From the President

UTSA is a university on the rise to greatness. We are a destination for top-ranked students seeking academic excellence. We have cultivated expertise and made new discoveries in critical research fields. We have gained national recognition and built international partnerships. We have become the preferred university for top-ranked students. We have raised more than $200 million dollars through our first-ever capital campaign to support our students and faculty. We have generated millions of dollars in economic development and impacted hundreds of thousands of people in our community.

By providing a framework to advance the university even closer to Tier One status, Blueprint UTSA builds on these successes. It underscores our emerging areas of excellence. It pinpoints the strategic initiatives and resources that will allow us to accelerate our ascent. It drives every aspect of the university and measures our progress against the top research universities in the world.

Blueprint UTSA was developed through the hard work and thoughtful contributions of students, alumni, faculty, staff, administrators and community leaders. I am so grateful for everyone’s time and dedication. My thanks, too, to the San Antonio community for the enthusiasm you have shown for UTSA’s aspiration.

Ricardo Romo, President
The University of Texas at San Antonio
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Mission, Vision and Core Values

UTSA’s mission, vision and core values statements reflect the purpose of the institution (mission), what it aspires to be (vision) and the guiding principles that it will use to reach its goals (core values).

MISSION
The University of Texas at San Antonio is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through research and discovery, teaching and learning, community engagement and public service. As an institution of access to excellence, UTSA embraces multicultural traditions and serves as a center for intellectual and creative resources as well as a catalyst for socioeconomic development and the commercialization of intellectual property — for Texas, the nation and the world.

VISION
To be a premier public research university, providing access to educational excellence and preparing citizen leaders for the global environment.

CORE VALUES

» Excellence: commitment to delivering consistently high-quality teaching, research and service through superior performance.

» Innovation: encouraging ingenuity, creativity and discovery.

» Integrity: adhering to a standard of core values at UTSA and ensuring that one acts in a fair and ethical fashion.

» Inclusiveness: fostering diversity and providing access to educational and socioeconomic opportunities for all — regardless of individual backgrounds and philosophies.

» Respect: treating others with civility and openness, recognizing the dignity inherent in each individual.

» Collaboration: working with others toward common goals while valuing teamwork, participation and commitment to service.
Until then, San Antonio was the only major city in the nation not served by a public university. Leaders, legislators and the public knew that if San Antonio was to achieve its full potential as a major American city, a top-tier university was needed to offer a comprehensive array of courses and degrees.

The university’s first two presidents, Arleigh B. Templeton and Peter T. Flawn, worked diligently to hire faculty, develop a curriculum and library, and finalize plans for a campus to be built on 600 acres near the junction of Interstate 10 and Loop 1604 in northwest San Antonio. At the time of construction, from 1972 to 1976, the campus was the largest university construction project in the country, comprising seven major buildings.

In summer 1973, UTSA admitted 671 graduate students and began classes taught by 52 faculty members in leased facilities at the Koger Center. Master’s degrees were offered in business administration, education, bicultural-bilingual studies, English as a second language, environmental management, Spanish, biology, mathematics and systems design. In 1974, UTSA’s enrollment reached 1,171, and 82 students received master’s degrees in the first Commencement in August.

The Recreation Wellness Center (left) and University Center (above) were constructed to accommodate UTSA’s growing enrollment, which today includes nearly 29,000 students.

The UTSA Story

Founded by the 61st Texas Legislature on June 5, 1969, UTSA was commissioned as a university of the first class.

UTSA’s first Commencement, held in August 1974, included a graduating class of 82 master’s students.
UTSA’s vibrant campus life attracts top-ranked students from across Texas, the nation and 99 countries. More than half of UTSA’s students are from underrepresented groups and nearly half will be the first in their families to earn a college degree.

Above: President Ricardo Romo and Dr. Harriett Romo join in the celebration of Fiesta UTSA with a member of the San Antonio Charro Association. Fiesta UTSA has been a campus tradition since 1980. Right: The bridge that connects the Business Building and the McKinney Humanities Building represents collaboration across multiple disciplines – a core value that UTSA strives to demonstrate.
In September 1975, UTSA began classes at the Main Campus with more than 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The first Commencement ceremony with both undergraduate and graduate students took place in May 1976 with 46 receiving bachelor’s degrees and 184 receiving master’s degrees. Today, the university has more than 112,000 graduates.

