



In 1903, the doors to Southwest Texas State Normal School in San Marcos opened to 17 faculty members and a student body of 303. By 1999, when the centennial of the original legislative action was observed, the university was proud to have grown to over 21,000 students and 900 faculty. Today, 25 years later, Texas State University serves over 40,000 students with nearly 5,000 faculty and staff. As the 6th largest public university in Texas, it is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Texas State's San Marcos campus students choose from bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral degrees as well as undergraduate and graduate certificate programs. Texas State's Round Rock campus, slightly north of Austin, is home to the College of Health Professions and offers courses leading to select bachelor's degrees and certificate programs, plus several complete master's degree programs and a professional doctoral program.

Today's Texas State is a public, student-centered, Hispanic-serving, doctoral-granting research institution dedicated to excellence in serving the educational needs of the diverse population of Texas and the world beyond. It has also been labeled as one of the 40 best college destinations for veterans by multiple college guidebooks. Central and South Texas as well as the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex, Houston and the Gulf Coast higher education regions account for over 90 percent of the enrollment and are the fastest growing in terms of contribution to headcount enrollment. The Upper Rio Grande (El Paso) and Dallas/Ft. Worth are the fastest growing Texas higher education regions, percentage wise. However, the percentage of students from out of state has grown faster than any Texas higher education region over the past ten years and the university has enrolled students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 125 countries in the past decade.

The current student body of 40,598 reflects the multi-ethnic and cultural diversity of the state with more than 56 percent ethnic minorities and a large number of undergraduates (40 percent) who are Pell Grant eligible. Undergraduates comprise 89% of students, while 10% are engaged in graduate study. Hispanic enrollment at Texas State has increased over 45% in the past decade, well above the growth rate of Hispanics at all Texas public universities. The university has been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

Over 2,000 faculty members support coursework, students and research through the College of Applied Arts, McCoy College of Business Administration, the College of Education, the College of Fine Arts and Communication, the College of Health Professions, the College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Science and Engineering. The Honors College offers interdisciplinary coursework for high ability students and The Graduate College coordinates the master's and doctoral programs across the San Marcos and Round Rock campuses.

U.S. News and World Report lists Texas State University as a selective institution. Over 44% of entering freshmen are from the top quartile of their high school class and the mean SAT score for the most recent freshman class was 1100, compared with a Texas mean for college-bound seniors of 1010 and a U.S. mean of 1050. The criteria used in admissions differ by institution, but Texas State's undergraduate admissions standards would be considered by most to be among the ten most selective of Texas' 37 public four-year colleges and universities.



Institutions used in peer studies vary according to the purpose of the study, so that appropriate peers can be used for different topics. One of the more commonly used national peer groups for research includes the New Mexico State University, Clemson University, University of Oregon, University of Central Florida, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Oklahoma, University of California-Santa Barbara, Arizona State University, and University of Arkansas.

Located midway between Austin and San Antonio, Texas State's San Marcos campus is also on the edge of the Balcones Escarpment, where prairies abruptly turn into the Hill Country. The location includes Spring Lake, headwaters of the San Marcos River and one of the oldest inhabited spots in North America. The springs that feed the lake and river are home to eight endangered species and one of the best places in the world to study freshwater aquatic ecosystems and species. San Marcos remains a popular place for modern-day humans. The city has been the fastest or among the fastest growing urban areas in the nation for several years.

The environment provides a natural focus for university faculty and student researchers, but the scope of scientific activity spreads far beyond that. The area's population growth has been accompanied by mushrooming business and industrial growth. That too, has stimulated, and been stimulated by, research activity on campus. In 2012, Texas State University was designated as an Emerging Research University by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This was confirmation not only of what the university had done, but where it is going. The Coordinating Board defines Emerging Research Universities as institutions that offer a wide range of baccalaureate and master's degree programs, serve a student population within and outside the region, and are committed to graduate education through the doctorate in targeted areas of excellence. The university currently enrolls 673 doctoral students and generated \$141 million in research and development funds in the 2023 fiscal year.

In 2023 the university updated the Strategic Plan for Research with targeted investments of institutional funds to support increased research activity across campus. The methodology, measurement and statistical analysis (MMSA) group in the Office of Research and Federal Relations provides state-of-the-art, technical support to the research community. Statisticians assist with the development and articulation of technical components, selection of appropriate analytic methods, identification and creation of measurement instruments, data management protocols, as well as data analyses and interpretation of results.

Those 17 original faculty members from 120 years ago would barely recognize what the world, and Texas, have become. But they would find that their drive to serve the educational, intellectual, environmental, business, and industrial needs of Texas still has a home here.

~last updated February 2025