



TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
President's Briefing
for the Board of Regents
December 7, 2020

PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, AND ACCREDITATION

2017-2023 University Plan

Texas State University completed the mid-cycle revision of the 2017-2023 University Plan and officially began the second phase of the plan on September 1, 2020. Revisions were made available to the university community via the Texas State University 2017-2023 University Plan website. Units are currently providing progress made in year three of the plan.

SACSCOC Reaffirmation

As Texas State prepares for reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 2021, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Development Task Force continues to draft and edit the QEP. The QEP Development Task Force has also been creating a campaign to inform and engage the university community in the various aspects of the QEP prior to the SACSCOC virtual site review scheduled in spring 2021.

Texas State's SACSCOC Compliance Certification Report was submitted for review on September 2, 2020. All narratives for the Compliance Certification Report were formatted on secure USB storage drives and forwarded directly to the off-site reviewers. A SACSCOC Reaffirmation 2021 website was also published to provide faculty and staff with information regarding the Compliance Certification process and access to the Compliance Certification Report.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Enrollment

Compared to fall 2019, fall 2020:

- Overall enrollment of 37,849 students declined by 0.99 percent (-382 students),
- Graduate enrollment increased by 8.2 percent (+329 students),

- New master's student enrollment increased by 24.3 percent (+269 students) to a record number of 1,374 students, and
- Continuing students at both the doctoral and master's level were retained at higher levels.

Four new graduate programs helped to fuel a new record number of master's applications topping 4,000 applications for the first time.

Despite a record number of freshman applications and fall admits, lower-income students were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and economic recession. Pell-eligible freshmen declined by -13.8 percent (-355 freshmen). Many students opted to attend colleges closer to home or simply deferred their enrollment to a later semester. Despite a drop in admit-to-enroll yield rates, the freshman class was the fourth largest in Texas State history.

The first-year retention rate for the 2019 freshman class is 76.9 percent compared to 75.7 percent for the previous cohort.

Texas State was particularly concerned about the loss of foreign students who were unable to secure visas due to closed embassies, travel restrictions, or their reluctance to leave their home countries during the pandemic. As expected, first-time international enrollment declined by 10 percent (-56 students). The loss of international student enrollment was significantly higher at the graduate level than at the undergraduate level.

Undergraduate Recruitment

Compared to fall 2019, fall 2020:

- Freshman applications of 32,685 increased by 2.6 percent (+814 applications),
- Freshman acceptances of 21,305 increased by 11.9 percent (+2,270 acceptances),
- New freshman enrollment of 5,855 decreased by 7.3 percent (-459 enrolled),
- Transfer applications of 6,749 increased by two percent (+111 applications),
- Transfer acceptances of 4,927 decreased by four percent (-190 acceptances), and
- Transfer enrollment of 3,059 decreased by 9.9 percent (-337 enrolled).

Graduate Recruitment

Compared to fall 2019, fall 2020:

- Master's applications of 4,004 increased by 8.7 percent (+321 applications),
- Master's student acceptances of 2,362 increased by 23.5 percent (+449 acceptances),
- Doctoral applications of 306 increased by 5.2 percent (+15 applications),
- Doctoral student acceptances of 148 increased by 17.5 percent (+22 acceptances),
- The number of enrolled new master's students increased by 24.3 percent (+269 students), and
- The number of enrolled new doctoral students declined by 2.4 percent (-2 students).

Student Retention

Compared to fall 2019, fall 2020 preliminary census day numbers indicated that:

- The continuing undergraduate student enrollment of 24,316 increased by 0.3 percent (+70 students), and
- The continuing graduate enrollment of 2,871 increased by 2.1 percent (+58 students).

In June 2020, Texas State announced a new retention initiative with ReUp Education. Approved by the Board of Regents (BOR) during the February 2020 meeting, the new partnership is designed to help stop-out students with some college experience, but no degree, return to the university and chart a path to graduation. The recruitment program enrolled the first cohort of 74 former undergraduate students this fall.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Capital Improvements

Three capital projects totaling over \$108 million have been deferred because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Status of Construction and Renovation Projects

This status report is organized by the phase in which each project falls in the development cycle. The phases include:

- Planning and Programming – The process of identifying space needs and general magnitude of project cost.
- Design – The process of developing detailed blueprints and cost estimates.
- Construction – The entire process of building the project.
- Project Completion – The construction is complete, the bills are all paid, the building has been turned over for use, and The Texas State University System (TSUS) has officially approved project close-out.

