credit consideration.

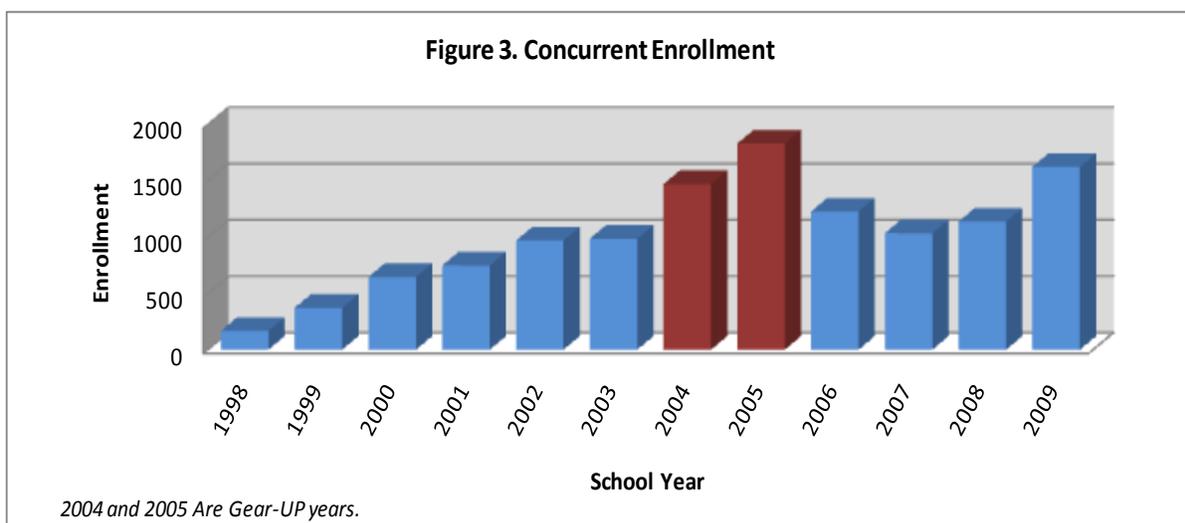
	Students	AP Score Reports	Rank Among Other Texas Colleges
2009	2857	4548	7
2008	2517	3809	6
2005	1913	3085	6
2004	1597	2550	6
2003	1254	1997	6
2002	1091	1883	6
2001	746	1250	8
2000	772	1278	6
1999	556	1060	7
1998	402	672	9
1997	291	411	9

Outreach Initiatives

At the same time, the university expanded a Concurrent Enrollment (CE) Program beginning in 1999 by encouraging high school administrators to allow their top students to experience the university environment with enrollment in on-campus college courses. This program enables students to take college courses in a manner that is different from the community college-offered dual credit courses. For the most part, dual credit students take courses from their high school teachers who serve as both high school and college teachers. In the UTPA Concurrent Enrollment programs, these selective, high achieving high school students attend classes at the UTPA campus, sit in classes with regular university students, and experience university life first-hand.

Additional incentives and venues have been expanded for students in the CE courses. Summer residence programs and ITV courses for distant locations were added. Additionally, the university reduced the cost for CE courses to approximately one-half that of regular tuition and fees. With these additional incentives, CE enrollment has grown dramatically from 167 students in the 1997-98 academic year to 1,625 students in 2008-2009.

The influx of GEAR UP I students into Concurrent Enrollment caused a 500+ student increase in 2004-2005, as illustrated in the figure below. With the new GEAR UP II cohort of students we were able to qualify 876 Concurrent Enrollment students for Summer Session I 2009 and 317 for Summer Session II 2009. Fall 2009 concurrent enrollment numbers doubled over Fall 2008 and Spring 2010 increased by 58% over Spring 2009.



An additional step for UTPA in promoting rigorous high school course-taking was the creation of the University Scholars (US) program in 1998. This is a scholarship initiative for students who completed either AP or Concurrent Enrollment coursework. In 2000,

the ESS Division was charged by President Miguel Nevárez to increase the number of students qualifying for University Scholars, a process which required them to complete four courses with “B” or better grades, prior to high school graduation. This program, which was first limited to students only in the four-county Rio Grande Valley, was expanded in several ways after 2001: geographic extension to other counties in South Texas; development of a University Scholars mentoring program where upper-class University Scholars recipients mentor entering freshmen; and the expansion for students graduating with International Baccalaureate Diploma. As shown in the table below, the program not only grew (until funding was restricted), but the students were the most successful cohort of entering freshmen in the period.

Cohort Semester	# Entering Freshmen Starting Program	# Entering Freshmen Remaining (after 1st year)	University Scholars EF Retention Rate (%)	UTPA (EF) Retention Rate (%)
Fall 1998	19	17	89.5%	57.0%
Fall 1999	55	47	85.5%	54.9%
Fall 2000	87	79	90.8%	60.4%
Fall 2001	97	80	82.5%	64.5%
Fall 2002	157	143	91.1%	66.0%
Fall 2003	210	198	94.3%	66.4%
Fall 2004	204	196	96.1%	68.0%
Fall 2005	165	158	95.8%	72.7%
Fall 2006	313	296	94.6%	68.2%
Fall 2007	76	74	97.4%	71.5%
Fall 2008	61	57	93.4%	74.3%
Fall 2009	51	n/a	n/a	n/a

After the first few years of the program, the university administration decided to raise the requirements for qualifying for the University Scholars program, requiring passage of a college-level English and Math, as part of the four-course program.

While the US program continued to be successful, the university was not as successful in finding external funding to support the fast growing scholarship program and was forced to reduce the number of scholarships awarded for Fall 2007. The university decided to fund only 106 new recipients in that semester, as well as setting higher standards for qualification. Only 76 students met those qualifications.

In the fall of 2009, the university decided to expand the US program to include two different levels of awards, increase the award amounts, and extend the scholarships to

students outside of the Rio Grande Valley in hopes of attracting higher quality students and bringing in students from other areas. The scholarship criteria has been expanded to include high scoring top 10% students. This change is being implemented to increase the number of US, to help increase academic diversity, and to improve the learning experience of local US as well as other students.

Rigorous course-taking was only one feature for encouraging South Texas students to prepare for and enroll in a college or university. Additional initiatives sprang from programs such as the traditional TRIO and other federal programs, including Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, High School Equivalency Program, and Upward Bound Math and Science. Each of these programs provides support and direction to low-income, minority and/or migrant pre-college students to increase their potential to attend and succeed at an institution of higher education. In addition, the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) recruits and serves 70 students from migrant farm-worker families each year and provides student support services during their freshman year at UTPA.

Subsequently, UTPA created the Valley Outreach Center, designed to be the coordinating office for college-going access programs. Through its programs, the VOC provides outreach services to public schools and others in the community in support of the “Closing the Gaps” and “College for Texans” initiatives to get more Texas students prepared for a higher education. The programs include a Mother Daughter Program that works with middle school young women and their mothers to provide personal and leadership development skills, centered around the concept that college is possible; Go Centers and G-Force that offer support and training services to Rio Grande Valley (RGV) High School and community-based Go Centers, operates a Go Center for use by community members, and facilitates services of the UTPA G-Force at RGV schools and other venues in the community; and a Mobile Go Center that promotes college going at small rural schools throughout south Texas. The VOC also developed Pre-College Academic Programs that allowed pre-college age youth to stay in the university residence halls while attending academic themed camps. This program was moved to the Transition to College section of the Dean of Students Office and has been enhanced with more personal development and leadership activities.

UTPA camps and conferences provide a venue for community members to experience university life, gain experience for future success, and to encourage college readiness. Camps and conferences also promote a supportive learning environment for students to reach their maximum potential. Student Life and Transitions Services, under the Dean of Students, hosted 37 camps and conferences from November 2008 through August 2009.

The university has also been forging the way for preparation of students in the science, technology, mathematics, and engineering (STEM) fields. Through collaboration between the College of Science and Engineering and the Enrollment and Student Services Division, UTPA offers a TexPREP program which works with approximately 250 high school students throughout the year, principally in the summer, to encourage

strong preparation toward a math, science or engineering degree. In addition, the university was successful in receiving an Upward Bound Math and Science program grant in 2003 that works with 125 low-income/first-generation potential college students from 3 area high schools to prepare them for majors in math and science-related careers. Last year the first UBMS cohort completed the program and 100% matriculated to higher education.

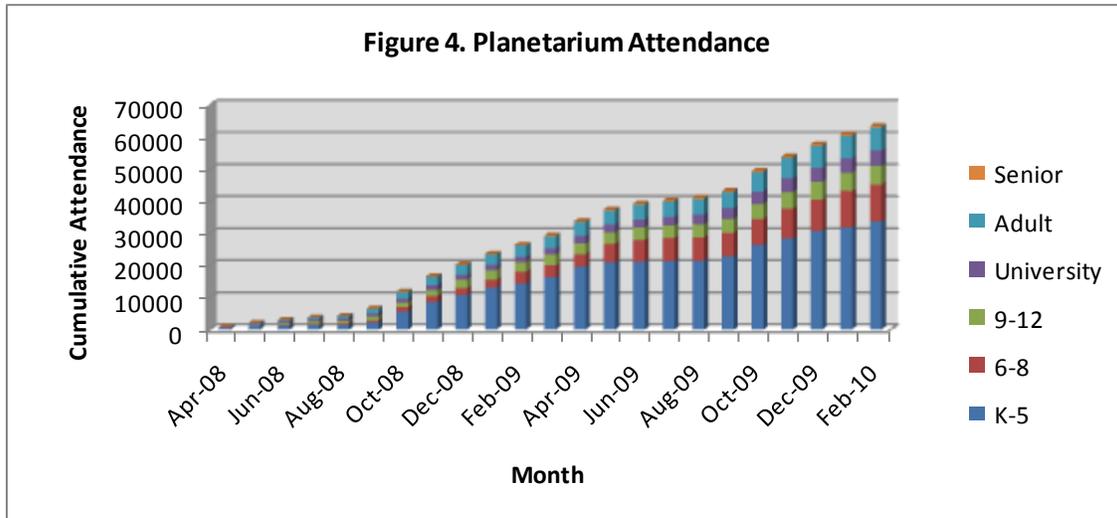
This year, another district partnership opportunity has arisen with Sharyland ISD. This program is currently in progress and brings high school students to campus to enroll in Concurrent Enrollment courses. The Sharyland partnership enables students to complete college hours in 3 fields: Nursing/Health Science, Engineering/Computer Science/Math, and Biomedical Science.

In 2002, a Visitors Center was constructed to assist with welcoming visiting students and families. The Center includes an exhibit hall to showcase educational exhibits suitable for K-12 field trips attracting thousands of students to the UTPA campus each year. While these students are on the campus, they are given tours and provided college-going information and encouragement. The director of the center, a former school teacher, prepares lesson plans for each exhibit that correspond to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) curriculum. During Fall 2008, the university was fortunate to acquire a blockbuster exhibit from the Chicago Field Museum, in partnership with the local McDonald's Owner/Operators' Association. The dinosaur exhibit, *A T. Rex Named Sue*, brought in over 50,000 visitors to UTPA, of which approximately 19,000 were K-12 students. Table 4 illustrates the diversity of the exhibits and the numbers of visitors each has attracted to visit to UTPA.

Semester	Title	Attendees
Fall 2003	Smithsonian <i>El Rio</i>	8000
Fall 2004	Milestones for Peace	7731
Summer 2005	Valley Heroes	1537
Spring 2006	Surrendering the White House: Documenting Watergate	4219
Fall 2006	A Slave Ship Speaks: The Wreck of the Henrietta Marie	10904
Spring 2007	Retablos: The Art of Faith	9018
Fall 2007	NASA	4807
Fall 2008	A T. Rex Named Sue	50047
Spring 2008	Mexican Masters	7108
Fall 2009	Space A Journey To Our Future	18629
Spring 2010	Masters of the Night: The True Story of Bats	

The university's Planetarium, in existence for more than 45 years, has recently been equipped with surround sound and a new digital projection system thereby, enabling visitors to visually explore the universe and travel through space and time. This was made possible by a grant from H-E-B. In Fall 2008, the Planetarium purchased *The*

Dinosaur Prophecies digital movie to correspond with the dinosaur exhibit and enabled schools to bring their students out for a day full of learning and fun. Figure 4 demonstrates the attendance distribution for April through February.



The university has partnered with several other organizations and for-profit companies to expand the P-16 programs. Programs like Tech Prep, TBEC, and THECB have brought partnerships which have provided both funding and programmatic initiatives, designed to increase college-going numbers. UTPA also worked with McDonald’s Corp and owners of the Valley McDonald’s restaurants to purchase a former McDonald’s and convert it to a “Go Center” where college-going literature and assistance are provided for students. In addition, the McDonald’s Rio Grande Valley Owner/Operators Association has funded serving tray literature for over 30 McDonald’s restaurants in the 4-county Rio Grande Valley area. These 1.5 million tray liners featured a college-going message in both English and Spanish.

