

A FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCING EXCELLENCE

THROUGHOUT THE UNIVERSITY *of* TEXAS SYSTEM



THE UNIVERSITY *of* TEXAS SYSTEM
Nine Universities. Six Health Institutions. Unlimited Possibilities.

**2012
UPDATE**

HOW WE'RE DOING

At the U.T. System Board of Regents' meeting in August 2011, I presented an action plan for implementing the Framework for Advancing Excellence throughout The University of Texas System.

The Framework has received an overwhelmingly positive response from educators and policymakers across the nation. I was invited to the White House to discuss the Framework and other educational issues with the President, the Secretary of Education, and a distinguished group of national leaders in higher education. They conveyed to me that our Framework Action Plan is addressing the challenges and opportunities of higher education in the 21st century.

This is the first annual progress report on the implementation of the Framework Action Plan's nine major areas of focus. We are tracking every initiative at a granular level. Some initiatives have been completed; for others we have built the infrastructures that will yield substantive results over time.

The futures of our children and our grandchildren are at stake. How do we make higher education more accessible and affordable to an increasing number of students? How do we produce more doctors, nurses, and health professionals, and improve the quality of healthcare in Texas?

This process is engaging hundreds of us in a team effort – not only from U.T. institutions but experts and consultants beyond our campuses. We will succeed if we continue to work together to transform higher education at all University of Texas institutions.



Francisco G. Cigarroa, M.D.
Chancellor, The University of Texas System

HOW WE'VE CATEGORIZED OUR PROGRESS

These indicators provide a snapshot showing the current completion status of strategies in each initiative:

Progress



Indicates progress, with some strategies on hold or about to begin.

Good Progress



Indicates progress with strategies advancing on schedule.

Substantial Progress



Indicates progress at an optimum rate, with strategies close to completion.

Complete



All initiative strategies have been completed.

Undergraduate Student Access & Success

✓	Strengthen methods to increase total number of degrees conferred and establish target goals	
✓	Review and strengthen enrollment management plans	
✓	Enhance four-year graduation rate action plans	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Best practices in enrollment management plans concentrating on student access and success were sought from three research intensive universities and one non-research intensive university representing similar student demographics within the U.T. academic institutions. ▶ Two working groups were convened, one on student access and success and the other on advising, and were charged with identification of best practices and the development of templates for student success plans focused on recruitment, retention and advising of students, increasing number of degrees conferred and improving six- and four-year graduation rates. ▶ Student success plans for all academic institutions have been developed and are currently being reviewed and vetted by the Office of Academic Affairs in collaboration with the Office of Strategic Initiatives. Institutional peers and aspirational peers have also been approved and are included within the metrics of the student success plans. ▶ Target and metrics, as outlined in the student success plans, will be monitored by the U.T. System Offices of Academic Affairs and Strategic Initiatives. 	
✓	Implement tuition policies that incentivize four-year graduation rates	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Institutions provided tuition policies and recommendations that advanced improving 4-year graduation rates, to the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellors for Health and Academic Affairs for Board of Regents' consideration. ▶ The Chancellor's recommendations related to proposed tuition increases and policies, focused on student success, were presented to the Board of Regents at the July 2012 meeting, at which time, certain tuition increases and policies were approved for Fall 2012. ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs is currently reviewing plans from institutions to keep the cost of education flat for U.T. students, mitigating the need for tuition increases for Fall 2013. 	
✓	Implement innovative plans to improve student advising	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An increased focus on student advising has been bolstered by the partnership with MyEdu through the use of its specialized programming for the U.T. campuses. More than 49,000 U.T. System students are presently utilizing the available tools. ▶ A working group representing all of the U.T. campuses continues to meet and work through the identification of best practices in student advising from across the nation. These practices will be shared with the institutions and incorporated into their on-campus advising initiatives. 	
✓	Increase access to technology to improve student learning	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Pre-qualified vendors have been selected as a result of a comprehensive RFP process and contracts are now in place to provide a complete menu of services and technologies from which U.T. System institutions may select and utilize to enhance student learning opportunities, for example, through hybrid instruction or online curricula. 	