Throughout the 1980s, UTSA experienced rapid growth while James W. Wagener served as president. New buildings were added and new degree programs were developed. In February 1986, the UT System designated the Institute of Texan Cultures a UTSA campus.

In 1990, UTSA’s fourth president, Samuel A. Kirkpatrick, began a new phase of university history by initiating a comprehensive strategic planning process and securing funds for construction. In 1997, UTSA opened the Downtown Campus adjacent to Interstate 35 and historic Cattleman Square.

In 1999, Ricardo Romo became UTSA’s fifth president and ushered in a new era of academic excellence and community involvement. A native of San Antonio, Romo expanded the university’s commitment of providing access to education. Today, UTSA offers more than 160 degree programs including 70 bachelor’s, 68 master’s and 24 doctoral programs. The student population is comprised of nearly 30,000 students, of which 4,300 are graduate students. It is a university of first choice for students from Texas, across the nation and 99 countries.

Underrepresented minorities make up about 60 percent of UTSA’s student body. The university also serves more first-generation students than ever before. Nearly half of UTSA’s undergraduates are the first in their families to earn a degree.

The university footprint substantially increased from 1.8 million square feet to 5.4 million square feet. Under Romo, the university launched new projects at the Main Campus including an expanded University Center, a Recreation Wellness Center, additional classrooms and laboratories, and new student housing that accommodates more than 4,000 on-campus residents. The Downtown Campus increased to 18 acres.

In 2010, the university installed one of the world’s most powerful electron microscopes, and opened the first bookless library on a U.S. college or university campus. Also, UTSA received its largest gift from an individual – an estimated $30 million from the estate of Mary E. McKinney that will fund UTSA scholarships in perpetuity.

The UTSA faculty includes international research leaders in health, cybersecurity, energy, sustainability, and human and social development. The university is pioneering new research initiatives in brain health, infectious diseases and data analytics. Today, UTSA conducts more than $83.5 million in external research and sponsored programs, including $56.8 million in research expenditures.

UTSA marked its inaugural season in 2011 and broke NCAA start-up program records for first-game attendance (56,743) and average attendance (35,521). In 2013, the university accepted an invitation to join Conference USA, where it continues to play today. Most recently, the university acquired 125 acres near the Main Campus, with the financial support of Bexar County and the City of San Antonio, to accommodate new athletic facilities at UTSA Park West.

Community service is a hallmark of UTSA. In January 2015, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching selected UTSA to receive its prestigious Community Engagement Classification. The honor acknowledges UTSA’s “dynamic and noteworthy” community outreach efforts in San Antonio and its impact on the global community through teaching and research, public service, volunteerism, civic partnerships and economic development.

The UTSA Institute for Economic Development is recognized as the nation’s leading Small Business Development Center, and has received critical acclaim for its initiatives throughout Latin American and the Caribbean.

In August 2015, UTSA announced that it had received $180 million in gifts and pledges during its inaugural capital campaign, We Are UTSA – A Top-Tier Campaign. The campaign was launched in 2009 with an initial goal of $120 million to support student scholarships, faculty and research initiatives, campus activities and community outreach programs. In early 2013, the university surpassed that goal and, with two years left in the campaign, went on to reach more than $200 million.