Note. When multiple projects are underway in one building, all projects are presented together for ease of understanding regardless of their phase in the development cycle.

Projects in the Planning and Programming Phase

The draft program of design for **Esperanza Hall** has been completed, and the project size is 107,665 Gross Square Feet (GSF). This will be the fourth academic building on the Round Rock Campus and will include classrooms, labs, and offices to support four departments in the College of Health Professions, the College's Advising Center, and the Dean's Office. The program document has been used in preparing a Tuition Revenue Bond (TRB) funding request for the 87th Texas Legislature. This project is on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and will be initiated pending TRB funding. The current estimated Total Project Cost (TPC) is \$75 million.

The **Music Building** will be located on the San Marcos Campus near the Performing Arts Center and the Theatre Center to address the pressing needs of the School of Music. The new building will include classrooms, offices, and rehearsal spaces. A draft program of design in June 2019 resulted in a project size of 110,128 GSF and an estimated TPC of \$70 million. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending successful fundraising.

The draft program of design for the **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Building** has been completed. This building will be located on the San Marcos Campus and will include classrooms, labs, and offices to support the Department of Mathematics, Department of Computer Science, and the School of Criminal Justice and Criminology. The building will also provide teaching space for several other academic disciplines. The draft program has been used in preparing a TRB funding request for the 87th Texas Legislature. This project is on the CIP and will be initiated pending TRB funding. The current estimated TPC is \$125 million, and the project size is 200,000 GSF.

Projects in the Design Phase

The **Film and Television Studios** (previously **Aqua Sports Repurposing Project**) is on the CIP. Located on the San Marcos Campus, this project will provide much needed space for students pursuing filmography and media studies and will provide dedicated teaching labs that achieve a high degree of acoustical performance for specialized course work. The Architectural Space Program is complete, and Lawrence Group Architects has been selected as the architect on the project. Vaughn Construction has been selected as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) on the project. The TPC is \$10 million. The scope of work changed from a renovation project of an older building to a new construction project after it was discovered that the Aqua Sports building's structural system had deteriorated due to decades of chlorine exposure to the point that is not fiscally reasonable to restore the building. The Aqua Sports building will only be used for storage for the time being and will be decommissioned and demolished at a later date.

The current TPC for the planned **Hilltop Housing Complex** on the San Marcos Campus is \$96.7 million based on 1,006 beds. Barnes Gromatzky Kosarek Architects is the architect, and Vaughn Construction is the CMR. Demolition of Hornsby and Burleson Halls and utility upgrades have been completed. Design development was approved during the May 2019 BOR meeting. The architect is working to complete 100 percent construction documents by the end of September 2020. The construction phase is being delayed until student enrollment rebounds after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The **Infrastructure Research Laboratory Building** is on the CIP. This project will provide the College of Science and Engineering at the Science, Technology, and Advanced Research (STAR) Park with state-of-the-art capabilities and innovative technology for advanced testing of beams, girders, and other concrete components under high stress and tension as well as provide research space for the civil engineering degree program. The TPC is \$18.2 million. Alamo Architects has been selected to provide design services for the project. Design Development documents are submitted to The TSUS BOR November 2020 meeting.

Projects in the Construction Phase (Note: All completion percentages as of October 1, 2020.)

The construction of the **Round Rock Campus Services Building** started in September 2020 and will fulfill the needs of several support services departments while freeing up space in academic buildings for teaching and research. McKinney York Architects is the architect, and Kitchell Construction is the CMR. This project has a TPC of \$6.1 million. Substantial completion is estimated in May 2021.

The construction of the **University Police Department (UPD) Building** began in October 2020. This project will include approximately 20,987 GSF and will relocate UPD from its current home in the Nueces building to make room for academic programs. The TPC is \$9 million and will reach substantial completion in February 2022. Atkins is the architect and Vaughn Construction is the CMR.

