The University of Texas at Tyler

Inspiring Excellence
Strategic Plan
2009-2015

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Vision

The University of Texas at Tyler will be nationally recognized as a destination university for high-ability, flagship-capable students. UT Tyler will be the premiere public university in Texas offering challenging academic programs and an exciting, personal university experience with smaller classes, service opportunities, and a residential, park-like campus that encourages learning.

Mission

The University of Texas at Tyler is a comprehensive institution of higher education offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs as an institution of the renowned University of Texas System. The University of Texas at Tyler's vision is to be nationally recognized for its high quality education in the professions and in the humanities, arts and sciences, and for its distinctive core curriculum. Guided by an outstanding and supportive faculty, its graduates will understand and appreciate human diversity and the global nature of the new millennium. They will think critically, act with honesty and integrity, and demonstrate proficiency in leadership, communication skills, and the use of technology.

The University is committed to providing a setting for free inquiry and expects excellence in the teaching, research, artistic performances and professional public service provided by its faculty, staff, and students. As a community of scholars, The University develops the individual's critical thinking skills, appreciation of the arts, humanities and sciences, international understanding for participation in the global society, professional knowledge and skills to enhance economic productivity, and commitment to lifelong learning.

Within an environment of academic freedom, students learn from faculty scholars who have nationally recognized expertise in the arts and sciences, and in such professions as engineering, public administration, education, business, health sciences, and technology. The faculty engages in research and creative activity, both to develop and maintain their own scholarly expertise and to extend human knowledge. The results of that research and other creative efforts are made available to students in the classroom and to the general public through publication, technology transfer, and public service activities.

The institution also seeks to serve individuals who desire to enhance their professional development, broaden their perspectives, or enrich their lives.

Challenges for Students

University students will need to strengthen their practical knowledge and skills in the professions in order to be productive soon after graduation. Given economic realities and global competition, university graduates must have knowledge and skills relevant to the workplace, and must have critical thinking abilities that allow them to adapt to rapid change.

University students will face a world vastly different from those of a decade ago. A strong economy and political stability cannot be presumed, and graduates will have to develop solutions to unforeseen problems. They will need a broad understanding of other cultures, religions, and political systems, and will need to be able to communicate with people unlike themselves.

University students will need to develop a sense of responsibility for their own actions, for others, and for their environment. They will need to be able to make decisions based on evidence, and to communicate and defend their positions to stakeholders. They will need to develop leadership skills as well as to learn to be good team members.

Challenges for the University

In the last decade, The University of Texas at Tyler has been transformed into a four-year, comprehensive, regional university with a full range of solid undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The challenge now is to distinguish the University among its peer universities so that it may experience continued growth and stability and add substantial value to the economic and civic future of East Texas, the entire state, and the nation.

Points of Distinction

The Honors Program
The University Honors program provides intellectually stimulating opportunities for academically talented and motivated freshman and transfer students at UT Tyler. The emphasis is on fully developing the capabilities of very talented students, not only enriching their coursework, but providing them significant opportunities to grow as leaders, citizens, and as individuals. They will build their speaking and writing skills, work with scholars to discover new knowledge through research in their chosen fields, meet and share ideas with foremost political, business, and civic

leaders, and have study and travel abroad opportunities to interact with new worlds beyond the campus.

Honors students will receive personalized academic advising, interdisciplinary honors courses with top faculty, special programming such as Honors Visitors, opportunities for research, and a variety of international study and travel abroad programs. Upon completion of the programs and graduation, students will receive a special Honors designation on their transcripts.

Global Awareness through Education (GATE)

The University will provide students the opportunity for multidisciplinary exploration of global issues through the GATE program: Global Awareness through Education: Living and Learning Communities. We will increase opportunities for students to study abroad, for international students to enroll in University undergraduate and graduate programs, and for students to be exposed to global and cultural issues in their programs of study GATE will bring together a diverse group of students in a living and learning community. These students will be broadly engaged in globally-enhanced learning opportunities and cross-cultural experiences. GATE's objectives will be achieved through the integration of three curricular enhancements: 1) global learning communities, 2) on-campus programs focusing on globally enriched core courses, and 3) off-campus programs, including study abroad, international courses, and international internships.