UTSA has internationally respected academic programs, award-winning faculty and sophisticated science, technology and recreational facilities, along with recognized arts and humanities programs and diverse, dynamic student life. For four years, the university has been ranked among the top 400 universities in the world, according to Times Higher Education.
Strategic Advantages

UTSA is an emerging Tier One university recognized for academic excellence, impactful research and dynamic community outreach. UTSA possesses numerous advantages that provide a foundation for addressing its strategic initiatives. These include:

- Broad areas of multidisciplinary expertise – ranging from computer science and health to engineering and education – that enhance UTSA’s ability to build strong research partnerships, pursue innovation, make new discoveries and recruit talented undergraduate and graduate students;
- Close proximity to the business community, military installations and institutions, such as Southwest Research Institute and Texas Biomedical Research Institute, advancing research and economic development in areas such as biomedicine, cybersecurity and sustainable energy;
- Opportunities for students to participate in real-world research and creative scholarship opportunities, as early as the freshman year;
- Location in San Antonio – the nation’s 7th largest city – with its vibrant multicultural population, thriving economy and opportunities for public and private partnerships;
- Recognition by top-ranked students as a university of first choice, raising the university’s reputation for academic excellence;
- History of providing opportunities for excellence to a traditionally underrepresented population in Texas higher education;
- Proximity to Mexico and Latin America, facilitating international partnerships in cross-cultural studies and exchange programs related to economic development, environmental issues, public health, human rights and other issues;
- Diverse campus population consisting of local, regional, national and international students and faculty that sparks dialogue on multicultural issues, enhances the appreciation of foreign cultures and fosters global citizenship;
- Alumni base of more than 112,000 graduates, approximately 70 percent of whom remain in San Antonio;
- Shared vision of student success and academic excellence that unites the UTSA community in its climb to Tier One recognition;
- Recognition from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching with the 2015 Community Engagement Classification for UTSA’s impact on the community through teaching, research, public service, volunteerism, civic partnerships and economic development;
- International reputation for excellence in teaching and research, including ranking as one of the top 400 universities in the world by Times Higher Education and one of only 66 U.S. public institutions included on the prestigious list. This allows UTSA to recruit top-tier students and faculty; and
- Partnerships with international industry leaders in areas such as cybersecurity, data mining and cloud computing, all of which are building a larger corporate presence in the San Antonio area.
Strategic Challenges

As a top-tier institution, UTSA has many strategic advantages over similar universities. However, the university recognizes there are challenges to realizing its vision of Tier One status. These include:

- Accelerating the increase in undergraduate retention and graduation rates by further supporting student success initiatives;
- Better supporting a unique and diverse student population that includes first-generation students, transfer students, students who need to work and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Meeting and exceeding the state’s quantifiable expectations for emerging research universities which include annual research expenditures, doctoral degrees, endowment growth, etc.;
- Increasing the number of top-tier scholars and researchers to expand UTSA’s research capabilities and advance the university to Tier One designation;
- Adapting to changing federal and state mandates that impact higher education;
- Securing greater funding through traditional and innovative sources of revenue to support academic excellence, research and community outreach programs;
- Maximizing limited resources on programs that are critical to the university’s operations and Tier One aspirations;
- More effectively leveraging community and institutional alliances to advance UTSA and San Antonio’s top-tier aspirations;
- Strengthening the university’s international reputation for excellence in academics, research and community service;
- Responding to rapidly changing social and educational needs including greater integration of technology to enhance teaching and learning; and
- Providing students and faculty with access to state-of-the-art facilities while facing an increasing deferred maintenance backlog due to limited resources.
Executive Summary

Blueprint UTSA articulates an institution-wide commitment to excellence. The plan is driven by the university’s vision of becoming a premier research institution that advances knowledge through distinctive research and discovery, provides students with outstanding educational experiences and furthers the economic and social well-being of the global community.

Developed by students, alumni, faculty, staff, administrative leaders and community members, Blueprint UTSA builds on the previous UTSA 2016 strategic plan. It reaffirms UTSA’s institutional mission and core values while presenting a clear roadmap that continues the university’s ascension to Tier One status.

Over the last decade, UTSA has achieved many milestones. It is a university of first choice for students. Its enrollment has grown to nearly 29,000. It is one of the nation’s leading Hispanic Serving Institutions with more than 50 percent of its students coming from underrepresented groups. Its diversity mirrors the demographic shifts and globalization of our society. It is uniquely “the face of America over the next 10 years.”

UTSA is expanding its world-class faculty, and the groundbreaking work of its researchers and students have generated new discoveries and led to international recognition.