Projects Completed

The **Albert B. Alkek Library Learning Commons Project**, with a TPC of \$8.3 million, reached substantial completion in February 2020. The final report is being prepared.

The **Albert B. Alkek Library Seventh Floor Wittliff Collections Expansion Project** is now complete. The TPC is \$4.7 million. The final report is being prepared.

The **Blanco Residence Hall Renovations Project**, with a TPC of \$29.6 million, reached substantial completion in July 2019. The final report is being prepared.

The **Bruce and Gloria Ingram Hall**, with a TPC of \$120 million and a total size of 166,851 GSF, is now complete. The final report will be presented at the November 2020 BOR meeting.

The **Elliott Hall Project**, with a TPC of \$6.65 million and a total size of 37,293 GSF, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

The **Jowers Center Renovation Project**, with a TPC of \$3,416,000, reached substantial completion in July 2020. The final report is being prepared.

The **LBJ Student Center Expansion Project**, with a TPC of \$31.2 million, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

The **Multi-Use Recreation Fields** on the San Marcos Campus, with a TPC of \$7.87 million, reached substantial completion in June 2020. The final report is being prepared.

The **Roy F. Mitte Space Reconfiguration Project**, with a TPC of \$6.5 million, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

The **Spring Lake Dam Phase One Stabilization Project**, with a TPC of \$1.3 million, was substantially completed in August 2019. The final report is being prepared.

The **University Events Center Expansion Project**, with a TPC of \$62.5 million and a total size of 81,272 GSF, is now complete. The final report is being prepared.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2020, the university added \$2.7 million in philanthropic gifts, bringing the fundraising total for fiscal year 2020 to \$18.6 million. Over the past year, fundraising for the Big Ideas initiative raised \$1.4 million in support and helped establish two new university level centers -- the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Center for Translational Health Research. During the past quarter, the Division of University Advancement adjusted its fundraising operation to align with social distancing guidelines and conducted over 175 virtual fundraising meetings which resulted in 42 proposals submitted for \$9.6 million in new funding requests.

On October 7-8, 2020, Texas State hosted its fifth annual Step Up for State day-of-giving event. In total, the university received over \$160,000 through 1,500 gifts to support projects. Over the last five years, this event has raised over \$1 million. As in past years, Step Up for State highlighted ways the Bobcat community can support the student experience. Several projects from past years were featured again this year, including: Bobcat Bounty, Bobcat Build, the Common Experience, First Generation Proud, and Operation Veteran Academic Success. Additionally, this year included a focus on student engagement in research and creative expression aligned with the Big Ideas themes: Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Translational Health Research, Materials with Intelligence, Learning with Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality, and Harnessing Big Data. There was also a fund to support student-focused projects in creative arts and humanities.

To raise awareness for Big Ideas, Texas State hosted a five-day initiative, Big Ideas Virtual Week, during the week prior to Step Up for State. Starting on September 28, 2020, and ending on October 2, 2020, a single Big Idea was highlighted each day. Conversations with alumni, industry representatives, students, and faculty explored how Big Ideas research is addressing social issues and business challenges, and shaping the student learning experience at Texas State. Pre-recorded and live programming was shared across all Texas State media platforms.

During fall 2020, the university will also reopen the process for submitting proposals for projects that align with the five approved Big Ideas areas, and a new sixth Big Idea in the humanities and creative arts under the theme of Human Expression. In this round, Texas State is looking for specific projects which, if given the necessary resources, can advance research and student engagement within one of the Big Idea areas. After proposals are received, they will be reviewed by a committee with member representation from across our campuses. Selected projects will be announced in December 2020 and will be included as featured fundraising opportunities under the Big Ideas initiative.

The Texas State Alumni Association (Association) is continuing implementation of the new strategic plan approved by the Association board of directors in August 2019. This past year, changes included a rebranded life membership program, Forever Bobcats, and a new website. For fall 2020, the Association is launching a new Alumni networks program. In addition to four regionally based networks, the Association is launching seven new networks to engage Bobcats around the country based on a professional industry, personal interests, or shared identity.