In an effort to meet the goals and challenges of the THECB’s *Closing the Gaps* initiative for access and success, in spring 2006, UTPA created a P-16 Council in collaboration with South Texas College, Region I Education Service Center and superintendents of Hidalgo County public school districts. The mission of the Upper Rio Grande Valley P-16 Council is to dramatically increase the number of students who complete high school, enter post secondary education and achieve a college degree in Hidalgo and Starr Counties.

The Goals of the P-16 Council are:

1. To increase the high school completion rates.
2. To increase the percentage of students who are college ready.
3. To increase access and participation into post-secondary education.
4. To increase graduation/completion of degrees at institutions of higher education.

5. To increase the number of highly qualified teachers
6. To increase the number of students choosing programs of study in allied health and nursing

In collaboration with the THECB, for the second consecutive year, UTPA hosted a Regional Round-UP meeting in Edinburg on October 23, 2009 to update participants regarding the THECB and TEA College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) statewide initiative. To continue with a Curriculum Alignment Project begun in Spring 2009, the Upper Rio Grande Valley P-16 Council facilitated the development of Reference Course Syllabi between English faculty from UTPA and STC Beginning in January 2010. The purpose of the effort was to align course syllabi in ENG 1301-Composition and ENG 1302-Rhetoric between the two post-secondary education institutions in preparation for aligning curriculum with high school English Language Arts teachers of the public schools in Hidalgo and Starr Counties. In March 2010, 70 public school high school English Language Arts teachers, 12 UTPA English faculty, 12 South Texas College faculty, and 6 Region I Education Service Center personnel met to begin alignment of syllabi, including the alignment with the CCRS. The purpose of the Curriculum Alignment initiative is to align the CCRS, Texas Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and course syllabi for UTPA and STC, through vertical teams, to ensure that students in Hidalgo and Starr counties are ready to engage in college level coursework when they graduate from high school and enter UTPA and STC.

The university's most ambitious P-16 program since 1999 has been the GEAR UP program. UTPA GEAR UP and partners work together to create a college going culture by increasing low income students' academic expectations and performance, career exploration opportunities, college preparation, financial aid choices, parental awareness of postsecondary education options, and professional development to align P-16 curriculum and provide a smooth transition from high school to the university. Funding was first granted to the university in 2001. By Fall 2006, 3,598 (60%) of these 6,000 students had prepared for and enrolled in college. A big plus for UTPA was the 489 students who were encouraged and assisted in their enrollment in CE courses at the university.

A second GEAR UP grant, awarded to the university to serve 9,000 7th grade students in Fall 05, enabled the GEAR UP staff to use what they had learned with the first grant, to begin anew and work to improve on the college-going rate of 60% from the first GEAR UP cohort. In 2008, the project achieved an 89% retention rate of its students from 9th to 10th grade. Most schools experience a 78% retention rate at the critical stage of the 9th and 10th grade. This same cohort experienced a 92% retention rate in the transition from 10th to 11th grade. GEAR UP also provided family and community outreach services to its parents, with 73% of parents receiving a GEAR UP service and 63% of parents receiving training in college planning and financial aid.

The GEAR UP project has also been successful with the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program. AVID average students and places them in advanced courses. The program has grown from 3 schools regionally to 51 schools through a

Michael and Susan Dell Foundation grant proposal written and awarded at \$4.5 million for 7 years.

Continuing with its strong partnership with local schools, in the fall semester of 2008, UTPA entered into an inter-local cooperation contract with South Texas ISD titled "Pathways to Success." The contract provides a process by which both institutions will work to develop better-prepared, college-ready students. Among entering freshman students with developmental needs, the University has established a "Summer Start" program at STISD. Additionally, UTPA will provide a "Summer University Prep" program which will help high school students become better prepared for their last years in high school through a summer residential program.

While UTPA has been a leader in access efforts for pre-college students, increased efforts are being implemented to improving access to graduate studies at UTPA. Most UTPA undergraduate students are first-generation college students and may not have the same level of awareness of graduate school opportunities as other students. In addition, it has been demonstrated that our students benefit from additional preparation prior to taking graduate school entrance exams. Our plan to improve access to graduate education addresses both of these factors (see graduate recruitment initiatives p.24).

V. Recruitment Plan

Overview

UTPA recruitment and marketing efforts have been expanded exponentially over the past ten years. Recruitment efforts focused primarily in Hidalgo County schools with limited efforts in the remaining RGV counties. The Admissions and New Student Services Office reviewed and modified efforts in recruitment and marketing strategies, to address the needs of target populations in the primary, secondary and tertiary markets. A prospective student communication flow was implemented in FY08 addressing each specific audience. Assessment of the communication flow to prospective students is continuous. In FY09 search lists of students with a Fall 2009 entry term who meet academic standards were acquired. Targeted mailings to an additional 9,972 prospective students in all three markets became a part of the recruitment target. Communication flows targeted each specific markets and included: (1) regular mail flow; (2) e-mail communications; (3) printed brochures; and (4) television/radio campaigns.

More recently, the office has implemented Constituent Resource Management (CRM) software which enables electronic oversight of mailings to prospective students. This has led to increased marketing and recruitment efforts in areas such as Corpus Christi, Laredo, San Antonio, Houston and the Winter Garden region. This system has allowed the tracking of communication pieces sent to prospective students. The total number of prospects in the system has increased by 124% in FY09. The number of prospective students who have received communication pieces from UTPA in the secondary market number 5,418 and the number of prospects in tertiary markets communicating with UTPA total 44,308 thus leading to a 50% increase in the secondary and tertiary markets in FY2009.

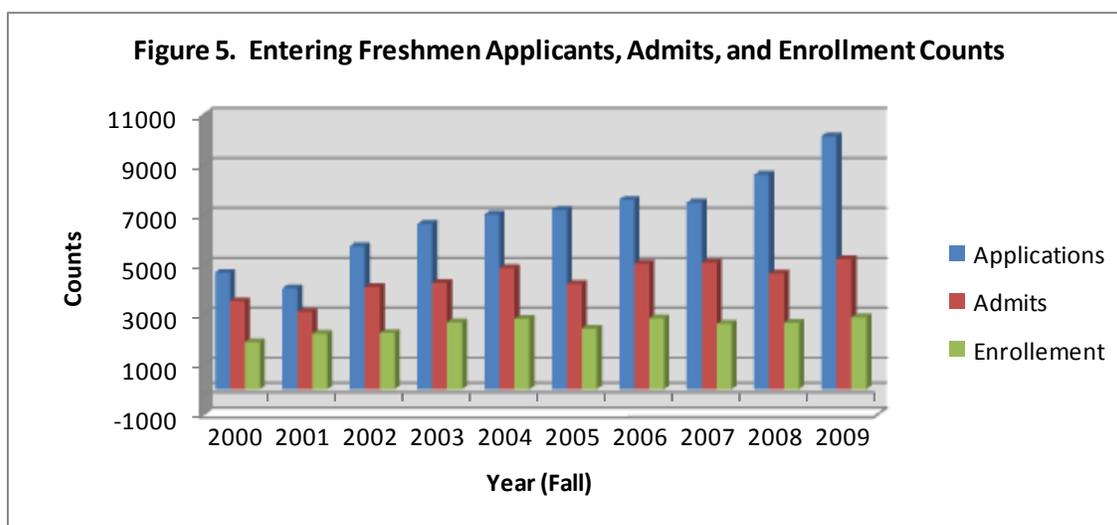
Undergraduate Market Map



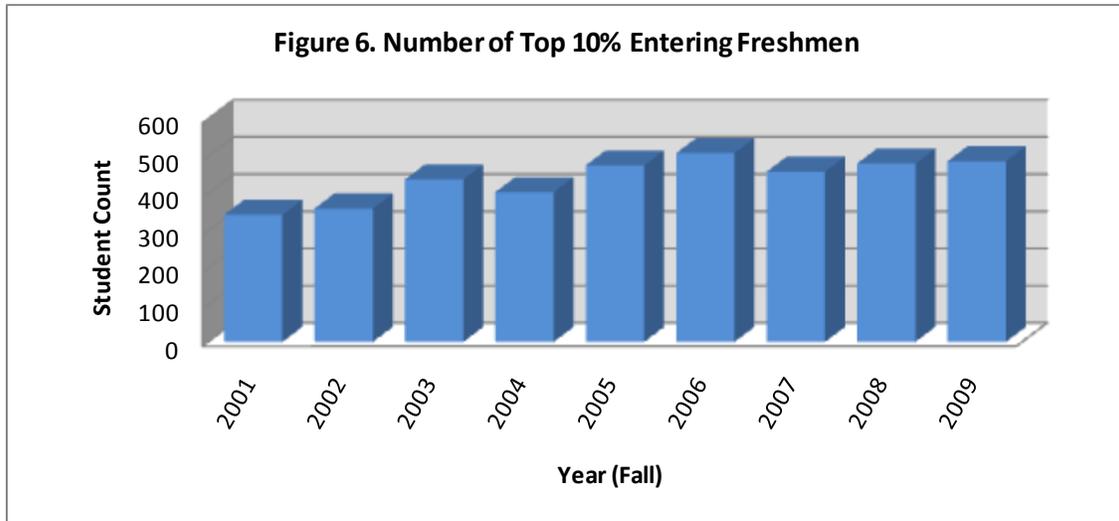
In addition, the Creative and Marketing Services department was established to expand upon recruitment marketing campaigns which include “The Total University Experience” and the new 2009 “It’s All Right Here” campaign. Media campaigns included print, radio and television encompassing the RGV and markets in Corpus Christi and Laredo. In addition, recruiters began visiting area schools more frequently to assist in application preparation earlier in the fall semester.

Entering Freshmen Recruitment Initiatives

The office has also established measurable objectives with specific strategies setting goals for the number of prospective students, applicants, and admitted students by high school. The number of high school visits has increased by 61% from 2002-2009. Freshmen application and admission numbers have also increased during the same period. Marketing funding was enhanced to provide funds for events used to convert admitted students to enrolled students. Figure 5 below indicates the number of applicants has increased steadily throughout the years highlighting the effectiveness of our recruitment efforts. Due to the increased admissions standards, the numbers of admitted and enrolled students have fluctuated.



A target goal is to increase the caliber of entering freshmen. UTPA implemented admissions standards beginning fall 2004. Strategies to recruit the high school top 10% students includes targeting additional scholarships when necessary to recruit these high caliber students. Figure 6 shows the trend of Top 10% student enrollment at UTPA.

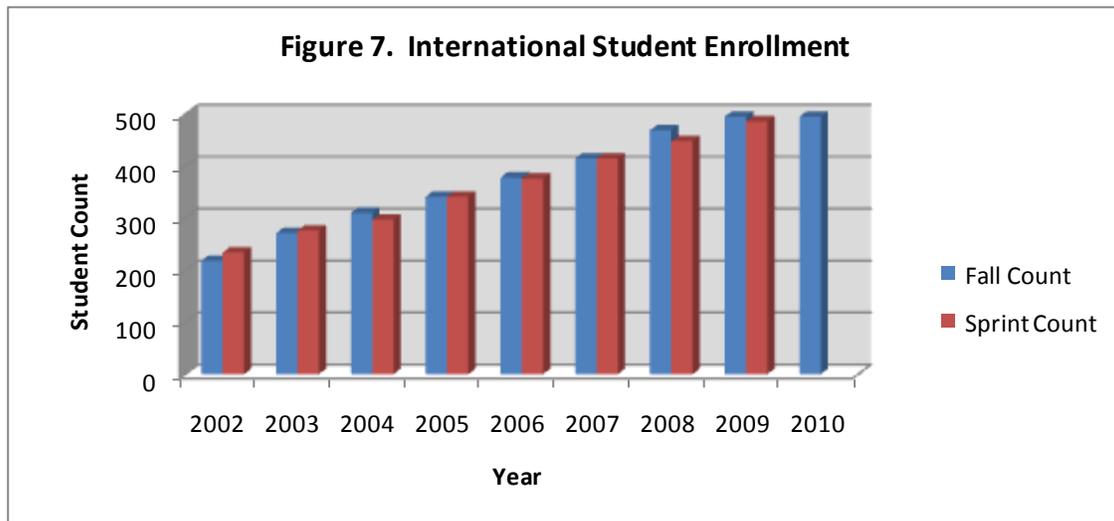


* Data not available for Fall 2000.

UTPA is currently in the final construction stage for a new Starr County facility, which will allow for expansion of program offerings currently being provided in limited facilities in Rio Grande City. This will enable UTPA to work more closely with South Texas College, also in Rio Grande City, to encourage more students in that sector to complete their degrees. Numbers enrolled at the Starr County facility have increased from 40 Fall 2000 to 118 Fall 2009; additional enrollments are expected with the opening of the new facility.

