

**FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO**

**DECEMBER 2011**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>SECTION</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE</u></b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<i>ii</i>
<b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. A PROFILE OF UTSA’S GRADUATES</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III. FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT COMPLETION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV. STRATEGIES FOR ACCELERATING DEGREE COMPLETION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>A. Student Academic and Social Preparedness</b>	9
<b>B. Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery</b>	10
<b>C. Advising and Student Support Services</b>	13
<b>D. Policies and Incentives</b>	14
<b>E. Oversight Team</b>	15
<b>V. A FUTURE SCENARIO</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>VI. RESOURCE ANALYSIS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>A. Total Resources Needed</b>	18
<b>B. New Resources Needed</b>	21
 <b><u>APPENDICES</u></b>	
<b>A— UTSA Student Enrollment and Degree Completion, 2001-2011</b>	
<b>B— Enrollment Management and Student Population Projections, 2011-2021</b>	
<b>C— Factor 1: Student Academic Preparedness</b>	
<b>D— Factor 2: Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery</b>	
<b>E— Factor 3: Advising and Student Support Services</b>	
<b>F— Factor 4: Policies and Incentives</b>	
<b>G— Timetable for All Strategies</b>	
<b>H— Implementation Metrics– Current and Long-Term</b>	

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) is committed to the success of its students. As an emerging research institution, the university is setting higher expectations for student completion and post-graduation outcomes commensurate with premier universities across the country. This has meant a transition from its historical access mission, to one that translates access into success. At the same time, the university is aware that different factors influence student outcomes and any plan to improve student success must take those factors into account and address them through concrete actions, policies, and development of an appropriate support infrastructure.

UTSA's students reflect the ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity of San Antonio, South Texas, and, increasingly, central and eastern Texas. Half of UTSA's students are first-generation college students (neither parent completed college). Nearly 60% are students of color, and more than two-thirds are eligible for need-based financial aid. Research has shown that these demographic characteristics correlate with low retention and graduation rates nationally. Graduation rates for freshman cohorts at UTSA reflect these findings: only 9.6% of students admitted into the 2007 freshman cohort graduated within four years, and only 27.2% of the 2005 freshman cohort graduated within six years.

To increase four- and six-year graduation rates, it is necessary to understand the factors associated with various student outcomes and proactively adopt practices that promote degree completion. As a result, this plan is built upon knowledge gained from several research studies that examine student completion and identify factors that are most strongly correlated with successful outcomes. As a Hispanic-serving institution, UTSA is particularly interested in the factors that contribute to the timely graduation of Latino students. We believe that addressing these factors will benefit *all* students equally.

Through this plan, the university is establishing goals that would significantly increase the completion rates for students admitted into the 2021 freshman cohort: **25%** to graduate within four years, and more than **60%** to graduate within six years. To achieve these goals, student year-to-year persistence at UTSA must improve substantially. In particular, the first-to-second year persistence rate must increase from 61% to 85%, and the second-to-third year persistence rate must improve from 74% to 88%. Thus, this plan focuses most critically on the early college experience and helping students with the transition from high school to college.

The factors that affect student completion at UTSA may be grouped into four general categories:

- student preparedness for college,
- curriculum structure and delivery,
- advising and student support, and
- enrollment policies and incentives.

The first category includes all aspects of students' academic and social preparation for college. Students who are unprepared for the transition to college, either through inadequate academic preparation or through problems related to social adjustment to a university environment, struggle to overcome a poor start in college and are often delayed in completing their degrees. Through a combination of outreach programs coordinated with local school districts, the implementation of higher admission standards, the use of academic "bridge" programs in the summer preceding freshman year, and intensified support structures aimed specifically at freshman students, UTSA hopes to ease students' transition to college. The initiatives proposed to address this factor have a total cost of about \$3.0 million, of which \$2.9 million will be derived from existing resources.

The second category encompasses the delivery and structure of the academic curriculum to students. Over time, many of the university's degree plans have become increasingly complex because of the adoption of more course prerequisites, a reduction in elective courses, and/or multiple choices of concentration areas within majors. In many cases, greater curricular complexity translates into delayed college completion. UTSA is designing a host of initiatives that would simplify the core curriculum and the curricula in the majors, as well as broaden the use of alternative and innovative course scheduling and delivery to make courses more readily available to students when they are needed. A major part of this response is UTSA's *Freshman Focus* initiative which seeks to transform the freshman academic experience, creating a solid academic foundation upon which student success can be built. This comprehensive set of initiatives will cost \$7.3 million, of which \$2.4 million comes from reallocated and existing resources, while \$4.9 million depends upon new revenues.

The third category includes the quality and availability of academic advising and other student support services. UTSA continues to make efforts to improve these functions. However, the sheer size of the student population, coupled with limited growth the past few years in the number of faculty and advising staff, compels the consideration of alternative means of delivering some of these support services so that students can make steady progress toward degree completion. In this plan, UTSA proposes several initiatives that would improve the quality and extent of advising support through additional advisors and online resources. Among these initiatives, the university would require all students to complete a four-year degree plan of study in the spring of their freshman year as a means of organizing their plans for completing degrees within four years. The total cost of this set of initiatives is \$7.9 million, of which \$6.0 million would come from existing resources and \$1.9 million would come from new revenue sources.

Finally, the fourth category concerns the university's enrollment policies and incentives. The impact of enrollment policies cannot always be accurately anticipated, and there is some evidence that current policies may be exacerbating student graduation rates by delaying completion of the curriculum. In addition, financial concerns are a major cause of student withdrawal or temporary "stop-outs." UTSA's efforts to address these issues include a comprehensive review and analysis of enrollment policies, the establishment of wait-lists for courses, the expansion of on-campus employment, and the use of financial aid incentives to promote earlier completion. These efforts have a total cost of \$2.4 million, of which \$1.9 million (all in the form of student financial aid) must be derived from new revenue sources.

While the approach taken by the university is both comprehensive and multi-faceted, there are a few elements that will likely have the greatest impact on student success. These more critical elements include:

**Increased admissions standards.** The use of more selective admissions criteria will not only result in better-prepared students, but will also send a signal that the university has high expectations of its students.

**Freshman Focus initiative.** The extensive overhaul of the freshman experience should transform the university in many positive ways and promote much greater student persistence and success.

**Student four-year degree plans of study.** Requiring all students to develop these plans of study will raise awareness of the elements needed to complete undergraduate degrees and provide a template for benchmarking progress.

**Financial aid incentives.** In addition to targeting financial aid to students who need it, this incentive will encourage students to complete the credit hours needed to maintain progress toward a four-year degree.

**Expansion of faculty and advising staff.** The success of at-risk students depends critically on personal contact with faculty and advisors, and many of these initiatives will require substantial time and effort to implement. Without these personnel, the overall success of the plan will be significantly reduced.

The various initiatives proposed in this plan will take time to develop and implement. Some have already been fully implemented and are ongoing. Others have been planned and developed, and should be ready for full implementation within the next year. Still other initiatives are in the planning process and may take an additional year or two to implement fully, especially if they are dependent upon the use of new revenue sources. Overall, UTSA expects to have all elements of this plan fully implemented by the 2014-15 academic year.

An executive oversight team, led by the Provost, will monitor the various aspects of this plan and make adjustments as necessary to assure continual improvement in UTSA's student completion rates. A range of performance metrics for each of the initiatives has been identified and will form the basis for assessing the institution's progress toward achieving its goals.