Information Literacy

Faculty members and professional librarians at The University of Texas at Tyler believe that the ability to evaluate and incorporate information strategically will be critical in creating a competitive advantage for students. Graduates will be skilled in locating, evaluating, and effectively using and communicating information in various formats. They will be aware of the economic, legal, and social issues concerning the use of information and will be able to access and use information ethically and legally.

Within this comprehensive information literacy effort, the University will strive to develop the ability of its students to use information technology effectively in their work and daily lives. UT Tyler's information systems will be state-of-the-art and will serve as the central hub influencing, supporting, and integrating academic and administrative processes across the University.

University of Texas System Support

The University of Texas at Tyler will continue to take advantage of its position as a member of the renowned University of Texas System and as an institution supported by the State of Texas. UT Tyler, for the intermediate term, is classified a Masters Level I institution with selected doctoral programs. The University will continue to be a comprehensive, coeducational, high-quality institution with moderately selective admissions standards.

The Strategic Plan that follows complements the UT System's strategic plan, which includes five major categories: 1) Enhancing student success, 2) Increasing research, global competitiveness, and technology transfer, 3) Enriching society through arts and cultural contributions, 4) Improving productivity and efficiency, and 5. Assuring integrity, accountability, and public trust.

The Planning Process

Strategic planning to meet the needs of our students actually began more than a decade ago. Using ideas expressed by students and focus groups that included civic, business, and educational leaders from across East Texas and The University of Texas System, the Strategic Planning Team worked together to build a long-range plan for the University.

The plan has been evaluated over time, with the current process of strategic planning beginning during the 2006-2007 academic year with excellent work done by a committee appointed by the President to develop a student retention plan. Part of the charge was to assess the University's academic and campus life to determine areas of strength and opportunities to improve. The University continued its planning process by gathering additional information from campus constituencies through focus groups with students in the 2007-2008 academic year. Also in January 2007, the University brought in a creative ideation facilitator from Buffalo State University to conduct a planning retreat with administrators, faculty, staff, and students. In the fall of 2008, the University continued the planning process by holding a strategy session with faculty, students, and staff, and continued the discussions virtually. Participants were invited to develop goals, strategies, and tactics for the new Strategic Plan.

After much discussion, collaboration, and refinement, UT Tyler's new vision for the next six years emerged. The resulting plan recognizes the University's excellence and traditions and is grounded on the successful implementation of the University's *2000 New Millennium Vision*. The *New Millennium Vision* outlined a direction that has proven nothing short of revolutionary in scope. Over the years, we adhered to guiding principles that, thus far, have withstood the test of time. Today, they

remain the cornerstone of our new effort to revise and update our strategic plan for the next six years.

Guiding Principles and Beliefs

University
We will promote inquiry and academic freedom.
We will work together to be productive and achieve excellence.
We will serve the public interest.
We will promote stewardship of all resources.
We will display ethical behavior.

People
We will display civility in all relationships.
We will foster respect for all individuals and all racial and ethnic groups.
We will be honest in all interactions and value integrity highly.
We will be accountable for results and professional behavior.

Process
We will share governance and promote cooperation throughout the institution.
We will promote openness and trust in all relationships.
We will commit to quality and continuous improvement.
We will recognize personal and professional development and accomplishment

Inspiring Excellence 2009-2015

The six major goals that came out of the strategic planning process, that built on the New Millennium Vision, and adhered to the Guiding Principles, are:

- **UT Tyler will become nationally known for excellence in undergraduate and graduate programs**

- **UT Tyler will promote excellence in scholarship, research, creative endeavor, and innovation**

- **UT Tyler will serve the community of East Texas and beyond**

- **UT Tyler will cultivate and inspire through the fine and performing arts.**

- **UT Tyler will enhance the quality of campus life**

- **UT Tyler will maintain outstanding stewardship of University resources**

As we move forward, we will continue building on our framework in six key areas: Teaching and Learning, Research, Service, Arts and Culture, Campus Life, and Stewardship of Resources.

Goal One: TEACHING AND LEARNING

UT Tyler will enhance student success, becoming nationally known for academic excellence in undergraduate and graduate programs.