SPONSORED PROGRAM AWARDS - RESEARCH AND INSTRUCTIONAL

The initial analysis of research expenditures for fiscal year 2020 indicates an increase in Total Research and Development (TRD) expenditures, but a decrease in Restricted Research Expenditures (RRE). Total Research and Development expenditures, which includes state appropriations, will reach a new institutional high mark of over \$67 million for an approximate four percent increase over fiscal year 2019. The increase in TRD expenditures is important for determining Texas State’s ranking in the National Science Foundation’s Higher Education Research and Development Survey. Based on the latest data, Texas State ranks 177 out of 915 universities. Conversely, RRE expenditures will be over \$31 million which is approximately a 10 percent decrease compared to fiscal year 2019 values. Even though there was a modest recovery in RRE during the fourth quarter, it did not completely offset the sharp decline in expenditures during the third quarter due to a lengthy COVID-19 related shutdown of research activities. Both key metrics are still under development as the Annual Financial Report is being finalized. Nonetheless, based on a number of factors including a high number of proposal submissions to external sponsors, available revenue on hand to spend including several new awards, Texas State is positioned to make consistent progress toward our institutional goals of achieving National Research University Funding eligibility and R-1 status.

Below are the research and instructional awards over \$100,000 received during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2020.

Recipient/Unit	Funding	Project Title and Purpose
Mrs. Theadora Dinelle Whalen Texas Justice Court Training Center	\$2,094,010 Justices of the Peace and Constables Association of Texas, Inc.	Justice Court In-Service Training Program Fiscal Year 2021 will support legal research and development of training curriculum for the Texas Justice Court Traffic Safety Initiative.
Dr. Daniel A. Brown University College	\$1,198,301 Year 5 of 5; Total Award \$5,963,769 United States Department of Education	HSI: IMPACTing STEM Success at Texas State will enhance and develop the STEM success pipeline through high impact practices and outreach as well as will strengthen STEM success through professional development research.

<p>Dr. Edwin L. Piner Department of Physics</p>	<p>\$660,000 United States Army</p>	<p>Heterogeneous Integration of Diamond and Ultrawide-Bandgap Semiconductors for Fundamental Phonon and Electron Transport Studies will produce high-quality materials for thermal management in electronic devices.</p>
<p>Dr. Ravindranath Droopad Ingram School of Engineering</p>	<p>\$656,949 Office of Naval Research</p>	<p>HSI: Ultrawide Bandgap Heterostructures; Growth, Characterization, and Matching will target a material system that addresses the need for developing and understanding bandgap oxide heterostructures that have the potential for significant technological impact to society.</p>
<p>Dr. Jangmin Kim School of Social Work</p>	<p>\$593,452 Texas Department of Family and Protective Services</p>	<p>Title IV-E Year 27 will expand the contractual relationship between the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Center for Applied Interdisciplinary Research, and Texas State to enhance the skills of current and prospective Child Protective Services workers in social work, and provide opportunities for on-going staff training.</p>
<p>Dr. Amy D. Benton School of Social Work</p>	<p>\$480,000 United States Department of Health and Human Services</p>	<p>Fiscal Year 2021 Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Competition will enhance services to rural and at-risk populations through a focus on increasing the number of social workers prepared to provide trauma informed, culturally sensitive, evidence-based behavioral health prevention and intervention practices at schools, hospitals/clinics, and homeless serving agency settings.</p>

<p>Dr. Kathleen Mary Melhuish Department of Mathematics</p>	<p>\$477,407 Year 3 of 3; Total Award \$1,984,657 National Science Foundation</p>	<p>Using Technology to Capture Classroom Interactions: The Design, Validation, and Dissemination of a Formative Assessment of Instruction Tool for Diverse K-8 Mathematics Classroom will be used to design, validate, and disseminate a formative assessment of instruction tools intended to support teacher learning focusing on interactions by teachers and among students.</p>
<p>Dr. Sean Bradley Justice School of Art and Design</p>	<p>\$449,100 National Science Foundation</p>	<p>Exploring Early Childhood Teachers' Abilities to Identify Computational Thinking Precursors to Strengthen Computer Science in Classrooms will be used to study teachers' understanding and implementation of computer science and computational thinking as well as precursor skills and practices in the early elementary classroom.</p>
<p>Dr. Lysle Lewis Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry</p>	<p>\$440,311 National Institutes of Health</p>	<p>DNA Repair Pathways Preserve Cellular Homeostasis will investigate the roles of all major pathways in maintaining a stable cellular environment (homeostasis) during normal growth in response to endogenous rather than exogenous sources of DNA damage.</p>
<p>Dr. Xiaoyu Xue Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry</p>	<p>\$436,350 National Institutes of Health</p>	<p>Roles of the Human UAP56 Helicase in Co-Transcriptional R-loop Resolution and Genome Maintenance will determine how the protein UAP56 helps eliminate harmful, co-transcriptional R-loops, and how this activity is regulated by its cofactors to maintain genome stability.</p>

