

VISION 2020: CREATING A  
CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY





## DEAR READER

The work included in this document resulted from thousands of hours of effort from more than 250 people. It achieves the very difficult task of getting a sense of direction from many important and informed points of view. We believe it represents a convergence of some of the best thinking on higher education in many years. It is bold in its recognition of the progress required to continue to move Texas A&M University forward, a process that will add value to the degree of every former, current, and future student. It is sensitive in that it recognizes our heritage — as a land grant university, as a place where students are central, and as a place that inspires leadership. It is visionary in that it suggests many changes to the culture of Texas A&M University. The challenge it presents is addressing the interaction of tradition and change in a manner that strengthens Texas A&M University.

The process has been one of great intensity, debate, and deliberation. The work embodied in this document is available on the web at [www.tamu.edu](http://www.tamu.edu). ***Vision 2020: The Groundwork***, which includes all of the reports from the many committees, and ***Vision 2020: The Baseline***, which includes the benchmark data that helped start the process, are also both on the web. All of this work is testimony to the respect that so many have for this great institution.

We trust you will share our positive reflection on the process and the result. Both set a high standard for the next generation of faculty, students, and staff at Texas A&M University and challenge the state to recognize the value of having nationally eminent universities.

Sincerely,

Ray M. Bowen

Jon L. Hagler  
*Vision 2020 Co-Chairs*



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1876

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE IDEA

On October 10, 1997 President Ray Bowen placed a stake in the ground. He proposed that Texas A&M University strive to be recognized as one of the ten best public universities in the nation by the year 2020, while at the same time maintaining and enhancing our distinctiveness. This goal set in motion the efforts of more than 250 people on and off campus to determine where we are now and how to narrow the distance between the place we are now and the goal President Bowen has envisioned. This is the foundation of Vision 2020.

### THE BEST

In order that a course might be charted to our goal, significant research was undertaken to ascertain which public universities are regarded as “the best” and why.

To identify qualitative and quantitative attributes of superior public institutions, two approaches were taken. The first was to consider the most prominent ranking systems and their results, as published by *US News & World Report* and the National Research Council. Six institutions are currently ranked among the nation’s ten best public universities by both of these sources: University of California – Berkeley, University of Michigan, University of California – Los Angeles, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of California – San Diego, and University of Wisconsin – Madison. Comparisons are drawn between Texas A&M University and these six institutions at many points throughout this document.

In addition, a number of other universities were deemed worthy of study, in order that all colleges and programs at Texas A&M University be accurately measured against leading academic counterparts. These institutions are Georgia Institute of Technology, University of California – Davis, University of Illinois – Champaign-Urbana, Pennsylvania State University, University of Minnesota, Ohio State University, Purdue University, University of Florida, and University of Texas – Austin.

### OUR STRENGTH

Many characteristics distinguish us nationally. We fare very well in our ability to attract National Merit Scholars. Some programs, such as our nautical archaeology unit and its affiliated Institute of Nautical Archeology, are the best in the entire world. Our chemistry program is consistently identified as outstanding, the more remarkable for the dramatic growth it has experienced in the last three decades. The colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Veterinary Medicine are frequently cited as among the

very best in the nation. Education for leadership is a fundamental and distinctive part of our campus life. Our ability to engender an attitude of good stewardship marks us; we have the lowest ratio of administrative to general costs of any university in the State of Texas. An expansive physical plant reminds us of the intensity of our growth. We have many existing strengths in which we can and do take pride. Our greatest strength, however, is our desire to be even better.

### **T H E N E E D**

The need to improve is real. We are good but not good enough. We do not provide the resources that the best public universities in America do to fuel quality teaching, research, and outreach. Our faculty, while excellent, as a whole is not the equal of those at the best institutions in the land, when measured by objective assessment. Many of our programs are very strong, as evidenced by their national recognition; few of our humanities and social science programs, however, have reached real strength. As an institution, we have accomplished much, but we must not become complacent. We need to be better if we are to effectively serve our students, the State of Texas, and the nation.

### **O U R C O R E V A L U E S**

Our core values have been re-articulated and re-affirmed during the extensive process of reviewing our progress. We are dedicated to the search for truth. We hold the public trust sacred. We seek excellence in all we do. We welcome all people. We desire the enlightenment brought by true diversity and global interaction. We will manage ourselves to the highest standards of efficiency and productivity. These powerful values undergird every aspect of our plan.

### **O U R M I S S I O N**

Our mission also has been clarified and affirmed. We seek academic, research, and service excellence; teaching excellence; and leadership and citizenship development for our students and all associated with the university. We expect managerial and service excellence from ourselves. Our values and mission set high targets for the future of Texas A&M University.

### **O U R V I S I O N**

A culture of excellence will be the hallmark of Texas A&M University in 2020. Our energy and boldness will distinguish us, guide our decision-making, and empower us to continue to improve. Our vision for 2020 addresses, through careful and honest analysis, our strengths and weaknesses. It reflects a steadfast determination to build on strengths, eliminate weaknesses, seek opportunities, and face threats creatively and energetically. We will create a culture of excellence that fulfills the need for an institution with quality of the first order. In 2020 Texas A&M University will be more distinctive than it is today. That distinctiveness will be created on a foundation of quality that is widely recognized and measured by world standards.

## THE TWELVE IMPERATIVES

The process of Vision 2020 produced hundreds of ideas supporting our goal. Almost all of these suggestions have merit, and most earn acknowledgment in the body of this report. The precepts, focused goals, and measures can be summarized in twelve overarching ideas. We call these the twelve imperatives.

### ***Elevate Our Faculty and Their Teaching, Research, and Scholarship***

The world today is knowledge-based and constantly changing. In such a world, the quality research university is “a creator, organizer, preserver, transmitter, and applier of knowledge.” The foundation of these functions is an excellent faculty in adequate numbers. We need to increase substantially the size of our faculty (perhaps by half), and we must attract and retain many more top scholars, teachers, and researchers. We will have to review and strengthen hiring and tenure policies, enhance compensation, focus our scholarship, and transform our administrative culture. We cannot achieve our goal without a nationally recognized faculty with a passion for teaching and an academic environment that values and rewards innovation, great ideas, and the search for the truth.

### ***Strengthen Our Graduate Programs***

We must have a shift in our thinking about the role of graduate education to attain the level of excellence we desire. A substantially expanded graduate studies effort is critical to our academic aspirations and to our effectiveness as a great research university. Outstanding professors attract superior graduate students and, in many instances, the money to help support their research. But these professors by themselves will not be enough. We must create a dynamic, exciting, discovery-driven intellectual environment that will draw superior graduate students, comparable to those in the nation’s best graduate programs.

### ***Enhance the Undergraduate Academic Experience***

The core of Texas A&M University must be a residential, learner-centered community that attracts excellent students and provides quality learning and mentoring experiences. We must better prepare learners for lives of discovery, innovation, leadership, and citizenship by better inculcation of writing, thinking, and self-expression skills. Texas A&M University is proud of its history of developing student leaders. Our co-curricular programs are already an area of true distinctiveness, but we must continue to strengthen their substance and reputation and extend their benefits to a greater percentage of the student body. While our retention rate is the highest in Texas, it is low relative to the best national institutions; we must make an institutional commitment to graduate those we enroll. We must emphasize education more than training and significantly improve our student-faculty ratio. We must provide more opportunity for intellectual exchange between distinguished faculty and undergraduates. Our recruiting should be more proactive and produce a more broadly representative student body. We need to expand our honors, study/live-abroad, interdisciplinary studies, and course-assistance programs.

#### ***4 Build the Letters, Arts, and Sciences Core***

Texas A&M University has historically placed less emphasis on the letters and arts. While many of our basic science disciplines are nationally acclaimed, the best public universities have stronger and deeper liberal arts programs and a fuller range of such programs with a significantly higher institutional commitment. Such strengthening is necessary for the true, enduring education of our graduates and the enrichment of their lives. It is abundantly clear that we will never be seen as a premier institution nationally without a far stronger letters, arts, and sciences program.

#### ***5 Build on the Tradition of Professional Education***

Undergraduate education in all areas, including professional education, has been our traditional strength at Texas A&M University. At the heart of Vision 2020 is a belief that we will not only sustain but also continually strengthen our professional programs at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels. We expect that these programs will be the first (as some already are) to represent Texas A&M University solidly and firmly in the top ten nationally. Our professional programs must also recognize the necessity to prepare their graduates more broadly for entry into a complex, changing, and unpredictable world.

#### ***6 Diversify and Globalize the A&M Community***

The time has passed when the isolation of the Texas A&M University campus served a compelling utilitarian function. Information, communication, and travel technology have produced a highly connected global society. The ability to survive, much less succeed, is increasingly linked to the development of a more pluralistic, diverse, and globally aware populace. It is essential that the faculty, students, and larger campus community embrace this more cosmopolitan environment. The university's traditional core values will give us guidance and distinctiveness, while preparing us to interact with all people of the globe. Texas A&M University must attract and nurture a more ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse faculty, staff, and student body.

#### ***7 Increase Access to Knowledge Resources***

Despite recent progress, the intellectual assets represented by Texas A&M University library holdings are underdeveloped and must be increased. Coincidentally, we must recognize that the technology related to the storage, access, and distribution of knowledge resources has changed as much in the last decade as in the 550 years since the invention of movable type. Texas A&M University must invest rapidly, but wisely, to gain parity with its academic peers. It must lead, not just grow, in forcefully developing new methods and measures of success in this rapidly changing arena. The wedding of communications and computer technology will, no doubt, yield the most formidable change in academe by 2020. Texas A&M University must lead the adaptation.

## ***Enrich Our Campus***

The physical environment of our campus should be conducive to scholarly work and study. Texas A&M University has an efficient and well-maintained campus. However, during our rapid growth over the past four decades, the physical unity of the campus has been diminished by the presence of Wellborn Road and the railroad tracks. Innovative planning and bold leadership are needed to redress this division for reasons of safety and convenience as well as aesthetics. West Campus has not maintained the human scale that exists on the Main Campus. Through judicious planning we need to attain the same pedestrian-friendly scale and green space that gives the Main Campus its character. The use of large areas for surface parking needs to be reconsidered so that the unity of the campus is maintained as new building occurs to accommodate growth. As more of the university's current land holdings are consumed by non-agricultural uses, acquisition of land on or near the Riverside Campus for agricultural development should be a high priority.

## ***Build Community and Metropolitan Connections***

The way that we relate to the local community, Houston, and other metropolitan areas of the state will have a powerful impact on Texas A&M University and the communities supporting and supported by the university. In addition, it is critical that the community in which we live provide opportunities for families to work and grow. Spouses need high-quality employment opportunities. Faculty and researchers need private-sector sponsorships and commercialization support. As we attract a wider range of people to Texas A&M University, the enrichment provided through our connection to a large metropolitan area becomes increasingly important. Correctly choreographed, such a connection gives us the best of both worlds.

## ***Demand Enlightened Governance and Leadership***

Great universities have a clearly articulated vision, a stimulating intellectual environment populated by great faculty and students, and resources adequate to support quality offerings. One other characteristic often contributes to greatness: enlightened leadership. Clear, cooperative relationships between the university and the System must be the norm. To achieve our aspirations, strong, enlightened, stable, and forward-thinking leadership focused on academic quality is essential. We have made progress, but we must guard it zealously. Regents must continue to take the policy high ground. The System administration must acknowledge and nurture Texas A&M University's role as a comprehensive research university with national peers. The university administration must be steadfast in its demand for quality in every decision. And finally, the university administration must make decisions through a process characterized by openness and appropriate faculty and staff participation. Our responsibility to the System as its flagship must be evidenced in all decision-making. Academic progress is fragile. Enlightened, shared governance and leadership are elemental to its achievement.

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***Attain Resource Parity with the Best Public Universities***

The combination of rapid population growth, demand for government services and difficult economic times have placed a strain on the Texas treasury in recent years. A good and widely dispersed university system has provided access to a growing college-aged population. Access alone is no longer enough. Texas must have a few universities that offer opportunities equal to the best public universities, while taking complementary steps to maintain access. Competitive peer states have long recognized the economic necessity of comprehensive research universities in meeting the knowledge demands of an information society. States with the best universities are currently investing twice as much funding per student as at Texas A&M University.

Texas A&M University and the University of Texas are ideally positioned to achieve recognition as top national institutions because of the state's historical, constitutional financial commitment to them. Texas may also need additional institutions of this caliber. The institutions designated to fill this role must be acknowledged and supported in a way that is consistent with national competition. They must be provided the flexibility and exercise the wisdom and courage to price their offerings more in line with their value, while taking complementary steps to maintain access. Finally, they must use their historical strength to generate more private capital. Texas A&M University must attain resource parity with the best public institutions to better serve Texas.

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***Meet Our Commitment to Texas***

Texas A&M University is a creation of the state and in its origin was designed to prepare educated problem-solvers to lead the state's development. This fundamental mission, born out of the land grant heritage of service, remains today. Texas A&M University's aspiration to be among the best public universities in the country resonates with this historical mandate. The diverse population of Texas should have access to the best public education in America without having to leave the state. Texas A&M University must also reach out even more to help solve the most difficult societal problems, including those related to public education, crime, and the environment, and must honor its heritage of enhancing the economic development of all regions of the state. Texas A&M University, if it aspires to national prominence, must first stay committed to Texas.

A mosaic background featuring a central six-pointed star with a yellow border. The star's interior is divided into sections of grey and brown mosaic tiles. The word "INTRODUCTION" is written in white serif font across the top part of the star. At the bottom, the year "1876" is written in large yellow numbers. The entire design is set against a light grey background with decorative floral or leaf-like patterns in the corners.

INTRODUCTION

1876

## THE IDEA

We are at an important juncture in our evolution as a university. We take justifiable pride in the historical fact that we are the oldest publicly supported university in Texas. We should also take great pride in the fact that, in a real sense, we are the youngest comprehensive research university in Texas. Our evolution, as I hope my historical summary reveals, as a university with major academic aspirations is rather recent.

Our history before approximately 1965 is something which gives us great pride and will never be lost in our future. However, when the history of this university is revisited in 2076, our 200th anniversary, it will be the academic transformation that occurred here since the mid-1960s that will be celebrated.

If I have a message that I would like you to take home with you today, it is the following: The magnitude and substance of this celebration of our 200 years depends, in a significant way, on the academic decisions we make in the next 20 to 25 years.

The challenge before us today is to decide what we must do for A&M in order to continue the positive academic development of the university. Can we take actions now which will greatly enhance the academic strength of the university by the year 2020? In other terms, can we add value to the degrees of the Class of 2000 in the same dramatic way as developments since the mid-1960s have added value to my degree and those of so many Aggies?

What must we do to move the academic quality of the university to an even higher level? Are the leaders in the A&M Family (Faculty, Current or Former Students, Regents, etc.) in the year 2020 going to look back at this period of time and say that we made the right decisions so as to benefit their university? When placed in this context, you can see that we have a great responsibility.

Academic Convocation Speech  
President Ray M. Bowen  
October 10, 1997

**T H E G O A L**

The goal of Vision 2020 is to continue the academic evolution of Texas A&M University so it is generally considered one of the ten best public universities in America by 2020, while retaining, or even enhancing, many of the unique features that have differentiated the university in the past.

**T H E B E S T**

In order that a course might be charted to our goal, significant research was undertaken to ascertain which public universities are regarded as “the best” and why.