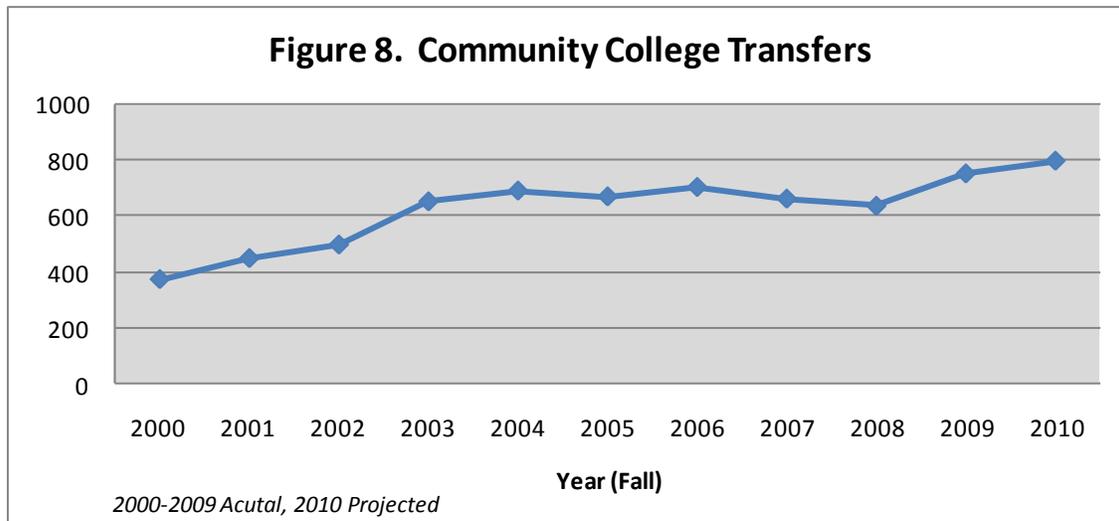
While the focus had been traditionally on the four-county Rio Grande Valley, the university has begun to expand its recruitment efforts outward to the north and south. Out-of-Valley recruitment is very important as the university continues to raise its admissions standards in the next three to four years. The numbers of ACT-qualified students may increase with the University's strong P-16 and access efforts; however, larger pools of students who meet admissions standards live in other regions where this university will be marketable to students and families.

This is also true for the university's efforts to attract students from Mexico, efforts which have resulted in a rapid increase in students from that region, particularly from Monterrey, Mexico north to the boundary. The growth of students from Northern Mexico also stemmed from enhancements to our International Student Admissions/Advisement office beginning with its transfer to the ESS Division in 2001. The transfer of the Office of International Student Admissions and Advisement to ESS allowed us to develop new internal strategies to address the stricter international student visa processes in the wake of the national tragedy of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent implementation of SEVIS. Efforts were successful, as shown by the tremendous increase in new international students in Figure 7 below, a 127% increase in just 7 years. In the recent years Mexico recruitment has fluctuated due to Health (H1N1 Epidemic) and Safety Advisories limiting recruiter presence in Mexico. To offset this challenge the office has invited students from the Northern Mexico Cities to attend recruitment events held on campus.



Transfer Recruitment Initiatives

Beginning in 2000 the university has taken a proactive approach to working with area community colleges, including South Texas College, Texas State Technical College, Laredo Community College, Coastal Bend College, and Delmar College. UTPA has signed dual admissions agreements with three of the colleges and plans to sign such agreements with the other two. As well, 12 articulation agreements have been signed for improved transition of students. The colleges receive regular visits from UTPA recruiters and advertisements are regularly placed in the college newspapers. The university also utilized additional scholarships, starting the Phi Theta Kappa alumni scholarship to attract members of that national community college academic honorary society. In 2001, the university also began an alumni association to assist in the transition of PTK members to the campus. The alumni association members on the UTPA campus also act as mentors to other community college transfer students. The university has been successful in garnering transfer students; however most of the students come from the closest community college, South Texas College. Continuous planning for attracting more transfer students and assisting to ease their transition to campus continues.



UTPA opened the doors to a Transfer Center adjacent to the South Texas College main campus in January 2009. The center was developed to assist STC students in the transfer process by providing admissions information, academic advisement and financial aid processes earlier in their academic career. The convenient location of the center allows students easy access to information and eases the transition from a community college to a university setting. Since opening, the Transfer Center has seen over 1,700 students and transfer enrollment from STC has increase by 13.7% from Fall 2008 to Fall 2009.

To continue the improvement of transfer recruiting the Admissions and New Student Service Office continuously assesses and revises strategies specifically targeting this population. New campaigns that include print, e-mail, television and radio have been implemented to target transfer students. In addition, on-campus events design to meet the information needs of Transfer students are in the planning stages.

Scholarships

Many universities offer renewable merit scholarships to attract students. UTPA has developed a four year renewable tiered scholarship program that is geared to attract the type of students the university wants to enroll and retain. The first cohort of students will be awarded for the 2010-11 academic year. Benefits of a renewable tiered scholarship program:

- A tiered scholarship allows an institution to target an appropriate pricing strategy for students of different academic levels.
- A renewable scholarship encourages retention and early graduation, as students strive to maintain scholarship requirements and complete the academic program within the timeframe of the renewable scholarship.
- An attractive renewable tiered scholarship program generates interest in the university, helping recruitment efforts. The benefit of the scholarship extends

beyond the students that actually receive it by generating interest and excitement, getting more “bang for your buck”.

- An appealing scholarship program encourages middle school and early high school students to strive to complete academic programs that will qualify them for the scholarship, helping to increase the pool of students eligible for college admissions.
- A merit scholarship program places the university on more equal footing with competitors that offer merit scholarship programs to recruit and retain high quality students

The University Scholars tiered scholarship proposal expands on the success of the university’s only premier merit scholarship program, University Scholars, which has been very successful in increasing the number of students with CE and AP credits. It has helped recruit and retain high quality students who have helped increase the university’s retention and graduation rates. Diversifying University Scholars into a tiered scholarship provides a scholarship that can be offered to a wider range of students, generating additional interest in the university.

	Fall 04	Fall 05	Fall 06	Fall 07	Fall 08	Fall 09
EF Retention Rate	94.5%	94.3%	91.4%	94.7%	94.7%	
Average GPA	3.18	3.28	3.22	3.43	3.32	3.37
Mean ACT	23.0	23.5	22.1	24.5	24.7	25.1
4-year Grad Rate	53.0%	58.0%				
5-year Grad Rate	66.0%					

Graduate Recruitment Initiatives

In 2000-2001, the university selected as one of its goals the achieving of the status of premier learner-centered research university, recognizing the need in south Texas for more research-oriented disciplines which would help to drive the economic engines for continued growth of industries in the area. Since that time, the university has adopted several objectives, some outlined above in the introductory statement, including raising admissions standards, recruiting a better-prepared student into the university, and focusing efforts not only on encouraging students to consider college, but also to consider continuing toward graduate work. At the same time, the university moved toward increasing distance learning capacity, primarily through web-based instruction and turned most of its classrooms into smart class facilities, enhancing ability to communicate more easily and effectively with students in and outside of our on-campus rooms.

One of the university’s stated long-term objectives is to increase the proportion semester credit hours generated by graduate students to 16.0% by 2015. This shift

towards graduate education is necessary to support the overall goal of achieving a graduate-research status.

To achieve the shift towards more graduate education, UTPA must increase the number of graduate students by attracting potential graduate students from among our undergraduate student body, from other universities as well as from the baccalaureate-degreed workforce in the community.

An aggressive marketing and promotional campaign resulted in significant increases for the Graduate School in several areas: a 6.79% increase in enrollment in Fall 2009 as compared to Fall 2008 and an increase of 10.78% in semester credit hours (SCHs), as well as an increase of 54% in applications in AY 2008-2009 as compared to FY 2007-2008. Campaign activities included:

- Teachers Scholars Program: A scholarship program that provides support to public high school teachers to complete 18 hours of coursework leading to a master's degree in a content area. 23 teachers completed 18 hours in Spring of 2009.
- Mexico Recruitment: An aggressive campaign that included advertising, presentations, and exhibitions was conducted throughout the year and resulted in more than 800 new prospects. Additionally, important partnerships were established with key organizations to assist with promotional efforts including the U.S. Embassy, Education USA, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Edinburg Chamber of Commerce which maintains an office in Monterrey.
 - Advertising: 12,000 flyers were distributed at the Reynosa/Hidalgo Bridge in Spring 2009 and several television and radio interviews were conducted at no cost with Televisa, Univision, Television Azteca, Telemundo, Radio Nuevo Leon (Monterrey) and Radio San Miguel (San Miguel de Allende)
 - Presentations: Presentations were made to more than 16 schools in Victoria, Reynosa and Monterrey, Mexico.
 - Exhibitions: Recruiters participated in recruitment fairs in Mexico City, Puebla and Monterrey, Mexico and hosted a booth at the Rio Grande Premium Outlets, a popular shopping destination for Mexican shoppers in the U.S.
- Recruitment of non-UTPA students: Efforts were made to diversify the graduate student population and promote to non-UTPA students, including:
 - As part of the "Texas Swing," graduate recruiters participated in graduate fairs at Texas A&M Kingsville, Texas A&M Corpus Christi, UT Brownsville, and Texas A&M Laredo.
 - Recruitment events were held at UT Brownsville to promote graduate programs not offered at the university.

- The Graduate School partnered with the College of Health Sciences & Human Services to promote the new PhD in Rehabilitation Counseling in Puerto Rico and California, resulting in 130 prospects.
- E-Communication: A strong effort was placed on expanding the communication avenues utilized by the graduate school, with an emphasis on e-communication. These included:
 - Graduate School Blog: Generated 193,121 total views in 2009
 - Email campaign-Current Students: 61,194 emails were sent to current students to promote events and encourage registration.
 - 190,435 emails were sent to prospects announcing events and providing useful information.
- Certificate programs: New certificate programs were created that introduce students to graduate programs and in many cases provide an opportunity for the student to take leveling courses to prepare for graduate school.
 - Certificate in Media Relations & Strategic Communication
 - Certificate in Communication Training & Consulting
 - Healthcare Administration and Leadership
 - Certificate in Advanced Business Administration
- College/Graduate School collaborations: Throughout the year, the graduate studies recruitment team collaborated with various UTPA graduate departments to provide assistance with marketing materials and to co-present at conferences and meetings throughout the country:
 - All colleges were represented at the Graduate Fair that was held in March, 90% of graduate programs participated and more than 300 prospects attended.
 - A Rehabilitation Services program reunion was coordinated with the College of Health and Human Services to introduce the PhD in Rehabilitation Services, resulting in seven alumni starting the program in Fall 2009.
 - Recruiters participated in presentations in Puerto Rico and California along with the College of Health and Human Services.
 - Recruiters helped to develop marketing plans for the College of Health and Human Services and the College of Education and assisted in creating marketing materials for all programs in the College of Health and Human Services, the Master's in Business Administration and the certificate programs.

The Graduate School also focused strongly on retention, implementing activities to help graduate students successfully complete their studies. One of these is the Education Title V "Promoting Post baccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans" grant which was awarded in August 2009. The total grant award is \$1.75 million over 5 years.

Working together with a faculty advisor committee, the graduate office has begun developing components of the grant, including:

- Scholarships totaling \$54,000 to be awarded to students studying in STEM fields;
- The creation of a Graduate Resource Center, that will organize training events for current students and serve as a clearinghouse;
- A faculty development program that will emphasize the role of faculty as student mentors; and,
- A Summer Research Symposium that will provide funding for 12 teacher/student research teams for a maximum amount of \$8,000 for each team.

VI. Marketing Plan

Current Marketing Initiatives

The University of Texas-Pan American's Integrated Marketing area became a part of the Division of University Advancement in 2007. In the early stages of the UTPA branding initiative, The Richards Group assisted with the creation of a brand vision and positioning statement. In May of 2009, the UT Board of Regents approved a new University slogan—Prepare. Discover. Transform.

In the fall of 2009, the Office of Marketing and Creative Services was established (Nicknamed "Studio Twelve01") reporting to the Vice President for University Advancement. This is a significant change for several reasons:

- 1) All design staff were brought together into one group. All communication pieces are now designed and written in one shop, allowing for consistency of messages.
- 2) All offices at the University are encouraged to work with Marketing and Creative Services in all aspects of message creation, including—market research, brand development, media strategy, strategic planning, and art direction/design. This allows the University better gatekeeping control of messages delivered to the public.
- 3) Media planning/buying
With the creation of Studio Twelve01, all media planning and buying is now centralized. This allows the University to leverage its media buying dollars.
- 4) Strategic Planning
Because Studio Twelve01 is the hub of marketing for the University, the office is able to more efficiently and effectively recommend and implement marketing strategies that enhance multiple offices.

There are a number of ongoing marketing initiatives at the university. With the establishment of Studio Twelve01, the creation of all radio, television, web, outdoor and print advertising has moved into this office.

- 1) People mover campaign: Print messages relating to a system of education in South Texas were created specifically for a regional or national audience to showcase the university. Print ads ran in Texas Monthly, Hispanic Magazine, Texas Monthly College Guide and online with the college guide. One of the ads from this campaign (Texas Invests) won a local ADDY award in Spring 2010.
- 2) It's All Right Here campaign: A television campaign was developed for our recruiting efforts to capture our target audience and deliver the message that, no matter what you're looking for in a university, it is all right here at UTPA. This was accomplished through print ads, TV commercials, and online banner ads.

Even though this was primarily a recruiting campaign, the line, “It’s All Right Here” has been adopted in many ways across campus as a great way to talk about the University. To supplement the TV ads, printed collateral materials were also developed using the tag line, “it’s all right here.” TV commercials for this campaign won four local ADDY awards in Spring 2010.