## **The University of Texas at San Antonio Graduation Rate Improvement Plan**

### **I. Introduction**

It is UTSA's goal to become a tier-one Hispanic-serving research university, a premier university that reflects the diverse multiculturalism of San Antonio and the future United States. The U.S. Latino population is the fastest-growing segment of our nation's population, and demographers predict that Texas will soon reflect the same racial and ethnic mixture currently found in San Antonio, while the U.S. will look more like Texas in the next few decades. However, Latino students attend and complete college in smaller numbers proportionately than any other student demographic. As a Hispanic-serving institution, UTSA must provide Latino students access to a college education and help them achieve success in the form of completed degrees. UTSA's success is and will be defined by the success of its students, and that will mean modeling the degree-completion rates of a premier university.

This report is a multi-faceted plan for improving the four-year graduation rate of UTSA students over the next ten years. The goal is to improve the four-year rate from **9.6%** (2007 cohort) to **25%** (2021 cohort), with a concurrent effect of improving the six-year graduation rate from **27.2%** (2005 cohort) to over **60%** (2021 cohort). This will be achieved through improved enrollment management and heightened admissions standards; enhanced student services in the freshman year; streamlined curricula to help students make steady progress toward a degree; improved student advising and support services; and paradigm shifts in the way we transition freshmen to the university, teach our courses, and incentivize students to graduate sooner.

UTSA's efforts to improve student success rates are framed by several guiding principles:

1. UTSA will continue to serve the general population of students it was established to serve, namely the educationally underserved populations of San Antonio and South Texas, while expanding its regional and national reach.
2. UTSA will strive to create academic and social environments that foster and promote student success, with the underlying assumption that every student will complete college.
3. UTSA will depend upon the conscientious and collaborative work of all UTSA faculty, staff, and administrators to achieve student success.
4. UTSA's actions will focus on foundational causes related to student completion and not on alleviating superficial symptoms.
5. UTSA will define a standard for excellence through high expectations of its students, faculty, and staff.

The approach in this report will be to first examine current completion rates, note trends and areas for improvement, and then review factors cited nationally as impacting student success and degree completion. Common features associated with institutions that have high completion rates will be identified, as well as the perceived factors that prevent students from timely completion of their degrees at UTSA. The proposed strategies that will mitigate those obstacles are reviewed in detail with a projection of resources needed to implement these plans.

*Special Note:* For the past ten years, UTSA has participated in the Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP) with UT Austin in which students denied outright admission to Austin are given an opportunity to earn their way into the school by completing a year of studies at another UT System institution. Throughout this report, CAP students are included in the quoted statistics as though they have enrolled at UTSA with the intent to complete their degrees here. Because 70% of CAP students leave UTSA after the first year, and these students represent roughly 20% of all freshmen, the UTSA statistics are artificially lowered by approximately 8-10% by this group. However, it is UTSA’s intention to phase out the CAP program within the next ten years.

## II. A Profile of UTSA’s Graduates

Through most of its history, UTSA has provided access to higher education, primarily to students from Bexar County and South Texas, and its student body reflects the full range of socioeconomic and racioethnic diversity found in this region. About 70% of UTSA’s current students qualify for need-based financial aid; more than one-third come from families with a household income of less than \$40,000; nearly 60% are students of color (African-American– 8%, Hispanic–44%, Asian American– 5%, and two or more races– 2%); and about half are first-generation (neither parent graduated from college).

This combination of features generally correlates with low college completion rates. The National Education Longitudinal Study of the high school class of 1992 performed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) indicates the college completion rates given in Table 1 below for students who enrolled in a four-year college, both four years later and by the age of 26.

**Table 1. National College Completion Rates by Income Quartile and Parent Education**

Parent Education Level	Income Quartiles							
	Lowest Quartile		2nd Quartile		3rd Quartile		Top Quartile	
	4-yr	by 26	4-yr	by 26	4-yr	by 26	4-yr	by 26
<i>Neither Parent Graduated from College</i>	19%	47%	23%	59%	29%	65%	32%	68%
<i>At Least One Parent Graduated from College</i>	39%	71%	32%	69%	36%	71%	46%	81%

Source: *Crossing the Finish Line*, by Bowen, Chingos, and McPherson (2009, Princeton University Press).

In a complementary study, the NCES’s 2006 report, *Placing College Graduation Rates in Context*, examined completion rates at a wide range of higher education institutions, both public and private. Institutions serving large low-income student populations (based on percentage eligibility for federal student aid) had median six-year graduation rates ranging from 31.3% (at minimally selective universities) to 42.9% (at highly selective universities), compared to rates twice as large for institutions with small low-income student populations.

These reports underline the challenges faced by institutions, like UTSA, that serve low-income, first-generation college students. Table 2 below presents UTSA’s student completion rates at four, five, six and more than six years after initial enrollment.

**Table 2. Graduation Rates of UTSA Freshman Cohorts, 2001-2007**

<i>Cohort Year</i>	<i>Admissions Rate</i>	<i>Graduate in 4 yrs</i>	<i>Graduate in 5 yrs</i>	<i>Graduate in 6 yrs</i>	<i>Graduate in &gt; 6 yrs</i>
2001	99.4%	7.2%	14.6%	7.9%	6%
2002	99.3%	7.8%	13.1%	7.6%	5%
2003	99.3%	7.5%	11.4%	7.6%	5%
2004	99.3%	7.4%	12.4%	6.5%	3%
2005	99.4%	8.0%	12.7%	6.5%	
2006	89.6%	9.1%	14.5%		
2007	88.6%	9.6%			

Source: UTSA Office of Institutional Research. All percentages include CAP students.

It is interesting to note that, as the admissions rate fell (*i.e.* UTSA became more selective) from 99.4% in 2005 to about 89% in 2006 and 2007, the four-year graduation rate improved by 20%, from 8.0% to 9.6%. This occurred despite the fact that the overall percentage of top 10% (top decile) high school graduates and top quartile high school graduates enrolling as freshmen at UTSA actually declined in those two cohorts (see Appendix A). One-fourth of UTSA freshmen from the top decile of their high school classes complete degrees at UTSA in four years and over half finish within six years, both notably higher than the overall average.

A more telling profile of UTSA graduates is revealed in Table 3, which sub-divides the most recent year of graduates (2010-11) by the number of semesters needed to complete their degree.

**Table 3. Time to Completion for 2010-11 Graduates**

<i>Admission Type</i>	<i>Number of Semesters Needed to Complete Degree</i>						<i>Total</i>
	<i>≤ 5</i>	<i>6-10</i>	<i>11-15</i>	<i>16-20</i>	<i>21-25</i>	<i>≥ 26</i>	
<i>Freshman</i>	10	849	983	143	19	8	<b>2,012</b>
<i>Transfer</i>	423	1,372	261	36	11	0	<b>2,103</b>
<i>HS or Dual Credit*</i>	2	3	0	0	0	0	<b>5</b>
<i>Non-Deg. Seeking</i>	0	8	2	1	0	0	<b>11</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>2,232</b>	<b>1,246</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4,131</b>

\*These students entered the university with enough AP or dual credits to be classified as sophomores (or later).

Although 63 students admitted as freshman in 2008 finished degrees in less than four years, a handful of students took more than 20 semesters (roughly ten years) to finish. Many of these later-year graduates stopped out of school for some time before returning to complete their degrees, and most changed their majors multiple times along the way. About 100 of these students started as freshmen at UTSA between 1980 and 2000!