The university raised more than $200 million for student scholarships, faculty and research support, campus amenities and outreach programs in its first-ever capital campaign.

The San Antonio metropolitan area is seventh in the nation in population growth, and has a thriving economy including a flourishing high-tech sector. Blueprint UTSA responds to changing workplace demands and demonstrates UTSA’s leadership in preparing students for the global workforce.
Strategic Goals

» We will transform students into successful scholars, global citizens and leaders.

» We will create scholarly work and research that significantly impacts society.

» We will enrich the quality of life and economic prosperity of the communities we serve.

» We will deliver world-class resources, support and infrastructure commensurate with a Tier One institution.

» We will achieve recognition and esteem as a premier research university.
Strategic Goal One

We will transform students into successful scholars, global citizens and leaders.
UTSA is dedicated to offering students a superior educational experience that builds on the rich experiences and cultures they bring will prepare them for the jobs of the future, including those that may not even exist today. Its programs balance rigor and high expectations with supportive learning experiences and inspiring mentors. It offers a rich student experience built on its cultural diversity.

Students engage with their peers, faculty and researchers, working in collaborative environments and contribute to cutting-edge research. The university’s location at the heart of a vibrant urban center allows students to participate in internships and service programs that develop their knowledge and skills and cultivate their leadership abilities.

UTSA fosters an environment that creates a sense of belonging for every student. It is committed to providing the resources that students need to thrive at the university and beyond. Three initiatives address teaching, learning and the student experience.

- **Strategy 1.1:** Ensure students are taught and mentored by the best teaching professionals and experts in their field.
- **Strategy 1.2:** Create a student-centered educational support culture that provides exceptional advising, thoughtful counseling and superior mentoring.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Encourage a robust culture of student engagement and campus life experience to support student success and leadership development.
Strategic Goal Two

We will create scholarly work and research that significantly impacts society.
In the past decade, UTSA has created a vibrant research environment that attracts extraordinary students and top-tier faculty. By investing in and promoting research and discovery, the university is advancing knowledge, improving the quality of life and raising the level of educational attainment.

UTSA has cultivated an environment that encourages interdisciplinary partnerships and industry alliances that foster innovation and the expansion of ideas. UTSA faculty members are thought leaders in their fields, sharing discoveries through publications, presentations, performances, exhibits and patents.

As the university’s research expertise grows, so too does its opportunity to provide excellence to graduate and undergraduate students. By linking faculty research and student learning, the university creates a culture of inquiry and continual learning. Five strategies address research, inquiry and scholarship.

» **Strategy 2.1:** Hire clusters of renowned research scholars and creative faculty, and recruit exceptional graduate students, in areas that can expand and establish UTSA’s national and global prominence.

» **Strategy 2.2:** Incorporate greater accountability at all levels of the University to ensure Tier One research and creative goals are being met.

» **Strategy 2.3:** Increase the number of UTSA departments that have achieved national and international recognition and improve the overall ranking of UTSA.

» **Strategy 2.4:** Strengthen support for established and emerging interdisciplinary areas while enhancing research collaborations and partnerships.

» **Strategy 2.5:** Provide an optimal research environment for faculty by reducing the financial and administrative burden on colleges and departments.
Strategic Goal Three

We will enrich the quality of life and economic prosperity of the communities we serve.
The value of a research university can be measured by the impact it has on the world around it. UTSA is committed to making positive change at the local, state, national and international levels. Researchers pursue projects that improve social conditions and quality of life.

The university’s curriculum focuses on preparing an ethical and educated workforce, ready to lead and engage through active citizenship. It supports impactful community initiatives and provides unique cultural opportunities. Its institutes support innovation, small business development and education attainment.

UTSA's engagement initiatives transform the community and UTSA students. Engaged students have broader perspectives, stronger leadership skills and deeper experiences to call upon in their lives after graduation. Four strategies address engagement with our communities.

» **Strategy 3.1:** Provide the community with substantial human resources through the engagement of students and faculty in service-learning activities.

» **Strategy 3.2:** Create new, strategic public-private partnerships with educational institutions, industry, government and venture partners that strengthen the economic well-being of our community and enhance ties with the University.