4) The Best campaign: A newspaper and Web-based campaign featuring the best of the best professors on the UTPA campus. Professors are featured in a Sunday newspaper ad and profiled in a long piece on the Web that allows the community to get to know the educator on both a personal and professional level. The concept is to highlight the excellence that is on the UTPA campus and to emphasize the scholarly nature of a UTPA professor.

5) Los Arcos

This two-time a year publication continues to serve as a public relations piece and is a collaboration between University Relations and Studio Twelve01. Delivered through our local newspaper as an insertion, this publication reaches approximately 30,000 community members, many of whom are alumni. In addition, the publication is mailed to select alumni out of the area and delivered via digital-magazine-page-turning software.

6) Media Buys

New vehicles have been employed to deliver messages to select audiences.

- a) Outdoor Boards:
 - i. Traditional boards along our major east-west highway were procured to introduce the “It’s all right here” campaign and the introduction of our McAllen Teaching Site.
 - ii. Digital boards were used to promote various campus events—including speakers, festivals, and athletics.
- b) ABC Video Player: This vehicle played a UTPA commercial during every single TV show that was watched (in the DMA) via the ABC video player online streaming service.
- c) Airport Signage: Newly added to our media mix, airport signage in the two major airports—McAllen and Harlingen—promotes the role UTPA plays in the economic development of our region.

7) Web site

The beginning of the Fall 2009 semester marked the launch of UTPA’s redesigned Web site. The new site organized a host of information in easy to find categories and provides a visual space to provide key information to our various constituents. The Web site won a local ADDY award in Spring 2010.

UTPA has been fortunate to secure free advertising in various media such as the student of the week profile and RSS feed in the local newspaper. UTPA has been able to secure free news media time slots for short informational segments – from 3 to 5

minutes long – on the local ABC, FOX and NBC channels, as well as on local Spanish TV stations.

Several groups within the university have marketing/promotional material funds for events. These groups include, but are not limited to, university theater program, mariachi and folkloric dance, Visitors Center, Community Engagement (for divisional activities and HESTEC), College of Arts & Humanities FESTIBA event, International Programs, graduate programs and student development.

Future Plans

The UTPA Marketing Plan continues to position UTPA as one of the top public universities in Texas and to recruit top-qualified students. Additionally, communication messages will focus on four centers of excellence: Healthcare and Healthcare Policy, Business/Entrepreneurship, Education-especially bi-lingual, and Engineering/Rapid Response Manufacturing, along with tying in the universities slogan, “Prepare. Discover. Transform.”

Other Marketing Initiatives

Community outreach activities on campus also assist us in marketing the university widely. UTPA hosted a McAllen Leadership Day, which brought 20 leaders from the McAllen area onto campus. Over the last two years, the Distinguished Student Speakers series hosted several speakers in which more than 6,000 people attended.

Table 6. Distinguished Speakers Series Attendance

	COMMUNITY ATTENDANCE	UTPA ATTENDANCE	STUDENT UNION OVERFLOW	Live Web Cast Viewers	TOTAL ATTENDANCE
Jeff Corwin	613	472	233		1318
Jehan Sedat	427	279	0		706
Robert Ballard	450	332			782
Judy Shepard	387	381			768
Steve Wozniak	239	470		18	727
Dr. Alfredo Quinon	305	506		11	822
Lisa Ling	465	462			927

Hispanic Engineering Science and Technology (HESTEC) Program is organized in conjunction with the Office of Congressman Rubén Hinojosa. The innovative program was created seven years ago to address the critical shortage of scientists and engineers in the United States.

HESTEC has become a national model for promoting science, technology, engineering and math careers among South Texas students who are predominantly Hispanic.

HESTEC goals include to emphasize the importance of science literacy to young students, to encourage students to consider careers in science, engineering, mathematics and technology (STEM) and to promote higher education to all children and their parents

Since its inception in 2002 more than 30,000 pre-college students have participated in the HESTEC conferences. More than 7,000 teachers have attended HESTEC hands-on workshops and \$1.55 million has been raised for student scholarships.

To complement the science conference held annually in the fall, UTPA created the Festival of International Books and Arts (FESTIBA) in 2006, seeking to increase the interest in reading and to help improve the success in secondary and post-secondary education, and to provide an educational opportunity for at-risk youth in rural communities. With literacy, reading, and cultural and civic engagement as the focus of FESTIBA, UTPA sought to foster a culture that appreciates and celebrates the arts and humanities within the South Texas community.

Now in its fifth consecutive year, FESTIBA has evolved into a regional event that brings together the most outstanding scholars, authors, and educators in their disciplines to UTPA and the surrounding community to contribute their expertise, encourage intellectual inquiry and exchange, and improve the capacity to teach and understand the arts and humanities. With the goal of fomenting cultural awareness, UTPA promotes the arts and humanities by engaging the community through books, poetry, drama, lectures, artistic exhibits, presentations in dance, theatre, film, musical concerts, Mariachi workshops, and much more!

In collaboration with UTPA, the Texas Book Festival "Reading Rock Stars" (RRS) Program brings visiting authors to public schools in the Rio Grande Valley, giving students the chance to hear from some of the country's leading children's authors. With their visits in 2008 and 2009, authors brought 7,100 autographed books to distribute. This year, they will bring 3,500 autographed books to dispense as part of the RRS Program. Through a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant, UTPA gave out approximately 600 copies of *Bless Me, Ultima* in 2009 and will give out 600 copies of *Sun, Stone and Shadows* this year. In the past, the Congressional Roundtable has brought together the most prominent educational and community leaders, such as Congressman Ruben Hinojosa; Congressman Henry Cuellar; Congressman Solomon Ortiz; Carol Rasco, President, Reading Is Fundamental; Clay Smith, Literary Director, Texas Book Festival; among many others. In 2009, 300 librarians visited the UTPA campus during "Librarians Rock" Day, at which they learned about different ways of nurturing their students' love for reading. In 2009, FESTIBA welcomed 1,000 students as part of the GEAR UP Days at UTPA, giving them the opportunity to engage in different exhibits geared towards fostering their love for reading. With 15,000 in attendance, FESTIBA Community Festival is considered one of the largest single day events in South Texas, receiving coverage from various national and international media outlets.

VII. Academic Plan

Overview

The UTPA academic plan is formed and re-formed based upon the University’s six strategic plan goals and its aspirational vision to become the premier learner centered research institution in Texas. The university’s strategic direction will enhance access, increase retention and graduation, and continue to support the workforce needs of Rio South Texas and the state. UTPA’s plan is focused on curriculum and reformation (focusing on high need areas) and the acquisition and support of a high quality teaching cadre who are engaged in active research.

Recently, UTPA underwent a campus wide examination of its core curriculum. The faculty revised and approved a 43 semester hour core curriculum, reducing it from 48 semester hours. At the same time, 45 degree programs reduced their requirements to 120 semester hours and 35 reduced them to 121-127 semester hours. At an aggregate level, it is expected this will facilitate shorter time to graduation, and a potentially reduced cost of education based on individual student registration patterns. Additionally, freeing up instructional resources will allow for the creation of new academic degree offerings.

The university has also established an academic program committee which examines proposals for new academic programs in relation to UT system and THECB criteria. The committee also makes recommendations regarding priority order for UTPA funding in this scarce resource environment. It is anticipated that all new programs will be self supporting with combined revenue sources of statutory and designated tuition and fees. Furthermore, UTPA anticipates focusing new programs on the STEM, allied health, and education areas. For example, a newly proposed baccalaureate civil engineering program, increasing nursing faculty capacity, a change in the physician assistance program, and modifications to both the traditional and alternative teacher certification programs will contribute to UTPA’s increasing enrollment in critical need areas. These changes will result in increased graduation in those areas as detailed below in the tables below.

Table 7. “Closing the Gaps” STEM Degrees

UTPA STEM * Degrees	Actual 2000	Actual 2005	Actual 2006	Actual 2007	Target 2010	Target 2015	Target 2020
Total	107	141	199	166	209	274	338
Engineering	59	87	104	97	121	168	211
Computer Science	17	25	34	20	29	37	45
Math	20	12	35	30	36	41	48
Physical Science	11	17	26	19	23	28	34

* Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

Table 8. “Closing the Gaps” Targets Allied Health/Nursing Degrees

UTPA Allied Health/Nursing Degrees	Actual 2000	Actual 2005	Actual 2006	Actual 2007	Target 2010	Target 2015	Target 2020
Total	135	221	224	241	260	358	401

Table 9. “Closing the Gaps” Certified Teachers

UTPA Certified Teachers	Actual 2000	Actual 2005	Actual 2006	Actual 2007	Target 2010	Target 2015	Target 2020
Total	485	696	603	548	700	850	1,150
Science/Math	72	50	39	36	40	75	95

The university’s academic centers – the South Health Disparities Center, Border Health Office, English Language Institute, Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center – actively involve graduate students as research assistants throughout the year and help to supplement their academic programs. The English Language Institute serves as a pipeline for both undergraduate and graduate students who enroll in intensive language courses to prepare for professional and educational opportunities. In 2009, 12 presentations were made to approximately 180 students, and 15 students went on to apply to graduate

In addition to new and modified curricular offerings, UTPA is also increasing on-line and distance education opportunities for students. The university underwent a leadership change of its online instruction support unit -- already yielding a 100% increase in the number of on-line courses for Fall 2008. Additionally, UTPA intends on increasing both its consortia and university programs offered through Telecampus. This unit will have a significant opportunity to assist both in the development of new enrollments but also will support enhanced graduation rates and time to graduation.

A new schedule timeframe was implemented in Fall 2008 that expanded the course offerings on Monday and Wednesday afternoons and decreased the timeframes for classes on Friday afternoons. One of the reasons for this change was to provide students an opportunity to select to take courses two days a week versus three days a week, and thus, save on transportation costs.

UTPA has also been gradually growing its study abroad and student and faculty exchanges programs to broaden students’ world view and increase student competitiveness in a global marketplace. For example, active agreements have been recently forged with Monterrey Tech and the University of Nuevo Leon. UTPA is also finalizing an agreement with the Nuevo Leon’s Department of Education to provide a graduate level certificate in English Language. This effort, along with the bilateral

University partnerships will yield an enrollment increase and extend the depth of faculty, staff, and student perspectives of the world.

A strong academic curriculum is only as strong as the faculty supporting it. To that end, UTPA has made a commitment to enhance the number and quality of faculty members employed at the University. Scarce resources, a change in workload policy to foster increased research productivity, and increasing SCH production has resulted in an increasing student to faculty ratio. Furthermore, the university continues to monitor workload to ensure that the policy changes are having desired impacts. UTPA has also just begun to use a blended funds (state and research) model to attract faculty of top quality and experience. For example, the highest paid faculty member in the history of the University was hired using a blend of state and federal dollars. Notably, this faculty member is a member of the Russian and European Academy of Sciences.

Notwithstanding the above strategies, UTPA also intend to increase the percentage of dollars (compared to total budget) going to faculty salaries—thus increasing its ability to increase the number of faculty as well as the quality. Table 10 delineates our historical and prospective new faculty hires.

Table 10. Number of New Faculty Positions Projected to 2010

Field	Actual					Planned	
	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12
STEM	8	0	4	3	0	12	12
Medical/Health	3	0	0	2	0	4	4
College of Arts and Humanities	4	0	5	8	0	16	9
College of Business Administration	1	0	0	2	0	3	1
College of Education	5	0	0	2	0	11	8
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences	1	0	1	1	0	11	7
Total	22	0	10	21	0	57	41

The McAllen Teaching Site, a state-of-the-art teaching facility, opened in August 2009 with 14 graduate courses and a total of 239 students. Spring 2010 course offerings increased to 25 with 444 students enrolled. Located on a major expressway, the site offers easy access to students who work full-time and commute. The site has strengthened the relationship between the university and the City of McAllen and South Texas College, with positive feedback from faculty and students.

Construction of the Starr County Upper Level Center, located in Rio Grande City, is well underway and is scheduled to be completed by July 2010. Full operation of the new facility begins in Fall 2010. It will include classrooms equipped with state-of-the-art technology and learning spaces that facilitate a learner centered environment. Expansion of course and degree program offerings in disciplines other than education is being planned.

VIII. Financial Plan

Division of Business Affairs

The purpose of the Financial Plan is two-fold. First, there is a continuing effort to control the cost of education borne by students in a region characterized by low incomes. If UTPA prices itself out of the market, it will fail in its role as a key Closing the Gaps contributor and will fail in its social obligation to provide attainable higher education for the region. Second, there is an increasing need to provide the resources required of an institution which is not only growing, but which is undergoing a shift in emphasis toward graduate and research programs.

Tuition and Fee Rates: Given the socioeconomic status of the region, UTPA has made a great effort to keep tuition and fees affordable. Only in FY 2007 did the designated tuition increase above the \$46/SCH maximum in effect prior to tuition “deregulation”, as shown on this table.