Based on this and similar data for other recent years of graduates, it is estimated that about 10% of UTSA graduates have taken seven or more years to complete their degrees at UTSA; last year, this group included 420 out of 4131 total graduates. From the data, one can also estimate that 80-

85% of the students who transfer to UTSA from other institutions ultimately complete degrees here, with a mean time to graduation of eight semesters and the largest number finishing within seven semesters after transfer.

These results lead to several important observations. First, more than half (51% in 2010-11) of UTSA’s graduates began their higher education at another institution. Although the university plays an important role in the success of these students, they do not contribute to the graduate rate metric as it is formally defined. As a consequence, *most of the successful student outcomes produced at UTSA are not captured by this metric.* The many programs and initiatives designed to help transfer students succeed at UTSA are not included in this report yet they form an important part of the student support services that the university provides.

Second, the 10% of all graduates who began at UTSA as freshmen, but took longer than six years to complete degrees, are also important and should be celebrated for their persistence and determination to finish a degree, in many cases under severe financial and family-related hardships. It is hoped that these students may achieve faster completion times through the additional counseling and mentoring programs proposed in this plan.

Thirdly, although UTSA’s four-year graduation rates are slowly improving, the rate of change is not fast enough. In particular, the institutional goals for student completion cannot be achieved by simply doing more of what has been done. Moreover, the four-year graduation rates of current top-quartile freshmen (~16%) are insufficient to meet UTSA’s overall institutional performance goals (25%). It is not enough to simply raise admission standards: *UTSA must re-conceptualize the way its students are served by the university.*

So what does this imply for the 2021 entering cohort, given the projected goals for four-year (25%) and six-year (60%) graduation rates? To illustrate what these completion goals imply for student persistence rates, the chart below shows how persistence and completion rates at each stage of a student’s studies at UTSA must improve over the next ten years.

**Chart 1. Targeted Persistence and Graduation Rates for 2021**

<u>Current</u> (2011)		<u>Persistence</u> (per 1000 population)		<u>Projected</u> (2021)	
		<b>1000</b>	<i>Initial Population</i>	<b>1000</b>	
<i>Cum.</i>		↓ (61%)		(85%) ↓	<i>Cum.</i>
<i>Grad.</i>		<b>607</b>	<i>Persist to 2nd year</i>	<b>850</b>	<i>Grad.</i>
<i>Rate</i>	<i>Graduate</i>	↓ (74%)		(88%) ↓	<i>Graduate</i>
<b>1.3%</b>	<b>13</b> (2.9%)	⇐ <b>447</b>	<i>Persist to 3rd year</i>	<b>750</b> ⇒	(4.35%) <b>33</b> <b>3.3%</b>
		↓ (88%)		(94%) ↓	
<b>9.6%</b>	<b>83</b> (21.4%)	⇐ <b>388</b>	<i>Persist to 4th year</i>	<b>676</b> ⇒	(32.1%) <b>217</b> <b>25.0%</b>
		↓ (90%)		(95%) ↓	
<b>22.3%</b>	<b>127</b> (46.2%)	⇐ <b>275</b>	<i>Persist to 5th year</i>	<b>415</b> ⇒	(69.3%) <b>288</b> <b>53.8%</b>
		↓ (90%)		(95%) ↓	
<b>28.8%</b>	<b>65</b> (48.9%)	⇐ <b>133</b>	<i>Persist to 6th year</i>	<b>121</b> ⇒	(73.3%) <b>89</b> <b>62.7%</b>
<b>38.8%</b>	<b>100</b>		<i>Graduate Later</i>		<b>80</b> <b>70.7%</b>

This chart is instructive because it shows exactly where retention performance must improve and by how much. Note that the percentages shown in parentheses give the fraction of a given population that either persists or graduates from UTSA. For years in which some portion of the students graduate, the percentage indicates the persistence rate of the remainder (those who did not graduate that year). Because the year-to-year retention beyond the third year is already at or near 90% each year, further improvement is limited, though it is expected that such improvement will occur through implementation of the initiatives described in this report.

It is clear that the greatest gains can be achieved by improving the first-to-second and second-to-third year persistence rates, as well as the rates of students completing their degrees in each of the fourth, fifth, and sixth years of study. The projection suggests that UTSA will need to increase the portion of students still enrolled that graduate in each of those years by about 50%. In other words, in the current year, 46% of enrolled fifth-year students graduated; for the 2021 cohort, UTSA must improve that percentage to  $1.5 \times 46\% = 69\%$  of fifth-year students graduating. The number of students who “graduate later” have purposely been reduced in this projection— if completion rates improve as planned, then there will be fewer students needing extra years to finish their degrees.

This chart and its implied enrollment numbers form the framework for the UTSA enrollment management plan over the next 10-15 years (see Appendix B). By 2021, the student body will be comprised of about 31,500 students, a smaller freshman class (3,600 vs. 5,000 presently), the same number of sophomores, larger junior and senior classes, and a roughly constant number of transfer students admitted each year. UTSA further expects that the graduate student population will increase by 25%, students will reflect greater diversity, and 10-15% more degrees will be awarded each year by 2021. If current trends for numbers of completed applications continue, UTSA will become much more selective, admitting only 40% of its applicants. This is the future that is envisioned for UTSA, and this plan is an important step toward achieving that vision.

### III. Factors Affecting Student Completion

The most effective way to improve students’ completion rates and the four-year graduation rate in particular, is to first understand the factors most responsible for delaying or inhibiting completion or, conversely, those factors most strongly associated with timely completion, particularly for those students who comprise UTSA’s student population.

A number of sources identify the most prominent student success factors, including national studies of large student cohorts by Bowen *et al.* (2009)<sup>1</sup> and Adelman (2006)<sup>2</sup>, scholarly studies of Latino student college completion,<sup>3</sup> and internal studies of UTSA student enrollment patterns. The national studies cited here are based on large databases that were created with no theoretical

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<sup>1</sup> Bowen, W.; Chingos, M.; and McPherson, M. 2009. *Crossing the Finish Line— Completing College at America’s Public Universities* (Princeton University Press).

<sup>2</sup> Adelman, C. 2006. *The Toolbox Revisited* (Department of Education)

<sup>3</sup> Rendón Linares, L.I. and Muñoz, S.M. 2011. Revisiting Validation Theory: Theoretical Foundations, Applications, and Extensions, *Enrollment Management Journal*; and Rendón, L.I., Nora, A., Cabrales, J.A. Jr., Ranero, J.J., and Vasquez, P.L. 2008. Latina/o College Success: A Realizable Goal, *Education Policy and Practice Perspectives* (Iowa State University), No. 4.

framework in mind. The resulting analyses, therefore, may overly simplify some of the underlying correlations observed and certainly remove them from the context of individual student and institutional characteristics. The studies of Latino student completion are more nuanced and examine some of the psychosocial factors that lead to college success within particular conceptual frameworks. A scholarly examination of student success at UTSA finds consistency with the results of the more general national studies, supporting their use here.<sup>4</sup>

Most student success factors appear to fall into two general groups:

- those related to student circumstances, including family finances or socioeconomic status, the parents' educational level, family dynamics, illness, and personal preferences; and
- those that arise from institutional characteristics, including admissions selectivity, curriculum structure, student support services, and enrollment-related policies, processes and incentives.

As indicated in the Profile, two strong counter-indicators of timely completion in college are low socioeconomic status (*i.e.* low family income) and whether a parent attained a college degree. It is an important, intrinsic part of UTSA's mission to serve first-generation students from diverse socioeconomic and racioethnic backgrounds and to help them succeed despite the additional challenges they face. UTSA has a greater ability to adjust its institutional characteristics. However, it is important to do so within the context of the factors that relate to student circumstances, and there is an opportunity to address *both* types of factors that influence student persistence and completion through well-designed programs.