» **Strategy 3.3:** Serve as a catalyst in collaborating on economic development initiatives, technology commercialization ventures, and fostering creative and cultural exchanges.

» **Strategy 3.4:** Enhance community ties by offering music performances, artistic exhibitions and athletic events that build community support and alumni loyalty.
Strategic Goal Four

We will deliver world-class resources, support and infrastructure commensurate with a Tier One institution.
Infrastructure often conjures up images of buildings like UTSA’s historic John Peace Library or its innovative Biosciences Building, but it encompasses the much larger support structure that plays a critical role in the university’s success. Outstanding people and state-of-the-art technology, business systems and facilities underpin the work of the university.

UTSA strategically invests in campus infrastructure, implements efficiencies and aligns its budget to ensure long-term strength. This includes advancing technology, expanding on areas of excellence, diversifying revenue resources, and hiring and developing exceptional people. UTSA has identified nine strategies for addressing infrastructure.

- **Strategy 4.1:** Create a comprehensive resource management system that excels at productivity and efficiency.
- **Strategy 4.2:** Implement a new budget allocation model that is transparent and data driven, supports entrepreneurship and innovation, and better aligns resources with the Blueprint UTSA Plan.
- **Strategy 4.3:** Enhance the philanthropic activities that enable the University to provide academic, research and student excellence.
- **Strategy 4.4:** Develop a comprehensive undergraduate and graduate recruitment and retention system to achieve UTSA’s overall enrollment goals.
- **Strategy 4.5:** Expand resources and financial support from UTSA stakeholders and allies through philanthropy, grants and contracts, public-private partnerships and commercialization activities, the UT System and the Texas Legislature.
- **Strategy 4.6:** Build, renovate and maintain state-of-the-art facilities to support UTSA’s Tier One goals.
- **Strategy 4.7:** Evolve the role of the Downtown Campus as a key asset in alignment with the institution’s strategic priorities.
- **Strategy 4.8:** Create a Tier One operations environment by streamlining administrative processes, by reducing cost and by improving customer service.
- **Strategy 4.9:** Develop cutting-edge information technology (IT) systems that support teaching, research and administration.
Strategic Goal Five

We will achieve recognition and esteem as a premier research university.
UTSA has expanded its academic aspirations, advanced its research expertise, enriched its campus life and strengthened its community impact. It aspires to be recognized as a premier research university, a place for students of diverse backgrounds to learn and grow and a place that can effect tremendous change on the world.

With growth, the university must reinforce and reaffirm its distinct identity – its commitment to excellence, its pioneering research and its rich cultural diversity.

UTSA has a remarkable story to tell. The achievements of its students, faculty and alumni are elevating the university to Tier One status and increasingly earning it national and international esteem.

UTSA is a world-class university, and its brand deserves world-class recognition. Three strategies will accomplish this goal.

» **Strategy 5.1:** Develop a distinct identity and personality for UTSA that establishes our brand promise and enhances credibility.

» **Strategy 5.2:** Create a powerful affinity and drive engagement by promoting a culture of shared vision and values with our stakeholder community.

» **Strategy 5.3:** Advance UTSA’s position as a world-class university by promoting achievement in academics, research and community engagement on the state, national and international scale.
Implementation

Blueprint UTSA is a collaborative effort that brings the campus community together to advance the university’s mission and further propel it toward Tier One status.

Because a commitment to excellence requires focus and sustained investment, the plan establishes priorities, outlines strategies and allocates resources that will allow the university to leverage its greatest strengths in the years ahead.

University leaders have identified 10 strategies from Blueprint UTSA that are essential first steps to advancing the university. Implementation of these strategies will be the responsibility of cross-functional teams led by members of the UTSA executive team. The teams will develop, plan and execute initial priorities, establish timelines, identify required resources, promote collaboration with campus constituencies and initiate action plans based on measurable benchmarks and targets.