Table 11. Tuition and Fees at UTPA, FY 2004-2010 (Resident Undergraduates)

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Designated Tuition per SCH</u>	<u>Statutory Tuition per SCH</u>	<u>Total Tuition and Mandatory Fees (15 SCH)</u>	<u>Headcount</u>
2004	\$32	\$46	\$1,491.75	15,915
2005 *	\$38	\$48	\$1,576.00	17,030
2006	\$46	\$50	\$1,738.35	17,048
2007	\$63.15	\$50	\$2,082.70	17,337
2008	\$79.15	\$50	\$2,413.30	17,435
2009	\$87.70	\$50	\$2,562.25	17,534
2010	\$97.00	\$50	\$2,712.35	18,337

* Deregulated by Texas Legislature

According to data published by the THECB (“*College Costs Fall 2003 – Fall 2008*”, available at www.txhighereddata.org) for resident undergraduates enrolled for 15 hours in Fall 2008, UTPA had the fifth lowest total academic cost (\$2,598) among the 34 Texas public universities. Fall 2009 data has not been published yet.

Unfortunately, UTPA is no longer able to afford keeping tuition and fee increases at bay. State appropriations are simply not keeping up with the institution’s needs as higher education is now being viewed more as a private good rather than a public good, resulting in a shift of cost toward the students. This trend unfortunately coincides with our growth and development of more expensive graduate programs, the recruitment of additional high-quality faculty members, and the increasing use of expensive instructional technologies (e.g., “smart” classrooms).

The table below shows the trend in state appropriated general revenue (GR) per semester credit hour (SCH) in nominal dollars (not adjusted for inflation). “Formula GR” represents the portion for operations support, the teaching experience supplement, and space support.

Table 12. General Revenue Appropriations per Semester Credit Hour, FY 2002-2009

	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Total GR	\$46,722,386	\$47,352,920	\$49,576,027	\$49,726,789	\$54,883,368	\$54,929,367	\$61,259,191	\$61,265,464
GR per SCH	\$132.33	\$124.97	\$120.47	\$112.49	\$125.19	\$121.69	\$135.45	\$134.20
Formula GR	\$32,915,035	\$33,061,382	\$33,776,382	\$33,927,144	\$39,379,804	\$39,427,716	\$42,028,735	\$42,048,458
Formula GR per SCH	\$93.22	\$87.25	\$82.07	\$76.75	\$89.82	\$87.35	\$92.93	\$92.11

This trend has resulted in an increase in operating costs shifted to local institution funds and, ultimately, to the student. UTPA has initially been able to absorb a portion of this increase by using reserve balances, as evidenced by negative annual operating margins for FY 2005-2008. However, in order to maintain our high level of service to students and to the community, UTPA has implemented substantial tuition and fee increases FY 2007 through FY 2009. Fortunately, most likely due to the resources available for financial aid, these tuition and fee increases do not appear to have significantly affected enrollment.

UTPA will continue its commitment to the 14-hour cap on designated tuition charges. Students enrolled for 15 or more hours in a term are charged for designated tuition at the 14-hour rate. This policy encourages students to take larger course loads, thereby improving progress toward graduation while increasing space utilization.

In order to promote acceptance by students and the community for cost of education increases, it is critical that students are active participants in the tuition and fee setting process. During the fall 2009 semester, UTPA convened the fifth annual Cost of Education Committee (COEC) to review tuition and fee proposals and to make recommendations to the president. As part of this process, the COEC conducted three public forums and an on-line public forum to present its preliminary recommendations and to receive feedback.

Discussion at the COEC meetings was largely conducted by the students, and 9 of the 19 voting members were students including a student co-chair. Attendance at the public forums by the general student population, however, has been disappointing. However, an online forum was established for students to review the recommendations and submit feedback. The number of responses received via the web far exceeded the forum attendance. This encouraging result indicated students were being informed.

Financial Assistance Set Aside: Now that designated tuition at UTPA has exceeded the \$46/SCH level, a portion of designated tuition charge is being set aside, as required by

TX Educ. Code Sec. 56.011 and 56.012, for need-based financial assistance for resident students. The projected uses of these set-aside funds are discussed in the following section under Financial Aid. The table below displays the actual set-aside for FY 2007 through FY 2009 and the projection for FY 2010.

Table 13. Designated Tuition Set-Asides for Need-Based Financial Assistance

	<u>FY 2007 Actual</u>	<u>FY 2008 Actual</u>	<u>FY 2009 Actual</u>	<u>FY 2010 Budget</u>
Undergraduates	\$1,308,506	\$2,510,377	\$3,144,588	\$3,929,955
Graduates	\$88,142	170,166	221,734	290,108
Total	\$1,396,648	\$2,680,543	\$3,366,322	\$4,220,063

Although future cost of education increases are inevitable, UTPA is committed to ensuring that no eligible student coming from a family with income under \$35,000 is faced with out-of-pocket costs for tuition and fees. Students are required to apply by the priority deadline and enroll full time to receive the guarantee. Resources generated from the financial assistance set-asides are an important component of this commitment.

Operating Costs: Efforts undertaken by the university to control operating costs can help mitigate tuition and fee increases passed along to students. Recent efforts have focused on rising utility payments. While the university cannot control the markets or the weather, it can continue to work to reduce energy consumption rates. There is an energy conservation program underway with plans to separately meter all campus buildings. In addition, the ongoing energy efficient lighting retrofit project will generate enough savings to pay for itself in less than 6 years.

The following table displays the recent trend in administrative costs as a percent of total operating expenses:

Table 14. Percent of Operating Expenses for Administrative Cost

FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
8.8%	8.8%	8.0%	8.2%	9.7%	9.6%	10.9%

The increase in the FY 2009 administrative cost ratio results from additional investments in institutional support activities such as development, human resources, information technology, and an institutional subsidy of the campus work-study program. It has also been determined, however, that certain information technology costs would more properly be classified as academic support. If this is changed for FY 2010, this ratio would fall. However, this would not lessen the institution's resolve to keep administrative costs at the minimum necessary.

Two major recent software implementation projects (Oracle and Banner) at UTPA should eventually be able to facilitate management of costs through metric-based performance evaluation. This should help reduce waste and better target expenditures toward intended outcomes.

Provision of Resources

Academic Space: Enrollment growth is expected to place pressure on existing facilities. According to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Academic Space Models for Fall 2003 to Fall 2009 UTPA has a persistent deficit in total academic space square footage, as can be seen in Table 15 below.

Table 15. Academic Space Square Footage

	Predicted Academic Space	Actual Academic Space (adjusted)	Academic Space Surplus/(Deficit)
FY 2003	1,289,161	1,114,157	(175,004)
FY 2004	1,336,143	1,086,446	(249,697)
FY 2005	1,352,977	1,172,360	(180,617)
FY 2006	1,414,600	1,119,684	(294,917)
FY 2007	1,436,213	1,109,471	(326,742)
FY 2008	1,443,684	1,114,316	(329,368)
FY 2009	1,540,748	1,080,434	(460,314)

Further, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s new Space Utilization Efficiency (SUE) measure was implemented in 2008. The SUE relies on several variables to determine activity, need and usage in classrooms and labs. The first variable used is facilities demand, which is measured by total hours of classroom activities divided by the total number of classrooms. The second variable, current utilization rate, is the traditional classroom and laboratory usage rate, explained below. The third variable is percent fill, which is the average percent of seats occupied in a classroom.

In the SUE rankings for Fall 2008 and Fall 2009, UTPA topped the list for the State of Texas. In Fall 2008 with a score of 192, UTPA was tied with Texas A&M and Texas State University-San Marcos. In Fall 2009, UTPA and TSU-SM were tied with a score of 200. This means we have the most efficient class and lab utilization in the State, and the least room for growth.

Space Utilization: The THECB monitors classroom and class laboratory utilization for public universities by average weekly hours of use.

The usage of UTPA’s classrooms decreased slightly from 40.6 hours per week in fall 2008 to 40 hours per week in fall 2009. UTPA tied its ranking at 3rd with two other institutions among 38 public universities in the state and was well above the state average of 31.8 hours per week and the state guideline of 38 hours per week. The usage of UTPA’s class labs increased from 25.4 hours per week in fall 2008 to 28 hours per week in fall 2009. UTPA tied its ranking at 5th place with 3 other institutions among 38 public universities in the state, it is well above the state guideline of 25 hours per week. The table below displays the Fall 2009 scheduling of lecture classes at various periods during the day. The highest demand is for classes between 9am and 2pm.

Table 16. Lecture Room Scheduling—Fall 2009

Period (Peak is 9am - 2pm)	Mon/Wed	Tues/Thurs	Mon/Wed/Fri	Friday
Peak Morning/Afternoon	62.4%	65.1%	57.6%	47.8%
Off Peak Afternoon/Evening	53.9%	55.7%	37%	3.2%

The lecture room utilization levels in Table 16 suggest classroom space is sufficient for current enrollment levels. Furthermore, it appears UTPA can accommodate a moderate amount of growth by improving utilization of existing space. For example, financial incentives could be employed to encourage students to enroll in courses scheduled at non-peak times during the week. Scheduling classes during off peak periods on Fridays and even on weekends should be given consideration.

In addition, UTPA is alleviating pressure on space needs by expanding the offering of courses delivered online. Online enrollments have increased 18.6% from Fall 2008 (1,775) to Fall 2009 (2,106). Using this data as a benchmark, UTPA will continue to promote the online curriculum, including expansion of web-assisted courses which, through alternating between in-person classes and web classes, enable the sharing of classroom timeslots.

Addition of Facilities: The Campus Facilities Planning Council meets monthly to discuss construction projects which will ensure academic space at UTPA will be sufficient to accommodate growth and which are deemed to be critical to recruitment and retention. Examples are the recently completed Education Complex, the Wellness & Recreational Sports Complex, the Student Health Clinic, and opening last fall, a teaching site in the City of McAllen. Projects on the horizon include the Academic and Performance Complex, the Starr County Upper Level Center, the expansion of the College of Business Administration, and construction of a bioscience research facility.

The addition of facilities, however, has not been without a heavy cost. Major construction and software implementation projects have resulted in a dramatic increase in the institution’s debt liability. As the state has traditionally appropriated funds to reimburse the institution for Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB) debt service, the increase in the proportion of non-TRB debt from 32% (FY 2004) to 68% (FY 2009) is significant.

Table 17. Debt Liability, FY 2004-2009

	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Debt Service Outstanding, 8/31/xx	\$93.1M	\$85.5M	\$103.3M	\$125.1M	\$137.8M	\$127.6M
Non-TRB Debt Service Outstanding, 8/31/xx	\$29.6M	\$26.9M	\$50.0M	\$74.7M	\$91.2M	\$86.4M
% Debt Service which is Non-TRB	32%	31%	48%	60%	66%	68%

The university is taking steps to mitigate the increase in non-TRB debt. The availability of Higher Education Assistance Funds (HEAF) has enabled the institution to avoid incurring additional equipment and software-related debt since February 2007.

Furthermore, the 20% institutional match for the 80% TRB-funded Starr County Upper Level Center construction is being paid with HEAF instead of incurring additional debt.

The cost of maintaining facilities is another major challenge. According to projections made by UT System consultants, UTPA is projected to have a peak of required expenditures in FY 2009:

Table 18. Facilities Renewal Projections

FY ►	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Campus Total ►	\$3,086,000	\$13,303,000	\$22,933,000	\$11,590,000	\$2,216,000

To prepare for ongoing facilities renewal requirements, UT System recommends that between 1.7% and 2.0% of the operating budget is set-aside annually for facilities renewal. For FY 2009 and FY 2010, \$3.0M was set aside each year for facilities renewal; however the minimum recommended amounts (@ 1.7% level) were \$4.0M and \$4.1M, respectively. It will be a major challenge to meet this ongoing need when there are many other critical needs competing for funds.

Land Acquisition: In recent years, UTPA has embarked on a steady course of acquiring the real estate needed to accommodate enrollment growth and campus expansion. These investments are critical to meeting Closing the Gaps targets. Completed and anticipated purchases for the FY 2005-2010 time period are listed below.

Table 19. Land Acquisition

FY	Status	Property	Acreage	Purpose
2005	Complete	Residential Lots	0.8	Parking
2006	Complete	Residential Lots	1.0	Parking
	Complete	N. Jackson Road – West Tract	9.7	Future Remote Parking
	Complete	West University Dr.	16.0	Campus Expansion
2007	Complete	Residential Lots	0.6	Parking
2008	Complete	Residential Lots	1.0	Parking
	Complete	N. Jackson Road – East Tract	19.0	Campus Expansion
2009	Complete	Starr County	4.5	Site for Starr County Upper Level Center
	Complete	Residential Lots	1.0	Parking
2010	Complete	Irrigation District Property	1.2	Parking
	Anticipated	Residential Lots	1.0	Parking
	Anticipated	Office Building	3.0	Site for Administrative Offices
	Anticipated	Jackson Road	0.9	Campus Water Management

One purchase provides for the construction of the Starr County instructional facility discussed in the Recruitment Plan. Another would provide space relief in administrative offices. Several of the purchases are to allow creation of additional parking lots.