As a Hispanic-serving institution, UTSA must pay particular attention to factors that influence the success rates of Latino students. Numerous studies have articulated some of the most critical factors associated with that success,<sup>5</sup> including family support and encouragement, academic performance and students' perceptions of their ability to succeed academically, difficulties with transition to college, campus climate, financial assistance and the affordability of college, validation and encouragement from mentors, participation in study groups, external influences (for example, serious family responsibilities), and a sense of purpose and self-worth. Several leading national experts on these issues are faculty members at UTSA, and their expertise will be instrumental in guiding the programs developed through this plan.

**Factor 1: Student Academic and Social Preparedness.** Student preparedness for the university academic and social environment upon entry correlates strongly with college completion. Freshmen in particular may struggle with the transition from high school to college and with socialization to the new environment. Among the factors linked to college completion by Bowen *et al.* (2009) are the high school grades earned by the student, the admissions selectivity of the university, and the grades earned during the freshman year of study. Students who fall behind early and perform poorly in the freshman year often do not recover and struggle to complete college at all, much less in four years. Interestingly, Bowen *et al.* (2009) find that institutional selectivity appears to have a "halo" effect beyond the increased success that one would naturally

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<sup>4</sup> Norton, G. and Padilla, R. 2008, February. Qualitative Student Success Modeling at a Hispanic-Serving University, *SACRAO Journal* 21, (9-18).

<sup>5</sup> Rendón, L.I., Nora, A., Cabrales, J.A. Jr., Ranero, J.J., and Vasquez, P.L. 2008. Latina/o College Success: A Realizable Goal, *Education Policy and Practice Perspectives* (Iowa State University), no. 4.

associate with the admission of more qualified freshmen, perhaps engendered by an environment that supports and expects success. Students with equivalent academic qualifications who attend less selective institutions tend to complete college at a lower rate when one accounts for all other differentiating factors. Similarly, Adelman (2006) includes the rigor of a student's high school curriculum, especially including a math course above the level of Algebra II, as being among the five most significant factors associated with college completion.

For Fall 2011, 11.5% of UTSA's freshman class graduated in the top decile of their high school class and 45.2% graduated in the top quartile (see Appendix A). However, in addition, 27% of current freshmen are enrolled in at least one developmental course. UTSA will be taking steps over the next ten years to ensure that entering freshmen are better prepared to succeed in college, both academically and socially, through the use of greater selectivity in admissions and the enhancement or introduction of a variety of student support strategies. These strategies are described in Section IVA below.

**Factor 2: Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery.** Major factors influencing the time required for UTSA students to complete their degrees are the structure of the curriculum and the availability and delivery of our courses. There is evidence that students sometimes have difficulty scheduling courses needed to sustain progress toward their intended degrees, particularly those that serve as prerequisites for higher-level courses. In addition, the structure of the curriculum, including its flexibility (allowing alternative courses to satisfy degree requirements) and the rigidity of the course sequence (found in some curricula required for the majors), may cause unintended delays in student completion. This leads to the conclusion that the curriculum- and course-related factors contribute to the low persistence and graduation rates reported above.

UTSA is actively working to address these issues through related initiatives that will reshape the curriculum and innovate course delivery. The goal is to introduce greater structure in the freshman year curriculum, consisting of courses that may be applied to any degree plan, independent of the choice of major, while adding flexibility to the major curricula. At the same time, strategies are being developed to promote innovative course delivery mechanisms, including hybrid delivery, which will make it easier for students to enroll in courses when they are most needed. The initiatives are described in Section IVB below.

**Factor 3: Advising and Student Support Services.** Many students enter their freshman year with incomplete knowledge about what it takes to succeed in college and complete a degree within four years. This is especially true of UTSA's first-generation students. For example, Adelman (2006) indicates three key factors associated with graduation from college are the completion of at least 20 credit-hours during the freshman year, earning at least four credits during summer terms while in college, and limiting the number of course attempts ending in withdrawal or leading to repeated attempts of the same course. In addition, Bowen *et al.* (2009) cite the strong correlation between academic performance in the freshman year and overall completion rates. All of these factors are related to student choices and performance once in college.

At UTSA, students consistently report that they often make poor decisions regarding which courses they take and when they take them. Additional feedback from professors and academic support professionals suggests that UTSA students struggle from lack of understanding about how to plan their enrollment in classes in advance from semester to semester and year to year; failure to participate in academic support programs designed to assist them in improving performance; and inadequate monitoring of student progress through the curriculum. The goal in the next few years is to significantly enhance the support of students through expanded course advisement and other student support services. These strategies are described in Section IVC below.

**Factor 4: Policies and Incentives.** Enrollment policies play an important role in determining the ease with which students navigate the university's curriculum. They can communicate to students implicit messages about what is important, and help with decisions they should make.

In addition to enrollment policies, the costs associated with a higher education are a major obstacle for the student population that UTSA serves. Financial challenges compel students to search for supplemental funding through scholarships, grants and loans, and/or employment, so that they can afford higher education. For most UTSA students, the longer they take to graduate, the more loans they accumulate, resulting in a higher debt burden upon completion. On average, the student who graduates in four years leaves UTSA with loans totaling \$18,067, while those who graduate in six years accrue \$23,748 in loans. In addition, students who work while attending school have less time available for study and may often face the dilemma of skipping class or losing their job. The demands of a job can negatively impact satisfactory course completion, and, therefore, time to graduation.

In addition to policies and financial issues themselves, students are often not cognizant of the long-term impact of enrollment decisions that they make during the course of their studies to address an immediate need. Better communication is needed to apprise students of any inadvertent consequences of their choices.

UTSA's goals are to ensure that policies are well aligned with the goal of four-year degree completion and to minimize the financial impact of a college education by reducing the debt burden. These strategies are described in Section IVD below.

#### **IV. Strategies for Accelerating Degree Completion**

The previous section briefly described four factors affecting the ability of UTSA's students to graduate in a timely manner. For each of these factors, several strategies designed to enhance student success have been developed and grouped under the factor that they primarily address. All of these strategies are part of UTSA's general plan to promote four-year completion and many work synergistically with other strategies to generate enhanced student performance. The success of these strategies depends critically on faculty and staff time and effort and, therefore, requires having sufficient personnel resources to implement and carry out the plan.

### A. Student Academic and Social Preparedness

UTSA has identified several strategies that will contribute to better student preparation for the university environment, including increasing selectivity in the admissions process; expanding the bridge programs to ensure incoming students have an opportunity to develop their academic skills before entry; utilizing instructional methods that enhance the students' sense of self-worth and confidence in their abilities<sup>6</sup>; and augmenting support services, particularly for freshmen, through peer-mentor support for the transition to college. These strategies are expected to greatly reduce, if not eliminate altogether, the need for developmental courses among freshman students.

