

## **The University of Texas System**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of The University of Texas System is to provide high-quality educational opportunities for the enhancement of the human resources of Texas, the nation, and the world through intellectual and personal growth.

This comprehensive mission statement applies to the varied elements and complexities of a large group of academic and health institutions. Individually, these institutions have distinct missions, histories, cultures, goals, programs, and challenges. Collectively, these institutions share a common vision and a fundamental commitment to enhance the lives of individuals and to advance a free society. Through one or more of its individual institutions, The University of Texas System seeks:

- To provide superior, accessible, affordable instruction and learning opportunities to undergraduate, graduate, and professional school students from a wide range of social, ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds, thereby preparing educated, productive citizens who can meet the rigorous challenges of an increasingly diverse society and an ever-changing global community;
- To cultivate in students the ethical and moral values that are the basis of a humane social order;
- To engage in high-quality, innovative research that entails the discovery, dissemination, and application of knowledge;
- To render service to the public that produces economic, technical, social, cultural, and educational benefits through interactions with individuals and with local, Texas, national, and international organizations and communities;
- To provide excellent, affordable, and compassionate patient care through hospitals and clinics that are of central importance to programs of teaching, scholarship, research, and service associated with medicine and related health sciences;
- To enrich and expand the appreciation and preservation of our civilization through the arts, scholarly endeavors, and programs and events which demonstrate the intellectual, physical, and performance skills and accomplishments of individuals and groups;
- To serve as a leader of higher education in Texas and to encourage the support and development of a superior, seamless system of education – from pre-kindergarten through advanced post-graduate programs, and encompassing life-long learning and continuing education.

To accomplish its mission, The University of Texas System must:

- Attract and support serious and promising students from many cultures who are dedicated to the pursuit of broad, general educational experiences, in combination with the pursuit of areas of personal, professional, or special interest;
- Acquire, retain, and nourish a high-quality, dedicated, diverse faculty of competence, distinction, and uncompromising integrity;
- Recruit and appropriately recognize exemplary administrators and staff members who provide leadership and support of the educational enterprise in an energetic, creative, caring, and responsible manner;
- Create and sustain physical environments that enhance and complement educational goals, including appropriate classrooms, libraries, laboratories, hospitals, clinics, computer and advanced technological facilities, as well as university centers, museums, performance facilities, athletic spaces, and other resources consistent with institutional objectives;
- Encourage public and private-sector support of higher education through interaction and involvement with alumni, elected officials, civic, business, community and educational leaders, and the general public.

[Approved Feb. 2004]

# Introduction

## Background and Purpose

The University of Texas System Board of Regents and Chancellor Mark G. Yudof continue to emphasize the increasingly important role that accountability will play in the U. T. System's future planning and activities. In 2002, they proposed development of an integrated and strategic approach to U. T. System accountability and performance studies and reporting for the Chancellor, the Board, public policy makers, and other internal and external audiences.

Most simply, accountability means “measuring the effectiveness of what you do.” An effective accountability system clearly defines an organization's mission, goals, priorities, initiatives, and where it intends to add value and lays out measures or indicators of progress toward those goals. This kind of accountability system makes it possible to answer questions that help advance institutional improvement:

- “Where do The University of Texas System and the nine academic and six health-related institutions seek to excel?”
- “How does U. T. System intend to act strategically to accomplish its goals?”
- “How well are the System and institutions doing in achieving their goals and adding value? What needs to be done next?”

This framework reflects the U. T. System's ongoing commitment to foster and monitor its overall accountability, including institution and System functions that contribute to its academic, health care, and service missions. The report provides information and analysis that demonstrate how U. T. System institutions add value, contribute to state goals, and how they compare with peers. It emphasizes results and implications for future planning to support continued improvement by the System and U. T. System institutions. The data displayed in this report provide a baseline of institutional performance; multi-year information is displayed where available to establish trend lines and to provide the basis for reviewing institutions and establishing benchmarks for future performance. The report is used by the System in conjunction with other documents, such as each institution's Compact and each president's annual work plan, to evaluate performance and establish expectations of each institution.

Many stakeholders have an interest in the U. T. System's accountability. This report serves internal and external accountability purposes and is used as a management tool. It is intended for the U. T. System itself—its Board; System officials; and campus administrators, faculty, staff, and students. It is also a public document for elected and appointed officials, students, alumni, parents, patients, donors, grantors, and other members of the public interested in the U. T. System's plans and performance.

## Report Scope

As the U. T. System has gained responsibility for certain decision-making, this report shows how it ensures accountability for the results of those decisions and demonstrates that it is an efficient and responsible steward of public resources.

- While this report is designed to serve U. T. System needs, it also responds to Governor Rick Perry's January 22, 2004, Executive Order RP 31 [[www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/press/exorders/rp31](http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/press/exorders/rp31)] relating to accountability of higher education systems and institutions, and should complement the statewide accountability system. The U. T. System accountability framework builds on the strong foundation established by the State, the Board of Regents, and U. T. System administration offices and institutions.