**THE INITIAL STRATEGIES INCLUDE:**

» Creating a student-centered educational support culture that provides exceptional advising, thoughtful counseling and superior mentoring. *(Strategy 1.2)*

» Hiring clusters of renowned research scholars and creative faculty, and recruiting exceptional graduate students, in areas that can expand and establish UTSA’s national and global prominence. *(Strategy 2.1)*

» Incorporating greater accountability at all levels of the University to ensure Tier One research and creative goals are being met. *(Strategy 2.2)*

» Implementing a new budget allocation model that is transparent and data driven, supports entrepreneurship and innovation, and better aligns resources with the Blueprint UTSA Plan. *(Strategy 4.2)*
Implementation (cont’d)

» Developing a comprehensive undergraduate and graduate recruitment and retention system to achieve UTSA’s overall enrollment goals. (Strategy 4.4)

» Expanding resources and financial support from UTSA stakeholders and allies through philanthropy, grants and contracts, public-private partnerships and commercialization activities, the UT System and the Texas Legislature. (Strategy 4.5)

» Evolving the role of the Downtown Campus as a key asset in alignment with the institution’s strategic priorities. (Strategy 4.7)

» Creating a Tier One operations environment by streamlining administrative processes, by reducing cost and by improving customer service. (Strategy 4.8)

» Developing cutting-edge information technology (IT) systems that support teaching, research and administration. (Strategy 4.9)

» Developing a distinct identity and personality for UTSA that establishes our brand promise and enhances credibility. (Strategy 5.1)

University leadership will assess the progress of the Blueprint UTSA implementation, refining targets and determining and activating the next Blueprint strategies so that the comprehensive plan remains in motion.
Accountability Plan

While a document can serve as an initial catalyst for change, it can only impact transformation if it is linked to an effective evaluation system.

To ensure the university community steadily advances Blueprint UTSA’s priority areas, robust accountability expectations are built into the plan.

Throughout the plan’s implementation, UTSA’s executive leadership and strategy teams will collaborate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to identify measures and performance indicators and to develop an institutional dashboard for ongoing review. These progress markers will be based on criteria that are directly tied to success outcomes. The resulting dashboard will be a powerful means of presenting, organizing and reviewing information about the university’s performance.

The executive team will review the dashboard to assess UTSA’s momentum. These reviews will measure the progress and impact of the plan and advance the work of the strategic teams. Additionally, they will allow university leaders to be nimble in adjusting the plan’s strategies, pursuing next steps and leveraging new opportunities that support the advancement of its key priorities.

To provide context for the plan’s progress and method of assessment, UTSA will select a series of peer institutions and aspirant peers against which it will measure success. Current peer universities closely resemble UTSA in mission, size, student population, budget and areas of research excellence. Aspirational peers reflect UTSA’s Tier One vision, providing a viable goal for emulation. In addition to revealing how UTSA’s progress compares with that of other institutions, these comparisons will provide insight about UTSA’s competitiveness and advancement in the higher education landscape.
Eight years ago, UTSA presented UTSA 2016, a strategic plan to advance its goal of becoming a Tier One university. Guided by that plan, UTSA has experienced significant growth, expanded its research profile, increased its stature in the community and achieved numerous strategic targets. Blueprint UTSA was designed to continue the work of the university’s strategic plan.

In 2015, UTSA embarked on an 18-month process to measure its progress, evaluate strategic priorities and define next steps. It assembled a university-wide leadership team to conduct an assessment of the UTSA 2016 strategic plan and to identify the opportunities and challenges that the university could face in the coming years. Using that information, the team identified strategic priorities including educational excellence, superior student experiences, strong community involvement, innovative research and discovery, world-class graduate programs, and superior infrastructure.

Then groups assessed current internal efforts, identified opportunities and challenges, benchmarked against peer institutions and defined initial targets and milestones.

This data led to the development of fully fledged strategies and focused on a university-wide approach to take advantage of UTSA’s distributed strengths. The result of this work is Blueprint UTSA, featuring five goals and their distinct strategic initiatives.

The university finalized Blueprint UTSA in the summer of 2016, providing targets for achievement and core metrics for measuring progress. Today, it serves as the guide for the university as UTSA advances to Tier One status.