To identify qualitative and quantitative attributes of superior public institutions, two approaches were taken. The first was to consider the most prominent ranking systems and their results, as published by *US News & World Report* and the National Research Council. Six institutions are currently ranked among the nation’s ten best public universities by both of these sources: University of California – Berkeley, University of Michigan, University of California – Los Angeles, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of California – San Diego, and University of Wisconsin – Madison. Comparisons are drawn between Texas A&M University and these six institutions at many points throughout this document.

In addition, a number of other universities were deemed worthy of study, in order that all colleges and programs at Texas A&M University be accurately measured against leading academic counterparts. These institutions are Georgia Institute of Technology, University of California – Davis, University of Illinois – Champaign-Urbana, Pennsylvania State University, University of Minnesota, Ohio State University, Purdue University, University of Florida, and University of Texas – Austin.

Universities	US News Ranking	NRC Ranking
Texas A&M	15	NR
UT	17	6
Berkeley	1	1
Michigan	4	3
UNC	3	10
UCLA	4	3
UC San Diego	6	2
Wisconsin	8	5
The Best Public Universities Source: 1998 <i>US News</i> , National Research Council NR: Not ranked		

Table 1

**O U R S T R E N G T H**

Texas A&M University is committed to improvement. We have faced challenges, accepted change, and improved, while responding to a dynamic environment. Planning and accomplishing goals are part of the culture of Texas A&M University. While we desire to be, and to be recognized as, one of the ten best public universities in America, we cannot sacrifice the existing strengths and qualities that have carried us to where we are today. We must balance our distinctiveness and the common traits of the best universities in America. If we meet the challenge, we will not only be recognized for our excellence nationally, we will also be able to add value to our students, our faculty, and the State of Texas as an educational leader.

There will undoubtedly be significant differences between the great universities of today and the great universities of 2020. At the same time, these differences will not affect the core of what an institution of higher learning is. Great faculties are indispensable. Gifted and attentive students are needed. Scholarship of the first order is required. Libraries and access to knowledge resources are part of the foundation. Change will affect every aspect of university life, and our willingness and ability to change is our greatest asset.

Many characteristics distinguish us nationally. We fare very well in our ability to attract National Merit Scholars. Some programs, such as our nautical archaeology unit and its affiliated Institute of Nautical Archeology, are the best in the entire world. Our chemistry program is consistently identified as outstanding, the more remarkable for the dramatic growth it has experienced in the last three decades. The colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Business, Engineering and Veterinary Medicine are frequently cited as among the very best in the nation. Education for leadership is a fundamental and distinctive part of our campus life. Our ability to engender an attitude of good stewardship marks us; we have the lowest ratio of administrative to general costs of any university in Texas. Today, an expansive physical plant reminds us of the intensity of our growth.

We have many existing strengths in which we can and do take pride. Our greatest strength, though, is our desire to be better.

### **T H E N E E D**

The destiny of Texas is inextricably linked to the level of quality of its premier institutions of higher education. A report of the Texas Commission on Higher Education said in 1987, "We believe higher education is vital to human advancement and that support for higher education reveals a society's commitment to progress."

Some may say Texas A&M University has made great progress in the last three decades and that we are good enough. They are right on the first point but wrong on the second. They are wrong for two reasons. First, what distinguishes the human species is the opportunity to improve our condition and seek new levels of understanding of humankind and nature. Anything but continuing to strive to be the best is just not acceptable. As the chart above (Table 1) makes clear, Texas A&M University must continue its quest for excellence at both the undergraduate level, which is reflected in the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking, and the graduate level, which is seen in the lack of ranking at all by the National Research Council.

The second reason those who say we are good enough are wrong is that we live in a global world of great change and advancing technology. In such a world, competitive excellence is defined by more rigorous national and global standards. Goods, ideas, people, and students flow readily from place to place. The state and our region will not prosper if we fail to measure ourselves by standards accepted the world over. Many of Texas's best students will go elsewhere, and those who remain will be disadvantaged. The state will not prosper economically if our best and brightest leave or cannot obtain the requisite opportunity to develop their talents.

Our student-faculty ratio is 25 percent higher than the best public institutions. Even in our strong colleges we have far too few National Academy members. Doctoral programs, especially in the social sciences and humanities, need development or need improvement by objective comparison through the National Research Council. Our graduate student population, while large in absolute numbers, is too small at 18 percent of the total student population; the best institutions have graduate student populations of more than 30 percent. Total research expenditures place us in the top ten nationally. However, our federally funded research expenditures, those attained through national competition, are only 63 percent of those at the best public universities. Our library has 1/3 the volumes and 1/5 the serials of the best public institutions.

Underfunding is the root cause of unfavorable comparisons to the best public institutions and prevents us from providing the same level of opportunity to our students. An objective evaluation of our position reveals an inescapable conclusion: As much progress as we have made, we are not yet a nationally prominent institution. Compared to the best public institutions, we significantly underspend them. Our spending in 1997 dollars per student (\$9,500) is approximately half that of the best public institutions. Only 17 percent of the total (\$1,600) comes from our participation in the Permanent University Fund, the state support that was originally intended to assure excellence in the state's flagship universities. How good we are is testament to our careful use of the resources we have had.

Excellence in people, programs, and opportunity is required for greatness and to be competitive with the best national institutions. Seemingly incremental changes, like so many of those required to move us from the position of being an "A" institution to an "A+" institution, are as dramatic as any changes the institution has ever set out to accomplish. Significant resources will be required. Visionary leadership; a commitment to excellence on the part of every faculty member, staff member, and student; and the willingness to take considered risks are all as important as financial resources.

## O U R C O R E V A L U E S

A prerequisite to planning change is articulating the core values that will drive all our decision-making.

- ◆ First, we are absolutely and unequivocally dedicated to the search for truth, freedom of inquiry, and contribution to society.
- ◆ Second, we recognize and hold the public trust sacred. We will conduct all of our activities with the highest standards of integrity, openness, and accountability. We will apply only the highest standards when making decisions on tenure, employment, and promotion. We will accept only the highest standards for the governance and leadership of the institution.
- ◆ Third, we will seek excellence in everything we do. We will define excellence by a broad universe of national and global standards, and by objective standards of achievement and/or contribution. We will measure ourselves by those standards and we will reach out to colleagues in academia, government, and industry to understand how we can learn, benefit, and contribute.
- ◆ Fourth, we will welcome all people and do our best to prepare them for purposeful and productive lives. We will attract a richly diverse student body, faculty, and staff. We will value and build character and leadership in our faculty, students, and graduates. We will treat all members of our community with respect and civility. We will foster an atmosphere of community among our faculty, students, staff, former students, and parents. We will increase opportunities for women and under-represented minorities on our faculty, staff, and administration.

- ◆ Fifth, we will manage ourselves effectively and with wisdom and the understanding that human and intellectual capital are our greatest assets. We will make choices, allocations, and re-allocations to sustain excellence. And we will treat all generations equitably.

## O U R M I S S I O N

The mission of Texas A&M University grows from a number of forces, but most important among these is adherence to our core values. These values serve to create and condition our mission.

Texas A&M University is a modern, comprehensive public educational institution dedicated to serving society by:

**Academic, Research, and Service Excellence, by which we mean** the achievement of national and international prominence through the scholarship and research of its faculty; development, dissemination, and use of the faculty's knowledge; facilitation and support of interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary faculties and programs; strategic orientation toward fields of importance and unique competency; alignment of the interests of the faculty with the broader needs and mission of the university; and interaction and cooperation with other institutions and parties, both within and outside of the Texas A&M University System.

**Teaching Excellence, by which we mean** the provision of an intellectual environment that encourages the development and expansion of the human mind and spirit; advances critical thinking and problem solving; significantly embraces global awareness; encourages life-long learning; develops in students the wisdom and skills needed to assume responsibility and leadership in a democratic society; and is committed to the success of its students once they are enrolled.

**Leadership and Citizenship Development, by which we mean** the provision of a university environment that improves students' understanding and use of their personal attributes and abilities; contributes to the students' ability to work and live with others; promotes honesty, integrity, and morality; develops leadership, personal effectiveness, and a commitment to community and civic involvement on a national and global basis as well as on a state and local level.

**Managerial and Service Excellence, by which we mean** the adherence to articulated core values and principles; the provision of an energetic, thoughtful, innovative, supportive, purposeful administrative structure led by individuals of character, effectiveness, insight, and accomplishment; and continuous reference to the best practices of our most admired peer institutions.

## O U R V I S I O N

Energy and boldness in creating a culture of excellence will be the hallmark of Texas A&M University in 2020. It will mark us among the best, guide our decision-making, and empower us to continue to improve. Our vision for 2020 addresses, through careful and honest analysis, our strengths and weaknesses. It reflects a steadfast determination to build on strengths, eliminate weaknesses, seek opportunities, and face threats creatively and energetically. We will create a culture of excellence that fulfills the need for an institution with quality of the first order.

In 2020 Texas A&M University will be even more distinctive than it is today. That distinctiveness will be created on a foundation of quality that is widely recognized and measured by world standards. Our students will be among the best and brightest that the state, nation, and world have to offer. At the undergraduate level, they will have many highly respected avenues for leadership development. Our graduate students will be greater in number, come from the best institutions around the globe, be well supported, and have opportunity for intellectual growth that is the equal of the best public universities. Our faculty in all fields and disciplines of the campus will have recognition for their scientific and creative acumen and also for their care and concern for students, their commitment to teamwork, and their appreciation for the membership they hold in our community of scholars. Our people will be diverse, not only in representation, but in the differences of view that fuel the engines of thought that compose great institutions of higher education. There will be more of us. The graduate population will grow in size, while the undergraduate programs will serve at least the same number of students. We will seek appropriate matches for people and resources.

Our campus will be attractive. It will be sensitive to people and not overrun with motor vehicles. It will offer excellent facilities for study and research, laboratories which people come from the world over to use for the freshness of technology and capability provided. The majority of students will still live here, many more in residence halls on campus, but Texas A&M University will be known as a seedbed for the best distance and advanced forms of educational technology available.

We will have new programs, especially at the doctoral level in some of the humanities and social sciences whose present absence undermines the quality of every program on campus. Our great professional programs and the genesis of the institution as a land grant university will be more important than ever before. Weak programs will be refined, reconstructed, or eliminated. Excellent universities cannot tolerate weak programs of any kind. If a program is important, then it will be made excellent.

The scholarship produced by faculty and students will be the best available in many fields. Campus experts will be frequently referred to in the national and global media for the knowledge and insight they bring to current issues. We will have participated in the invention of new ways of assessing quality in scholarship that are responsive to changing forms of information technology. Much of the insight for this growth will come from a refreshed alliance between the library and the scholarly traditions of faculty members. We will have reinvented the roots of the university, reflecting our understanding that the flow of knowledge is the foundation for the university.

Because of efforts over the past few decades, the legislature and the people of Texas will have a deeper appreciation for the role that flagship universities play in the state's economy. The general population will be more aware of what universities do for the economy and for their quality of life. Our heritage of service will provide the foundation for this awareness, but it will be built upon by a new view of how a university can provide leadership. We will take our responsibility to inform in a way that serves as a benchmark for other institutions of higher learning.

New alliances and new forms of teaching and learning will have been born at Texas A&M University in the early part of the 21st century. These will shape educational programs that go beyond the individual and affect learners from childhood to old age, in primary and secondary schools, in corporate office and places of production, individually and in groups, for profit and for fun. This is the changing nature of higher education, and it will mark Texas A&M University.

Resources will be seen in a different light at Texas A&M University. The state will provide the foundation for the infrastructure that is needed to create and sustain a culture of excellence. Private resources will provide opportunity for study and research that exceeds the state's capability to support our work. These gifts and support will come from individuals and corporations. Many times they will be unrestricted, but at other times specific to programs created through strategic alliances that benefit both the giver and the institution. Lastly, a fair-share cost of educational opportunity will be paid by students, both in degree programs and through extension, cooperative education, and other forms of specialized service that the university will provide.

This is a glimpse of our future, constructed on the ideas generated by the Vision 2020 task force. It is a future that is respectful of our past and bold about what will come. This is Texas A&M University in 2020.

## **C R E A T I N G   T H E   C U L T U R E   O F   E X C E L L E N C E**

Excellence in anything is a rare commodity, and unlike many commodities it can disappear if not continually cultivated. Our excellence has grown over our history through the determination of the people who live and work here. We must continue to aspire to be better than we are. One way to say this is that we must continually expect and create a culture of excellence. A culture of excellence will set the tone for our future, build on existing strengths, and recognize our commitment to quality.

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT EXCELLENCE

We must do all we can to strengthen the quality of teaching and our academic programs, for that is the core of the intellectual pursuit associated with higher education. Without excellent teachers—and teachers who are both dedicated and well-compensated—we will have missed out on our chances for true greatness. It is only through this means can we take this institution to the next level—to truly make the mere mention of its name synonymous with excellence.

Regent Fred McClure '76  
November 20, 1998



THE IMPERATIVES

*The process of Vision 2020 produced hundreds of ideas supporting our goal of national prominence. Almost all of these suggestions have merit, and most earn acknowledgment in the body of this report. They can best be thought of in relation to twelve inviolate ideas, or imperatives.*

# Elevate Our Faculty and Their Teaching, Research, and Scholarship

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The world today is knowledge-based and constantly changing. In such a world, the quality research university is “a creator, organizer, preserver, transmitter, and applier of knowledge.” The foundation of these functions is an excellent faculty in adequate numbers. We need to increase substantially the size of our faculty (perhaps by half), and we must attract and retain many more top scholars, teachers, and researchers. We will have to review and strengthen hiring and tenure policies, enhance compensation, focus our scholarship, and transform our administrative culture. We cannot achieve our goal without a nationally recognized faculty with a passion for teaching and an academic environment that values and rewards innovation, great ideas, and the search for the truth.

## PRECEPT: ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST QUALITY FACULTY AND FACULTY LIFE

The evolution of the highest quality of student life requires a commitment to high-quality faculty and faculty life. Intense dedication to teaching, research, and service on the part of faculty will be matched by the university’s commitment to provide a supportive, encouraging environment. The dimensions of this environment are manifold. They include access to the best intellectual resources to help faculty achieve the best results; contemporary work environments supported by electronic computing and information availability; evaluation and annual review processes that promote increased desire for performance and commitment to excel-

lence; sensitive leadership and responsiveness to the needs of individual faculty members; a fair compensation system and means to reward excellence consistent with peer institutions; and participation in the governance of the institution. No single indicator of excellence in faculty life can be taken in isolation. The aim is to provide an environment that supports the highest creative and intellectual work to benefit students, the institution, and the faculty—in short, to create an encompassing community of scholars.