<p>Mr. Paul Joseph Harper Small Business Development Center</p>	<p>\$432,000 Small Business Development Center (UTSA)</p>	<p>COVID: Fiscal Year 2020 SBDC COVID Business Recovery Accelerator Cooperative Agreement will assist small businesses impacted by COVID-19 by providing counseling/education to apply for financial resources, protecting workplaces against COVID-19, preparing for sudden disasters, developing web integration, use of online distribution services, developing/executing Continuity of Operations, protecting internet protocol, risks/mitigation of cyber threats, and mitigating the effect of reduced travel.</p>
<p>Dr. Stephen P. Ciullo Department of Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p>\$373,284 Year 3 of 4; Total Award \$1,398,259 United States Department of Education</p>	<p>Exploring Writing Instruction Delivered by Teachers Providing Services to Students with Disabilities will investigate differences in the use of effective writing practices between special and general education teachers, exploration of three teacher-level variables and impact on student writing outcomes.</p>
<p>Dr. Dana M. Garcia Department of Biology</p>	<p>\$366,693 National Science Foundation</p>	<p>Collaborative Proposal: Development and Genetic Pathways to Phenotype Convergence in a Radiation of Groundwater Salamanders will support collaborative research in fundamental principles that identify and explain the unity and diversity of life and its interactions.</p>
<p>Mrs. Rachael Weldon-Caron Institutional Inclusive Excellence for Student Initiatives</p>	<p>\$338,972 Year 1 of 5; Total Award \$1,355,888 United States Department of Education</p>	<p>Student Support Services will impact student retention and graduation for low-income and first-generation students and students with disabilities.</p>

<p>Dr. Valarie B. Fleming Department of Communication Disorders</p>	<p>\$315,350 Year 1 of 5; Total Award \$1,576,750 United States Department of Health and Human Services</p>	<p>Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students in Communication Disorders will provide scholarships to Texas State's Department of Communication Disorders graduate students for whom the cost of college attendance would constitute a financial hardship.</p>
<p>Dr. Alyson Alexander Collins Department of Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p>\$305,561 Year 1 of 2; Total Award \$601,953 United States Department of Education</p>	<p>Comprehensive Meta-Analysis of Writing Interventions for Students in Grades K to 5 will conduct a comprehensive meta-analysis to explore effective writing interventions in grades K to 5.</p>
<p>Dr. Merritt L. Drewery Department of Agricultural Sciences</p>	<p>\$274,998 United States Department of Agriculture</p>	<p>HSI: Exposure, Experimental Learning, and Extension: Positioning Underrepresented Students for Academic and Professional Success in Agricultural Sciences will strengthen the incoming Food, Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Sciences workforce by developing educational activities that position underrepresented students for success in attaining and excelling in a professional career or doctoral degree program.</p>
<p>Mrs. Rachael Weldon-Caron Institutional Inclusive Excellence for Student Initiatives</p>	<p>\$261,888 Year 1 of 5; Total Award \$1,309,440 United States Department of Education</p>	<p>Student Support Services (STEM) will target academic services unique to the needs of low-income and first-generation students and students with disabilities, majoring in STEM disciplines.</p>
<p>Dr. Oleg Komogortsev Department of Computer Science</p>	<p>\$255,787 Facebook Technologies, LLC</p>	<p>Eye Movement Prediction on Virtual Reality Platforms will study eye movement prediction.</p>
<p>Dr. Timothy H. Bonner Department of Biology</p>	<p>\$230,000 Lower Colorado River Authority</p>	<p>Mark-Recapture Mussels in the Colorado River will document changes in freshwater mussels at the San Saba site in the Middle Colorado River.</p>