Board Authorized Tuition: Beginning with FY 2007, the university has been allocating a portion of the Board Authorized Tuition (BAT) back to the colleges and the graduate office. The BAT, often referred to as graduate incremental tuition (GIT), is the additional tuition charged for graduate courses. Distributions have totaled \$256,000 (FY 2007), \$373,572 (FY 2008), \$412,176 (FY 2009), and \$500,000 (FY 2010). These funds are utilized for the growth and development of graduate programs, serving our drive to emphasize graduate and research programs.

Division of Enrollment and Student Services

One of the biggest challenges facing UTPA is providing financial assistance to students who reside in some of the poorest counties of the nation. A large portion of UTPA's students qualify for full Pell funding, but often that barely covers tuition and fees. Compounding this problem is the lack of awareness that exists in first-generation students about the availability of financial assistance for higher education.

Approximately 69% of UTPA students receive some form of financial assistance. Of the 13,484 students awarded need-based and non-need based aid in FY2009 (fall/spring), 9,837 students (73%) were Pell eligible (economically disadvantaged). Of the Pell eligible students, 6,129 (62%) had a zero Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The average family income of our students in FY2009 was \$30,254 with 41% having less than \$20,000 family income. In addition, 21% of our aid recipients indicated on their financial aid application they have dependent children.

UTPA has developed a financial aid model that works well with the population that we serve. We strive to keep the cost of education low and we encourage students to complete the FAFSA in a timely fashion. We have created a special program for students from families with a household income of \$35,000 or less called UTPA Advantage. The university aggressively pursues outside financial aid funding from state, federal, and other sources. UTPA has consistently been in the top three schools in the state in total Texas Grant funding from the Coordinating Board. In addition, UTPA encourages the use of Graduate Tuition Assistance Grant funds for graduate students. The overall financial aid growth at UTPA has gone from \$84,211,929 in FY 2005 to \$120,846,933 in FY 2009.

	Amount	% change
FY 2009	\$120,846,933	8.7%
FY 2008	\$111,213,969	8.7%
FY 2007	\$102,339,607	11.7%
FY 2006	\$91,638,924	8.8%
FY 2005	\$84,211,929	

Total financial aid awards for FY 2009 are summarized in the table below.

SOURCE	GRANTS	LOANS	SCHOLARSHIPS	WAIVERS	WORK STUDY	TOTAL
FEDERAL	\$36,266,112	\$40,832,045	\$1,602,125		\$1,120,103	\$81,784,338
INSTITUTIONAL	\$4,636,543		\$6,688,116	\$116,161	\$965,381	\$11,755,214
PRIVATE			\$1,332,947		\$6,924	\$1,165,373
STATE	\$23,634,610	\$608,780	\$301,486	\$2,480,506	\$267,277	\$27,458,972
TOTAL	\$64,537,265	\$41,440,825	\$9,924,675	\$2,584,485	\$2,359,684	\$120,846,933

The university has been successful in acquiring external scholarships to provide students with additional financial aid assistance. Amounts from private and foundation sources are indicated below:

Non-Endowed Student Financial Aid for FY 2009: \$1,332,947
 Endowed Student Financial Aid for FY 2009: \$1,270,706

IX. Retention Plan

Background

By the late 1990s, the university faced daunting challenges with its enrollment, partially caused by the development of a successful community college which diverted freshman and sophomore enrollment. The university also faced a high attrition rate for new students within their first year of enrollment. The freshman cohort of 1999 had a retention rate of only 56%. Recognizing this as one of the first areas needing improvement, the university created the Enrollment and Student Services Division in 2000 and developed a strategic program in the Academic Affairs Division—the University Retention and Advisement Program (URAP) targeted for developing advisement and retention programs. The ESS Division set a goal of improving freshmen retention by 2% each year. Strategies included engaging entering freshmen in campus activities and organizations, developing mentoring for at-risk students, enhancing tutorial programs, increasing financial aid, and working with Academic Affairs to create a freshman course, entitled UNIV 1301—Learning Framework.

These initiatives increased communication between students and staff, resulting in improved retention of entering freshmen by Fall 2003. Following the full-scale implementation of the Learning Framework course in 2004, along with the addition of a large advising and academic advising corps in 2005, freshman retention has hovered in the low 70% range, similar to the national average for institutions like UTPA.

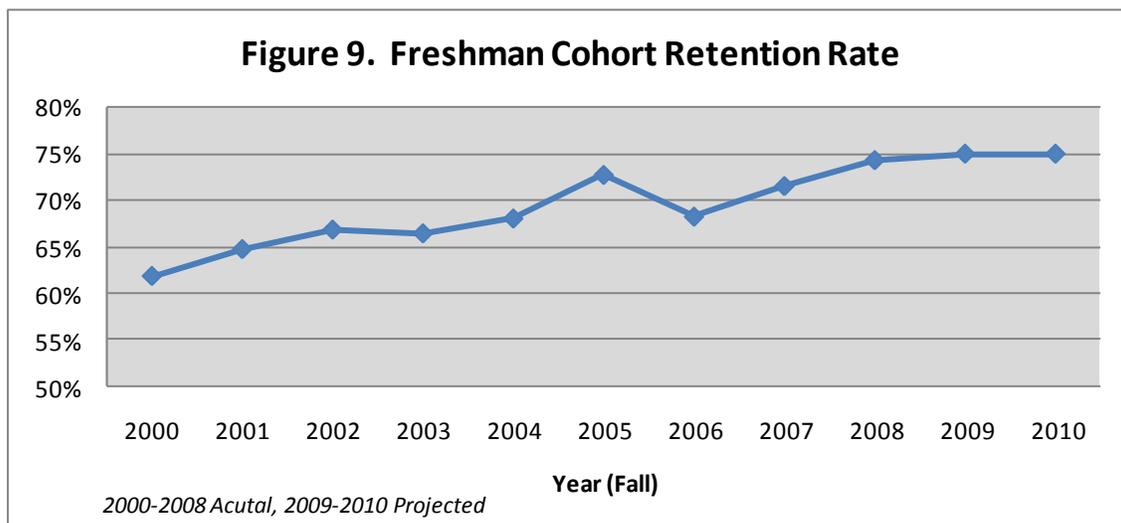
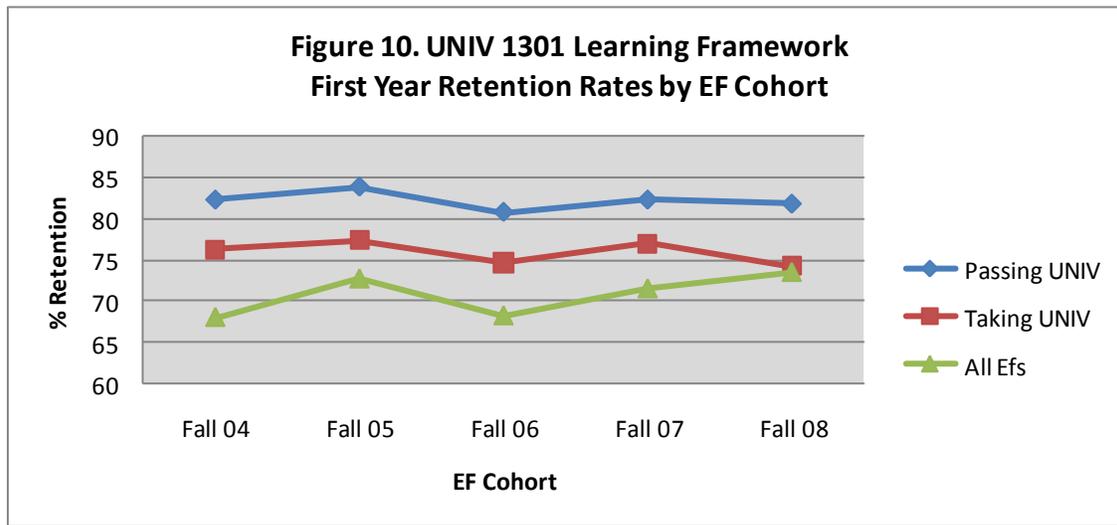


Figure 10 below describes the retention rates for the first and second year of college for students who enrolled and passed the Learning Framework course.



As can be observed, the entire Fall 2004 cohort of first-time, full-time entering freshmen had a retention rate of 68% after one year in college. In the same cohort, students who took and passed UNIV 1301—Learning Framework course had a retention rate of 83.9% after one year as compared to those who did not enroll or did not pass the course. The entire Fall 2005 cohort of first-time, full-time entering freshmen had a retention rate of 72.7%, while students who took and passed UNIV 1301 had a retention rate of 82.1%. The Fall 2006 cohort of first-time, full-time entering freshmen had a retention rate of 68.2%, a decrease of 4.5% as compared to the Fall 2005 cohort. One explanation for the decrease in retention may be that the Fall 2006 cohort of first-time, full-time entering freshmen was larger than the Fall 2005 cohort by 406 students and the number of sections of UNIV 1301 offered during Fall 2005 were not increased. Thus, students who might have been retained did not have the opportunity to enroll in the class during the Fall semester. For the Fall 2007 cohort, the first year retention rate recovered and increased to 71.5%, above the national average. The criteria for students required to take UNIV 1301 was changed effective Fall 2008, requiring only those believed to be most at risk to take the course. Thus, the number of students required to take the course decreased. However, of those that did take and passed the course, the retention rate was 81.8%. The overall retention rate for Fall 2008 cohort was 74.3%.

The data also indicate that the second year retention for the Fall 2004 cohort of first-time, full-time students who took and passed UNIV 1301 was 64.8% as compared to the second year retention rate of 53.8% for the entire cohort. The second year retention rate for the entire Fall 2005 cohort of entering freshmen was 59.3 as compared to 53.8% for Fall 2004 cohort. The second year retention rate for Fall 2005 cohort of entering freshmen who took and passed UNIV 1301 was 67.0%, a difference of 7.7%. The second year retention for the Fall 2006 cohort of first-time, full-time entering freshmen who took and passed UNIV 1301 was 67.2% as compared to 56.5% for the entire cohort of entering freshman, a difference of 10.7%. The Fall 2007 second year

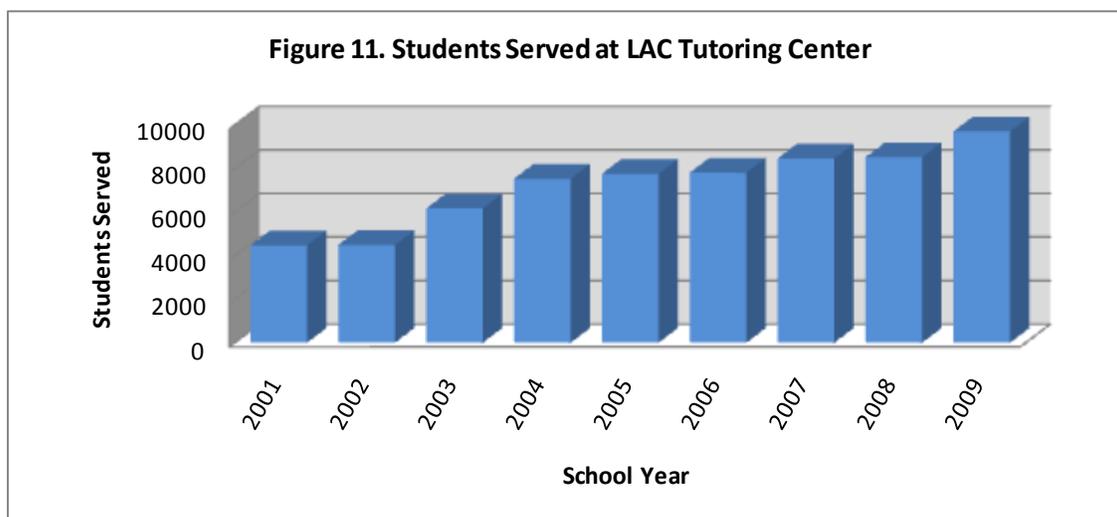
retention rate among students who took and passed UNIV 1301 was 68.8% as compared to 59.0% for the entire cohort.

Sophomore Academic Mentoring

In addition, a sophomore retention strategy was instituted in Fall 2008. The Sophomore Academic Mentoring (SAM) program is designed to assist the UTPA sophomore student population to reach their individual academic goals through mentoring by exceptional Junior and Senior students. The mentors serve as role models in the areas of academic and co-curricular involvement in order to support sophomore students to successfully complete their second year. This academic support service gives sophomore students the opportunity to increase self-confidence and independence.

Learning Assistance Center

The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) offers academic tutoring to university students at all levels in both individual and group sessions. The graph below shows an increasing number of students taking advantage of the tutoring sessions.



The UTPA Student-Athlete academic support program has been relocated into the Learning Assistance Center to maximize tutoring and Supplemental Instruction services for student-athletes. The LAC is working closely with athletic academic support services to coordinate group tutoring and after hour tutoring services which include student athletes.

Additional strategies for enhanced student success included the development of a Supplemental Instruction (SI) program in 2005. SI is a student service under the Learning Assistance Center (LAC) designed to improve the students' academic

performance and increase retention. The SI program targets traditionally difficult courses and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer-facilitated group study sessions. SI leaders attend the courses they work with and conduct two or three study sessions per week, reviewing lectures, class notes and assignments, and facilitating group discussions. In Fall 2008, the SI program was offered in 21 classes and 48 sections. Students who took advantage participating in the SI program averaged a .73 point difference in GPA in Fall 2007.