*If Texas A&M University is to become one of the top ten public universities by the year 2020, it is imperative that this university have an outstanding faculty and an environment that promotes academic excellence. It is also imperative that Texas A&M University make the academic quality of the institution known to the world.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Improve the faculty-student ratio to facilitate the interaction of faculty and students to create a better academic experience. **Attain a faculty-student ratio equal to the median of the best public universities.**
- ◆ Classroom teaching and the teaching of graduate students must be of the highest quality and play a central role at Texas A&M University. **Provide the resources and facilities that will allow faculty to lead the way in developing the highest quality learning environment in the classroom and laboratory.**
- ◆ Attract and keep outstanding faculty members. This will require compensation and benefits packages that positively affect the desirability of the institution and endowments for “career-development” chairs, “superstar” chairs and “exceptional-promise” chairs. Start-up funds for research and scholarly activities should be developed to allow for attractive offers. Laboratories and teaching facilities should be available, efficient, and of high caliber. Intense searches for every faculty position should be the norm. Recruiting processes should be focused on excellence. An excellent sabbatical program is also required. Job opportunities for spouses, given the dual-career nature of today’s families, must be enhanced on and off of the campus. **Lose no faculty to other institutions for reasons that do not involve sound professional decision-making.**

Universities	National Academy Engineering Faculty	National Academy Science Faculty
Texas A&M	10	3
UT	39	13
Berkeley	62	116
Michigan	14	21
UNC	5	9
UCLA	15	31
UC San Diego	11	58
Wisconsin	17	43
1999 National Academy Members Source: National Academies of Engineering and Science		

Table 2

**PRECEPT: EXPECT AND SUPPORT RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP OF THE HIGHEST CALIBER**

Scholarship is the foundation of quality in teaching, researching, and service. Our goal for 2020 is to produce scholarship that breeds excellence and is uncompromising in its commitment to understanding. This is the highest form of truth-seeking and the reason for hiring the best faculty and recruiting the best students. The cornerstone of the academic enterprise is traditional, basic research. The act of discovery is different from, although complementary to, the teaching of new ideas or the sharing of thoughts and concepts with the larger community. Additionally, while universities value all forms of creative activity, the act of discovering new basic knowledge—truth about relationships of matter, people, and organizations—has always been at the center of the academic enterprise and will be at the center of Texas A&M University. It is understood that the best basic research leads to the best applied research.

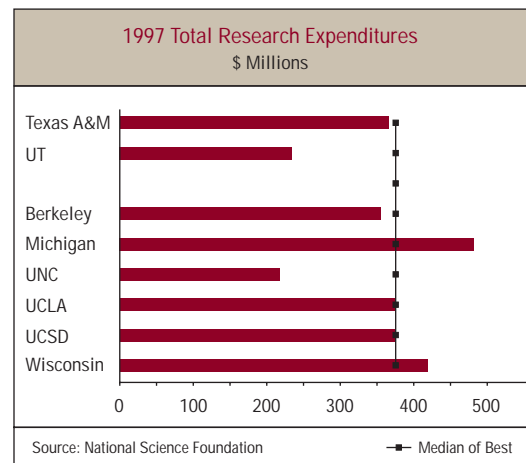


Table 3

*Research, as the creation of knowledge in the broadest sense, encompasses all forms of scholarship from creation of works of art and literature through evaluation and reorganization of knowledge to investigations into the preservation, transmission, and application of knowledge. Research is an essential function of the human race and it is through individual intellects that this creation occurs. Thus, a primary function of the university is to create an environment in which individuals, on behalf of society, may be engaged in these knowledge-based activities.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**GOALS:**

- ◆ Select and develop priority research and scholarly programs acknowledged to be important and compelling on a national and global level through faculty-driven strategic planning. **Create an environment where Nobel Prize - and Pulitzer Prize - quality work is being done, with achievement of such awards as evidence of the environment.**
- ◆ Emphasize research as an essential component of every student’s learning and every faculty member’s responsibility. **All undergraduate majors have a required research component—research across the curriculum.**
- ◆ Position Texas A&M University to become a major source of research faculty for the next generation by attracting

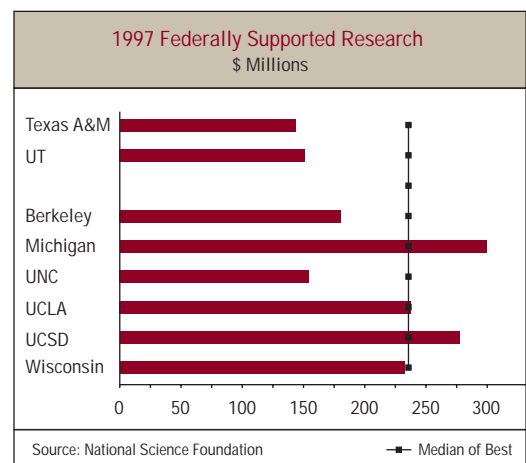


Table 4

outstanding research personnel at all levels: senior faculty, junior faculty, postdoctoral associates, and students. This will require endowed chairs, fellowships and quality laboratory facilities. **While recognizing that not all doctoral graduates seek academic careers, place 75 percent of those who do at top-tier national institutions.**

- ◆ Coordinate research administration in order to unify the planning and implementation of the university's research program and to effectively deploy Texas A&M University faculty and physical resources. **Achieve top-five standing in research expenditures as measured by the National Science Foundation and top-ten standing in federally funded research.**
- ◆ Expand our research activities by hiring the best scholars in their fields. **Quadruple the number of faculty who are members of the National Academy of Science, the National Academy of Engineering, or fellows in academic and professional societies.**
- ◆ Build on the existing endowed-faculty program. **Have endowed positions equal to the best public universities in America.**

#### PRECEPT: ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP

In any view to the future, it is absolutely certain that the challenges of solving complex problems will require interdisciplinary work—teams of scholars from various disciplines as well as partnerships between scholars and researchers from business and industry. In the immediate future, issues requiring strong interdisciplinary participation are life sciences, telecommunications, public policy, education, and diversity. What is less clear is what the key challenges will be 20 years from now. Whatever those challenges may be, it is critical that the university foster an adaptive culture, that embraces and encourages interdisciplinary work and eschews structural boundaries and bureaucratic legacy.

*Encourage faculty teamwork and collaboration to identify emerging cross-disciplinary fields and to compete successfully for large grants.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### GOALS:

- ◆ Create and refine structures and mechanisms that encourage and support interdisciplinary work. **Have 25 percent of faculty members involved in scholarly work and teaching that crosses disciplinary lines.**
- ◆ Revise tenure, promotion, and annual-review processes to recognize multi-disciplinary and team work. **Value teamwork and independent activity in all tenure, promotion, and annual review processes.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT RESPONDING TO A  
CHANGING GLOBAL REALITY:

The College of Geosciences is dedicated to excellence as we strive to understand the physical, biological, and human systems of our planet and the ways in which they interact. We investigate the forces that shape the past, present, and future of the solid earth, the oceans, the atmosphere, the biosphere, and human cultures and society. We work with society to develop, sustain, and enhance our planet's resources as responsible stewards of the environment. We address the needs of the people of Texas, the nation, and the world by rising to the challenges posed by a changing global environment.

The College of Geosciences  
Vision for 2020

# Strengthen Our Graduate Programs

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We must have a shift in our thinking about the role of graduate education to attain the level of excellence we desire. A substantially expanded graduate studies effort is critical to our academic aspiration and to our effectiveness as a great research university. Outstanding professors attract superior graduate students and, in many instances, the money to help support their research. But these professors by themselves will not be enough. We must create a dynamic, exciting, discovery-driven intellectual environment that will draw superior graduate students, comparable to those in the nation's best graduate programs.

## PRECEPT: INCREASE THE SIZE AND QUALITY OF THE GRADUATE POPULATION

Texas A&M University aspires for graduate education to play an expanded role in our institutional life. Graduate students should make up a greater proportion of the student body and more should come from the best institutions in the nation and the world. Enhanced ability to attract and retain graduate students and provide the framework in which they can complete their studies as full participants in the community of scholars is essential for healthy growth in graduate programs.

Many forces affect our ability to attract the brightest graduate students. The state's view of the graduate student must be differentiated from the well-understood need to serve our own population of undergraduates. Stipends, insurance benefits, tuition waivers, and other forms of financial support are important for effective results. However, if our response to the challenge stops there, a key ingredient to graduate student life remains beyond our reach. Avenues must

be found to involve graduate students more in the creative enterprise of higher education, to make them contributing members of the academic community. Incorporating the work of graduate students into the mainstream work of the university will ensure a more energetic, high-quality engagement with the faculty and pursuits of the institution.

*The current measures of excellence for universities are focused on the breadth and depth of their graduate and professional programs. These standards include both educational and research components. Similar indicators of excellence are likely to continue into the 21st Century.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Create a climate that welcomes graduate students as part of the community of scholars and increase the size of the graduate student population while maintaining present numbers of undergraduate students. **Increase the proportion of graduate students to 30 percent of the student population, while developing financial resources, influencing state policy, and refining the academic culture that support excellence in graduate education. Specifically, make financial support for graduate students competitive with that of the best institutions.**
- ◆ Recruit top students. **Recruit 75 percent of graduate students from institutions other than Texas A&M University and 50 percent from outside Texas.**
- ◆ Develop more master’s degree programs. **Have 20 percent of the student body enrolled in master’s programs.**
- ◆ Impact the quality of higher education in the 21st century by providing graduate students excellent preparation as teachers as well as researchers. **Give responsible training in pedagogy to graduate teaching assistants and to graduate students seeking academic careers.**
- ◆ Post-doctoral study should be increased for graduates of Texas A&M University as well as for those from peer institutions. **Double the number of post-doctoral fellows.**
- ◆ Advance Texas A&M University’s information technology strategies and infrastructure to position us to be a world leader in the development and delivery of education in the 21st Century. **Increase to 50 percent the proportion of the master’s population enrolled in distance and other non-traditional master’s offerings.**

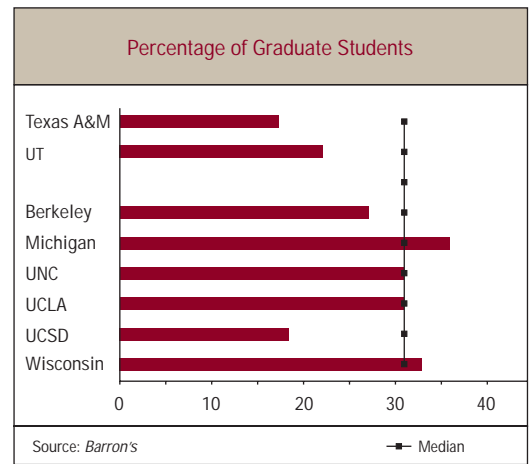


Table 5

## PRECEPT: CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE RANGE OF PROGRAMS

All programs should be responsive to student needs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Graduate programs in particular should be flexible and cover a range of issues that are current, subject to change, sensitive to changing economic, social, and cultural developments, and broad enough to create critical mass for the graduate student. The last consideration speaks directly to the quality of graduate student life in the university. Excellent science programs must be balanced with excellent humanities programs at the graduate level. Focus, the primary characteristic of graduate study, does not alleviate the responsibility of the university to provide breadth so that graduate study is informed from a number of perspectives. Texas A&M University must respond to this notion and commit to providing a range of graduate programs that is both balanced and of the highest quality. One distinguishing characteristic of great public universities is that they have many graduate offerings, and all are strong or improving.

*The challenges and opportunities of the 21st century will require students to have both traditional discipline-based education and the ability to obtain skills provided by interdisciplinary and integrated programs.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

### GOALS:

- ◆ New programs need to be created in areas that are central to quality graduate study and that would contribute to overall enhancement of the university. **Commit to an implementation plan that identifies and initiates graduate programs in the humanities and social sciences that are configured to achieve distinction.**
- ◆ Texas A&M University should assume a leadership role for graduate education in the Texas A&M University System. **Create special opportunities, such as articulation agreements, for graduate students from System institutions and have 10 percent of total graduate enrollment from those institutions.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS ABOUT  
GRADUATE PROGRAMS THAT LEAD:

The College of Veterinary Medicine envisions an expanding role in the life sciences to include enhanced understanding of the human/animal bond; a key role in the tremendous challenge of food safety and public health; the study of human and animal nutrition to be better able to feed the world's population; as leaders in the understanding of reproductive technologies; as active players in medical and surgical research including the understanding and development of new therapeutic agents; as experts in the identification of animal models for human disease; and as research scientists.

The College of Veterinary Medicine  
Vision for 2020

# Enhance the Undergraduate Academic Experience

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The core of Texas A&M University must be a residential, learner-centered community that attracts excellent students and provides quality learning and mentoring experiences. We must better prepare learners for lives of discovery, innovation, leadership, and citizenship by better inculcation of writing, thinking, and self-expression skills. Texas A&M University is proud of its history of developing student leaders. Our co-curricular programs are already an area of true distinctiveness, but we must continue to strengthen their substance and reputation and extend their benefits to a larger percentage of the student body. While our retention rate is the highest in Texas, it is low relative to the best national institutions; we must strengthen our commitment to graduate those we enroll. We must emphasize education more than training and significantly improve our student-faculty ratio. We must provide more opportunity for intellectual exchange between distinguished faculty and undergraduates. Our recruiting should be more proactive and produce a more broadly representative student body. We need to expand our honors, study/live-abroad, interdisciplinary studies, and course-assistance programs.

## PRECEPT: PROVIDE STUDENTS THE OPTIMAL UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE IN A RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

Our first cause, that without which all others lose purpose, is the student. Our culture should value, above all else, the students and the educational opportunities afforded them, especially through excellence in teaching. Our need to be responsive to changing realities as

well as the need for interdisciplinary work to solve complex problems lead to new thinking about curricula. Curricula must be in tune with the forces at work in the world, the needs of students, and the expert understanding of faculty. The changes required may force us to rethink the nature of degree programs and to balance disciplinary traditions with other forces. Every one of the goals and attributes of excellence proffered through Vision 2020 are directed towards the student.

*Provide a university climate that is learner-centered; emphasizes academic rigor and high expectations of students, faculty, and staff; encourages involvement in the life of the institution beyond the classroom; fosters an environment of caring and concern; and promotes success and leadership development for all students.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Set high-quality admission standards. **Focus on academic preparation (i.e. required curriculum, grade-point average, test scores) and increase consideration of leadership and other dimensions of the whole student.**
- ◆ Nurture the individual student to insure highest probability of success. We must assume responsibility for the success of our students. **Attain a 95 percent freshman retention rate and an 80 percent six-year graduation rate—levels consistent with the best institutions.**
- ◆ Increase opportunities for all students to develop the academic and social connections that facilitate academic success and involvement in the life of the institution. Bring students and faculty into more frequent and productive interaction. **Double the number of small classes for undergraduates.**
- ◆ Facilitate interaction between faculty and undergraduates. **Attain a faculty-to-student ratio of 1-to-16.**
- ◆ Our undergraduate students should be among the best in the nation. **Have the majority of undergraduates who apply for graduate study accepted at leading academic institutions.**
- ◆ Teaching of undergraduates should occur by tenured or tenure-track faculty members. **Seventy-five percent of lower division courses should be taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty.**

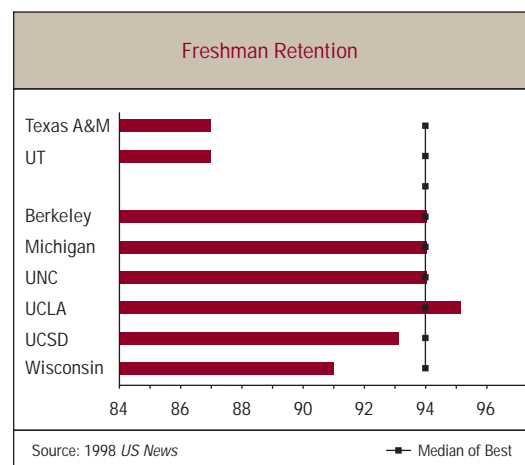


Table 6

- ◆ All students should have readily available opportunities for academic enrichment experiences appropriate to their educational goals. **Develop a systematic approach and infrastructure to facilitate opportunities for all students to have enrichment experiences, such as expanded honors courses, study-abroad experiences, interdisciplinary curricula, supplemental instruction, internships, cooperative education, and research opportunities.**
- ◆ Continually evaluate and adjust academic offerings and curricula to keep them relevant and strong. **Have the majority of companies that recruit at Texas A&M University rate Aggies as among their best hires.**

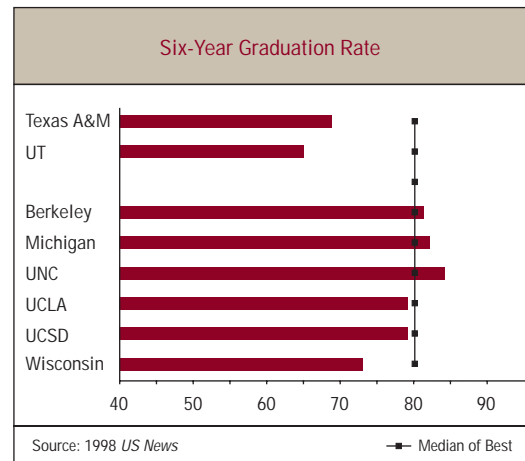


Table 7

**PRECEPT: ESTABLISH HONORS TRACKS**

Large numbers of exceptionally qualified students choose to study here and those students’ needs must be addressed. Honors tracks will provide that experience. These students help attract and retain top faculty and contribute to the experience of all students. Texas A&M University also has a rich history of attracting first-generation college students who may have received less preparation for college and require an especially supportive environment. Texas A&M University is also fully committed to meeting their needs for educational access.

