



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT IS PROJECT SOUTH TEXAS?

- Project South Texas is a temporary name for The University of Texas System-led initiatives in South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley that includes efforts to create a new 21st century university with global impact and a new medical school.
- The new university will combine the talent, assets and resources of UT Brownsville, UT Pan American and the Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC), along with other resources to create a new model of university excellence uniquely designed to transform the quality of life, health and economic prosperity of the region.

### WHY IS THIS NEW UNIVERSITY BEING CREATED?

- The UT System and Board of Regents sought authorization from the Texas Legislature to create a new University of Texas academic institution. In the 83rd regular session, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 24 to accomplish this goal. The bill has been signed into law by Governor Perry.
- The new university is being created to transform Texas and the nation by becoming a global leader in innovation, student success, research and health care.
- The new university will integrate next-generation technology and customized learning to increase access and affordability for all students to become the largest and most successful Hispanic-serving institution in the nation.
- The new university will serve as a “Gateway to the Americas” by partnering with global leaders in education, health, research and other strategic, high-growth industries.
- The new university will produce state, national and world leaders who are bicultural, bilingual and biliterate.
- The new university will provide a leadership role in fostering economic and community development to help solve critical local, state, national and global problems.
- The new university will recruit and employ the highest quality faculty members and staff who are interested in pursuing global excellence in teaching, research and service.
- The new school of medicine will augment health care for the state, increase biomedical research, provide more opportunities for residents of the Rio Grande Valley to become physicians and improve the economic vibrancy of the region.
- The new institution will be eligible for full participation in the Permanent University Fund.



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### WHEN WILL THE UNIVERSITY BE NAMED?

- The target for announcing the new name is by the end of 2013. Input will be solicited from the Valley community and a wide range of stakeholders.

### WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR ESTABLISHING THE NEW UNIVERSITY?

- During the summer of 2013, a special adviser will be appointed through the UT System Office of Academic Affairs to coordinate and facilitate a transition team that will begin planning and developing the new university. The transition team will include UT Brownsville President Juliet Garcia and UT Pan American President Robert Nelsen.
- Campus-based work teams and regional advisory groups will be formed in 2013 to begin thinking about the mission of the new university, curriculum and academic programs, student activities and support services, organizational structure, administrative functions, community outreach, research and economic development, etc.
- Chancellor town hall meetings with campus (faculty, staff and students) and community members will be initiated in August to help communicate updates and answer questions during the transition process.
- The Board of Regents is launching a national search with the goal of announcing a president for the new university in 2014.
- Transition and accreditation processes will continue throughout 2014 and 2015.
- The new university is expected to enroll its inaugural class of first-year students in the fall of 2015.
- Updates to the timeline will be posted on the Project South Texas website, which will be maintained by the UT System until the university opens. The new website is [www.projectsouthtexas.com](http://www.projectsouthtexas.com).

### WHAT HAPPENS TO UT BROWNSVILLE AND UT PAN AMERICAN WHEN THE NEW UNIVERSITY IS CREATED?

- Assets and resources from the current institutions will be consolidated and become part of the new university. It is the expectation that both campuses will grow with the new university.



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### WHAT IS PUF MONEY? WHY IS THE NEW UNIVERSITY ELIGIBLE FOR PUF FUNDING?

- “PUF” is the abbreviation for the Permanent University Fund, a public endowment established in 1876 by the Texas Constitution that receives revenues and earnings on investments from land in West Texas to support institutions in the UT and Texas A&M systems.
- The new South Texas university is specifically made eligible for access to the PUF by the law recently passed by the Texas Legislature and signed by Governor Perry.

### WHEN AND HOW WILL THE NEW PRESIDENT BE SELECTED?

- The Board of Regents is launching a national search with the goal of announcing a president for the new university in 2014.

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE FACULTY AND STAFF OF UT BROWNSVILLE AND UT PAN AMERICAN?

- During the transition process, UTB and UTPA faculty, staff and administrators will continue with their current university responsibilities.
- There will be careful thought and deliberation by the transition team, in collaboration with faculty, staff, campus-based work groups and expert consultants, on looking for ways to improve organizational efficiency to focus more resources on building a 21st century university in South Texas.
- The new university will establish single academic programs and single administrative units, which could require reorganization and reassignments of staff.
- A guiding principle of the new university will be to expand and grow programs and opportunities in the Rio Grande Valley while enhancing efficiency and excellence.



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### WHAT WILL THE IMPACT OF THE NEW UNIVERSITY BE ON CURRENT UT BROWNSVILLE AND UT PAN AMERICAN STUDENTS?