<p>Dr. Sandra Beatriz Vanegas School of Social Work</p>	<p>\$199,873 Year 1 of 3; Total Award \$599,870 United States Department of Health and Human Services</p>	<p>HSI: Efficacy of the Autism Spectrum Disorder Screening and Parent Engagement (ASPEN) Intervention Program in Low-Resource Community will examine the efficacy of a culturally informed parent-mediated intervention that has been developed specifically for families of young children at risk for Autism Spectrum Disorder who reside in low-resource households.</p>
<p>Mr. David N. Dornak The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment</p>	<p>\$193,935 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</p>	<p>Upper San Marcos River Watershed Protection Plan and Implementation for Riparian Restoration for the Windmill Branch of Sessom Creek and Outreach and Education Programs will revegetate the Windmill Tributary to slow down and mitigate stormwater runoff and reduce high velocity and sediment-laden flows to Sessom Creek, and ultimately to the San Marcos River.</p>
<p>Dr. Stephen P. Ciullo Department of Curriculum and Instruction</p>	<p>\$132,763 Year 2 of 4; Total Award \$514,284 George Mason University</p>	<p>Writing in Middle School Science and Social Studies: Exploring Instruction and Social Studies: Exploring Instruction and Support for Students with Disabilities will observe and survey teachers in Social Studies classrooms, document instructional activities, and administer assessments to students with disabilities who are taught in those classrooms.</p>

<p>Dr. Martin Burtscher Department of Computer Science</p>	<p>\$102,171 Year 1 of 3; Total Award \$302,480 National Science Foundation</p>	<p>Collaborative Research: Practical and Rigorous Correctness Checking and Correctness Preservation for Irregular Parallel Programs will extract common patterns from sophisticated parallel programs and convert them into a suite of small test programs. The entire suite will then be used to drive the development of automatic verification tools that can handle even the most complex parallel programs.</p>
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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Informal Site Visit

Since June 2019, Texas State has been taking significant steps toward ARL membership. In June 2020, the University Libraries hosted a virtual formal site visit by the ARL membership committee (in lieu of an in-person visit), and as a result of the visit, and subsequent ARL membership meetings, the Division of Information Technology is pleased to announce that Texas State was extended and has accepted a formal offer to join the ARL membership. Texas State is proud of this accomplishment and looks forward to forging new partnerships with fellow research libraries. Texas State is the sixth higher education institution in Texas to become a member of the ARL, joining Rice University, Texas A & M, Texas Tech, the University of Texas-Austin, and the University of Houston.

The Wittliff Collections Update

After extensive renovations, The Wittliff Collections opened all exhibits and spaces to the public in mid-August 2020. Three new galleries were added to the space and the size of the Lonesome Dove gallery doubled. The Lonesome Dove space can now display the entire collection in one area and has a viewing gallery with Lonesome Dove episodes on repeat. An immersive new experience awaits visitors to the Texas Music Gallery. The exhibit features interactive content and rich Texas Music history.

Alkek One

The first floor of the Albert B. Alkek Library was transformed after recent renovation and construction projects were finalized. Students and other library patrons have access to innovative makerspaces and state-of-the-art technology. The new space now houses 2D and 3D design spaces, a GeoSpace employing powerful geospatial and remote sensing technologies, an augmented and virtual reality immersion studio, and multiple YouStar audio and video production studios.

Buck Winn Mural Installation

After years of restoration and cleaning, the portion of the Buck Winn mural in Texas State's possession called "The Chuckwagon," has been installed at the Albert B. Alkek Library. Winn's entire work, called "The History of Ranching," is over 280 feet long, of which 82 feet are now proudly displayed for Texas State visitors and library patrons to view.

Learning Management System Update

The migration from Texas State's previous learning management system, TRACS, to the new Canvas system is well underway. Currently 85 percent of courses are being taught via Canvas, and faculty and students have embraced the new system. Outreach and training efforts have been well received across the university. The Division of Information Technology's partnerships have been strengthened with areas such as Faculty Development and the Office of Distance and Extended Learning during the migration. Beginning in the spring 2021 semester, all courses will be taught in the new Canvas environment.