*Establish an honors house that brings together faculty and students to stimulate intellectual exchange and informal communications.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**GOAL :**

- ◆ Honors tracks will make a significant contribution to the academic environment of Texas A&M University. **Substantially enrich the honors programs and quadruple the number of undergraduate students involved in them.**

**PRECEPT: MAINTAIN A RESIDENTIAL CAMPUS**

A high quality of life for students is a clear demonstration of our commitment to educational opportunity. It has been suggested that residential campuses will be obsolete in 20 years. Texas A&M University embraces the role distance education will play in some components of the university, particularly in graduate education. However, the university also recognizes the importance of a residential experience to undergraduate student development and is committed to maintaining a strong residential core. Many factors impact the quality of student life. An excellent library, state-of-the-art information technology, appropriate laboratories and classrooms all affect the academic dimension of student life. Widespread and varied

leadership and social opportunities for students round out their educational experience. One of the chief determinants of the quality of student life is the degree of interaction between faculty and students. Communion of faculty and students is the core of learning. Towards that end, Texas A&M University will increase the quality, frequency, and regularity of student-faculty interaction.

*The residential, learner-centered nature of the campus should not be sacrificed simply to integrate technology into the curriculum or delivery systems. Distance learning, web-based courses and similar alternatives should be developed in the context of how they enrich and provide opportunities unavailable in the regular classroom environment rather than be viewed as completely alternative delivery systems.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Heighten our status as a powerful residential learning center and provide a high quality of student life - a place where undergraduate and graduate students immerse themselves in all forms of educational opportunity and have frequent interaction with faculty. **Increase the faculty-student ratio to enhance quality and quantity of interaction.**
- ◆ Maintain and enhance the quality of Texas A&M University’s residential campus by improving and expanding resident facilities. **Establish specialized dormitories for 25 percent of the undergraduate population.**

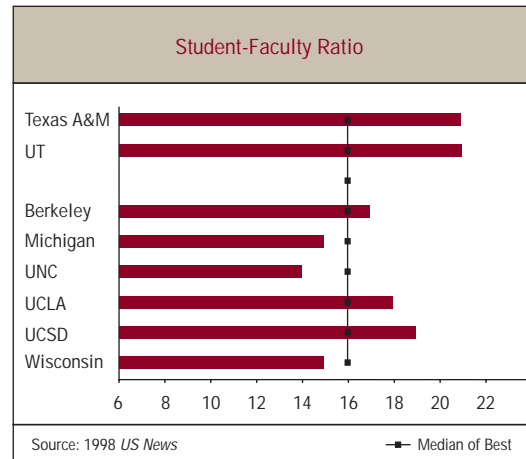


Table 8

**PRECEPT: VALUE AND ENHANCE STRONGEST AND BEST VALUES OF AGGIE SPIRIT**

Texas A&M University has a rich history that marks it as distinctive and that binds students and graduates to it. Many values are powerfully important and define special academic traits of Texas A&M University. We cannot talk about the undergraduate experience of students and the quality of the educational opportunity we offer without reference to the value system that helps define the experience of learning here. Values that provide a basis for “Aggie Spirit” include mutual respect, honesty, integrity, and morality; hard work and dedication; loyalty, patriotism, and commitment to family; leadership and personal effectiveness; commitment to academic excellence and accomplishments; inclusiveness and equal opportu-

nities; commitment to community and civic involvement; commitment to Texas A&M University and other Aggies; optimism and faith in the future; and a sense of the value of history and tradition. We must build on the distinctiveness and character that our long-term commitment to the whole student gives us.

*Perhaps the most uniquely defining characteristic of Texas A&M University, the quintessential difference between Texas A&M University and other great public institutions, is the role of traditions in perpetuating Aggie Spirit.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

## G O A L S :

- ◆ Use the strength of Texas A&M University's student enrichment and traditions to facilitate students' learning both in and out of the classroom. **Provide high-quality service and developmental opportunities while fostering an inclusive campus community in support of the university's educational mission.**
- ◆ Promote Aggie Spirit through a focus on the underlying, basic human values which Aggie Spirit reflects. **Attain the highest rate of student participation in volunteer service activities in a national research university.**
- ◆ Encourage the involvement of all students in co-curricular activity. **Have 100 percent student involvement in "the other education."**
- ◆ Support efforts to grow and enhance the quality of the character, leadership and citizenship development offered by the Corps of Cadets, the Memorial Student Center, Student Government and other broad-based student organizations. **Grow the Corps of Cadets to no less than 2,600. Achieve national recognition for the leadership programs of all major student organizations.**
- ◆ Enhance Texas A&M University's culture of leadership and involvement by developing a comprehensive leadership facility and an innovative student leadership institute. This facility would lend itself to more interaction among students and faculty. **Build a Student Leadership Center.**

## INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS AND THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY MISSION

Intercollegiate athletics are an important part of Texas A&M University's history, and they can and should play an overwhelmingly positive role in the university's future destiny. Intercollegiate athletics have a broad and unique opportunity to add to the diversity of Texas A&M University while increasing unity on campus. Athletics can be a focal point for encouraging former students to be actively involved in the institution. The university can be assisted by athletics in achieving a more positive national prominence. Athletics can play a major role in the spirit of the university while setting enviable standards for educational and character development. A number of our best peer institutions have demonstrated the reality that, properly managed with an appropriate set of core values and beliefs, there is no dichotomy between excellence in academics and athletics. Texas A&M University intends to be in that group of admired and respected institutions, and we advocate being held to those high standards.

Athletic Department  
Vision for 2020

## FORMAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IN THE CORPS OF CADETS

We envision building on the Corps' strong legacy of producing leaders by developing a more formal, intensive program of leadership training and character development. Upon successful completion, each Cadet would receive a credential having significant academic worth and practical value in the market place. Relevant training situations will include mental and physical challenges, ethical dilemmas, and issues of humanitarian concern, among others.

The Corps of Cadets  
Vision for 2020

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS ABOUT  
CREATIVE THINKING:

Liberal arts teaches the fundamental and transferable life skills required for the many adaptations to career and life changes that will be necessary in the 21st century. Students who have mastered these skills will be able to think critically and creatively, to analyze and synthesize ideas in order to make decisions and solve problems, and to communicate effectively through writing and speaking. These are aspirations we hold for all students of Texas A&M University, and they constitute the fundamental argument for strengthening and expanding the liberal and fine arts programs.

The College of Liberal Arts,  
Vision for 2020

# Build the Letters, Arts, and Sciences Core

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Texas A&M University has historically placed less emphasis on the letters and arts. While many of our basic science disciplines are nationally acclaimed, the best public universities have stronger and deeper liberal arts programs and a fuller range of such programs with a significantly higher institutional commitment. Such strengthening is necessary for the true, enduring education of our graduates and the enrichment of their lives. It is abundantly clear that we will never be seen as a premier institution nationally without a far stronger letters, arts, and sciences program.

## PRECEPT: STRENGTHEN THE LETTERS, ARTS, AND SCIENCES

All the great universities exhibit strength in the core arts and sciences programs. Strong arts and sciences programs provide a foundation for undergraduate students, no matter their major or their future educational or career plans. Texas A&M University has the nucleus of an outstanding arts and sciences complex, particularly in the sciences. This nucleus must expand so that all undergraduate students learn to think critically and build their intellectual, professional, and civic lives on a broad and deep understanding of our world. The Vision 2020 process examined multiple models to achieve this precept, including dramatically different organizational constructs. While these may merit further review and serious

consideration, at a minimum the model for 2020 should be one that includes the development of focused excellence at the Ph.D. level in arts and sciences, especially in the humanities. Achieving this will require a superb letters, arts and sciences faculty at the center of Texas A&M University and an expansion of arts and sciences programs.

*Letters, Arts, and Sciences teach the fundamental and transferable life skills required for the many adaptations to career and life changes that will be necessary in the 21st Century. Students who have mastered these skills will be able to think critically and creatively, to analyze and synthesize ideas in order to make decisions and solve problems, and to communicate effectively through writing and speaking. They will produce a student body more dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and scholarship, with the flexibility and adaptability to become community and national leaders and better able to assume places in the most prestigious graduate and professional schools in the country.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Generate a range of programs that compares favorably with the nation’s best public universities.

**Establish doctoral-level faculties in appropriate arts, humanities and social sciences disciplines.**

- ◆ Create an academic beacon of great intellectual value for innovative learning and teaching.

**Establish an Honors College.**

- ◆ Provide opportunity for breadth in undergraduate study. **Develop a**

**campus-wide undergraduate interdisciplinary-studies degree with a strong arts and sciences core.**

	1998 Ph.D. Program Rankings					
	Economics	English	History	Political Science	Psychology	Sociology
Texas A&M	34	62	NR	34	80	51
UT	25	20	19	25	18	13
Berkeley	4	1	1	2	2	2
Michigan	12	14	6	2	3	4
UNC	29	17	14	10	18	4
UCLA	12	11	6	10	6	6
UC San Diego	14	40	30	10	12	36
Wisconsin	10	17	NR	14	12	1

Source: *US News*  
NR: Not Ranked

Table 9

**PRECEPT: ESTABLISH A FINE ARTS PROGRAM**

Texas A&M University needs visual and performing arts programs, freshly conceived and fitted to the university’s distinctive competencies. Fine arts programs will broaden the experience of all students, faculty, and staff. They will prove to be an invaluable source of advancement that demand and create new forms of technology and communication, and breed higher levels of creative thought and action in many disciplines.

*Develop a phased plan for instituting degree programs in the visual and performing arts that are consistent with the needs of the state and the strengths of Texas A&M University.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L :**

- ◆ Establish a fine arts program at Texas A&M University. **Create a fine arts offering, distinctive to Texas A&M University and the fine arts disciplines, that occupies a national leadership role.**

**PRECEPT: INFUSE FINE ARTS INTO THE LIFE OF THE UNIVERSITY**

The desire and need to express ourselves and our understanding of our world creatively through visual and performing arts is an intensely human trait. While satisfying to the creator, the products of such creativity can also be enriching, challenging, and satisfying for those who observe them. Experiencing the thrill of hearing an exquisitely felt and performed musical piece, the challenge of seeing a work of visual art that asks us to look at the world in an unaccustomed way, or the insight into human behavior and motivations found in a stage performance—these experiences made possible by a vibrant arts community contribute immeasurably to our quality of life and enrich our humanity. A fine arts program at the university will be important far beyond its impact on those who enroll in its classes. The fine arts program will provide the nucleus for an arts community that will enrich the life of the university and the larger community. The university should actively support the integration of visual and performing arts into the life of the university.

*Increase cultural and entertainment opportunities and access to the campus.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L :**

- ◆ Expand co-curricular arts experiences available to students. **Five nights out of seven students have choices for fine arts experiences and cultural activities.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT EDUCATION FOR LIFE:

Character skills are the basic arts of democracy. I believe this university's distinctiveness can be a central role in cultivating character and inculcating self-discipline and empathy. These "liberal" arts enable and empower true commitment to civic and moral values. I think Distinguished Professor Howard Kaplan was right yesterday when he said there is no university of prominence that does not have a strong arts and sciences program, and there is no other program in the university that would not benefit from a strong arts and sciences program.

Jon Hagler, Vision for 2020  
June 5, 1998



# Build on the Tradition of Professional Education

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Undergraduate education in all areas, including professional education, has been our traditional strength at Texas A&M University. At the heart of Vision 2020 is a belief that we will not only sustain but also strengthen our professional programs at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels. We expect that these programs will be the first (as some already are) to represent Texas A&M University solidly and firmly in the top ten nationally. Our professional programs must also recognize the necessity to prepare their graduates more broadly for entry into a complex, changing, and unpredictable world.

## PRECEPT: ENHANCE EXCELLENCE IN UNDERGRADUATE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Excellence in professional education as well as in the core arts and sciences disciplines mark the best research universities in America. The excellence is interdependent. Our history includes a strong and longstanding commitment to undergraduate professional education.

These programs should add to our distinctiveness and be capitalized on as the arts and sciences programs evolve in quality. Our engineering undergraduate programs are ranked fourth by *U.S. News & World Report*. Additional examples of particularly strong professional programs at the undergraduate level include agriculture, which is ranked second nationally; architecture and landscape architecture, ranked seventh and second nationally; and business, ranked tenth nationally. These rankings are compiled from the *Gourman Report*, and include both public and private universities. While not as widely recognized as either

U.S. *News* or National Research Council rankings, they evaluate a more comprehensive range of programs. We will continue to enhance these and other already strong undergraduate professional disciplines.

*The current measures of excellence for universities are focused on breadth and depth of graduate and professional programs. These standards include both educational and research components. Similar indicators of excellence will continue into the 21st century.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L**

- ◆ Increase awareness of existing and improving quality of professional programs. **Achieve top-ten standing, by appropriate evaluating organizations, for all undergraduate professional programs.**

**PRECEPT: CONTINUE TO BUILD GRADUATE PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS**

While undergraduate professional education has existed at Texas A&M University since its inception, widespread professional education at the graduate level is a more recent development. Many of our graduate professional programs are good, but others need attention to create the pervasive quality in professional education desired.

**G O A L**

- ◆ Increase awareness of existing and improving quality of professional programs. **Achieve top-ten standing, by appropriate evaluating organizations, for all graduate professional programs.**

1999 Rankings of Graduate Professional Programs							
	MBA	Engineering	Architecture ('97)	Law	Public Affairs ('98)	Education	Vet Med ('97)
Texas A&M	36	14	26		52	45	6
UT	18	10	10	15	5	11	
Berkeley	14	5	6	10	5	5	
Michigan	7	3	11	8	8	8	
UNC	16			21	14	22	
UCLA	10	20	13	16	26	4	
UC San Diego		20					
Wisconsin	36	12		29	11	9	9

Source: *US News*

Table 10

**PRECEPT: CREATE A UNIVERSITY WITHIN A UNIVERSITY**

We are proud of our heritage as a Texas institution. What we are and what lies ahead are colored by our public nature. In a rapidly changing educational environment, however, agility and flexibility may become more important. Some programs, notably specialized graduate offerings, need to be tested in a setting that allows flexibility and promotes innovation. The concept of a private university within our public university, a university that can respond

quickly to offer special study opportunities for distance education, professional post-baccalaureate learning, extension work, and certification programs would serve us well. The university within a university would be a place where faculty could implement new forms of educational opportunity to serve Texas business and industry at both the corporate and individual level.