UT Tyler will enhance student success, emphasizing excellence in undergraduate and graduate programs; employing dynamic educators; a variety of innovative pedagogies consistent with Boyer's paradigm of "the scholarship of integration; the scholarship of application; and the scholarship of teaching" (Scholarship Reconsidered, 1990, p. 16); challenging course work; and unusual learning opportunities that promise success for a broader spectrum of learners. UT Tyler's core curriculum includes courses from a variety of disciplines that require students to enhance their critical thinking skills; understand ethical systems; acquire knowledge and its application to the exploration of social, economic, cultural, or scientific issues; and effectively communicate. To these ends we will employ the following strategies:

Curriculum

■   Create in every college new or redesigned programs of superior quality and relevance that foster intellectual inquiry and critical thinking and that prepare students to be innovative and successful citizens in a global society.

■   Create transformational learning opportunities such as student assisted research, study abroad, or service learning that actively engage students in the discovery, expansion, and application of knowledge within their disciplines, across disciplines, and with respect to global issues.

■   Develop students' communication skills in both written and oral forms through instruction and practice in activities such as publication, research presentations, colloquia, and debates.

■   Instill commitment to global citizenship by developing curricula that enhance students' understanding of the worldwide community of people and cultures.

■   Extend opportunities for technological and scientific knowledge and fluency and increase students' participation in disciplines related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

- Develop an honors program for high-ability students that offers challenging cross-disciplinary course work, leadership training, and unique opportunities for personal growth.

- Add high-demand new programs such as environmental studies, health administration, media studies, and graphic design.

- Implement a system of formal periodic reviews of each degree program to assure that it fulfills the needs and engages the interests of our students.

- Strive to be both efficient and effective in delivering academic programs.

Support

- Use academic advising creatively to help students form and follow their own educational and professional goals.

- Support student learning by encouraging utilization of existing systems such as the Writing Center, Robert R. Muntz Library, The Mathematics Learning Center, Supplemental Instruction, and Student Learning Communities.

- Proactively attend to student success through early monitoring and positive intervention for students struggling academically.

- Use relevant technologies in academic activities when and wherever possible, ranging from research and problem-solving to communication.

- Offer opportunities for students to graduate with enhanced credentials, including travel, study abroad, and internships related to their field.

- Develop more scholarships and fellowships and explore other forms of compensation for TAs and RAs.

- Form partnerships with graduate degree-granting institutions in order to offer easy acceptance and transition to doctoral programs.

Faculty

- Attract and support dynamic and inspiring teaching faculty.

- Attract and retain faculty with distinguished research or creative profiles, or with potential to become distinguished and productive scholars.

■ Encourage and reward faculty who achieve balance in teaching and research or creative activities.

■ Develop a campus-wide learning effectiveness center that offers information and guidance for faculty members on topics such as learning assessment and technological resources.

■ Improve compensation of faculty whenever possible by raising salaries, using merit and equity funds, and increasing the number of endowed chairs.

■ Provide more opportunities for professional development, including semester leaves and travel funds.

Recruiting

■ Implement recruiting and retention programs to significantly increase diversity in the student population—including students from outside the U.S.

■ Recruit more high-ability freshmen, sophomores, and transfer students.

■ Recruit and retain more quality graduate students.

■ Recruit and retain a more diverse faculty.

■ Proactively recruit outstanding teachers and scholars in targeted fields.

Goal Two: RESEARCH

UT Tyler promotes excellence in scholarship, research, creative endeavor, and innovation

UT Tyler promotes an enterprising, faculty-driven research environment that produces new knowledge, enhances teaching and learning, and addresses local and societal challenges

Leadership

■   Promote research, scholarship, and creative endeavors in every academic discipline.

■   Generate research funding for breakthrough advancements or outcomes that can positively impact those around us.

■   Contribute to human and intellectual diversity by advancing research projects addressing global issues.

■   Design and execute research projects that develop local collaborative partnerships or that have the potential to contribute to local economic development.

■   Create and support graduate programs with effective research initiatives.

■   Create a formal undergraduate research initiative.

■   Demonstrate the highest standards of ethics and integrity in all research enterprises.

■   Establish distinctive research centers and institutes, especially those that collaborate with local entities. Plans include a Center for Research Excellence in Community Health, a Center for Reading and Learning, and a Center for New Media and Digital Arts.