1. Rigorous preparation of high school students. *UTSA Ready* is designed to provide a diagnostic assessment and additional academic preparation for high school students who want to attend UTSA but might not meet college readiness standards. This program, designed by the Office of P-20 Initiatives, will utilize diagnostic assessment instruments to help students identify deficiencies in math, reading and writing early, towards the goal of remediating those deficiencies while still in high school. See Appendix C, Strategy 1 for more details.
2. Increased admissions standards. UTSA has adjusted its admissions criteria three times in the past five years and is presently preparing a proposal to upgrade those standards again in 2013. With the ultimate goal of populating the entering freshman class with more than 80% top quartile students (25% from the top decile), periodic adjustments in future admissions standards are planned over the next ten years. The goal is to raise standards gradually so that students in middle and high school will have an opportunity to adjust to higher academic expectations. See Appendix C, Strategy 2 for more details.
3. Top scholars recruitment. Starting in 2010, UTSA began mobilizing the recruitment of highly ranked students through increased admissions standards and the Top Scholars program. This program targets students with strong academic qualifications and uses strategic scholarship awards to recruit top students. There are several tools now in place including the McKinney Scholars fund and active participation in the Terry Scholars program. A proactive recruitment strategy is being implemented with targets defined by Chart 1 (presented in section II above) and recent investments in staffing. See Appendix C, Strategy 3 for more details.
4. Bridging programs. For admitted freshmen who do not meet one of the UTSA criteria for math or science proficiency, the summer Math Boot Camp and *Jump Start* programs are offered to bolster those skills before enrollment in university classes. These programs are held during the summer and provide an opportunity for entering freshmen to get an early start and be fully prepared for college-level courses. In addition, UTSA is host to nine TRIO programs to help students prepare for college entrance. See Appendix C, Strategy 4 for more details.

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<sup>6</sup> Rendon, L. I. and S. M. Munoz. 2011. "Revisiting Validation Theory: Theoretical Foundations, Applications, and Extensions. *Enrollment Management Journal*, Summer, 12-33.

5. *Academic and social support for freshmen.* Freshmen will be organized in cohorts for the purpose of block scheduling courses (see section B, #1 below) and each cohort will have an upperclassman as a peer mentor. Mentors will be responsible for providing basic advice on campus life and adjustment to the university. They will also help freshmen become familiar with the university's extensive academic support services. For freshmen enrolled in courses with a history of low-success rates (*i.e.* high "D-F-W" rates), UTSA will intensify the tutoring and supplemental instruction resources available for students. For example, the College of Engineering has already implemented a peer-tutored engineering study hall to assist students who are declared Pre-Engineering majors in early math and science courses. See Appendix C, Strategy 5 for more details.
6. *Online resources.* UTSA is designing a variety of online resources to enhance internal communication with students. Student Affairs has pioneered the *Ask Rowdy* web site as a quick information tool for students and a similar site is planned to service the most frequently asked advising questions. In addition, UTSA will make students aware of free online tutoring sources for both high school and university subjects, such as the Khan Academy (<http://khanacademy.org/>). These sites will be introduced during student orientation, prominently featured by the Tomás Rivera Center staff, and on resource web pages on the university's web site. See Appendix C, Strategy 6 for more details.

Finally, for those who cannot meet UTSA's admissions criteria, UTSA has already developed collaborative arrangements with several community colleges for streamlined transition once the student meets certain academic performance benchmarks. This gives students an opportunity to build up their academic skill sets and complete core curriculum requirements over one to two years before entering UTSA. Students will then be ready to enter their intended major.

## ***B. Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery***

This factor will require a longer-term effort and additional funding for new faculty. The strategies include several approaches: a comprehensive overhaul of the freshman curriculum; the addition of new, more flexible major curricula; a thorough review of course prerequisites and implementation of multiple options for meeting prerequisite requirements; the expansion of alternative forms of course delivery, particularly hybrid courses; the expansion of the faculty population; greater use of credit by examination and summer school; and innovative course planning and scheduling.

1. *Freshman Focus initiative.*<sup>7</sup> This fall (2011), UTSA has begun implementation of an ambitious plan to enhance the freshman year academic and student support experience. The *Freshman Focus* initiative is comprised of several parts, including the formation of a University College (see section C, #1 below), the block scheduling of all freshmen in cohorts (see section A, #5 above), the introduction of an *Academic Inquiry* course, and the requirement that students register their four-year degree plans of study. This initiative is designed to provide freshmen with a solid academic and social foundation for their

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<sup>7</sup> For a complete report on the *Freshman Focus* initiative, go to <http://provost.utsa.edu/home/docs/Report-Freshman-Experience-Task-Force.3.pdf>.

college studies and a better understanding of what is needed to complete a degree within four years. See Appendix D, Strategy 1 for more details.

2. Streamlined curriculum. The structure of the university curriculum involves several components, including the general education program (core curriculum), the quantitative literacy curriculum of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), the planned freshman curriculum (*Freshman Focus*), and the curriculum required to major in a discipline. All of these components must be integrated seamlessly or students will experience delays in degree completion. The *Freshman Focus* is intended to simplify and structure the freshman year curriculum so that all entering students are enrolled in courses that will contribute to their degrees regardless of their eventual major. The core curriculum will be undergoing some modification in the next two years, both to align it with the new statewide core curriculum and to integrate it with the QEP, so that the latter does not have the effect of adding credits to the degree plan. Finally, as a campus-wide initiative, departments will be asked to review the structure of the curricula in their majors, and determine ways to improve flexibility so that students can easily complete their degree plans on time. The university will provide the departments with data showing the general sequence followed by successful majors and note those areas where students are delayed in their progress toward a degree. These efforts will require faculty time devoted to curriculum redesign. See Appendix D, Strategy 2 for more details.
3. Course prerequisites and competency-based assessment. In some instances, students' progress toward fulfilling degree requirements is delayed by the need to complete prerequisite courses first, before enrolling in a required course for the major curriculum. Using curriculum mapping and information from student degree plans, we will determine when prerequisite courses are needed and with what capacity so that students can fulfill those requirements. In addition, each department will be asked to review its course prerequisites to determine what elements of a prerequisite course are actually needed by a given course and study the feasibility of offering online assessment as an alternative to taking a prerequisite course. In this way the course burden and interdependencies of the curriculum can be reduced while adding flexibility for students. See Appendix D, Strategy 3 for more details.
4. Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies. In Fall 2011, UTSA initiated a flexible degree program: the Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies. This degree allows students to construct a degree plan using sets of courses from three different areas of concentration, thereby fashioning a degree tailored to their particular interests. The degree should also serve to assist students in completing a baccalaureate degree, when they have transferred to UTSA with a large number of credit hours that do not fit easily into any of our more traditional major curricula. This degree could also be used to accelerate the degree completion date of students who have changed majors at least once after the freshman year. See Appendix D, Strategy 4 for more details.
5. Course availability and scheduling. UTSA has begun auditing course availability to determine its possible role in delaying student degree completion. Several factors affect course availability, including having a sufficient number of faculty and having

classrooms available, especially during high-demand times of the week. Alternative scheduling strategies may be used to make more courses available to students in UTSA's heavily utilized classroom inventory. Related strategies include adding more faculty (see #6 below), using alternative delivery mechanisms (see #8 below) and expanding credit by examination (see #7 below), increasing summer school course offerings (see #9 below), and utilizing course "wait-lists" (see section D, #2 below). Finally, student four-year degree plans (see section C, #2 below) will enable departments to plan appropriately for the expected enrollment demand for traditionally large courses. See Appendix D, Strategy 5 for more details.