*Texas A&M University will also operate a “university” funded totally from non-state sources, primarily tuition and fees, offered through multiple and diverse educational modes (e.g., technology-based media) to non-traditional, off-campus students throughout Texas, the United States, and internationally.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L :**

- ◆ Become a respected leader in educational innovation. Establish an agile, private component of Texas A&M University to respond to specialized education needs. **Create an operational 501(c)3 corporation that generates revenues from specialized educational services and provides a means for extended utilization of faculty skill and insight.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS ABOUT  
INFORMED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:

Many challenges and opportunities anticipated by the college will be brought by changes in the built-environment professions. Practitioners of these professions will operate in a truly global economy. Location of projects will no longer influence selection of the project planning or design-build firms; successful practitioners will be effective in the global range of physical environments, customs, and cultures. Practitioners will completely renew their knowledge base regularly.

The College of Architecture,  
Vision for 2020

# Diversify and Globalize the A&M Community

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The time has passed when the isolation of the Texas A&M University campus served a compelling utilitarian function. Information, communication, and travel technology have produced a highly connected global society. The ability to survive, much less succeed, is increasingly linked to the development of a more pluralistic, diverse, and globally aware populace. It is essential that the faculty, students, and larger campus community embrace this more cosmopolitan environment. The university's traditional core values will give us guidance and distinctiveness, while preparing us to interact with all people of the globe. Texas A&M University must attract and nurture a more ethnically, culturally, and geographically diverse faculty, staff, and student body.

## PRECEPT: LEAD IN DIVERSITY

Texas is one of the most diverse states in the union and its diversity is increasing. Texas A&M University must be a leader in promoting diversity in its student body, faculty, staff, and intellectual viewpoints. Affording opportunity to all racial and ethnic groups is critical to the future of Texas. Our vision of diversity as a wellspring of academic energy goes beyond race and ethnicity to all manner of thought and action. An educated person must appreciate and interact with people of all backgrounds and engage ideas that challenge his or her views.

Two decidedly different, but equally important forces require diversity. The need for the intellectual vitality that diversity produces is real. Historically, the vitality produced by different views of the world has produced new knowledge and insight. Insight that allows full appreciation of cultural differences grows in a diverse environment.

Additionally, there are the pragmatic forces of the market economy. We have become a knowledge-intensive society with an economy dominated by service industries, requiring an educated work force capable of functioning in a global society. It is imperative that Texas educate citizens of all backgrounds to be the work force of the future. Failure to do so points to negative social and economic consequences for the state.

*Texas A&M University must reflect the demographic distribution of our state and provide leadership development opportunities for all students. Through such an achievement Texas A&M University will contribute in significant ways to building a leadership base that is representative of the state.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**GOALS :**

- ◆ Recruitment activities must focus on students and their parents in targeted school districts and community colleges through strategically located outreach centers and through utilizing students and faculty of diverse backgrounds in recruiting activities. Outreach activities should involve students and their parents as early as elementary school. Retention activities include summer bridging programs and increasing opportunities for students to develop the academic and social connections that facilitate academic success and involvement in the life of the institution. **Achieve student diversity that reflects college-bound Texas high school graduates through appropriate recruitment and retention activities.**

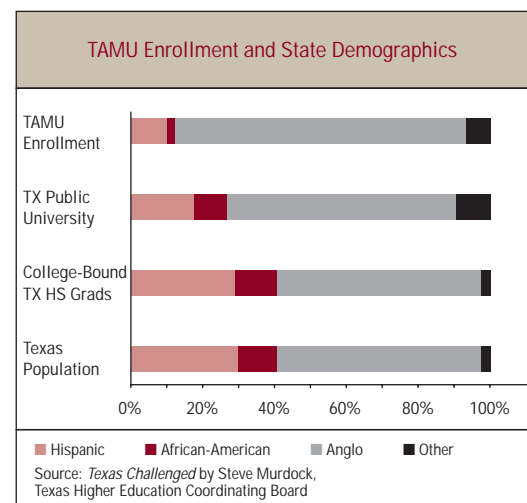


Table 11

- ◆ Create an environment that respects and nurtures all members of the student, faculty, and staff community. **Reduce to zero the number of students, faculty, or staff who leave because of a perception of a less-than-welcoming environment.**
- ◆ Increase the geographic diversity represented in the faculty, students, and staff. **Target areas of the state, country, and world from which to recruit our populations of faculty, students, and staff.**
- ◆ Losing outstanding young minority students to out-of-state educational institutions, in all likelihood, means losing them as future leaders of the state. **Recruit outstanding minority students and provide the educational opportunities and leadership development experiences that will prepare them as future leaders for Texas.**

## PRECEPT: ACHIEVE GLOBAL AWARENESS AND EXPERIENCE FOR ALL STUDENTS

Telecommunications and transportation have created a highly integrated global society in which economic, social, and political factors are inextricably connected. Our students must be prepared to succeed in this highly sophisticated environment. The university must consider the world as source and marketplace for its ideas. We must bring the world to our students and faculty, and our students and faculty to the world. Involvement in the world sharpens who we are and helps define and fulfill our mission. Our reach into the larger world and the reach of the larger world into Texas A&M University will affect both the real and perceived quality of the university. Global perspectives must be infused into all curricula. Programs for students and faculty that support travel, international study, research, cooperative agreements, internships, extension, outreach, and exchanges will enhance our position as an excellent university. Language study should be required in all disciplines. The best universities in America are world universities. They serve the citizens of their respective states, but they also serve a world population. Such perspectives are central to a comprehensive research institution, essential in the best universities.

*To position our students to live and compete in a global society, Texas A&M University must produce graduates who are not only academically prepared, but who have the capacity to understand other cultures and to live and work outside their own cultural framework. Texas A&M University must provide opportunities for its students to have international experiences and to gain understanding of globalization issues throughout their undergraduate program.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

### GOALS:

- ◆ Work to reduce parochialism and develop a campus culture and attitude that make international education a truly integrated part of the university's academic programs and campus life. Provide more opportunities to participate in international educational experiences. **Have 100 percent access to international education experience for all students.**
- ◆ Develop and offer international distance education programs, including master's degree, professional development and continuing education. **Have 20 percent international enrollment in distance education master's degrees, professional, and continuing education programs.**
- ◆ Continue to build an Aggie network of former students worldwide to recruit top international students and build on the university's disciplinary strengths through research and exchange programs to

address global issues. **Triple the number of former students involved in expanding the university's research and exchange programs worldwide.**

- ◆ Insure that our students are prepared to compete successfully in a global environment. **Provide incentives to ensure that a global perspective is infused into all courses.**

## PRECEPT: ENCOURAGE AN INSTITUTIONAL GLOBAL NETWORK

Global awareness through international education is important. Of equal importance are the connections and relationships between faculty members and administrators at Texas A&M University and their counterparts at institutions in other countries.

### GOALS:

- ◆ Support the establishment of long-lasting and mutually beneficial relations with foreign institutions. **Establish agreements with strategically important institutions worldwide that support Texas A&M University's research and educational objectives.**
- ◆ All interested faculty and students should be provided with opportunities and support for international experiences. **Create an international endowment for funding chairs and professorships, a wide array of international opportunities (including study abroad programs and exchanges, and internships) and development of programs that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries.**
- ◆ A welcoming environment is essential to establishing relationships with international students, scholars, and institutions. **Work with the campus and local communities to make Texas A&M University and the Brazos Valley places that embrace international scholars, students, and visitors.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT DIVERSITY:

The pluralism of our nation in terms of ethnic heritage and economic status will continue to challenge the skills of educators and other professionals to establish and maintain high-quality, rigorous schooling/educational experiences. Linguistic diversity and rapidly changing knowledge bases coupled with the pervasive effects of generational poverty on children and families create a context in which our College of Education Community must focus on the preservation and enhancement of democracy.

The College of Education,  
Vision for 2020

# Increase Access to Knowledge Resources

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Despite recent progress, the intellectual assets represented by Texas A&M University library holdings are underdeveloped and must be increased. Coincidentally, we must recognize that the technology related to the storage, access, and distribution of knowledge resources has changed as much in the last decade as in the 550 years since the invention of movable type. Texas A&M University must invest rapidly, but wisely, to gain parity with its academic peers. It must lead, not just grow, in forcefully developing new methods and measures of success in this rapidly changing arena. The wedding of communications and computer technology will, no doubt, yield the most formidable change in academe by 2020. Texas A&M University must lead the adaptation.

## **PRECEPT: PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES**

The library and its allied information technologies are key components of the future of Texas A&M University. Our university is now better than its library. We must view this as an aberration. The very best universities and their libraries are of equal excellence. Our goal is to make our library as good as our university. That will mean a critical assessment of the kinds of resources, both traditional and electronic, that are required to create the symbiotic relationship between resources and discovery that mark the best universities of the world. It will also mean significant outlays of capital. Further, the processes by which scholars communicate and research activity is reviewed, archived, and disseminated are changing. Texas A&M University should be among the leaders in redefining those processes.

*Great universities have great libraries. For Texas A&M University to be rightfully recognized as one of the premier institutions in the world, it must be able to ensure that its students and faculty are without peer in their ability to access information in the 21st Century.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Achieve a research library that is outstanding in its support for learning and scholarship. **Library ranked within the top 20 public and private libraries on Membership Index 2019-2020 of the Association of Research Libraries.**
- ◆ Lead the development of alternative modes of scholarly communication and measurement of quality. **In promotion and tenure process, electronically disseminated scholarship should be valued the same as traditionally disseminated scholarship.**
- ◆ Provide significant, sustained investment over time for library development. **Have library expenditures per student equivalent to the best institutions.**
- ◆ Continue working to make all libraries in the System a seamless unit. **Provide all students at System schools access to all intellectual resources within the System.**

1999 ARL Index Ranking	
Texas A&M	36th
UT	11th
Berkeley	5th
Michigan	9th
UNC	17th
UCLA	3rd
UC San Diego	43rd
Wisconsin	16th

Source: Association of Research Libraries  
Median of Best: 12.5

Table 12

**PRECEPT: LEAD IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The role of information technology becomes more important to faculty, students, staff, and administrators as both knowledge and information continue to multiply. The best universities will always be at the forefront of advances in information technology. Premier institutions will lead the ways in which information is transferred and used. Texas A&M University will be a leader in the application and development of information technology that improves on-site and off-site instructional approaches, provides access to intellectual resources, increases the delivery of services to students and faculty, and facilitates excellence in all facets of institutional life.

*Information technologies are increasingly important to all parts of the university. The aspirations of Vision 2020 cannot be realized without a high-quality information technology infrastructure. Not too many years ago, computing and computer networking were of importance primarily to the sciences, engineering, and the business operations, but today all segments of the university depend on desktop computing, the computer network infrastructure, and strategic administrative systems. They will continue to do so.*

## TASK FORCE IDEA

## GOALS:

- ◆ Maintain computing, telecommunication, and electronic connect- edness that enables our faculty, students, and administrators to process, synthesize, and refine information into knowledge and provide state-of-the-art administrative services. **Have state-of-the-art information and computing systems available to students, faculty, and administrators.**
- ◆ Provide appropriate computer technology to all classrooms, laboratories, and residence halls. **Have electronically-assisted instruction used in all courses on campus to increase the frequency and quality of faculty-student interaction.**
- ◆ Establish a Texas A&M University Digital Library as a premier facil- ity to scan, digitize, access, and store image data for the university community. **Have the Digital Library recognized as a national leader.**
- ◆ Provide facilities that tie into system-wide distance learning efforts and provide convenient locations for pooling expensive digital communication technologies for academic studies, continuing education, and production requirements of the university. **Create a cost-effective infrastructure for electronic communication that enhances student-faculty interaction.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT TECHNOLOGY:

The 21st Century will be one of technology, with continued dependence on the capabilities of engineers, computer scientists, and technologists. Texas universities will place more emphasis on these areas, and the flagships will further develop world-class programs. The Look College of Engineering, already highly ranked and one of the largest, will meet the challenge and be recognized as a national and international leader in engineering. It will include faculty, staff, and students of the highest quality, supported by excellent facilities and powerful outreach to the rest of the university and beyond.

The Look College of Engineering,  
Vision for 2020

# Enrich Our Campus

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The physical environment of our campus should be conducive to scholarly work and study. Texas A&M University has an efficient and well-maintained campus. However, during our rapid growth over the past four decades, the physical unity of the campus has been diminished by the presence of Wellborn Road and the railroad tracks. Innovative planning and bold leadership are needed to redress this division for reasons of safety and convenience as well as aesthetics. West Campus has not maintained the human scale that exists on the Main Campus. Through judicious planning, we need to attain there the same pedestrian-friendly scale and green space that gives the Main Campus its character. The use of large areas for surface parking needs to be reconsidered so that the unity of the campus is maintained as new building occurs to accommodate growth. As more of the university's current land holdings are consumed by non-agricultural uses, acquisition of land on or near the Riverside Campus for agricultural development should be a high priority.

## PRECEPT: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

Our facilities and the support they provide for people to do their best work are essential to our continued evolution as a university. The laboratories, classrooms, libraries, and lecture halls are all important in providing the environment needed for the highest and best learning and inquiry. In addition, the campus setting itself should promote interaction and be a place of reflection and inspiration. It should provide meeting places and present the image of an organization dedicated to quality in all it undertakes. Movement of students, faculty, and staff around the campus should be convenient. Guests should feel welcome. Former students should be reminded of their days on campus. Users should find efficiency in the organization of facilities. These characteristics mark the very best institutions of higher learning.

*Provide new residence halls equipped for the technological climate of the 21st century. Also, provide for innovative transportation between main and west campus.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### G O A L S :

- ◆ Create a culture that values the aesthetics and functionality of the physical settings in which people work and one that appreciates the opportunity for interaction and growth that a thoughtfully planned campus supports. **Break down the distinction between east and west campus. Develop pedestrian, bike, and vehicular pathways for the safe movement of people. Maintain the pedestrian-friendly character of the campus as it grows.**
- ◆ Plan buildings and physical facilities that are recognized for their excellence. **Build structures and execute campus plans that are recognized by users and national professional architectural and planning organizations for their aesthetic and functional value.**

#### PRECEPT: VALUE THE RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE

Texas A&M University will build upon our existing strength in attending to the whole student to earn recognition as one of the best residential learning centers in the world. One facet of university life that should be available to all undergraduate students is the opportunity to reside on campus. To provide such opportunity, additional on-campus housing will be required, as will alternative living environments, such as apartment-style housing.