## Report Framework

- This report is organized in five sections that highlight and track U. T. System institutions' impact in areas that are of high importance for the System and that relate to key state goals:
  - I. Student Access, Success, and Outcomes
  - II. Teaching, Research, and Health Care Excellence
  - III. Service to and Collaborations with the Community

- IV. Organizational Efficiency and Productivity
- V. Profiles for each U. T. System institution, including:
  - Institutional Rankings
  - Mission Statement
  - Comparisons with Peer Institutions
  - Centers of Excellence
- Within this framework, performance measures are aligned with System values, goals, and priorities in each area. They include:
  - Performance Measures: provide data on activities for which institutions will be held accountable. These measures emphasize outcomes, e.g., graduation rates, but also include some measures of progress, e.g., retention rates, that will help address any trends before they become major problems.
  - Contextual Measures: provide important background information on institutional context.
  - Measures Suggested for Future Development: important topics for which consistent data will not be available within the current study period but that should be pursued in the next edition. In the next edition, all measures will be re-evaluated to align with the new 10-year strategic plan of the U. T. System ([www.utsystem.edu/osm/planning.htm](http://www.utsystem.edu/osm/planning.htm)).

## **Report Development and Data Sources**

### System-wide representation

A System-wide accountability working group helps develop the accountability strategy, identify and define performance indicators and benchmarks, and refine the studies and report. Representation includes faculty and staff from the 15 campuses and individuals from appropriate System offices.

### Consultation

Throughout the development process, the U. T. System continues to communicate with policy-makers in Texas and the nation about what is needed to address state priorities and, in other states, to gather ideas about other models for higher education accountability.

### Data sources

- Where possible, data are presented for the most recent five fiscal or academic years.
- Coordinating Board and Legislative Budget Board definitions and data are used wherever possible.
- For some measures, U. T. System institutions provide data.
- Comparisons with peer institutions use measures for which information is available from national data sets.

## **Related U. T. System Accountability Initiatives**

### Institutional Compacts

In 2003-04, The University of Texas System instituted the development of compacts for each U. T. System institution. The compacts are written agreements between the Chancellor of The University of Texas System and the presidents of each of the System's academic and health institutions that summarize the institution's major goals and priorities, strategic directions, and specific tactics to achieve its goals. Institutional compacts reflect the unique goals and character of each institution, highlighting action plans, progress, and outcomes. Faculty, staff, and students help to create the compacts with a shared plan and vision. The System Administration's commitment of resources and time to support each institution's initiatives is included in every compact. Compacts covering the fiscal years 2006 and 2007 were completed in the summer of 2005, and updated for the third year of the cycle in August 2006.

For more information and to view each compact, visit the U. T. System's institutional planning and accountability Web site, at [www.utsystem.edu/osm/compacts](http://www.utsystem.edu/osm/compacts).

### U. T. System Learning Assessment Initiative

In this accountability context, the collection and analysis of data related to students' educational experience and outcomes are vitally important to address the related questions, what is the value added and what are the outcomes of students' educational experiences at U. T. System institutions? Employers want consistent skills, including good verbal and written communication skills, honesty and integrity, teamwork skills, interpersonal skills, and a strong work ethic. The public expects college graduates to possess the ability to learn, take initiative, make decisions; think strategically and flexibly; write; and use information technology and qualitative and quantitative analysis skills. Focusing on learning outcomes has been recommended by recent studies of higher education accountability systems, including the Business Higher Education Forum and the National Commission on Accountability in Higher Education, which endorsed use of a common test across the states.<sup>1</sup>

- Using multiple measures. The U. T. System has the opportunity to use existing tools to create its new model to address the issue of student outcomes. Based on national research and emerging experience, the U. T. System has adopted a multiple-measure framework to assess student outcomes from four different perspectives.<sup>2</sup> The University of Texas System is engaged in a broad-based research project to develop and assess the usefulness of several different approaches to measuring student learning outcomes for all nine member universities. In addition to measures of student engagement and satisfaction, pass rates on licensure exams, and postgraduation experience, the U. T. System includes measures of student learning outcomes.
- Selection of national test: the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). In 2004-05, the U. T. System began administration of the CLA, along with 123 other colleges and universities across the country, in partnership with the Council for Aid to Education and the Rand Corporation. This test is unique, carefully designed to provide a means to assess general problem solving and critical and analytic writing abilities of freshmen and seniors – skills that are fundamental to future success in the workplace or in future graduate or professional study.

In 2005-06, a national cross-section of 113 institutions of every type participated, enabling the CLA test to be used by institutions to benchmark their performance against others with similar student bodies, as well as to compare senior and freshmen performance within an institution.

It provides at least a preliminary answer to the questions, "How do the problem solving and critical thinking and writing skills of students at an institution compare with similarly prepared students at other institutions?" and, "To what degree does the institution add value to students' problem solving and critical thinking and writing skills between the freshmen and senior years?"<sup>3</sup>

See Section I, pp. 53-61, below, for detailed results of the assessment.

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<sup>1</sup>Business-Higher Education Forum, *Public Accountability for Student Learning in Higher Education*, 2004, [http://www.bhef.com/includes/pdf/2004\\_public\\_accountability.pdf](http://www.bhef.com/includes/pdf/2004_public_accountability.pdf). State Higher Education Executive Officers, National Commission on Accountability Higher Education, *Accountability for Better Results: A National Imperative for Higher Education*, March 2005, <http://www.ctdhe.org/info/pdfs/2005/2005Accountability.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup>In addition to these measures, each institution assesses outcomes of specific academic programs and submits this information as part of self-studies for regional and specialized accreditation reviews.

<sup>3</sup>See Council for Aid to Education, *Collegiate Learning Assessment*, "CLA in Context 2004-2005," p. 8; accessible at: <http://www.cae.org/content/pdf/CLA%20Context%200405.pdf>.