Telecommunications Easement Update

After approval by The TSUS BOR during its May 2020 meeting, the new telecommunications easement for Consolidated Communications Enterprise Services, Inc., located in the north-east corner of the Bobcat Stadium parking lot, has provided a redundant connection to the university's internet service provider: the LEARN network. Previously, the sole connection to LEARN was located at STAR Park and provided a single point of failure should lines be damaged. The new connection provides a failover should the university experience any cut transmission lines or other disruption, thereby mitigating the risk of a campus internet outage.

eSports Update

The Division of Information Technology, in partnership with the Division of Student Affairs, is proud to sponsor the creation of a fully equipped, technologically advanced arena for the Texas State eSports team to practice and hold tournaments. The space, located in the LBJ Student Center, has been re-imagined with customized equipment made specifically for eSports gaming. The space and equipment will better serve the current eSports community at Texas State and be a great university recruitment tool.

UNIVERSITY SPECIFIC ITEMS

COVID-19 Response

Texas State has partnered with the Texas Division of Emergency Management and Curative, Inc., to bring free COVID-19 testing to the San Marcos Campus. The PCR test is collected with an oral swab and results are provided in less than 48 hours. All Texas State faculty, staff, and students are eligible for the testing. In the first two weeks of testing, more than 2,000 tests were conducted.

The Division of Information Technology has added new system functionality to timekeeping and multiple other human resources and finance modules to properly document employee time and adhere to federal updates and requirements. The division's Information Technology Assistance Center installed cameras and microphones in classrooms to facilitate the varied learning modes available this fall 2020, which appear to have yielded a successful outcome. Multiple areas within the division worked to quickly turn the LBJ Center ballrooms into technology-equipped spaces for students who may have one class on campus followed by their next one online. These converted ballroom spaces provide a location for students to attend their online class from on campus.

A survey of Austin-area workers conducted by the Translational Health Research Center at Texas State, in cooperation with Central Texas' transportation management association, Movability, sheds new light on how employees have adapted to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic while offering guidance to businesses as they seek to navigate an uncertain economy. The survey gauged the telework experience of 732 unique participants from 103 unique home zip codes who previously commuted to 85 unique work zip codes. The study was overseen by Dr. Melinda Villagran, a professor in the Department of Communication Studies and director of the Translational Health Research Center. Dr. Villagran also discussed the findings in episode seven of the Big Ideas TXST podcast.

A report from a national work group co-chaired by Dr. Emily Brunson, associate professor in the Department of Anthropology, warned that an array of social factors could ultimately undermine any COVID-19 vaccine's effectiveness if not addressed. The report, "The Public's Role in COVID-19 Vaccination: Planning Recommendations Informed by Design Thinking and the Social, Behavioral and Communication Sciences," was released on July 9, 2020, by the Center for Health Security at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Texas State Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Awards

Dr. Deborah Bergeron, Ms. Gloria Campos Brown, Mr. John L. Navarrette, Mr. James Samuel Taylor, and Mr. Johnny R. Weisman are the 2020 recipients of the Texas State Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumni Award. Additionally, the Alumni Association named three Young Alumni Rising Star Award recipients: Mr. Mark Estrada, Ms. Cortney Lebens, and Mr. Kuro Tawil. First given to President Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1959, the Distinguished Alumni Award is the Alumni Association's most prestigious honor. Award recipients are Texas State graduates who have distinguished themselves in their chosen occupations and whose leadership serves as an example for the Texas State community.

Academic Programs

In June 2020, the master's degree program in nursing at the Round Rock Campus was accredited for 10 years by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Board of Commissioners. The accreditation is effective as of October 7, 2019, which was the first day of the program's CCNE on-site evaluation. Texas State will next host an on-site evaluation in fall 2029. The CCNE Board of Commissioners determined that the program met all accreditation standards with no compliance concerns.