TSI Advising

Furthermore, the TSI Advisement Center continues to improve the retention rates of its TSI affected population. The Center advises 100% of TSI affected students before the student is allowed to register for the successive school semester. As well, 100% of TSI students who attended Orientation for the Fall 08 and Spring 09 terms were advised to ensure proper placement and scheduling. Retention for the EF TSI affected Fall 07 cohort into Fall 08 improved to 62.6% compared to the EF TSI affected Fall 06 cohort retention rate of 53%.

Student Financial Services

Scholarships, which serve as an excellent recruitment tool, also assist with retention initiatives to attract and keep top-notch students. Below are two examples of scholarships offered to top graduating students, as well as the rate they are retained after their first year. Students on scholarships consistently do better than the average UTPA student. The Gateway Scholarship is a one-time scholarship offered to recruit top Entering Freshmen to UTPA.

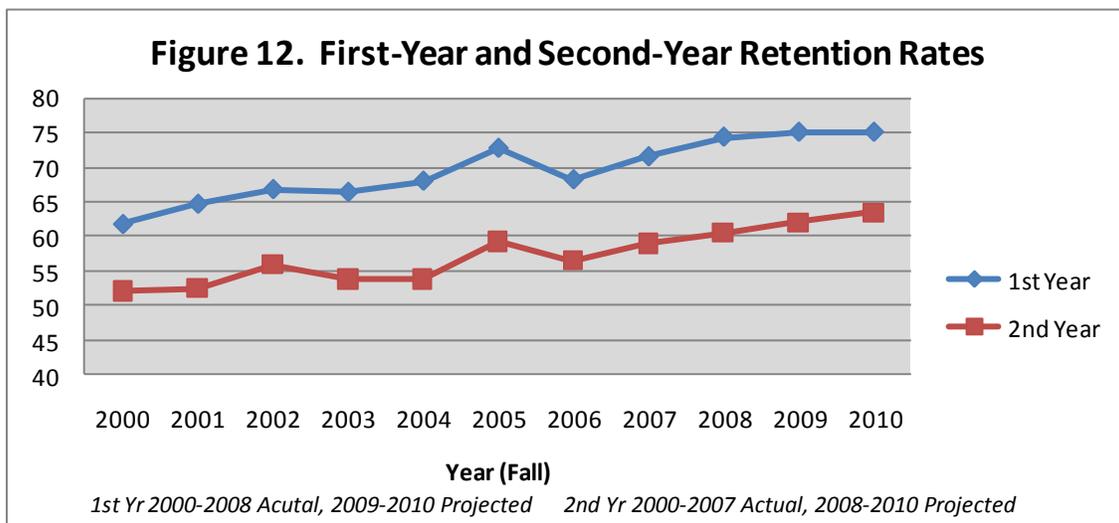
	Fall 04	Fall 05	Fall 06	Fall 07	Fall 08	Fall 09
EF Retention Rate	84.3%	87.5%	79.8%	80.0%	87.7%	n/a
Average GPA	3.62	3.31	3.28	3.65	3.47	3.1
Mean ACT	24.08	25.4	23.94	24.32	25.6	24.2
Mean Class Rank	Top 15%	Top 22%	Top 25%	Top 14%	Top 5%	Top 14%

The Housing Scholarship was established in Fall 2001 to recruit and encourage students to live on campus. Selection of the recipients was based on need and preference was given to Entering Freshmen. Beginning in Fall 2003, this scholarship was changed to a merit scholarship.

Table 23. Housing Scholarship Entering Freshmen Retention Rate vs UTPA Entering Freshmen Retention Rate				
Cohort Year	# Entering Freshmen Starting Program	# Entering Freshmen Retained (after 1st year)	Retention Rate (%)	UTPA (EF) Retention Rate (%)
FY 2003	85	58	68.2%	66.0%
FY 2004	33	24	72.7%	66.4%
FY 2005	64	49	76.6%	68.0%
FY 2006	70	62	88.6%	72.7%
FY 2007	49	38	77.6%	68.2%
FY 2008	91	80	87.9%	71.5%
FY 2009	55	46	83.6%	74.3%
FY 2010	62	n/a	n/a	n/a

The Student Financial Services Office implemented a new Satisfactory Academic Progress policy to determine eligibility for financial aid funds. Twenty percent of students have been positively affected by the change in the policy, and more students are able to qualify for financial aid funds.

All of these initiatives, in combination with the increasing admissions standards, have led to more students being prepared to succeed at the university. As we attract and retain more students who are better prepared, begin with prior college hours, and who are TSI cleared, we will continue to see our retention and graduation rates increase.



A new retention strategy will be the development of living-learning communities in Residence Halls for TSI affected students for a Bronc Success program and Mexican

American Studies program, where graduate assistants will serve as residence hall assistants, with offices located in the dormitories to facilitate activities for students. Students will also be clustered into taking the same courses which will allow for better coordination of academic activities and out-of-classroom conversations about their course studies.

Supplemental Instruction

The Supplemental Instruction program (SI) was implemented in 2006 as an academic enrichment program that is linked to traditionally difficult courses characterized by a 25 percent or greater failure rate. The initial program included core classes; Math 1300, Math 1334, Biology 1401 & 1402, History 2313, Political Science 2314, Psychology 1310, and Economics 2301. Other courses which have been added include Accounting 2301 & 2302, Finance 3383, Biology 2403 & 2304, Chemistry 2302, and History 3330, all of which were also targeted due to low course pass rates. From 2006 to 2009, the number of courses linked with supplemental instruction has doubled as we continue to expand this program.

This intervention consists of discussion and review sessions that are facilitated by trained student SI leaders who have successfully completed the course. Designed to supplement - not replace - class lectures and recitations, SI sessions are interactive and collaborative. The results of this initiative have unquestionably demonstrated success as an effective student support intervention.

In each of the last two years the aggregate population of SI participants has achieved a grade point average in SI courses of almost a full grade point over those who did not participate. In some of the individual courses the aggregate GPA differential between participants and nonparticipants is more than two full grade points. In addition, 86% (623 out of 727) of the students who participated in SI sessions in fall 2008 passed with an A, B, or C compared to 70% (756 out of 1074) of students from the same class that did not attend SI sessions. In spring 2009, 77% (498 out of 650) of the students who participated in SI sessions passed with an A, B, or C compared to 60% (756 out of 1265) of students from the same class that did not attend SI sessions. Other Fall 2006-Fall 2009 accomplishments include: a 31.8% and 81.8% increase in the number of SI-sections and SI-courses offered respectively; 41.1 % increase in participants and a 171% increase in student participation contact hours.

These data suggest that Supplemental Instruction, through its collaborative learning approach, is an effective student service that can enhance student success, improve retention, and shorten time to graduation. For future terms, the Supplemental Instruction program will be one of the strategies used to improve retention for sophomore students in targeted retention programs.

Veteran's Service Center

One new initiative for FY 2010 is the creation of a Veteran's Service Center. In response to the expected influx of veterans and the Post 9/11 GI Bill a one-stop shop

for services to veterans was created in Fall 2009. A focus group held with veterans during the spring 2009 semester provided valuable information into the way current veteran students feel about the University and the services provided to veterans. In order to provide for the needs of the increasing veteran student population the University restructured to create the Veterans Services Center. Instead of one person in the Registrar's Office, as part of her duties, certifying veterans to receive benefits the Center was created with the following components:

- Veterans Services Manager
 - Coordinates all services veterans need to apply, enroll, succeed and graduate, including the following:
 - Assistance with completing the Texas Common App and admission requirements and communication with New Students and Visitor Services
 - Assistance with completing the FAFSA and communication with the Financial Aid Office
 - Completion of certification of attendance with the Veterans Administration in order to receive benefits
 - Communication with and referrals to all other offices on campus
- Veterans Services Clerk
 - Assists the Manager with all of the above
 - Maintains close ties with all offices with which veterans interact
 - Provides a welcoming atmosphere for all veterans
- Veterans Advising Coordinator
 - Coordinates advising within the Learning Assistance Center Advisement Center for all veterans during their freshman year.
 - Transitions veterans to Professional Guidance Counselors within the Academic Advisement and Mentoring Center at the end of their freshman year
- Clinical Therapist
 - Consult with therapist of record for current veteran clients
 - Provides mental health counseling for veterans referred by the Veterans Center
 - Conducts seminars/workshops to encourage help-seeking by veterans

Migrant Services Office

Another new initiative for FY 2010 is the creation of the Migrant Services Office. The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) is home base to one of the largest migrant / seasonal farm worker populations in the nation, as evidenced by the number of students identified as eligible for Migrant Education Program (MEP) services in local school districts: 25,135. This represents more than a third of the total student population in RGV schools. In addition to making up a significant percentage of total school enrollment, RGV-area migrant students also account for 45% of all Texas migrant students.

After more than 30 years experience with migrant students in the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) at UTPA we are well aware of the at-risk nature of this cohort of students. To this end, the university will establish a Migrant/Seasonal Farm Worker Student Success Office (MSS) to serve those students who qualify or self-identify as coming from a migrant or seasonal farm worker family. The MSS office will provide support for outreach, transition and student success needs, including but not limited to, admissions and financial aid application assistance, peer advising, mentoring, academic assistance, and study skills workshops. Additionally, the office will offer programming for migrant families and coordinate community outreach to local migrant families about the services and opportunities at UTPA and how MSS will assist migrant students become successful college students.

A pilot migrant residential living learning community, Abriendo Caminos, was established in Fall 2009. Seven students are currently served by Abriendo Caminos and provided with room and board scholarships, tutoring sessions, community service projects, study skills workshops, career planning and financial guidance.

In March 2010, the Migrant Student Success Office hosted a Migrant Counselor/Director Luncheon at UTPA, including approximately 30 high school counselors and directors. Presentations on CAMP, HEP, Abriendo Caminos, MUSE, the Learning Assistance Center and Financial Aid were provided for participants.

IT Division

The IT Division has focused on providing a competitive advantage in technology for our students. The robust technology environment that is available to our students contributes to their academic achievement and personal development. One example that has grown to be expected everywhere and everyone is familiar with—wireless computer networking, WiFi—gives our students this sort of competitive advantage. Soon after completion of the first seamless wireless network in the UT System, it was apparent that we were meeting a demand for a much needed service for our students. Students working on laptops in every building became a ubiquitous scene immediately after implementation. The need to find a vacant workstation in a computer lab has been eliminated for many of our students. The laptop loaner program in student union and the laptop check out program from our library have experienced increased utilization. The next logical step following this project would be providing print services to these same students. With printer availability limited to the computer labs, a wireless solution was developed and implemented in a number of locations across the campus. Now that a wireless print network and distributed print stations are available, students can focus on academic projects without being tied to a lab just for access to a university supported printer.

A review of the UTPA computer labs was conducted to determine if we were providing appropriate technology and meeting the needs of our students. It was determined that UTPA has some of the best equipped computer labs and the best computer-to-student

ratio of comparable schools in Texas. An enhancement that resulted from this review was the development of the virtual computer lab concept. Virtual labs allow students to use software that would have previously have been only available in certain labs to now be available anywhere internet access is offered. Students are no longer required to go to a specific lab and wait for access to a machine dedicated to an application that is only available in one venue. With the combination of wireless network, wireless print stations, and now virtual labs, students can utilize virtually all of our technology without going to the computer labs building.

In an effort to attract students and expose them to the latest technology, a Learning Studio has been created. This venue is designed for students to use as a study site and is especially suited for collaboration and team projects. This venue is a technology incubator located on the second floor of the Academic Services Building and is set up as a modern, casual technology lounge, with numerous electrical outlets, wireless printing, a giant touchscreen, a video projector, and comfortable seating. This facility was created for students and is dedicated for student use.

All of the initiatives detailed above have been designed to provide both infrastructure and service to students in a technology environment that will allow them to be successful in their academic programs. The IT Division will continue to monitor technology developments and implement applications and hardware that will give our graduates a competitive advantage as they go on to advanced studies or transition into the workplace.

X. Graduation Plan

Background

UTPA’s low graduation rates in the 1990s were caused by several factors: lack of preparedness of entering students, the paucity of courses being offered, weak advisement process, and failure to track and then monitor targeted cohorts. In addition, and possibly most importantly, UTPA students did not have the resources to enroll without resorting to outside employment. It is common in the Hispanic culture to require the grown child to help support the entire family financially, and academic pursuits take on a secondary role. As a result, many students “stopped out” or took reduced loads throughout their academic career.

Graduation Initiatives

An initiative to increase courses, sections, and seats offered was put into place in 2003. The addition of six advisors in the academic colleges in FY 2006 improved the transition of students into upper-level courses. Electronic degree audits were implemented in FY 2004, resulting in more efficient and effective advising and course selection for students.