■   Increase the number of endowed chairs and international scholars.

Support

■ Aggressively seek grant support for faculty research projects and graduate programs.

■ Seek research partnerships with other universities, companies, and nonprofit organizations in Texas, the nation, and worldwide.

■ Create a superior research infrastructure as a model for effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness.

■ Develop a top-tier library for research and education with high quality information professionals, a global collection, and featuring the latest innovations in technology.

■ Increase the number of conferences and publications with national and international reach that are hosted and supported by UT Tyler.

■ Provide opportunities for off-site faculty research.

■ Nurture emerging talent through increased use and support of graduate assistants.

■ Launch aggressive marketing, advertising, and promotional campaigns to highlight UT Tyler's accomplishments in research, scholarship, and creativity.

Goal Three: SERVICE

Serve the community of East Texas and beyond

UT Tyler will work to enhance opportunities for our students to learn and develop their leadership skills through service to the community and make sure East Texas benefits from our educational, research, and creative activities. Plans targeted in this effort include:

Leadership Training and Service Learning For Students

■ Create internships and service learning projects that provide students opportunities to learn and grow personally.

■ Encourage opportunities for students to work with alumni and other local leaders in business, government, education, philanthropy, and non-profit organizations.

■ Provide education and training in leadership to students, faculty, and staff by bringing in leaders from a variety of backgrounds through mentoring programs, the Distinguished Lecture Series, colloquia, seminars, and teleconferences.

■ Sponsor campus-wide discussions of ethics, responsibility to others, and civic engagement.

■ Establish student and faculty speaker's bureaus.

Community Projects

■ Serve the community and promote economic development through research and creative activities that are community-based, project-oriented, and problem solving.

■ Seek opportunities to form new service relationships throughout the area, partnering with educational organizations, not-for-profit groups, and corporations.

■ Establish research centers that serve regional educational, health, and economic needs, such as a Center for Reading and Learning, Center for Interdisciplinary Health Studies, and Center for New Media and Digital Arts.

■ Help to build a community of life-long learners in East Texas by establishing a university-level continuing education program.

■ Offer summer camps to area junior high and high school students in the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) to encourage students to consider careers in those fields.

■ Encourage faculty to develop community-based and project-oriented research and educational services that can be extended to East Texas cities, counties, school districts, or other public bodies.

■ Maintain and further expand UT Tyler's role as the cultural center for East Texas and the primary forum for exchange of ideas by continuing to offer and expand its world-class lecture series and performing arts series.

Developing our Regional Campuses

■ Enhance the effectiveness of regional campuses by improving their integration into main campus activities.

■ Construct a new building at the Palestine campus to better serve that area.

■ Extend the reach of our communications about UT Tyler's economic, academic, artistic, cultural, and athletic programs and opportunities to the communities in East Texas near our satellite campuses.

Partnering with Local Educational Entities

■ Develop strong ties with primary and secondary schools in the region, promoting common educational interests through initiatives such as the P-16 Council, Minds-Matter, and graduate certificate programs for teachers.

■ Host academic conferences on school performance, inviting speakers from organizations such as the Education Trust in Washington, D.C.

■ Develop enhanced working relationships between UT Tyler and other higher education institutions in the East Texas area.

Goal Four: ARTS AND CULTURE

Promote the Arts and Culture on Campus and in the Community.

Recognizing the importance of a culturally rich society, The University of Texas at Tyler is committed to cultivating and inspiring students through the fine and performing arts and contributing to the cultural life of East Texas. Specifically, the University will support the arts and culture by implementing programming initiatives and enhancing facilities.

Programming

■ Raise the profile of student performances and exhibitions.

■ Create inventive programs to increase campus and community engagement and attendance at student performances and exhibitions.

■ Incorporate the arts into the University's ceremonies and events when appropriate.

■ Develop appreciation of the arts globally and the role of art in other cultures.

■ Challenge established perceptions of the fine and performing arts.

■ Establish a Center for Excellence in Fine and Performing Arts that complements UT Tyler's educational mission.

■ Increase the number and breadth of performance groups and increase financial support of existing performance groups.

■ Establish an endowment for the R. Don Cowan Fine and Performing Arts Center to support its mission of providing programming to the region.

