

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

May 11, 2004

We concur with the Washington Advisory Group's (WAG's) assessment that the next decade will be critical in determining whether UTA can achieve Tier 1 research status. Our many strengths position us well to pursue this goal; the major challenge we face is to secure the resources necessary to make strategic research-related investments in faculty, graduate assistants, facilities and equipment. Development initiatives, managed enrollment growth, and carefully planned tuition increases will fund new investments in research capacity. Strengthening our research capacity will pay dividends in increased funds from federal and state agencies, foundations and industry and also will contribute significantly to regional and state economic development.

In September, the UTA community will engage in the development of a new strategic plan with a focus on enhancing our research capability. This plan will incorporate recommendations from the WAG report; specifically, their suggestions for high priority areas of selective investment. The plan will also be responsive to their recommendation that *all departments* be raised to a level of being capable and competitive in the realm of funded research. We recognize, however, that the broad range of programs at UTA has highly differential opportunities for pursuit of external funding. Active, well-published researchers/scholars operating in disciplines with limited funding opportunities are also essential to the future vision of UTA as a comprehensive, Tier 1 institution.

We are a strong Carnegie Research Extensive University with the realistic though challenging goal of becoming a Tier 1 research university. Research is synergistic with instruction, resulting in improved undergraduate and graduate curricula and programs. Both are central to our mission. We will carefully shepherd our resources to build on our research strengths, foster strategic investments from the private sector and further develop those areas currently deemed less strong.

We are optimistic regarding our Tier 1 research university goal. As Clifton R. Wharton, Jr. stated in his keynote address at the recent President's Investiture and Academic Excellence Convocation, "What fascinated me most in reading about your institution is the phenomenal drive that energized its steady pursuit of the goal of becoming a first class university. ... the campus has forged a manifest sense of purpose and a tradition of self-confidence that has and will meet every challenge."