The development of concurrent enrollment program and the University’s concomitant emphasis on scholarships for students taking rigorous high school courses led to the University Scholars program. This program provided entering freshmen with a full tuition and fees scholarship, as long as they had taken 4 AP and /or Concurrent Enrollment courses in high school. The students pledged that they would not work outside of campus while drawing US scholarships –many were also eligible for grants—and this combination of rigorous preparation, plus greater concentration to studies, led to the highest graduation rate of any large cohort of students. At its peak, US scholars represented 11% of the entering freshmen and reached a 6-year graduation rate of 71%. As mentioned previously, this program has been re-introduced thru the tiered Scholarship program, which also encourages rigorous course-taking in high school.

	3 year	4 year	UTPA 4 Year	5 year	UTPA 5 year	6 year	UTPA 6 year
Fall 1998	5%	68%	8.3%	68%	17.9%	74%	26.7%
Fall 1999	11%	35%	8.4%	53%	21.3%	64%	29.6%
Fall 2000	8%	47%	10.4%	64%	22.9%	67%	33.0%
Fall 2001	5%	37%	9.6%	58%	23.3%	66%	32.8%
Fall 2002	11%	51%	13.4%	63%	28.3%	71%	36.4%
Fall 2003	18%	51%	13.7%	65%	28.1%	71%	36.2%
Fall 2004	19%	53%	13.3%	66%	27.0%		
Fall 2005	12%	58%					

Graduation rates have also improved thru the requisite services, like Supplemental Instruction and a peer-mentoring program begun by Student Development in 2002. In addition, ESS has implemented a cohort-tracking process. While this tracking system is fairly recent, already cohorts of students have been identified for additional retention and graduation strategies: migrant students, veteran students, financial aid at-risk cohort, among others.

Graduation rates began to improve as the university developed the requisite services and a cohort-tracking process.

The increased number of incoming freshmen enrolling with college credit hours has been another contributing factor. In Fall 2008, 40.5% of the Entering Freshmen class came to the university with an average of 15.16 hours. The aggregate number of students graduating also increased from FY 2000 to FY 2007, both in undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Table 25. “Closing the Gaps” Degrees Awarded

UTPA	Actual 2000	Actual 2005	Actual 2006	Actual 2007	Actual 2008	Target 2010	Target 2015	Target 2020
UG Degrees	1,361	1,987	2,287	2,409	2,420	3,126	4,072	4,395
Doctoral Degrees	7	12	4	10	24	25	35	60

One of the major reasons for increased graduation rates rests in changes to UTPA’s financial aid processes. Upon passage of the TEXAS Grant legislation, UTPA adapted its financial aid processes to maximize the benefits of the TEXAS Grant program for its students. This strategy was successful for the following reasons:

1. 52% of UTPA students are Pell-eligible and thus became eligible for the TEXAS grant’s financial requirements;
2. Increasingly, 80-95% of UTPA’s entering freshmen had taken the college-prep high school program, the Recommended High School Program or higher, thus meeting the TEXAS grant’s academic requirement. UTPA’s push for schools to adopt the Texas Scholars program had paid off for Valley students and families;
3. UTPA adopted an aggressive approach with the difficult-to-implement TEXAS Grant process and employed a full-time TEXAS Grant coordinator.

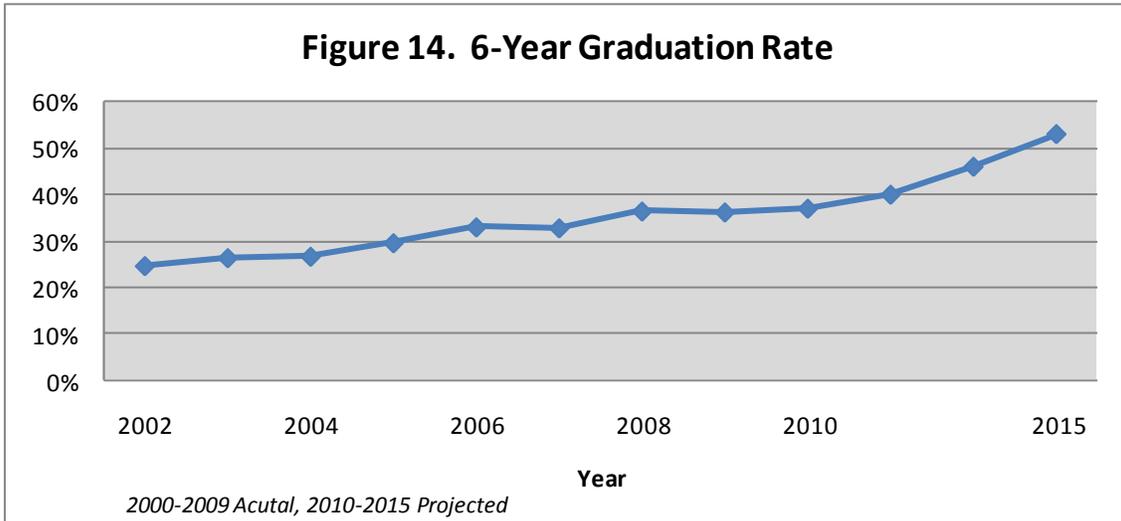
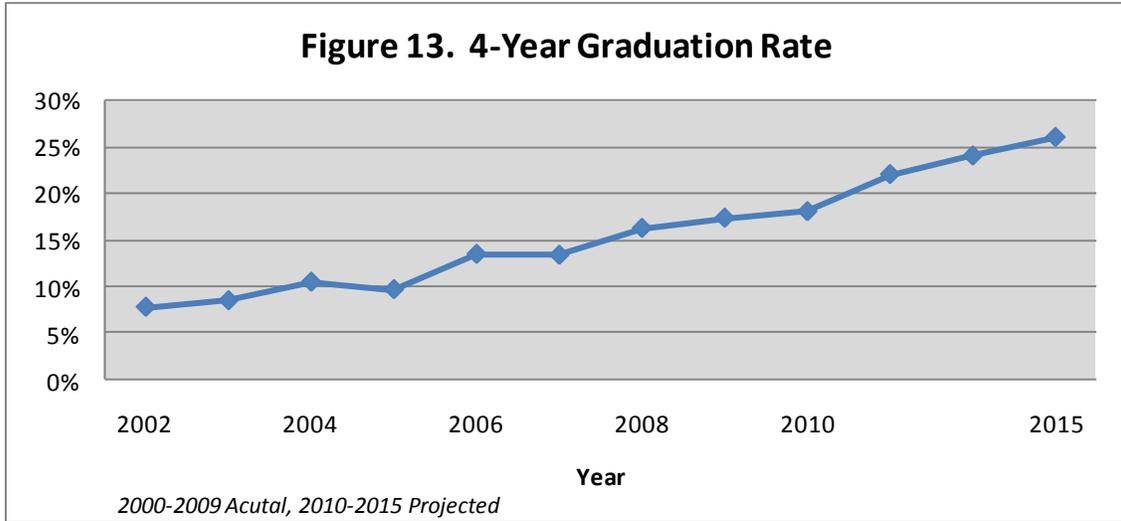
Because of all of these factors, UTPA has ranked in the top three institutions in TEXAS Grant funds disbursed since its inception in FY 2000. Students suddenly had the equivalent of a double Pell Grant that provided funds over and above tuition and fees. Many of these students could then devote more of their time to their academic program.

In addition, the University Academic Advisement and Mentoring (AAM) Center was created to provide academic advising to undergraduate students. A strategy to improve time to graduation has been the development of 4th, 5th, and 6th year Road Maps leading to graduation. Students are guided by Academic Career Advisors and Professional Guidance Counselors in the selection of a Road Map most appropriate for their individual needs.

Another factor influencing the graduation rate is the number of credits that entering freshmen now bring to the university upon completion of high school through programs like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Concurrent Enrollment, and Dual Credit. In 2000, only 25% of UTPA's entering freshmen enrolled with prior college course credit. In Fall 2006, 49% of UTPA entering freshmen entered with prior college course credit. These students persist at a higher level and graduate in a more timely fashion. The university partners with area school districts and community colleges to support these initiatives.

In an effort to ensure the timely and successful degree completion of transfer students, The University of Texas-Pan American entered into a Transfer Success Action Plan with South Texas College. The agreement is a bilateral effort that focuses on seven targeted objectives. The agreement will allow students to have more courses count toward degree upon transfer including students participating in dual credit, will benchmark transfer data through a shared data exchange policy and set targets for measuring future success. Additionally, it will develop a pre-admit proposal for STC students who want to transfer to UTPA, develop a reverse transfer program, align developmental education, develop an inventory of best approaches to transfer inside and outside the state of Texas and expand opportunities for upper level, master's and doctoral programs by UTPA.

As admission standards for new students continue to increase and services are expanded, retention and graduation rates should continue to improve. The figures below show that the graduation rates have historically been low, but show an increasing trend. Through implementation of innovative strategies, the university hopes to achieve the targeted goals, indicated by the dotted line.



An important element of the increased emphasis on graduate education is to decrease the time-to-graduation for graduate students while retaining a greater proportion of graduate students. The combination of these efforts will increase the number of graduate degrees awarded.

XI. SEM Integration

Aligning enrollment management planning with other campus planning efforts

UTPA aligns enrollment management planning with the campus strategic plan, facilities/campus master plan, and financial plan to assure that programs, facilities, and other resources are directed to supporting enrollment growth and development at all levels and for all programs to facilitate teaching and learning.

The University's strategic planning process is directed by its major outcomes. Two of UTPA's major outcomes are the achievement of its *Closing the Gaps* targets for participation and success: enrollment and graduation. To achieve these targets, the University references its strategic enrollment management plan to develop objectives and strategies that are integrated into the campus strategic plan. In addition, three of the University's six goals are informed directly by the strategic enrollment management plan:

- Provide students a quality educational experience that enables them to complete their educational goals in a timely fashion.
- Become an outstanding research institution, emphasizing collaborative partnerships and entrepreneurship.
- Collaborate with P-12 schools to enlarge the pool of applicants who are personally prepared and academically qualified for higher education.

UTPA's campus master planning process is directed by enrollment projections. The first step in the master planning process is data gathering, with enrollment projections the most critical variable. UTPA's strategic enrollment management plan is the source for the enrollment projections that guide construction and renovation of facilities to support our core mission of teaching and learning.

The University's financial plan is built on enrollment projections to determine the income stream for the institution for the near future. UTPA's strategic enrollment management plan is the source for the enrollment projections that guide the development of the university's financial plan.

With respect to external accountability, the University's strategic enrollment management plan is aligned with targets and performance measures that are tracked through *Closing the Gaps*, the State Accountability System, and UTPA's *Compact* with the U. T. System.

Appendix A

Enrollment Projections – Numbers and Percentages

	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
New Freshmen	2807	2626	2663	2882	2908	3011	3128	3260	3412	3580
New Transfers	847	838	797	923	1060	1075	1100	1125	1141	1181
New Graduate Students	609	475	687	557	589	605	623	643	668	694
Returning Undergraduates										
Freshman	1513	1550	1806	1840	1735	1746	1766	1788	1816	1846
Sophomores	2504	2404	2281	2518	2549	2627	2716	2817	2933	3062
Juniors	2738	2940	2803	2882	3159	3334	3529	3747	3994	4269
Seniors	4102	4180	4516	4529	4916	5332	5701	6113	6576	7093
Post Bacc	565	649	470	373	394	355	311	264	215	158
Returning Graduate Students	1652	1773	1511	1833	1834	1916	2009	2115	2235	2368
Total Enrollment	17337	17435	17534	18337	19144	20005	20883	21873	22990	24250

Appendix B

Recruitment, Admission, and Enrollment Goals

	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015
Freshmen										
Prospects	Data not available	Data not available	28557	19504	24363	26264	27851	29437	31024	32611
Applicants	7596	7482	8598	10139	10000	10780	11432	12083	12734	13385
Admits	5029	5074	4640	5214	5357	5505	5672	5838	6005	6172
Enrolled	2845	2626	2663	2882	3000	3039	3124	3209	3294	3379
Transfers										
Prospects	Data not available	Data not available	11029	6059	9026	9219	9766	10312	10858	11405
Applicants	1623	1561	1757	1952	2173	2219	2351	2482	2614	2746
Admits	1104	1124	1076	1193	1407	1362	1420	1479	1537	1596
Enrolled	847	838	797	923	1060	1075	1100	1125	1141	1181
Graduate Students										
Prospects	Data not available	Data not available	3016	4039	4281	4539	4811	5099	5405	5728
Applicants	1199	1346	1293	1756	1861	1973	2092	2217	2350	2491
Admits	1070	1112	841	990	1007	1063	1121	1183	1270	1364
Enrolled	714	721	658	804	818	863	911	961	1032	1108

Appendix C

Degrees Awarded

	AY 2007	AY 2008	AY 2009	AY 2010	AY 2011	AY 2012	AY 2013	AY 2014	AY 2015
Undergraduate	2,409	2,420	2,705	3,126	3,315	3,504	3,693	3,882	4,072
Graduate – Master’s	608	654	742	775	821	870	922	977	1036
Graduate – Doctoral	10	24	21	25	27	29	31	33	35
Total	3,027	3,098	3,468	3,926	4,163	4,403	4,646	4,892	5,143