*Increase opportunities for all students to develop academic and social connections that facilitate academic success and involvement in the life of the institution. Possibilities include on-campus housing for all freshmen who request it, living-learning communities, student groups with coordinated courses and class schedules . . . and summer bridging programs.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### G O A L :

- ◆ Living on campus can assist in the social integration that is a major factor in university success. It can also help establish relationships that last a lifetime. **One hundred percent of all undergraduates have the opportunity to live on campus at some point in their student experience.**



THE STATE OF TEXAS

# Build Community and Metropolitan Connections

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The way that we relate to the local community, Houston, and other metropolitan areas of the state will have a powerful impact on Texas A&M University and the communities supporting and supported by the university. In addition, it is critical that the community in which we live provide opportunities for families to work and grow. Spouses need high-quality employment opportunities. Faculty and researchers need private-sector sponsorships and commercialization support. As we attract a wider range of people to Texas A&M University, the enrichment provided through our connection to a large metropolitan area becomes increasingly important. Correctly choreographed, such a connection gives us the best of both worlds.

## PRECEPT: NURTURE CONNECTIONS WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Our relationship with the community is critical to enhancing the university. The schools, industries, businesses, cultural activities, and entertainment opportunities all play a pivotal role in building a quality place to work and learn. This is a mutually reinforcing phenomenon.

*Texas A&M University aspires to identify areas of mutual interest and focus efforts on even greater university-community cooperation in critical areas.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Collaborate in attracting new businesses, expanding existing businesses and providing employment opportunities. **Collaborate on certain capital and other projects required to achieve strategic academic and community goals.**
- ◆ Work with colleges in the local area to build stronger, more robust relationships. **Strengthen partnership with Blinn College for the benefit of all citizens of the Bryan-College Station area.**

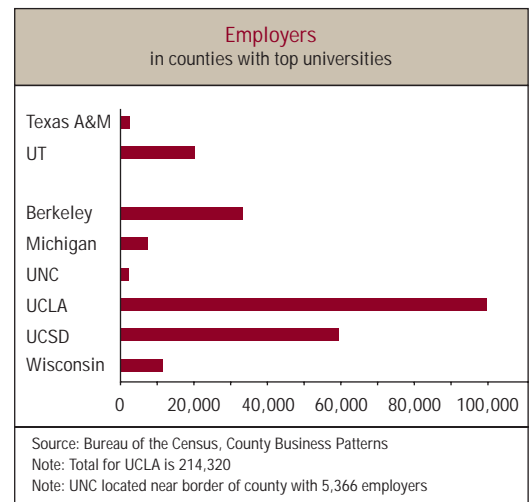


Table 13

**PRECEPT: CREATE AND ENHANCE METROPOLITAN CONNECTIONS**

Most universities started out as islands, located away from the city and its distractions. This is especially true of land grant institutions developed in the United States at the end of the 19th century. While many fine university towns were created, changing forces in the world tend to support the idea that great universities are enhanced by close relationships with, and physical proximity to, large metropolitan centers. Connections to metropolitan areas affect such disparate concerns as our desire to be a diverse institution, employment for faculty spouses, and cultural opportunities. While distance is a limiting factor in our association with a major metropolitan area, the inexorable growth of Houston to the northwest and the Bryan-College Station area to the southeast indicate that eventually the connection will be completed. The best universities in the 21st century will have strong connections to major metropolitan areas.

*Establish an enhanced presence in the urban areas of the state with primary emphasis in greater Houston.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**G O A L :**

- ◆ Identify common interests between the community, the university, and nearby metropolitan areas through ongoing relationships among the leaders. Expedite and effect positive growth and development in the Houston-Bryan-College Station corridor. **Establish significant transportation, cultural, and economic linkages between Houston and other metropolitan areas and the Bryan-College Station area.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT CONNECTIONS:

A significant problem of mutual community and college interest lies in the fact that the A&M College of Texas is located nearly 100 miles from a metropolitan area and that transportation to and from large cities is relatively difficult. The construction of a rapid transit highway between College Station and Houston and increased public transportation facilities would virtually eliminate the relative isolation and would bring great benefits to the A&M College and the community. The difficulties involved in gaining this transportation advantage are recognized, but the potential impact is so great as to invite the maximum attention of the A&M College, its administration and board of directors, and the civic leaders of Bryan and College Station.

A Report on Faculty, Staff, and  
Student Aspirations  
The A&M College of Texas, 1962

# Demand Enlightened Governance and Leadership

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Great universities have a clearly articulated vision, a stimulating intellectual environment populated by great faculty and students, and resources adequate to support quality offerings. One other characteristic often contributes to greatness: enlightened leadership. Clear, cooperative relationships between the university and the system must be the norm. To achieve our aspirations, strong, enlightened, stable, and forward-thinking leadership focused on academic quality is essential. We have made progress, but we must guard it zealously. Regents must continue to take the policy high ground. The System administration must acknowledge and nurture Texas A&M University's role as a comprehensive research university with national peers. The university administration must be steadfast in its demand for quality in every decision. And finally, the university administration must make decisions through a process characterized by openness and appropriate faculty and staff participation. Our responsibility to the System as its flagship must be evidenced in all decision-making. Academic progress is fragile. Enlightened, shared governance and leadership are elemental to its achievement.

## PRECEPT: LEAD WITH COURAGE AND VISION

For Texas A&M University to realize its aspirations it must have excellent leadership. Our regents must be as good as any in the United States at any public university. Our chancellor and president must meet the same standard. In every corner of the organization the deans, department heads, faculty, and staff must be identified for their leadership capability, which must be measured by national standards. Leaders at all levels must understand and be able to negotiate the complexities of university governance, be able to form and achieve plans, be committed to teamwork, and be focused on managerial as well as academic excellence. These qualities must be apparent in all who hold administrative appointments. Anything less will guarantee mediocrity.

*We envision bold and visionary leadership in all areas of activity and at all levels of the university. This leadership will acquire and effectively use substantial resources, both financial and human capital, to achieve (Texas A&M University's) strategic goals.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### G O A L S :

- ◆ The regents are the front line of academic leadership for Texas A&M University. **The selection process for regents should be seen as the most thoughtful in the nation.**
- ◆ The president, the provost, the deans and department heads should be identified through search and recruitment processes noted for their intensity and rigor. **All recruiting should be targeted to academic excellence.**
- ◆ There must be continued recognition of the importance of shared university governance as a reflection of the mutual commitment and mutual respect among the members of the university community that is characteristic of all great universities. Governance by individuals in administrative posts and in the faculty senate should be thoughtful, forward-looking, and oriented towards producing long-range, high-quality results. **Encourage and reward faculty participation in campus governance.**

#### PRECEPT: ENCOURAGE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT OF STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF AND PROMOTE INFORMED RISK-TAKING

People identify with the entrepreneurial spirit of Texas A&M University students and graduates. Many Aggies seek to make their own way, to start their own businesses. This spirit—which pushes the edge of thought and action and sees possibilities and opportunities where others may not—needs to be present in the faculty, staff, and students of Texas A&M University in 2020. Faculty, staff, and students should be encouraged to be entrepreneurial in every aspect of university life, to be bold in seeking opportunities that benefit the life of the university, its citizens, and ultimately the citizens of the state and beyond. This entrepreneurial spirit and the positive risk-taking that it implies will mark Texas A&M University as distinct from our peers.

*Leaders at all levels and in all areas of university operation are willing to take risks, are visionary, are proactive, are flexible, are willing to delegate authority, have a global orientation, and recognize and promote excellence in all activities.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Establish an incentive and reward system that acknowledges and encourages risk-taking. **Create and implement a comprehensive pay, benefits, and recognition plan for all faculty and staff at Texas A&M University that encourages informed risk-taking.**
- ◆ Encourage entrepreneurial action that leads to improvements in the university through an incentive and reward structure that recognizes entrepreneurial activity among faculty, staff, and administrators. **Establish a competitive, entrepreneurial fund equal to 10 percent of the education and general budget to support faculty/staff entrepreneurial ideas and activities.**

**PRECEPT: MAKE ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTRAL**

Texas A&M University has a history, one in which we take great pride, of developing student leaders. Texas A&M University must focus attention on producing more scholar leaders for itself and for the knowledge industry of the United States and world. We will never achieve our goal without a commitment to providing leadership for higher education at the state, national, and world level. Leadership development must be a focal point for faculty.

*Develop a culture and reward structure that recognize and promote excellence, make quality a top priority, and build the leadership that holds these values as fundamental tenets.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L :**

- ◆ Texas A&M University's name and reputation are spread in the academic world by its undergraduate alumni seeking advanced degrees and by former faculty who leave for administrative posts. **Achieve a four-fold increase in the number of graduates or former faculty of Texas A&M University who are acknowledged as academic leaders in the state and nation evidenced by appointments as comprehensive research university presidents, chancellors, provosts, deans, and department heads.**

**PRECEPT: ENHANCE ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Texas A&M University is known as an efficient organization. Many sources suggest it is lean at the top and that resources for administration are effectively distributed when compared to other universities. Increasing competition from private, for-profit universities and our changing goals mean our university must become even more effective from an administrative standpoint. Necessary bureaucratic procedures should be transparent and easy to negotiate, not an obstacle to success. People, rather than organizations, should be responsible for making decisions. We should do all that we can to create funnels of responsibility with decisions made by people at the lowest, most appropriate level that adds value. The best universities will be responsive to change, adaptable, agile, and able to provide support and assistance for the knowledge work of the institution.

*Although Texas A&M University annually seeks to improve its productivity, we must continually search for ways to be more efficient and effective.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### GOALS :

- ◆ People making informed decisions are the foundation of leadership. **Structure the university so that decisions are made by the appropriate and most knowledgeable party regardless of level.**
- ◆ Continuously assess all processes that support teaching, research, and service for efficiency, simplicity, and value added. **Maintain the lowest ratio of administrative costs to general educational costs when compared to peer institutions.**

#### PRECEPT: VALUE STAFF SUPPORT FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The thousands of staff at Texas A&M University are essential to creating educational opportunity and excellence and to achieving the multiple missions of the university. Classified and non-classified staff, custodial workers, landscape, and grounds maintenance workers, campus police, and many others play an integral role in making Texas A&M University a great place to study and live. Appropriate compensation for work performed is central to a quality workplace for staff, but it is not the only consideration. Professional respect, the opportunity to be heard, the possibility of growth and advancement, involvement in the life of the university, recognition of the importance of staff roles, and appropriate work environments all add to the quality of environment for staff, and all contribute to achieving the central missions of Texas A&M University.

*Develop a culture and reward structure that recognize and promote excellence, make quality a top priority, and build the leadership that holds these values as fundamental tenets.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### GOALS :

- ◆ Foster a work environment for staff that promotes quality, encourages resourcefulness, recognizes achievement, and provides for growth in responsibility so that excellence can be achieved at every level of the university. **Have no staff losses except for reasons that involve sound professional decision-making.**
- ◆ Have compensation, benefits, professional development packages, and a strong organizational culture to attract and retain outstanding staff. **Have continuous availability of staff development opportunity consistent with the best corporate practice.**



THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT LEADERSHIP:

Our leadership, governance, and organization vision is to operate as a learning organization by supporting continuous innovation and creativity in all programs. The ability to operate as a learning organization is a cornerstone—in addition to the cornerstones of diversity and values, information resources and globalization—to achieving our recognition among multiple constituencies as a preeminent and internationally renowned business school.

Lowry Mays College & Graduate  
School of Business, Vision for 2020

# Attain Resource Parity with the Best Public Universities

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The combination of rapid population growth, demand for government services and difficult economic times have placed a strain on the Texas treasury in recent years. A good and widely dispersed university System has provided access to a growing college-aged population. Access alone is no longer enough. Texas must have a few universities that offer opportunities equal to the best public universities, while taking complementary steps to maintain access. Competitive peer states have long recognized the economic necessity of comprehensive research universities in meeting the knowledge demands of an information society. States with the best universities are currently investing twice as much funding per student as at Texas A&M University.

Texas A&M University and the University of Texas are ideally positioned to achieve recognition as top national institutions because of the state's historical, constitutional financial commitment to them. Texas may also need additional institutions of this caliber. The institutions designated to fill this role must be acknowledged and supported in a way consistent with national competition. They must be provided the flexibility and exercise the wisdom and courage to price their offerings more in line with their value, while taking complementary steps to maintain access. Finally, they must use their historical strength to generate more private capital. Texas A&M University must attain resource parity with the best public institutions to better serve Texas.

**PRECEPT: ENHANCE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR EXCELLENCE**

*We believe higher education is vital to human advancement and that support for higher education reveals a society’s commitment to progress. An investment in education is an investment in this State’s future development and prosperity. By exploring the frontiers of knowledge, higher education produces new ideas to meet future challenges.*

**TEXAS CHARTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, 1987**

This charter, adopted by the 70th Legislature of the State of Texas, describes the importance of higher education well. As the world changes, this importance will only grow. As the 1995 Master Plan for Texas Higher Education states, “knowledge is thus replacing non-renewable physical resources as the state’s most valuable economic asset.” To compete effectively with other states it is necessary, but not sufficient, to make sure a broad fraction of the state’s population is technologically literate. It is also essential that Texas A&M University be among the best public universities in the nation. This is because top-tier universities, through their faculty, their research programs, and their education of the best and brightest students, will play a pivotal role in generating the “knowledge capital” that will become increasingly important to economic success. Enhanced public understanding and state support is crucial to performance of this role.

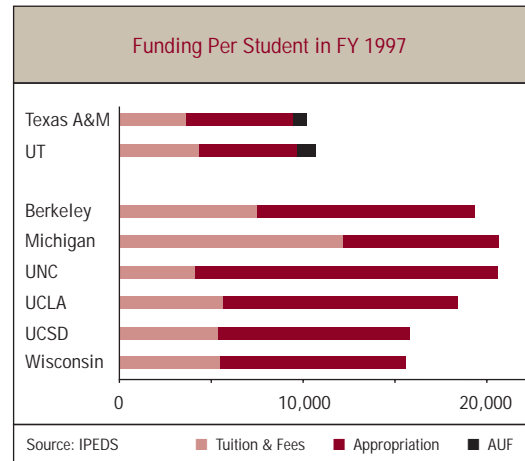


Table 14

*One extremely important source of revenue will be continued public support from the State of Texas. To deliver improved value to our constituencies, the university will need to extend and enhance its partnership with the state. Texas A&M University will need to leverage this public support by increasing non-traditional sources of funding; by charging tuition that is more consistent with the value of education that is provided to students; by developing a culture that is more conducive to the formation of public-private partnerships; and by increasing financial aid to attract a more diverse student population.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**GOALS:**

- ◆ Communicate well with our state capital and garner the support necessary for excellence. **Document the role of Texas A&M University in attracting new industries to the state.**

- ◆ Increase the public’s perception of the importance of higher education to the economic and social well-being of the state. **Have the majority of registered voters value the contribution higher education makes to the state’s economy.**

**PRECEPT: INCREASE STATE RESOURCE FLOWS**

Resource flows allow for the accomplishment of goals and objectives. The challenge for Texas A&M University in the coming decades will be to exploit to the fullest potential all resource streams. This means increased efforts to secure additional resources from the state will be required. It means crafting a better fit between the value and cost associated with educational opportunity at Texas A&M University. It means private giving will need to be increased. It means relationships with industry and response to their legitimate needs befitting our mission should be generated. It means new resource-producing services, such as distance education, corporate education, and traditional continuing education, should be mined for the value they can add to our revenue streams. True excellence will require that streams flow into rivers and that focus in resource production and resource allocation be of paramount importance. Lastly, while we need to create more resources to provide the margin of excellence that will help us continue to improve Texas A&M University, we must also carefully, regularly, and critically review how we utilize what we have. Intelligent resource allocation requires constant review of people and programs for their efficacy and contribution to the goals of the university.