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">UPDATE</p>	<p>✓ Develop full-cost financial disclosure statements for students and their families</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ U.T. System partnered with the U. S. Department of Education on the development of a shopping sheet as part of the financial aid award process to promote transparency and fully inform students and their families of college costs and financial aid options. Utilization of the shopping sheet will begin in Fall 2013 with relevant information linked to more detailed information on the U.T. System Productivity Dashboard. ▶ MyEdu will develop real-time, online application to provide individualized cost disclosure statements allowing students to provide specific information and build different scenarios. Projection for going live with this tool is Spring 2013. ▶ A committee on reducing student debt has been established and will provide a comprehensive white paper to the Board of Regents outlining its recommendations for further opportunities to inform students and their families on the cost of obtaining a higher education and strategies to reduce debt. 	
	<p>Implement blended and online learning recommendations from U.T. Regents' Task Force on Blended and Online Learning</p>	
	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">UPDATE</p>	<p>✓ Recruit an Executive Director for the U.T. System Institute for Transformational Learning</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Dr. Steven Mintz, a nationally recognized expert in the field of innovative learning practices, will begin his post as Executive Director of the Institute for Transformational Learning on September 1, 2012. Dr. Mintz comes to the U.T. System from Columbia University where he held the position of Director, Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Teaching Center, Columbia University. 		
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">UPDATE</p>	<p>✓ Establish a merit based grant program to augment innovations in student learning and success</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The newly hired Executive Director will immediately begin working to steward \$50 million in allocations from the UT System Board of Regents to create an entrepreneurial business model by fostering educational innovation in the areas of blended and online learning across the U.T. System and to foster innovation through competitive grant proposals from the U.T. institutions. 	
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">UPDATE</p>	<p>✓ Expansion of online courses across the U.T. System</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Finish@UT was launched and has more than 1590 new students enrolled through the four institutions participating in this program. Finish@UT provides an avenue for adult students who have at least 60 hours in an accredited institution to finish their degrees. ▶ Opportunities for more online course offerings and robust web-based environments in which students and faculty can interact have been developed, through the use of pre-qualified technology vendors. ▶ Additional programs and online offerings are being developed at several U.T. System institutions. To date, more than 1760 courses are available online to our students. ▶ The newly hired Executive Director will continue to create innovative strategies to facilitate the development and use of an array of courses as a tool to advance students through their degree programs, as well as consider open courses that can be shared globally. 	

Faculty / Administrators / Staff Excellence

<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Faculty recruitment and retention (STARs/Teaching Awards)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The U.T. System Board of Regents authorized an additional \$20 million at its August 2011 meeting for the expansion and continuation of the STARs program. ▶ STARs guidelines were modified and expanded to recognize and reward exceptional teaching and research by academic and health faculty. ▶ The Board of Regents presented health institution faculty with teaching excellence awards in July 2012 and recognized new members of the U.T. Academy of Health Science Educators. The Board of Regents will present teaching excellence awards to academic institution faculty at its August 2012 meeting. ▶ Chancellor Cigarroa approved the creation and operation of the U.T. System Academy of Distinguished Teachers for academic institutions. The Academy is expected to select new members in Fall 2012. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Incentive based compensation strategies to reward and incentivize performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Working with a national compensation consultant, an executive performance compensation plan for U.T. System presidents and executive officers of the U.T. System Administration has been developed and will be presented to the Regents for their consideration at the August 2012 meeting. ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs is gathering information from the academic presidents regarding incentive compensation strategies to retain and reward outstanding faculty and administrators at their respective institutions. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Strengthen and assure annual performance evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The U.T. Systemwide Compliance Officer and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Benefits and Services provided a survey to, and are meeting with, the human resource directors at each campus to ensure compliance with the Regents' Rules requiring annual performance appraisals and to prepare recommendations and strategies to improve current evaluation methods and practices. ▶ Regents' <i>Rule 31102</i> regarding post-tenure review was strengthened to include annual performance evaluations of faculty. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Strengthen and clarify post-tenure review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Board of Regents approved revisions to Regents' <i>Rule 31102</i> for the evaluation of tenured faculty members at its February 2012 meeting. The revisions included clarification of rating categories and shortening the review cycle of faculty. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Assure external reviews of colleges/schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Executive Vice Chancellors for Health and Academic Affairs will compile a report/schedule of all college and school administrative and programmatic reviews to assess if complete, timely, holistic reviews were conducted and if not, additional reviews of specific areas will be requested. ▶ Any necessary additional reviews will begin in Fall 2012. 	

