

The University of Tyler's Response to The Washington Advisory Group Study

May 13, 2004

The WAG report provides independent confirmation of the quality of UT Tyler people and programs.

- Our student body is of high quality. Our entering classes are among the very best in the state with an SAT average near 1100. Nearly one of every four at UT Tyler is a graduate student—and one out of every three programs is a graduate program. This quality student body and considerable number of master's students will be a tremendous asset to our faculty as we increase research.
- Tyler is one of only three cities in the state where a UT university and medical center are co-located. (Dallas and San Antonio are the others.) WAG characterizes UT Tyler's collaboration with UTHCT as "meaningful" and currently in development is a joint *Institute for Biotechnology and Health Science*. This will expand opportunities for sponsored-research at both institutions.
- UT Tyler has long engaged in successful partnerships with other universities to award Ph.D. programs. WAG concludes we can use these partnerships to "bootstrap" the creation of our own doctoral programs. This is essential to strengthening our research performance. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has deferred our request to bootstrap our Texas A&M partnership to offer our first stand-alone Ph.D. degree, in Human Resources Development. WAG urges the Coordinating Board to approve our request and we are hopeful they will do so.
- WAG notes that UT Tyler and the city of Tyler and all of East Texas already recognize the University's important role in the region's health, education, and economic development. Quality faculty and high-ability students can generate life-changing research and raise standards of living.

UT Tyler will address several challenges to improve its research capability.

- The Washington Advisory Group noted UT Tyler has outgrown classroom capacities. Likewise, WAG labeled research laboratory space as "inadequate." The University is seeking PUF and TRB allocations to:
 - Complete the Engineering, Sciences, and Technology building;
 - Add an academic excellence center (classrooms) to the new residence hall;
 - Relocate education and psychology to for UT Tyler's first dining services;
 - Enlarge the art studio so that students can move out of a portable building; and
 - Build a new classroom facility to accommodate significant future growth.
- The report also points to the limited on-campus housing currently available on our campus. Student apartments, a residence hall, and small theme houses are under construction or in planning with a goal of providing on-campus housing for 15% of our student body.
- WAG also identified the important role played by junior college transfer students who represent a large portion of our enrollment. UT Tyler has spent most of its history as a campus where all undergraduates were transfer students. Yet, we will seek to strengthen our collaborations.

WAG experts see promise for the future of research at UT Tyler.

The prominent WAG experts conclude UT Tyler can become a "Doctoral/Research University-Intensive" within a decade. The report provides an excellent roadmap for accomplishing this objective.