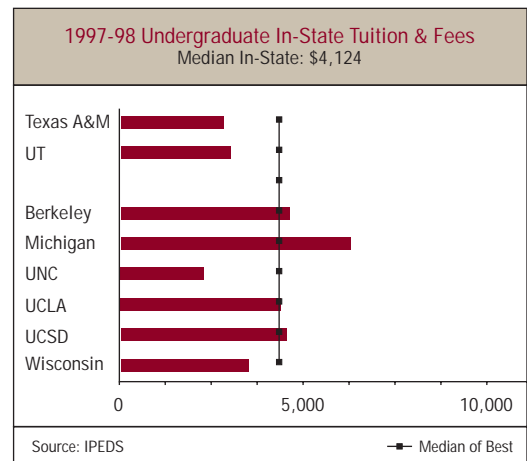


Table 15

*It is unlikely that Texas A&M University will be able to achieve top ten recognition without charging tuition that more accurately reflects the value-added nature of a Texas A&M University degree. At the same time, financial support to students must be increased so that we can achieve our goal of a diverse student body.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**GOALS :**

- ◆ Resources will not ensure quality but will provide the foundation on which quality can be built. **Have the state emphatically acknowledge and support Texas A&M University’s position as a nationally competitive flagship university, and achieve resource allocation from state sources, on a per-student basis, equal to the average for the best public flagship institutions.**

- ◆ Texas A&M University students have long enjoyed very low tuition, especially in comparison to the best public universities. **Acquire the ability to charge differential tuition based on market value. Maintain access by appropriate strengthening of financial aid.**
- ◆ Encourage the legislature to support matching endowment programs that stimulate private giving. **Establish an eminent-scholars program.**

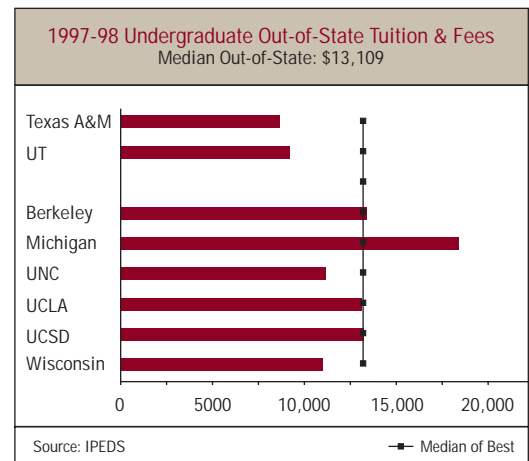


Table 16

**PRECEPT: FORGE STRATEGIC ALLIANCES**

The nature of universities is changing. Public institutions will be more influenced by private sector forces. Private institutions will be more sensitive to public sector forces. These different, but related, phenomena are producing partnerships and alliances between public and private enterprises and the university. Our history is strong in building the trust required to sustain such relationships. The university should continue to enhance partnerships and joint ventures that benefit students through resource flows, through joint research projects, through opportunities for service, through internships, and through other interactions. The differences between public and private research institutions will diminish over time. We should be national leaders and shepherd the sequence of events.

*We believe that public-private partnerships will play a critical role in helping Texas A&M University establish top-ten status. These partnerships will benefit the economy of Texas, augment the financial resources of the university, enhance the educational experience of students, enrich the research capabilities of faculty, and benefit private sector partners.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**GOALS:**

- ◆ Create a culture that ensures all avenues of collaboration are investigated and that barriers are eliminated. **Double strategic alliances with corporate, public, and non-profit partners.**
- ◆ Develop and implement alliances with other major universities inside and outside the state to facilitate outstanding research and instruction. **Quadruple the number of articulation agreements with other institutions in and out of state.**

**PRECEPT: INCREASE PRIVATE GIVING TO SUSTAIN EXCELLENCE**

Extramural funds provide increased educational opportunity for faculty and students. The momentum of the Capturing the Spirit Capital Campaign should be sustained as the university moves ahead to the 21st century. The progress of the past six years is remarkable. Every college dean recognizes the importance of extramural funds and the sharp advantages these create in hiring and retaining the best faculty, recruiting the best students, and rewarding quality in people and programs. In the next 25 years the cultivation and development of private resources for the institution must continue to be a high priority.

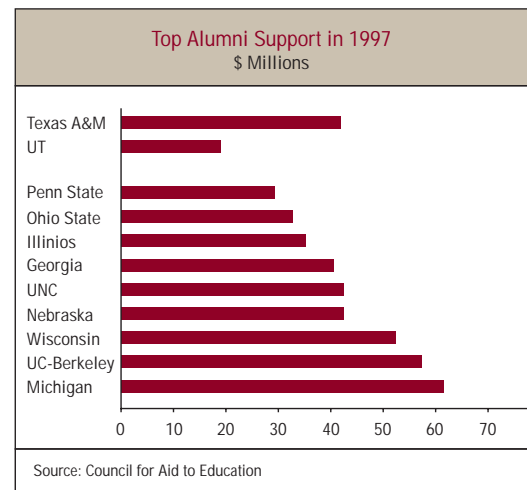


Table 17

*While State funding will always be a vital source of financing, private funds will enhance Texas A&M University’s ability to improve on its tradition of excellence by the year 2020. Texas A&M University has enjoyed an excellent record of private support. Many of its fund-raising programs are considered to be among the best in the nation. We must continue to expand and build on the tradition of excellence in private support at Texas A&M University.*

**TASK FORCE IDEA**

**GOALS :**

- ◆ Quadruple the private endowment supporting Texas A&M University. **Mount two successful capital campaigns that increase private endowment from \$700 million to \$3 billion.**
- ◆ Texas A&M University has long valued the loyal support of its graduates. **Increase financial support by alumni to 55 percent of graduates.**

THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS  
ABOUT ENHANCING RESOURCES:

The College of Science will continue to provide the foundation for education and training in the life sciences, the natural sciences, the medical sciences, the engineering sciences, the earth sciences, the information sciences, the political and human sciences, and the management sciences. Its departments' basic research and service programs will all reach world-class status, and the college's outreach efforts will make an even bigger impact on solving the problems of the state and nation.

The College of Science,  
Vision for 2020

# Meet Our Commitment to Texas

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Texas A&M University is a creation of the state, and in its origin was designed to prepare educated problem-solvers to lead the state's development. This fundamental mission, born out of the land grant heritage of service, remains today. Texas A&M University's aspiration to be among the best public universities in the country resonates with this historical mandate. The diverse population of Texas should have access to the best public education in America without having to leave the state. Texas A&M University must also reach out even more to help solve the most difficult societal problems, including those related to public education, crime, and the environment, and must honor its heritage of enhancing the economic development of all regions of the state. If it is to achieve enduring national prominence, Texas A&M University must first stay committed to Texas.

## **PRECEPT: FULFILL OUR FLAGSHIP MISSION**

Texas A&M University, by virtue of its history and its drive for excellence, is one of two flagship institutions in the State of Texas. Its broad array of programs and the fact that it is a center of research, graduate education, and professional schools define it as a flagship. Flagships, by their nature, require more resources than other institutions, but they also return more to the state and its citizens. The people of the university must understand and embrace its special role and its special responsibilities. One aspect of this responsibility is to model the most effective teaching, research, and service for our System partners and the state. Fostering increased interdependence of Texas A&M University with our partners in the agencies and other institutions in The Texas A&M University System will help us exploit our

public and private resources for the greatest benefit to the students and taxpayers of the State of Texas. Moreover, Texas A&M University should lead in working productively with all comprehensive research universities in Texas for the betterment of the state. In addition, the university must work to engender public and legislative support for the role of flagship universities.

*Resolving new socioeconomic challenges in the State of Texas and beyond will provide faculty and students with unique intellectual opportunities that will stimulate inquiry, strengthen public support, and solidify the role of the university as a flagship institution in the System and in the State of Texas.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

#### **G O A L :**

- ◆ Demonstrate the role and responsibilities of a flagship university and communicate its importance to stakeholders. **Gain a significantly enhanced level of public and legislative support for the university's flagship role as evidenced by tripling per-student appropriations.**

#### **PRECEPT: CREATE A CONTEMPORARY VIEW OF OUR SERVICE HERITAGE**

The genesis of the Morrill Act that established the land grant universities in America was the demand created by the Industrial Age for educated people to serve the agricultural and mechanical needs of a growing nation. This landmark legislation recognized that education could and should lead to the improvement of the human condition. It also resulted in recognition that learning should be for the many rather than the few. This strong notion of service still prospers at Texas A&M University. The challenge as we enter the knowledge age is to capture and enact a contemporary concept of the land grant philosophy. Our contemporary understanding of how higher education can transform society will have an impact on American life equal to or greater than that of the Morrill Act in the late 19th century. Texas A&M University should lead its peers in extending and amplifying what it means to be a land grant university in the 21st century.

*The demographic changes presently sweeping through the State of Texas will gain momentum in the first two decades of the next century. The choice is clear. This state can continue to be a place of opportunity or it can decline due to serious socioeconomic problems. The flagship universities in Texas have a unique responsibility to find solutions to these difficult issues. There is no better time than now for Texas A&M University, as a vibrant, evolving land grant institution, to assume the leadership role in addressing the challenges ahead.*

TASK FORCE IDEA

**G O A L S :**

- ◆ Establish Educational Extension and Research programs as a fundamental and high-priority land grant mission of Texas A&M University in the 21st Century. **Develop and implement an exemplary national model for this new concept.**
- ◆ Infuse the idea of learning through service into the educational experience of Texas A&M University. **Incorporate a required service experience into the undergraduate curriculum.**
- ◆ Expand the idea of service through extension and research to the most pressing social problems of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. **Make the work of the Bush School a national model for educating elected and appointed public officials, citizen board members, and students on public service and the development and implementation of public policy.**
- ◆ Establish a Center for Business and Industry in the university, which is charged with coordinating the role of the institution in economic initiatives statewide, marketing the intellectual capabilities of the university to the private sector, nurturing new spin-off and incubator companies resulting from local university/private sector collaboration, and promoting the growth of the university's research park. **Quadruple the number of spin-off industries associated with the university.**
- ◆ Open the various resources of the university to the greater public. **Establish the Texas A&M University Access Center, a large "window" to the university through which requests for assistance or partnerships would flow.**

## THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE IS ABOUT SERVICE

The next quarter of a century promises a host of new opportunities associated with dramatic, revolutionary advances in the life sciences and an expanding technological, information age. In responding to these challenges, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences seeks excellence through scholarship by building on its distinguished teaching, research, and extension/public service programs. The college embraces its goal of developing future leaders for the agricultural, food, human, and life sciences industries by fostering an intellectually challenging academic environment focused on the individual needs and interests of each student. The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences will serve Texas and the nation by providing leadership through research discoveries, furthering the transfer of knowledge within the academic and extension programs of the Land Grant University System, and supporting a network of industry partners and global linkages to advance research and learning.

The College of Agriculture and  
Life Sciences, Vision for 2020

THE NEXT STEP



## ACHIEVING THE CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

To create a particular culture, particular actions are needed. The participants in Vision 2020 have suggested changes in Texas A&M University that will aid in increasing the quality of the institution. The identified imperatives, if acted upon, will create a culture of excellence. The precepts will serve as general guidelines to create that culture. Strategies and some goals have been enumerated. The theme group reports, found in the companion document, *Vision 2020: The Groundwork*, will provide more detailed suggestions. Taken together, these provide the framework for planning at Texas A&M University over the next two decades.

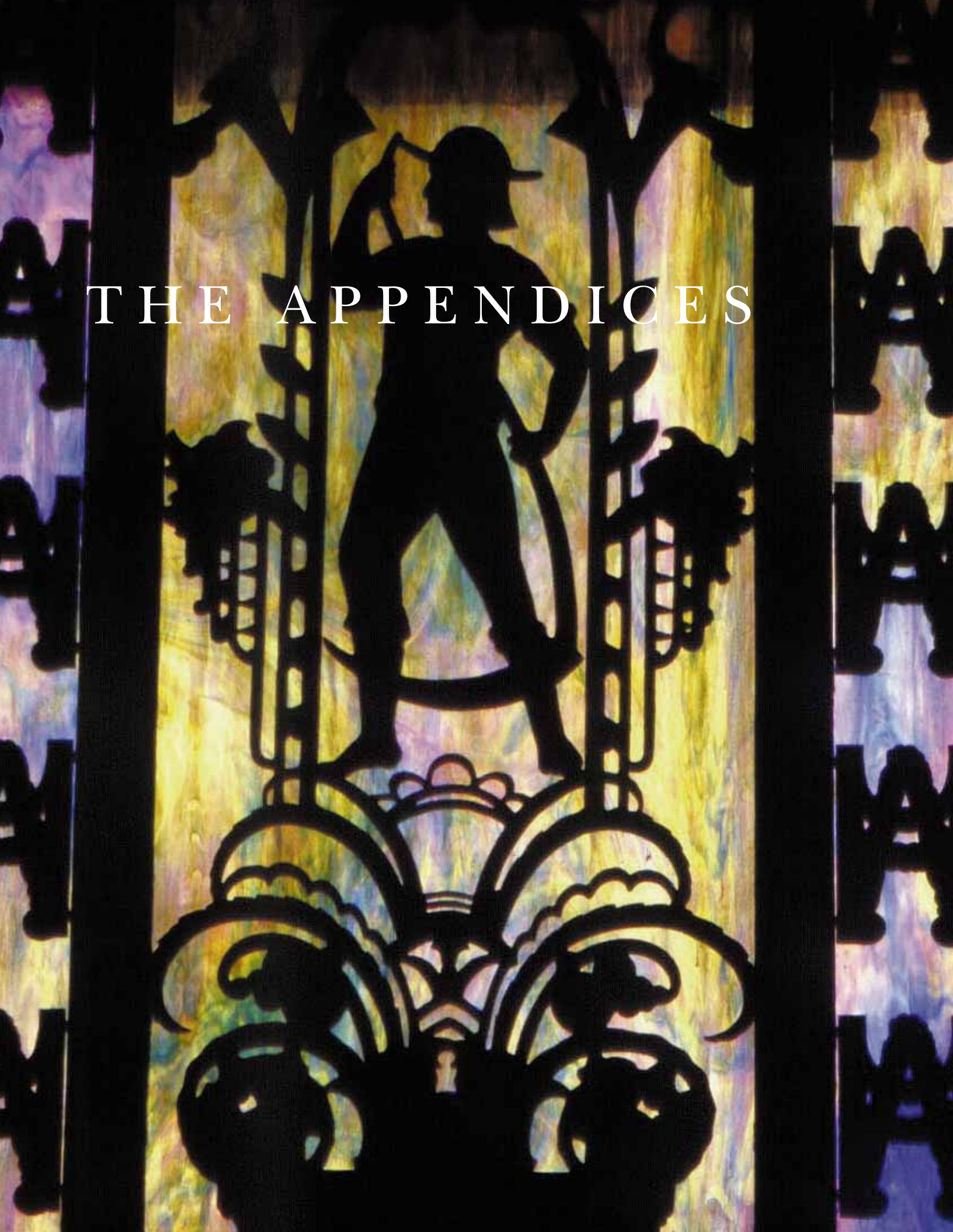
It is vital that the energy of Vision 2020 does not fade away now that we have taken the first step. A University Planning Council, a relatively small group that will report directly to the president, is being established. The charge to the council will be to assist in focusing strategic planning efforts of the university on the institutional vision proposed in *Vision 2020: Creating A Culture of Excellence*. As the world changes over the next 20 years, so must our plans. The council will assess progress and suggest changes in direction on a regular basis. The members of this group must take a university-wide view.