✓ **Recruit outstanding administrative and faculty leadership: strengthen selection process for department chairs**

UPDATE

- ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs has developed a draft policy, with input from provosts, which includes guidelines and requirements for the competitive selection of department chairs, their appointment, roles and responsibilities.
- ▶ Consideration will be given to the development of a new Regents' Rule and subsequent associated campus policies.
- ▶ A Systemwide leadership council will be instituted during Spring 2013 to train new chairpersons in leadership, management, legal, and ethical responsibilities required by the position.

FRAMEWORK INITIATIVE:

Research

✓ **Promote synergistic research collaborations**

UPDATE

- ▶ U.T. System teams, including input from the institutions, evaluated commercial software to effectively identify and network faculty researchers from across all 15 U.T. institutions to achieve synergy and increase collaborations in their work. Contract negotiations are currently underway to provide services to the health and academic campuses.
- ▶ The Chancellor's Health Fellow on Collaboration is working with the Associate Vice Chancellor for Health Science Research and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Research to develop strategies to identify and increase research collaborations and funding (e.g. appraisal of research "core" services and faculty infrastructure to benefit multiple campuses and maximize return on investment).
- ▶ The U.T. System Office of Federal Relations is seeking to hire two individuals who have expertise in, and relationships with, the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Defense. The impact of these additional positions on federal research funding and activities will be assessed annually with reports made to the Board.
- ▶ The U.T. System Discovery Leadership Council, composed of the vice presidents for research and Clinical Translational Science Award recipients of all 15 institutions, continues to meet to develop joint research efforts, for example, the Texas Cancer Dream Research Consortium, to submit collaborative grant proposals.

✓ **Establishment of the Horizon Fund to advance technology transfer and commercialization**

UPDATE

- ▶ The Board of Regents approved establishing and funding the Horizon Fund at its August 2011 meeting.
- ▶ Process of application, review and granting of Horizon Fund allocations was presented to the Board of Regents at its November 2011 meeting.
- ▶ U.T. System technology transfer and commercialization draft plan has been developed and recommendations to be presented to the Board at its August 2012 meeting with a possible action item for the November 2012 Board of Regents' meeting.

✓ UPDATE	Identify new revenue streams to support research <div style="float: right; width: 100px; height: 15px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #4CAF50, #FFC107);"></div>
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Institutional vice presidents for research, other campus research leaders, and U.T. institution vice presidents for development formed a consortium and continue to meet to determine best practices for fundraising in support of research. ▶ The Chancellor appointed the Chancellor’s Technology Commercialization Advisory Cabinet and held its first meeting in April 2012.
✓ UPDATE	Development of business plans for the emerging research universities <div style="float: right; width: 100px; height: 15px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #4CAF50, #FFC107);"></div>
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Model comprehensive business plans have been developed and are under review by the Offices of Academic Affairs and Business Affairs, as well as external review panels, to provide feedback and adjustments as necessary. The business plans include target goals on 12 indicators and related metrics (e.g., research expenditures, number of degrees produced, and philanthropy). The Office of Strategic Initiatives is building internal dashboards to assess progress on all 12 indicators for each campus.