6. Student-faculty ratio. Adding more teaching faculty ranks among UTSA's most critical needs. Its student-faculty ratio of 25:1 is large compared with other public universities in Texas, and the average number of student credit hours taught by UTSA faculty each semester (220) is 20% greater than the average of public universities in Texas. The limited number of faculty and correspondingly large instructional workload correlate with lower four-year completion rates as they affect the availability of courses offered and limit the degree of direct student-faculty interaction that is critical to student success. See Appendix D, Strategy 6 for details.
7. Credit by examination. UTSA will expand the use of credit by examination through a concerted marketing strategy aimed at high school students prior to enrollment, as well as in student orientation and in freshman advising sessions through the University College (see section C, #1 below). See Appendix D, Strategy 7 for details.
8. Alternative course delivery. Today's students have grown up in a digital environment and learn in ways that are different from previous generations of students. The modern university must find ways to adapt its curriculum to acknowledge those differences and provide effective learning environments for 21st century students. UTSA will undertake a comprehensive initiative to examine effective ways of delivering courses, particularly those that must accommodate large numbers of students. Strategies will include the expanded use of classroom technology, the development of online and hybrid delivery courses (hybrid courses include both an in-class and an online component), and the widespread adoption of instructional techniques pioneered by UTSA's best teachers through the creation of a new Academy for Distinguished Teachers and associated faculty development programs. The use of alternative delivery mechanisms should improve the availability of courses, as well as stimulate student success through better teaching. See Appendix D, Strategy 8 for details.
9. Summer school expansion. UTSA has increased its investment in summer school the past couple of years as a means of helping students gain access to high demand courses. This initiative calls for additional funds to be invested in summer school courses to emphasize its use as a time for students to stay on track for a four-year degree by prioritizing "bottleneck" courses and advertising their availability at the time of fall and spring registration. See Appendix D, Strategy 9 for details.

### C. Advising and Student Support Services

UTSA's students have cited the need for improved advising and academic support services throughout their careers at the university. With a large number of first-generation college students, there is a greater need at UTSA for assistance in making the transition from the close supervision and tight structure of a high school learning environment to the greater flexibility of the university environment. The university has identified several strategies to address this factor, including creation of an entity to oversee the students' transition from high school; earlier counseling about choice of major; online monitoring tools; improved advising programs; and monitoring of student progress with early intervention when problems arise. With sufficient resources, UTSA will provide renewed attention to this educational support element so that a student can receive the support they need to graduate on time.

1. *University College.* This particular element of the *Freshman Focus* initiative (see section B, #1 above) has been singled out because of its special role in improving the mentoring of freshman students as they transition to college. Through the University College, freshmen will receive their initial course advisement for cohort enrollment in blocks of courses, and information about and assistance with selecting a major, in addition to the support described in sections A.5, B.1 and B.4 above. Finally, the University College will oversee all the various academic support services offered at UTSA. This is one of the most important strategies for improving four-year graduation rates as it directly targets the time when students are most likely to leave the university or struggle academically. See Appendix E, Strategy 1 for more details.
2. *Four-year degree plans of study.* UTSA will begin requiring students to develop a four-year degree plan during the spring of their freshman year with the help of University College advisors. The online database might be facilitated through a customization of *MyEdu*. See Appendix E, Strategy 2 for more details.
3. *Online degree audit system.* This strategy is related to the previous one in that the same degree plan of study software and database can be utilized for online degree auditing. The importance of this strategy is that it enables students to chart their progress on their own and to explore alternative options before visiting with an advisor. This should make advising sessions more efficient and allow advisors to assist with more substantive academic issues. See Appendix E, Strategy 3 for more details.
4. *Advising quality and access.* UTSA is in the process of implementing several recommendations provided by the Advising Task Force in Fall 2010.<sup>8</sup> Among these are initiatives to improve the accessibility of advisors through an online software system and a comprehensive advising web site with answers to frequently asked questions. The software system ideally would enable advisors to record the results of an advising session so that students can receive consistent course advisement from one session to the next and transmit summary notes to students as well as meeting reminders. UTSA's ultimate

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<sup>8</sup> For the complete report of the provost's Advising Task Force go to [http://utsa.edu/success/docs/provost\\_task\\_force\\_on\\_academic\\_advising-final\\_report\\_9-27-2010.pdf](http://utsa.edu/success/docs/provost_task_force_on_academic_advising-final_report_9-27-2010.pdf).

goal is to shift its advising paradigm so that advisors are used exclusively for in-depth intrusive academic advising concerning students' majors, overall plans of study, and goal setting. See Appendix E, Strategy 4 for more details.

5. *Electronic early alert system.* Student success can be greatly aided through academic and financial early alerts that trigger intervention to address emerging problems.<sup>9</sup> Implementing such a system will require coordination with UTSA's learning management system (e.g. Blackboard, WebCT, or equivalent— this is presently under review) and active faculty participation to record grades from assignments and exams in the system. UTSA is examining a number of software platforms that may serve this purpose. Financial early alerts trigger intervention when there is a financial hold on registration so that students may be made aware of financial obligations that could prevent them from registering for classes. See Appendix E, Strategy 5 for more details.

#### ***D. Policies and Incentives***

UTSA will review its policies and offer special incentives to encourage students to complete their degrees in four years. The university will implement policies that discourage course withdrawal and repeat enrollment and, instead, encourage steady progress toward degree completion. In addition, it is hoped that financial stresses can be somewhat diminished through the optimal allocation of financial aid resources and enhanced work-study opportunities. Some of these strategies require resources to implement new systems (e.g. the wait-lists for courses) and the financial incentives described; however, many of these strategies involve a realignment of effort and/or existing resources. Finally, an important factor for both policies and incentives is adequate communication so that students are aware of both positive and negative consequences for certain enrollment choices.

1. *Enrollment policies review.* A review of current enrollment policies has been initiated to analyze them for effectiveness in stimulating behaviors that lead to earlier degree completion. For those that appear to prolong a student's studies, the analysis will lead to modified policies that better reflect an emphasis on four-year completion of degrees. See Appendix F, Strategy 1 for more details.
2. *Wait-lists for courses.* In the past, UTSA has not had wait-lists for over-enrolled courses, resulting in many of these courses ending up with less than full capacity by census date. By utilizing wait-lists, more students can gain access to needed courses as they "shop" for an optimal course schedule. The College of Engineering will pilot the wait-list program for Spring 2012 with future plans to expand the program to other colleges. See Appendix F, Strategy 2 for more details.
3. *Freshman/sophomore tuition and fee incentive grants.* To encourage freshmen and sophomores to get on track for graduation within four years, tuition and fee incentive grants will be made available. Eligible students would receive the grant if they have

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<sup>9</sup> See the Education Advisory Board 2009 report, *Hardwiring Student Success*.

completed at least 30 credit hours of work during the prior year with a 2.5 grade point average. See Appendix F, Strategy 3 for more details.

4. *Finish in four incentive.* To encourage juniors and seniors to continue accumulating 30 credit hours in an academic year, thus staying on track for graduation within four years, this initiative provides a small financial aid award and intervention designed to assure their on-time graduation. Eligible participants will have completed 60 credits with a 2.5 grade point average before their fifth regular semester (*i.e.* Fall or Spring) and will receive financial assistance through their eighth semester and graduation. Students will be required to enter into a contract for this additional financial aid and academic support. See Appendix F, Strategy 4 for more details.
5. *On-campus employment opportunities.* UTSA currently supplements the federal work-study program by \$1.4 million each year to provide more on-campus work opportunities for students. This initiative seeks to expand on-campus work opportunities further. See Appendix F, Strategy 5 for more details.
6. *Four-year completion marketing.* UTSA will begin a concerted effort to raise student awareness of the benefits of finishing their degrees in four years. The goal is to create a culture of completing in four years among our students and faculty. See Appendix F, Strategy 6 for more details.