Our vision will be made acute by an External Review Council, drawn from among the off-campus participants in Vision 2020. The charge to this group will be to provide volunteer continuity as leadership changes at the institution, in the System, on the board of regents, and in the State of Texas. The External Review Council's role will parallel that of the University Planning Council—to assess progress and suggest changes responsive to the changing environment in which Texas A&M University exists.

Vision 2020 sets a direction and a context for future strategic planning at Texas A&M University. Strategic plans from each unit on campus are reviewed and updated annually. These plans will include goals and strategies that are responsive to the imperatives, precepts, and goals of Vision 2020. These cycles as well as the day-to-day activities and decisions at every level of the university will be guided by the general principles articulated in this document.

This structure—our on-going planning processes kept on target by a University Planning Council and an External Review Council—will help guide us. But what chaperones this university into the first part of the next century is a commitment to be better than we have been before—to add value to the degrees of our students. Our commitment to excellence is the bedrock on which the future of the university will be built. Our responsibility to be better than ever is the “13th Imperative”—and the most important of all.

THE APPENDICES





## APPENDIX A: THE BACKGROUND

We discuss below why we embarked on this planning venture and detail the Vision 2020 journey that led to our affirmation of the desire to be a top ten institution.

### WHY PLAN?

Texas A&M University embarked on Vision 2020 because we are committed to positive, thoughtful change. We celebrate our history, but we also know we can be better. We have faced challenges, accepted change, and improved while responding to fluid environments. Past planning efforts clearly show this capability. *The Aspirations Study* conducted during the presidency of James Earl Rudder articulated a substantial change in mission. It proposed the Corps of Cadets be non-compulsory, suggested women be admitted on a full-and-equal-basis with men, and pioneered the serious development of graduate education. Many observers credit these visionary steps with moving the institution to a new level of recognition, and perhaps even with saving it from extinction.

A second major study, *Target 2000*, was carried out in the 1980s, with importance equal to Rudder's earlier work. In reviewing the *Target 2000* report and findings, it is clear that the vast majority of goals have been accomplished. The extremely successful "Capturing the Spirit" capital campaign, the strengthening of faculty governance, increasing computing capability, and creating international study opportunities are a few examples. Other planning efforts and studies have helped direct our future. The *Final Report of the Multiple Missions Task Force*, *The National Science Board Government-University-Industry Research Roundtable Study*, the *Ad Hoc Report on Graduate Education* and the *Study of the Campus Climate* are a few examples of effective planning that led to positive, thoughtful, change at Texas A&M University.

## VISION 2020: THE JOURNEY TO THE VISION

### Traditional Strengths

The first step in Vision 2020 was reaffirming a commitment to the traditional strengths and qualities of Texas A&M University. They have carried us to where we are today. We remain committed to them and understand their importance to our past, to our present, and to our future. They have been a catalyst for our excellence. They should be a foundation for our future as we build strength in areas that are common to the best universities in America. A special chemistry will be required. If we meet the challenge, we will not only be recognized for our excellence nationally, but also be able to add value to our students, our faculty, and the State of Texas as an educational leader.

## Defining Quality

An immense challenge, and one of the early steps in Vision 2020 was considering how to define and assess quality. Quality is not always easily characterized in words and numbers. Some aspects of quality in higher education defy any quantification; most require multiple indicators. For example, in discussing research expenditures—a measure Texas A&M University fares well in—it should never be misinterpreted to mean our research is of high quality just because we do so much of it. Rather, given this quantity of research, our chances for achieving quality research results will probably go up, but only other indicators of research prowess will demonstrate that. The number of publications by our faculty and students in prestigious journals is one such indicator, one dimension of quality. Quality and excellence, as defined for *Vision 2020*, are always multi-dimensional constructs and are never fully captured by one indicator. The synergy and interaction of the dimensions discussed are, themselves, an indicator of our aspiration for making Texas A&M University a place known for quality in each of its manifold pursuits.

## Studying the Best Universities in America

To understand what it means to be considered among the ten best public institutions of higher learning in the United States, it was also necessary to understand the ways universities are judged. We understand the pitfalls of ranking systems, whether it is *U.S. News & World Report* or the National Research Council. But we also understand that they are a yardstick by which institutions are often judged. Through looking at these systems and through our own analysis, we identified six public institutions that are consistently cited as the best in the nation to study. These are the University of California – Berkeley, University of Michigan, University of California – Los Angeles, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, University of California – San Diego, and the University of Wisconsin – Madison.

In addition to these six universities, the deans of the colleges and the vice presidents at Texas A&M University identified a number of other institutions to study to ensure program comparability was high and that all disciplines on campus would have some comparisons. These are: Georgia Institute of Technology, University of California – Davis, University of Illinois – Champaign-Urbana, Pennsylvania State University, University of Minnesota, Ohio State University, Purdue University, University of Florida, and University of Texas – Austin.

## A View to the Future of Higher Education

Studying what makes great universities great today was only a start. We also had to consider what will define great universities of the future. There will, undoubtedly, be significant differences between the great universities of today and the great universities of 2020. At the same time, we believe these differences will not affect the core of what defines a renowned institution of higher learning. Great faculties are indispensable. Bright students are needed. Scholarship of the first order is required. Libraries and access to intellectual resources are part of the foundation. Change will affect these components of the equation incrementally. There are areas that will change dramatically. What will our population look like? How will a student be defined? What will our students study? How much of it will they do on campus, at their desk in their homes, in Guadalajara or in Geneva? These are issues that may change

our nature significantly. But the core of the institution—great teaching, great research and scholarship, reaching out to an ever-increasing community, and preparation for leadership in life—will still be near the heart of what defines us and other great universities.

Understanding what will change and what will remain the same is one of the challenges of Vision 2020. The difficulty of predicting the future implies that, as we progress toward 2020, we will have to constantly monitor the world and the world of higher education to keep our target in focus. At the same time, we must continually find the balance between maintaining our distinctiveness and honing the traits common to great universities. These challenges are the essence of Vision 2020.

### **The Vision 2020 Process**

Our vision of Texas A&M University in 2020 did not spring forth fully formed. It was born of a process that involved more than 250 people from inside and outside the university who worked in eleven theme groups and three white-paper panels to study issues believed crucial to Texas A&M University's future and make recommendations. The eleven theme groups are as follows: Faculty; Research and Infrastructure; Graduate Studies; Library and Information Technology; Leadership, Governance and Organization; Locale; The Other Education; Service to the State; Arts and Sciences; Resources; and Undergraduate Academics. The three white paper panels include: Diversity, Globalization, and Information Technology. Two advisory committees gave comment and give direction to the process. One was the Academic Advisory Committee, composed of the academic leadership of Texas A&M University, including deans, the provost and provost's staff, and key faculty leaders. The other was an Executive Advisory Committee, which consisted of thought and opinion leaders from Texas and the United States. In addition, the Vision 2020 Executive Committee provided insight and leadership throughout. All members and participants are listed in the back of this document. The work of these people represents the backbone of Vision 2020, and provides testimony to the commitment of people from on- and off-campus to our university. The brainpower behind Vision 2020 rests here.

It should be mentioned that the Texas A&M University – Galveston branch campus, because of its special mission, did not participate in the Vision 2020 process. It will create its own vision and plans.

The last phase of the work was focused on synthesizing the thoughts and ideas from the various committees, theme groups, and councils. During that phase, the documentation was produced through a series of draft and feedback cycles. The documentation consists of these parts:

#### ***Vision 2020 - Creating a Culture of Excellence***

The Vision for Texas A&M University in 2020 and a summary of the entire effort.

#### ***Vision 2020 - The Ground Work***

A compilation of all theme group reports, white papers, vision statements, and working group projects that provides the groundwork from which the vision grew.

#### ***Vision 2020 - The Baseline***

The early benchmarking studies.



## APPENDIX B: VISION 2020 PARTICIPANTS

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Ray M. Bowen '58**, *President and Professor of Mechanical Engineering*  
**A. Benton Cocanougher**, *Dean, Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business, and Professor of Marketing*  
**Eddie J. "Ed" Davis '67**, *President, Texas A&M Foundation*  
**Ronald G. Douglas**, *Executive Vice President and Provost, and Professor of Mathematics*  
**Jon L. Hagler '58**, *Director, Grantham, Mayo, Van Otterloo & Company*  
**Robert W. Harvey '77**, *Director, McKinsey & Company, Inc.*  
**Diane S. Kaplan**, *Speaker, The Faculty Senate, and Assistant Professor of Educational Curriculum and Instruction*  
**Frederick D. McClure '76**, *Member, Board of Regents*  
**Laurie Nickel '99**, *Student Body President*  
**Anneliese Reinemeyer**, *President, Graduate Student Council*  
**Mark Weichold '78**, *Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Academic Services, and Professor of Electrical Engineering*  
**Walter V. Wendler '72**, *Executive Assistant to the President and Professor of Architecture*

### EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Don Adam**, *Chairman of the Board, CEO, The Adam Corporation/Group*  
**James R. Adams**, *Texas Instruments & SBC Communications*  
**Rufus Cormier**, *Baker & Botts, L.L.P.*  
**Jim Crownover**, *McKinsey & Company, Inc.*  
**James J. Duderstadt**, *President Emeritus & Professor of Science and Engineering, Millennium Project, The University of Michigan*  
**Marvin J. Girouard**, *President/CEO, Pier 1 Imports*  
**Robert Drayton McLane, Jr.**, *McLane Group*  
**Herbert Kelleher**, *Chairman/President/CEO, Southwest Airlines Company*  
**Tommy E. Knight '61**, *President & CEO, Retired, Brown & Root, Inc.*  
**Jack E. Little**, *President & CEO, Shell Oil Co.*  
**L. Lowry Mays '57**, *Chairman & CEO, Clear Channel Communication, Inc.*  
**Kay Moran McCord**, *Private Investor*  
**M. Bookman Peters '59**, *Bookman Peters Accounting Firm*  
**Marvin Runyon**, *Former Postmaster General*  
**Derby Wilson**, *Insurance and Private Investments*

### ACADEMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**H. Richard Adams**, *Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine, and Professor of Veterinary Physiology and Pharmacology*  
**Emily Ashworth**, *Assistant Provost for International Programs*  
**Pierce Cantrell**, *Associate Provost for Information Technology and Associate Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering*  
**A. Benton Cocanougher**, *Dean, Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business, and Professor of Marketing*

**Jane Conoley**, *Dean, College of Education, and Professor of Educational Psychology*  
**Sandra DeGraw**, *Executive Vice President, Vice Dean and Professor of Law, South Texas College of Law*  
**Richard E. Ewing**, *Dean, College of Science, and Professor of Mathematics and Engineering*  
**Roland Haden**, *Vice Chancellor for Engineering, The Texas A&M University System; Dean, Dwight Look College of Engineering; and Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering*  
**Fred Heath**, *Dean and Director, Sterling C. Evans Library*  
**Edward A. Hiler**, *Vice Chancellor for Agriculture and Life Sciences, Texas A&M University System; Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; and Professor, Department of Agricultural Engineering*  
**Glenn A. Jones**, *Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs*  
**Woodrow Jones, Jr.**, *Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Professor of Political Science*  
**Diane Kaplan**, *Speaker, The Faculty Senate and Assistant Professor of Educational Curriculum and Instruction*  
**Howard Kaplan**, *Distinguished Professor of Sociology*  
**Robert Kennedy**, *Vice President for Research and Associate Provost for Graduate Studies; Professor of Biology, Plant Physiology, and Plant Biotechnology*  
**Laurie Nickel '99**, *President, Student Government*  
**David B. Prior**, *Dean, College of Geosciences, and Professor of Geography, Geology, and Geophysics*  
**Anneliese Reinemeyer**, *President, Graduate Student Council*  
**Tom Regan**, *Dean, College of Architecture, and Professor of Architecture*  
**Janis Stout**, *Dean of Faculties and Associate Provost, and Professor of English*  
**Mark Weichold '78**, *Associate Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Academic Services, and Professor of Electrical Engineering*  
**Paul J. Wellman**, *Professor and Head, Department of Psychology*

### ARTS AND SCIENCE

**Howard B. Kaplan**, *Distinguished Professor of Sociology, On Campus Co-Chair*  
**Ray A. Rothrock '77**, *General Partner, Venrock Associates, Co-Chair, Off-Campus*  
**Jeffrey J. Morgan**, *Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics, Facilitator*  
**William J. Neely '52**, *Retired VP & Director of Marketing Dow Chemical Company, Off-Campus Liaison*  
**Susanna Finnell**, *Executive Director, Honors Program & Academic Scholarships, Resource*  
**Dennis A. Berthold**, *Professor, Department of English*  
**David A. Brooks**, *Executive Associate Dean, College of Geosciences, and Professor of Oceanography*  
**Robert D. Brown**, *Professor & Head, Department of Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences*

**John P. Fackler**, *Distinguished Professor, Department of Chemistry*  
**Raymond R. Hannigan, Jr. '61**, *President, Kinetic Concepts, Inc.*  
**Katie Hanselka**, *Student, Agricultural Development*  
**Karen S. Kubena '82**, *Associate Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences*  
**Thomas M. Matthews '65**, *President, NGC Corporation*  
**Harris J. Pappas '66**, *President, Pappas Restaurant, Inc.*  
**Leila Payne**, *Assistant Professor, Sterling C. Evans Library*  
**Anthony D. Ross, Jr.**, *Assistant Professor of Business Analysis and Research*  
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#### Acknowledgments

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Not printed at state expense.

## RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray M Bowen, President of Texas A&M University initiated a long range planning process called Vision 2020 for Texas A&M University at the Academic Convocation on October 17, 1997, and

WHEREAS, this planning process was guided by the goal of positioning Texas A&M University so that by the year 2020 it would be considered one of the ten best public universities in America while its distinctive characteristics are maintained, and

WHEREAS, a group of 260 people associated with Texas A&M University, including students, and former students, leaders from education, commerce and industry in and out of the State of Texas have gathered for thousands of hours of deliberation to articulate direction whereby the goal would be accomplished, and

WHEREAS, these individuals and groups have produced a number of reports, summarized in Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence, that describe excellence for the future of Texas A&M University by national standards so that maximum benefit of public expense is directed towards our students, and the state, and

WHEREAS, implementing the plan that will allow and support the accomplishment of the goal set forth on October 10, 1997 will take the commitment and dedication of future Regents, chancellors, the presidents, administration, faculty, staff, students, and former students of Texas A&M University, and

WHEREAS, the commitment will span the careers and lives of many and affect all: now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the members of the Board of Regents of Texas A&M University System, meeting this 28th day of May, 1999 hereby express our support for the Vision 2020 Plan and our sincerest thanks to the members of the Vision 2020 Task Force who labored to chart a course for continued excellence at Texas A&M University that will materially affect the quality of Texas A&M University; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the minutes, and copies thereof, signed by the Chairman of the Board of Regents, to ensure that the general principles outlined in the reports of Vision 2020 Task Force become a guide for future direction of Texas A&M University, and a permanent expression of support for excellence.

The Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System:

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