FRAMEWORK INITIATIVE:

Productivity and Efficiency

✓	Identify and develop a long-term strategy for standardized Systemwide operations systems <div style="float: right; width: 100px; height: 15px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #4CAF50, #FFC107);"></div>
✓ UPDATE	Implement additional shared services initiatives <div style="float: right; width: 100px; height: 15px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #4CAF50, #FFC107);"></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Organizational structure is in place to support re-engineering of U.T. System business practices – from standardizing systemwide operational systems (e.g., PeopleSoft implementation for eight campuses and System Administration) to shared services initiatives. Accenture was hired to review health institutions (procure to pay, hire to retire, etc.). ▶ Thirty shared services projects have been identified and are in various stages of evaluation, business planning, implementation, and sustainment.
✓ UPDATE	Conduct external administrative organizational reviews across the U.T. System <div style="float: right; width: 100px; height: 15px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #4CAF50, #FFC107);"></div>
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reviews to be conducted at all 15 institutions and U.T. System Administration every five years (3 reviews a year) by a team of seven members who will compare organizational structure to benchmarks and best practices (from within and outside of higher education). ▶ Reviews scheduled for FY 2012-2013 include U.T. MD Anderson Cancer Center, U.T. Dallas, U.T. Medical Branch at Galveston and U.T. Tyler. Review of MD Anderson is almost complete and UTMB, UTD and UTT will follow in sequence over the next 6-8 months.
✓ UPDATE	Review and implement space utilization strategies <div style="float: right; width: 100px; height: 15px; background: linear-gradient(to right, #4CAF50, #FFC107);"></div>
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Executive Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs constituted a space utilization efficiencies working group of various experts from academic and health institutions, the U.T. System Office of Facilities Planning and Construction, U.T. System Office of Strategic Initiatives, as well as obtaining advice from outside experts specializing in space utilization efficiencies.

Strategic Information Technology Infrastructure Investments

✓	Develop a Systemwide information technology plan to expand computing power and capacity in support of U.T. institutions													
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Through an RFP process, the U.T. System Administration contracted with PricewaterhouseCoopers to develop a systemwide information technology plan. ▶ Plan was received and is currently under review. PricewaterhouseCoopers outlined 13 key recommendations toward the development of a comprehensive information technology plan for U.T. System. ▶ A U.T. System work group has been formed to prioritize the recommendations from PricewaterhouseCoopers and will provide them to institution presidents for comment by early Fall 2012. 													
✓	Establish an interactive dashboard and supporting data warehouse													
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Phase One of the Productivity Dashboard is online and provides interactive electronic information on eleven core indicators: <table border="0" data-bbox="227 840 1315 997"> <tr> <td>1. Multiple aspects of enrollment</td> <td>5. Research expenditures</td> <td>9. Healthcare revenues</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Degree production</td> <td>6. Technology transfer</td> <td>10. Cost of degrees</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Graduation rates</td> <td>7. Endowments</td> <td>11. Post-graduation success</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Faculty teaching load</td> <td>8. Doctoral programs</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> ▶ Phase Two of the Dashboard is ongoing and populating more information into the data warehouse. ▶ Expert groups continue to meet to provide plans for the other multiple dashboards to be added in the coming months. ▶ The Office of Strategic Initiatives is working collaboratively with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to develop procedures and partnerships to automate the flow of data from the THECB to the U.T. data warehouse. 	1. Multiple aspects of enrollment	5. Research expenditures	9. Healthcare revenues	2. Degree production	6. Technology transfer	10. Cost of degrees	3. Graduation rates	7. Endowments	11. Post-graduation success	4. Faculty teaching load	8. Doctoral programs		
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Enhance Philanthropic Success

✓	Develop and implement multi-year business plan	
✓	Renewal of Strength in Numbers Initiative	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In August 2011, the Board of Regents approved \$10 million in funding for the Strength in Numbers initiative. Institutions provided proposals for potential grant awards to supplement their current philanthropic programs. Allocations of Strength in Numbers were made at the end of November 2011 to those institutions providing well-developed proposals. Those programs will be monitored for return on investment. ▶ Philanthropic business plans have been completed for all 15 institutions to assure balanced fundraising programs that will continue to be reviewed annually. ▶ U.T. System institutions collectively achieved one of their best fundraising years in history, in fiscal year 2011. 	