Finally, several initiatives not detailed in this report will also contribute to student persistence at UTSA. These include the gradual expansion of residence halls, the enhancement of on-campus recreation and dining facilities, and increased opportunities for student life activities, including athletics, clubs, and student government. All of these efforts encourage students to spend more time on campus and become engaged in campus life, and are indirectly associated with greater student success outcomes.

Each of the four factors affecting students' completion success along with strategies accelerating degree completion are described in more detail in Appendices C-F. Also included are a timetable for implementation of each strategy and the metrics related to each strategy to determine its effect on improving four-year graduation rates.

### ***E. Oversight Team***

The university will establish an executive oversight team, under the leadership of the Provost. The oversight team will monitor these initiatives, so that actions will be undertaken and results assessed in a coordinated, holistic manner, optimizing our chances of achieving our goals for student success. The Office of Institutional Research will provide pertinent data, monitor the performance metrics, and perform analyses. The oversight team will meet twice each year to review our performance metrics and our enrollment data broken down by gender, racioethnic group, family income level, parent level of education, and other important factors relevant to student completion. This group will also have the authority to commission task forces to implement new initiatives as warranted by students' needs and as indicated by the data.

## V. A Future Scenario

To illustrate UTSA's planned approach to student success, imagine the following scenario describing a typical incoming freshman at UTSA in the year 2021. Although a fictional account, it is meant to reflect a future reality.

Ana Martinez, an 18-year-old Latina, is a first-generation college student entering UTSA directly from high school, where she ranked in the top quartile of her graduating class.<sup>10</sup> To prepare herself for a successful university experience at UTSA, Ana took advanced high school courses in English, math and science and participated in the *UTSA Ready* program offered at her high school. She learned the benefit of her strong academic preparation in conversations with her roommate in the dormitory, who participated in the *Jump Start* program during the summer to brush up on her math skills before she started her first semester at UTSA, and said the program was 'really hard.'

Like all freshman students, Ana is enrolled in the University College, where she will learn about the many majors available to her, though she has a pretty good idea what she wants to study. During her first semester, Ana is taking core classes<sup>11</sup> like math, writing, academic inquiry, biology, and introduction to business, with a cohort of students<sup>12</sup> who, like her, already plan to major in business. Though she also plans to complete some of her core subjects, like history, through credit by examination, she hopes that the friendships she is making in her freshman cohort will provide a support group as she starts taking more advanced business courses. Her peer mentor has told her that his peer support group really helped him stay on track toward graduation.

Working closely with her University College advisor, Ana has mapped out her entire four-year degree plan. To help her keep track of her progress, she's using *MyEdu*, an on-line course-planning tool. She likes the fact that some of her classes are offered in a hybrid format, because it makes her class scheduling easier, and still gives her a 'face-to-face' personal learning opportunity with her class professors every week.<sup>13</sup> She will have completed 30 credit hours toward her degree by the end of the spring semester.

Ana wants to major in information systems because she likes programming, there are increasingly more jobs in that field, and those jobs pay well. Because she knows that her preferred major is rigorous and very selective, she is relieved to learn that there is online tutoring

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<sup>10</sup> Adelman, C. 2006. *The Toolbox Revisited*. Statistics indicate that on average 45% of Hispanic students in the top quartile of their high school classes will graduate from college within eight years. If they enrolled in college without taking a break, this figure increases to 50.5%.

<sup>11</sup> Completing courses in which students learn critical academic skills like math and writing improves success later in the curriculum. At present, too many students delay their completion of the core curriculum and lose this benefit.

<sup>12</sup> Several studies indicate that use of cohorts in the freshman year greatly enhances persistence and success. Empirically, this is observed at UTSA through athletics, ROTC, and the Living and Learning Communities.

<sup>13</sup> Numerous discussions with students at UTSA indicate that they strongly favor the hybrid course approach over a totally-online delivery, for the reasons stated in this sentence. The hybrid courses allow for continued face-to-face interactions while enabling the university to optimize its use of classroom space.

software and learning assessment instruments to help her practice and hone her skills. Ana has every intention of doing well in her classes, but she feels more comfortable knowing that her advisors can monitor her progress through the online course management system, and will intervene if they see she needs academic counseling.<sup>14</sup>

Ana's family is proud of her academic effort and encouraged her to go to college. However, they are unable to provide Ana with much financial support, so it is up to Ana to find ways to cover the expense of attending college.<sup>15</sup> Through UTSA's assistance, she is receiving all the financial aid for which she qualifies. Because she also has a work-study job on campus and in her major department, she has a reduced need for loans, and it helps that the people she works for are highly sensitive to her academic commitments. They want her to be successful and are willing to adjust her work schedule to allow her time to do her schoolwork.

Ana understands that extending the time it takes her to earn her degree increases her eventual financial burden, so she is considering taking a course or two in the summer.<sup>16</sup> This will help her keep on track for a four-year degree and will also qualify her to actually reduce her costs through the grants UTSA offers if she completes more than 30 credit hours by the end of the academic year. If she completes her degree in four years without taking extra courses, she will also qualify for an additional rebate when she graduates.

Ana exemplifies the typical freshman student we believe will be enrolled in UTSA in 10 years. She wants to take advantage of the full college experience, so that she will be better prepared for a profession when she graduates. She wants to earn a degree that will provide her entry into a well-paying job. To do this, she must stay committed over the entire four years and work hard to reach her goals. Our fictional student, Ana Martinez, reflects not only the typical student at UTSA, but also exhibits aspirations common to students at every university in Texas.

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<sup>14</sup> Early alert systems and incessant academic monitoring have been cited by the Education Advisory Board in its 2009 report, *Hardwiring Student Success— Building Disciplines for Retention and Timely Graduation*, as being best practices for enhancing student persistence and success.

<sup>15</sup> Orrenius, P, Zavodny, M, and Kerr, E. 2009. "Getting to the Bottom of Texas' Latino Pay Gap." Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. *Southwest Economy*. Fourth Quarter. Texas Latino median hourly earnings were \$11.54, about 64% of what the state's non-Hispanic whites earned. The Federal Reserve attributes this to the facts that as a group, they are younger (less work experience), and have considerably less education (40% didn't graduate from high school, compared with 5% of Texas' non-Hispanic whites).

<sup>16</sup> Adelman, C. 2006. *The Toolbox Revisited*. Taking at least four credit hours during the summer correlates with higher completion rates. This effect is especially pronounced for African American students.

**VI. Resource Analysis**

**A. Total Resources Needed**

The implementation of these initiatives will require personnel, budgetary resources, and financial aid funding. UTSA will be committing a substantial portion of the resources needed from existing sources, particularly in the reallocation of personnel time and effort toward achieving the goals of these initiatives. However, new revenues will also be needed over the next two fiscal years. Tables 4-7 below outline how the various initiatives will be accomplished using a combination of existing and new resources.