The Department of Respiratory Care in the College of Health Professions at the Round Rock Campus received the Distinguished Registered Respiratory Therapist Credentialing Success Award from the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC). CoARC also announced that Texas State had the nation's largest Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care program. Total enrollment at Texas State averaged 44 students 2016-2018, whereas the national average for all other programs was 19.7 over that same span.

Faculty News

A team of researchers led by Texas State astronomer, University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Physics and The Texas State University System Regents' Professor Donald Olson applied his distinctive brand of celestial sleuthing to 17th century Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer's masterpiece, *View of Delft*, using the artist's signature gift for depicting light and shadow to resolve the long-standing uncertainty over when it was painted. Dr. Olson, along with Mr. Russell Doescher, retired professor in the Department of Physics, Mr. Charles Condos and Mr. Michael Sánchez, current students at Texas State and Mr. Tim Jenison of San Antonio, published the findings in the September 2020 issue of *Sky & Telescope* magazine. Based upon the team's research, Vermeer painted *View of Delft* from the second floor of an inn overlooking the city and was inspired by the scene that he observed on or near September 3, 1659, (or an earlier year) at 8:00 a.m., local mean time.

Dr. Paula Stigler Granados, assistant professor in the School of Health Administration, serves as lead organizer of the Texas Chagas Task Force, which is a group of experts working to raise awareness of this often-neglected disease. The Texas Chagas Task Force warned about the threat "kissing bugs" can pose for humans and pets as they spread Chagas disease. Kissing bug is the common name for a group of blood-sucking insects called triatomines. Chagas disease is caused by a parasite, *Trypanosoma cruzi*, that lives in the intestines and feces of kissing bugs. As part of that effort, the Task Force shared information and resources on Chagas disease and kissing bugs with the public.

Dr. Paul Dawkins, assistant professor in the Department of Mathematics, was awarded the Annie and John Selden Award for outstanding achievement in undergraduate mathematical education by the Mathematical Association of America. The Annie and John Selden Award honors a researcher who has established a significant record of published research in undergraduate mathematics education.

Dr. Rodney Rohde, associate director of the Translational Health Research Initiative, professor in the College of Health Professionals and chair of the Clinical Laboratory Science program, was named a finalist in the Pathologist's Power List 2020. The Pathologist's Power List recognizes motivating mentors, trailblazing innovators, social media gurus, and laboratory medicine heroes who have made a dramatic impact on laboratory medicine.

University News

Texas State was named one of the nation's best institutions for undergraduates to earn their college degrees by the *Princeton Review*. The education services company profiled and recommended Texas State in the 2020 edition of its annual college guide, *The Best 386 Colleges*. The book does not rank the universities in numerical order.

Texas State was named among "America's Best-in-State Employers" by *Forbes* magazine. The bi-weekly business magazine listed Texas State at No. 86 among the 100 best employers in Texas. Texas State was the only four-year university to be included in the Texas ranking. *Forbes* previously recognized Texas State among "America's Best Employers" in 2019 and 2017, "Best Employers for Women" in 2018 and "Best Employers for Diversity" in 2019.

Texas State University was named among the Best National Universities for 2021 by *U.S. News and World Report*. Texas State was included in the Nos. 298-389 ranking range on the list. *U.S. News* surveyed 1,452 U.S. bachelor's degree-granting institutions on 17 measures of academic quality to compile the list. In addition to the overall list, Texas State was also included at No. 119 for Top Performers in Social Mobility, in the Nos. 154-209 ranking range for Top Public Schools, and in the Nos. 195-206 ranking range for Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs.

Texas State University was named one of the "Best Colleges in America, Ranked by Value" for 2020 by *Money* magazine. *Money* ranked Texas State No. 385 out of 739 schools included, ahead of such institutions as the University of Arkansas, Baylor University, Texas Christian University, and University of North Texas.

Texas State hosted approximately 60 students and staff from Lamar University who were under a mandatory evacuation from their campus in Beaumont, Texas, due to Hurricane Laura. Lamar students and staff arrived on the San Marcos Campus on August 25, 2020, and departed on August 29, 2020. Texas State was committed to helping these students and staff during the difficult time, while also making sure to take precautions to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Major Construction Fall 2020

1. University Police Department Building
2. Roy F. Mitte Building Space Reconfigurations