Ph.D. Programs

✓	Strengthen criteria for review of Ph.D. programs	
✓	Create innovative plans for student and career advising	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs met with graduate deans and developed strategies to reduce time to Ph.D. completion by producing criteria for review, elements of advising, and agreements between students and departments. ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs provided coordination with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to provide efficiencies in the criteria review process for Ph.D.s to avoid duplicative efforts. ▶ The Office of Health Affairs requested results of all Ph.D. program evaluations and has received and is evaluating written reports describing current policies, practices, and criteria used to review doctoral education programs (with suggestions for improvement). Criteria for review of Ph.D. programs were discussed at meeting with graduate school deans in June 2012. 	
✓	Develop agreements between Ph.D. students and department	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The U.T. health institutions are using a model American Association of Medical College's (AAMC) agreement between graduate students, including post-doctoral students, and their mentor/advisors that improves student advising, shortens time to degree, and provides career advising. ▶ The U.T. academic institutions are using a revised model agreement, developed by the Council of Graduate Schools, between graduate students and their mentor/advisors that improves student advising, shortens time to degree, and provides career advising. ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs met with graduate deans to reduce time to Ph.D. completion by producing criteria for review, elements of advising, and agreements between students and department. The agreements and criteria for review have been developed and will be implemented this coming academic year. 	

The Health of Texas

✓	Implement Transformation in Medical Education (TIME) pilot projects	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Dr. Molly Cooke, Professor of Medicine at the University of California – San Francisco and co-author of <i>Educating Physicians: A Call for Reform of Medical School and Residence</i>, has been engaged as a national expert and reviewed and evaluated the TIME program and pilot projects. ▶ Dr. Steve Lieberman, Vice Dean of Academic Affairs at UTMB and co-chair of TIME project, updated the Board of Regents at its May 2012 meeting on pilot projects. The pilot projects were subsequently presented to the Liaison Committee of Medical Education (LCME) and were approved to be appropriate activities; final LCME decisions will be rendered when students matriculate. 	

✓	Expand U.T. Southwestern Medical Center/Seton Healthcare Family/U.T. System affiliations to enhance medical education and research in Austin.	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Joint Conference Council of affiliated parties (U.T. Southwestern, Seton Healthcare Family and U.T. System) meets quarterly.▶ Residency program expansion is occurring ahead of schedule with Child Neurology and Pediatric Emergency Medicine coming online in 2013 and Plastic Surgery, Neurosurgery and Radiology in 2015.▶ Dr. Steven Warach, senior investigator with the National Institutes of Health, was appointed in December 2011 as the founding executive director of the Seton/U.T. Southwestern Clinical Research Institute.	
✓	Develop a plan for four-year research intensive medical education in Austin	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The Board of Regents, at its May 2012 meeting, committed to the development of a medical school in Austin and authorized \$25 million in annual Available University Fund funding and \$5 million (for 8 years) in annual STARs funding for the school. This commitment is contingent on the continuation of Seton Healthcare Family support of graduate medical education at current or increased levels and the availability of \$35 million annually from local community sources for support of a medical school at U.T. Austin.	
✓	Advance Austin and other metropolitan areas as technology/biotechnology hubs	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The Chancellor's Technology Commercialization Advisory Cabinet was established and held its first meeting to review System technology commercialization efforts toward enhancing efforts in Austin and other metropolitan areas. Its next meeting is scheduled for Fall 2012.▶ Successful recruitment of executive director and establishment of Seton/U.T. Southwestern Clinical Research Institute will bring clinicians/researchers to Austin.▶ The Institute for Applied Cancer Science at U.T. MD Anderson Cancer Center was established with recruitment of over 25 research scientists with strong pharmaceutical industry collaborations.▶ The Bio Center was established at U.T. Southwestern (13 acre / 4 building biotech park) for commercial development of discoveries at U.T. Southwestern and elsewhere to drive biomedical innovation in North Texas.▶ Funding for the Horizon Fund was approved by the Board of Regents and initial investment allocations have been awarded.	
✓	Improve patient safety and quality through systems engineering	
UPDATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ The Office of Health Affairs held a successful annual Clinical Safety and Effectiveness Conference in October 2011, with 265 attendees and 83 abstracts presented.▶ Over 1000 U.T. System health care professionals completed patient safety and quality courses and produced 360 related projects.▶ The Board of Regents approved \$4 million from the medical liability fund for systems engineering efforts to improve patient safety and quality, with the Chancellor's Health Fellow on Systems Engineering leading the effort on academic/health collaborations. Proposals will be reviewed for potential projects to be funded.▶ Eleven grants were provided to fund project proposals to facilitate institutional/broad systems engineering processes; progress on the proposals will be presented during a U.T. System systems engineering conference scheduled for October 2012, at U.T. MD Anderson Cancer Center.	