Facilities

■ Expand the R. Don Cowan Fine and Performing Arts Center to includes a 300- to 400-seat auditorium, an adequate stage, and rehearsal space.

■ Consider unique arts space requirements when planning all capital improvements.

Goal Five: CAMPUS LIFE

Enhance Quality of Campus Life

Recognizing that our students, faculty, and staff are the life of the institution, UT Tyler is committed to creating a vibrant campus life for them that addresses the needs of the whole person. To enhance the sense of community and deepen engagement in campus life at UT Tyler, we will provide or enhance amenities, services, security, communication, and leisure opportunities for all members of our university family.

Communication

- Host town hall-style meetings with students, faculty, and administration to collect input and exchange ideas on key issues.

- Improve the use of campus media such as the campus newspaper, Blackboard, blogs, and e-mail to announce policies and events.

- Provide a more friendly and accessible e-mail system to students and employees.

- Promote opportunities for faculty and students to engage outside the classroom.

- Provide wireless connectivity from any location on campus.

- Establish a campus Internet radio station.

Campus Activities

- Raise awareness of and access to student performances and athletic events.

- Develop a greater sense of community among graduate students with a graduate student support center that addresses their unique needs.

- Offer popular games and a variety of student-selected entertainment activities in the University Center.

- Increase weekend and leisure activities, paying particular attention to constituents of a broad range of cultures and with a variety of interests.

■ Create campus-wide activities that can become traditions and that will promote camaraderie among students and enhance students' identification with their *alma mater*.

Facilities and Services

■ Provide expanded health and wellness facilities and initiatives for all members of the UT Tyler community, utilizing and helping to expand the knowledge and skills of faculty and students in pertinent colleges and disciplines such as Kinesiology and Nursing.

■ Offer convenient, affordable daycare utilizing and helping to expand the knowledge and skills of faculty and students in pertinent colleges and disciplines such as Education and Nursing.

■ Provide postal, banking, and copying services at a convenient location and with expanded hours.

■ Provide a variety of meal options for students, staff, and faculty, including a Faculty Club.

■ Construct an alumni center with space to house career services and interview facilities and space for the necessary campus entertaining of special supporters of the University.

■ Increase signage, lighting, and the number of campus security personnel.

■ Monitor the campus warning system to ensure that the best practices are employed.

Outreach

■ Provide opportunities for our campus neighbors to participate in on-campus activities, including an annual open house for neighbors.

■ Promote retail development near the campus

■ Promote stronger connections between alumni and the University.

Goal Six: STEWARDSHIP

Maintain outstanding stewardship of university resources.

UT Tyler is committed to responsible use of its financial and natural resources. We will ensure proper management and allocation of funding, preserve our natural and built environment, and work to protect our campus for generations to come. Strategies to these ends include:

Budgeting

■   Ensure efficiency and transparency in all financial affairs by employing zero-based budgeting, convening annual budget hearings, and using System, State, Federal, and University auditors.

■   Conscientiously monitor contractual, legislated, and other agreements and obligations.

Information Management

■   Acquire hardware and software necessary to accomplish the University's mission, including full installation and operation of PeopleSoft and upgrading of Blackboard.

Administrative Functions

■   Create a communication plan and policies to foster working relationships among administrative and academic units.

■   Monitor and regularly update faculty and staff training.

■   Encourage partnerships among units to share services, expensive equipment, and other resources

Seek Opportunities to be Entrepreneurial

■   Encourage and optimize research collaborations between faculty and community business leaders that will result in development of profit centers.

■   Educate researchers about commercialization opportunities.

■ Encourage development of continuing education programs, and other entrepreneurial ways of delivering education to the region.

The Campus

■ Retain and enhance the park-like quality of the University's campus through management of our existing spaces and purchase of adjacent properties as opportunities arise.

■ Develop and monitor a schedule to maintain campus buildings.

■ Encourage foot and bike traffic on campus by developing footpaths and bike paths and design parking to protect green space.

Be Green

■ Endeavor to "be green" in all our operations and use of energy, including the initiation of a campus-wide recycling program and provision of convenient ways for the community to conserve.

■ Encourage understanding of environmental issues, methods of conservation, and green technologies among students, staff, faculty, and throughout the East Texas community.