- Students admitted to or currently enrolled at UTB and UTPA will be automatically admitted to the new university.
- Current students will benefit from a new vision for the university, which is to become a global leader in innovation, education, research and health care.
- Transcripts, course credits, degree plans, grants, loans, legal documents and other student support and academic services will be transitioned appropriately as the new university is created.

### WHAT TUITION AND FEES WILL BE CHARGED TO STUDENTS AT THE NEW UNIVERSITY?

- The tuition and fees will be determined by the UT System Board of Regents, whose focus is to improve access, affordability and excellence.

### WHERE WILL THE NEW UNIVERSITY BE LOCATED?

- Initially, the new university will use the existing facilities of UTB and UTPA.
- However, academic programs, student support services, research and health education, including administration, will take place all over the Rio Grande Valley, including, but not limited to:
  - Academic campuses and other academic operations will be located in Cameron and Hidalgo counties, as well as an academic center in Starr County.
  - Medical education programs for first-year and second-year students will be primarily located in Hidalgo County, while educational programs for third-year and fourth-year students will be primarily located in Cameron County.
  - Educational programs for all medical students will take full advantage of existing educational facilities and programs at UTB, UTPA and the Regional Academic Health Center in Harlingen.
  - Graduate medical education programs and activities will be conducted throughout the region.



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### WHICH DEGREE PROGRAMS WILL BE OFFERED AT WHICH CAMPUSES?

- The new university will offer a comprehensive array of degree programs designed to meet the needs of students and the demands of the Rio Grande Valley and beyond.
- Faculty members will work collectively with the UT System-led transition team over the next 12-18 months to determine the degree programs to be offered at the new university.

### WILL STUDENTS HAVE TO TRAVEL BETWEEN MULTIPLE CAMPUSES TO COMPLETE THEIR DEGREES?

- A key goal of the new university is to utilize technology and innovative learning strategies, such as online and hybrid courses, to increase student access and success across the entire Rio Grande Valley and minimize travel.

### HOW CAN I ENROLL IN THE NEW UNIVERSITY?

- New students will apply to the new university as they would any other University of Texas System institution.

### WHEN AND HOW WILL THE MASCOT AND SCHOOL COLORS BE SELECTED AND WHAT ABOUT ATHLETICS, STUDENT AND ALUMNI GROUPS AND OTHER UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONS?

- The new university president will begin working with students in 2014 to develop a process for selecting a new university mascot and school colors.
- Once the new university president is appointed, campus work groups will be formed to review how athletic teams and student teams, groups, alumni and other organizations will be organized and operate in the new university.

### HOW DOES THE NEW UNIVERSITY AFFECT THE DEGREES OF UT BROWNSVILLE AND UT PAN AMERICAN ALUMNI? DO THEY NEED TO GET new diplomas?

- The degrees previously conferred by UTB and UTPA will remain with alumni their entire lives.
- The new university will award new academic degrees under its new name for graduates starting in December 2015. Future requests for records and transcripts from UTB and UTPA will be serviced by the new university.





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### WILL THE NEW UNIVERSITY BE ACCREDITED BY THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS (SACS)? WHAT ABOUT OTHER SPECIALIZED PROGRAM ACCREDITATIONS?

- Yes, the new university will obtain accreditation by SACS. Faculty members and administrators will also work to obtain discipline-specific accreditations.

### WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MANY GIFTS AND ENDOWMENTS THAT WERE DIRECTED TO UTB AND UTPA OVER THE YEARS?

- The UT System and the new university will honor the donors' wishes as prescribed in their previous gift agreements and will communicate with each donor to ensure that donor intent is honored.

### WILL THE MEDICAL SCHOOL BE INTEGRATED INTO THE UNIVERSITY?

- Plans to establish a stand-alone medical school in South Texas, authorized by statute in 2009, were under way prior to the proposal to create a new university.
- The new school of medicine will be part of the new university once it is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). The medical school is expected to enroll its first class in the fall of 2016.
- A search for the founding dean of the medical school was launched in the spring of 2013.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO ADVANCE PROJECT SOUTH TEXAS AND BECOME MORE INVOLVED?

- Visit [www.projectsouthtexas.com](http://www.projectsouthtexas.com) frequently to receive regular updates, offer comments and learn more about Project South Texas.
- Support the new university with philanthropic funding toward student scholarships, faculty, programs and research.
- Be an advocate and encourage Rio Grande Valley high school graduates and others to attend the new university.