Expanding Educational and Health Opportunities in South Texas

<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Implement South Texas/Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Board of Regents provided \$30 million for education and health initiatives in the LRGV in August 2011 for implementation of UTeach/STEM, establishment of the Valley STARs program, building a simulated teaching hospital, development of a biomedical research program, expansion of medical residency education, and funding to support philanthropy through the Strength in Numbers initiative. ▶ UTeach has been fully implemented at U.T. Brownsville and U.T. Pan American and they are working toward the goal of self-sustainability at the respective institutions. ▶ The Vice President for South Texas Programs is actively hiring faculty in the areas of obesity and diabetes research, to collaborate with Valley STARs recruits of U.T. Pan American and U.T. Brownsville to populate the South Texas Research Network's six sites to advance scientific discovery in obesity and diabetes. ▶ Two outstanding candidates for South Texas initiatives are being recruited, including a program director of psychiatry residency program and research scientist for the Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) research division. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Plan for 4-year research intensive medical education in South Texas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ During its May 2012 meeting, the Board of Regents committed to the development of a medical school in South Texas that fully utilizes existing RAHC facilities and is contingent on current RAHC funding being available for the medical school, the establishment of adequate residency programs, and the availability of additional resources, including local and state funding adequate to sustain the ongoing operations of a medical school. ▶ A residency program consultant has been engaged and is working to maximize program design and federal funding available for family and internal medicine residency programs across multiple sites. ▶ Press conference was held at the RAHC in Edinburg announcing the matriculation of medical students into a South Texas-tract via the U.T. Health Science Center at San Antonio. The first cohort of students will matriculate in this program in 2014 and graduate in 2018, under the accreditation of the UTHSC San Antonio. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Enhance educational linkages in South Texas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The Office of Academic Affairs is preparing to expand agreements with the Regional Academic Health Center campus, local community colleges and independent school districts. Currently 21 articulation agreements between U.T. Pan American and South Texas College have been negotiated with another 19 between U.T. Brownsville and South Texas College. An additional eight agreements are anticipated for completion in Fall 2012. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Expansion of the STARs Program for the Lower Rio Grande Valley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The U.T. System Board of Regents authorized \$9.5 million in Valley STARs funding for recruitment of exceptional STEM faculty and researchers to U.T. System institutions in the Lower Rio Grande Valley at its August 2011 meeting. ▶ U.T. Pan American and U.T. Brownsville are actively seeking Valley STARs faculty recruitments in coordination with South Texas Research Network recruitments in obesity and diabetes. 	
<p>✓</p> <p>UPDATE</p>	<p>Establish U.T. Brownsville as a comprehensive four-year university</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The U.T. System has established a transition team that has been working diligently to study complex issues regarding students, programs, facilities, services, funding and appropriate staffing levels. ▶ Currently on target with the timeline and U.T. Brownsville is expected to receive separate accreditation by 2015. 	

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