**Table 4. Resource Requirements for Student Academic and Social Preparedness**

<i>Initiative (Responsible Offices)</i>	<i>Current/Reallocated Resources Used</i>	<i>New Resources Required</i>
1. Rigorous preparation of HS students <sup>1</sup> (P-20 Initiatives)	\$82,000— Staff (prog. coordination and academic coaches)	None
2. Increased admissions standards <sup>2</sup> (Admissions Office)	Nominal costs to be absorbed by current budgets.	None
3. Top scholars recruitment <sup>3</sup> (Provost’s Office, Admissions Office)	\$75,000— Assoc. Provost + staff \$50,000— Staff time \$1,500,000— Merit scholarships	None
4. Bridging programs <sup>4</sup> (Tomás Rivera Center, Testing)	\$20,000— Staff (prog. coordination) \$12,500— Staff support	\$45,000— <i>Jump Start</i> \$20,000— Math Boot Camp (faculty and tutors)
5. Academic and social support for freshmen (University College)	\$729,810— Supplemental instruction, tutoring services, learning communities, staff and operations support \$348,000—Peer Mentors	None
6. Online resources <sup>5</sup> (OIT, University College)	\$100,000— OIT staff	None
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,917,310</b>	<b>\$65,000</b>

*Notes:*

1. Initiative is planned and will be implemented in 2012-13. Program is funded by current/reallocated resources.
2. Initiative is already implemented and funded through current resources.
3. Assoc. Vice-Provost devotes approximately 50% effort to this task with the assistance of a program coordinator; also includes effort devoted by Admissions staff: 1.0 staff-years at \$50,000/year.
4. Reallocated resources for this initiative are estimated based on 0.33 staff-years at \$60,000/year and 0.5 staff-years at \$25,000.
5. Costs will depend, in part, on the outcome of UT System’s relationship with *MyEdu*.

**Table 5. Resource Requirements for Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery**

<i>Initiative (Responsible Offices)</i>	<i>Current/Reallocated Resources Used</i>	<i>New Resources Required</i>
1. <i>Freshman Focus initiative<sup>1</sup></i> (University College)	\$500,000— Faculty and staff time (reallocated effort to plan and implement)	See Table 6, <i>New Resources Required, Initiative #4</i>
2. Streamlined curriculum <sup>2</sup> (Provost Office)	\$410,000— Faculty and staff time (reallocated effort to implement)	None
3. Course prerequisites and competency-based assessment <sup>3</sup> (Provost’s Office)	\$157,000— Faculty and staff time (reallocated effort to implement)	None
4. B.A. in Multidisc. Studies <sup>4</sup> (University College)	\$52,500— Faculty time (reallocated effort to implement)	None
5. Course availability and scheduling <sup>5</sup> (Registrar, Office of Space Planning)	\$30,000— Faculty and staff time (reallocated effort to implement)	None
6. Student-faculty ratio <sup>6</sup> (Provost Office)	\$750,000— ~10 new faculty positions and associated benefits costs created from vacant faculty lines	\$3,760,069— ~40 new faculty positions and associated benefits
7. Credit by exam (Testing Services)	Nominal costs to be absorbed by current budgets	None
8. Alternative course delivery (OIT, TLC)	\$102,500— Hybrid academy \$353,000— Faculty Innovation Technology Lab	\$162,000— Instructional Tech. Specialists and associated benefits
9. Summer school expansion (Provost Office)	None	\$1,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,355,000</b>	<b>\$4,922,069</b>

*Notes:*

1. Initiative is planned and will be fully implemented by Fall 2014. Resource needs identified here do not include creation of University College or supplemental advising staff. Startup costs estimated based on use of 4.0 faculty-years at \$75,000/year and 4.0 staff-years at \$50,000/year.
2. Initiative will be undertaken in 2012-13. Implementation costs estimated based on use of 4.0 faculty-years at \$75,000/year plus 2.0 staff-years at \$40,000/year and 0.2 vice provost-years at \$150,000/year.
3. Initiative will be undertaken in 2012-13. Implementation costs estimated based on use of 2.0 faculty-years at \$75,000/year plus 0.1 staff-years at \$40,000/year and 0.02 vice provost-years at \$150,000/year.
4. This initiative has been implemented as of Fall 2011 using current resources.
5. Initiative will be undertaken in 2012-13. Implementation costs estimated based on use of 0.20 faculty-years at \$75,000/year and 0.30 staff-years at \$50,000/year.
6. Estimate based on 30 retirements via UTSA’s Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP) at average salary of \$100,000 with replacement cost at \$75,000.

**Table 6. Resource Requirements for Advising and Student Support Services**

<i>Initiative (Responsible Offices)</i>	<i>Current/Reallocated Resources Used</i>	<i>New Resources Required</i>
1. University College <sup>1</sup> (Provost Office)	\$638,000— Undergraduate Studies (Tomás Rivera Center, Core Curriculum, QEP, Writing Core; Retention)	\$184,000— Administrative staffing and associated benefits
2. Four-year degree plans of study <sup>2</sup> (Provost Office, OIT)	\$75,000— OIT staff time to design online interface and data porting	None
3. Online degree audit system <sup>2</sup> (Provost Office, OIT)	\$75,000— OIT staff time to design online interface and data porting	None
4. Advising quality and access <sup>3</sup> (Provost Office)	\$5,141,000— Undergraduate advising	\$1,700,000— Changes in the advising fee structure to meet critical needs and demands for services to include reallocation of resources, funding the addition of new advising positions and advisor retention <sup>4</sup>
5. Electronic early alert system <sup>2</sup> (Registrar, OIT)	\$75,000— OIT Staff time to design online interface and data reporting	\$43,000— Software acquisition
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,004,000</b>	<b>\$1,927,000</b>

Notes:

1. Creation of the University College will be fully implemented by Fall 2012. Resource needs identified here include both existing and needed additional administrative support costs. Advising resources are included under other initiatives.
2. Cost depends on implementation of *MyEdu* as a possible platform for this initiative. Even if the use of *MyEdu* greatly reduces software acquisition costs, it will be necessary to reallocate 1.0 OIT staff-years at \$75,000/year to interface the software platform with university databases and web sites.
3. Implementation of this initiative requires both tasking our existing advisors to redefine their roles, and adding additional advisors to provide improved access to students.
4. Revenue source is generated from the Undergraduate Advising Fees.

**Table 7. Resource Requirements for Policies and Incentives**

<i>Initiative (Responsible Offices)</i>	<i>Current/Reallocated Resources Used</i>	<i>New Resources Required</i>
1. Enrollment policies review <sup>1</sup> (Provost Office)	\$80,000— Staff time	None
2. Wait-lists for courses <sup>2</sup> (Provost Office, OIT)	\$75,000— OIT staff time to design online interface and data reporting	None
3. Freshman/sophomore tuition and fee incentive grants <sup>3</sup> (Financial Aid Office)	Nominal costs to be absorbed by current budgets.	\$1,000,000— student incentive grants
4. Finish in Four <sup>3</sup> (Graduation Initiative, Financial Aid Office)	\$31,250— Staff time reallocated to administer program	\$912,500— student grants
5. On-campus employment opportunities <sup>4</sup>	\$330,000— Wages for student workers	None
6. Four-year completion marketing (Provost Office)	Nominal costs to be absorbed by current budgets	None
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$516,250</b>	<b>\$1,912,500</b>

*Notes:*

1. Initiative will be undertaken in 2012-13. Implementation costs estimated based on use of 0.2 faculty-years at \$75,000/year plus 1.0 staff-years at \$50,000/year and 0.1 vice provost-years at \$150,000/year.
2. Estimate based on allocating 1.0 OIT staff-years at \$75,000/year to develop new software platform and interface with university databases and web sites.
3. Implementation of this initiative requires both tasking our existing advisors to redefine their roles, and adding additional advisors to provide improved access to students.
4. Cost estimate based on placing 60 additional student workers for 19 hours/week × 35 weeks × \$8.25/hour.

The net resource need totals \$20,619,129, of which \$11,792,560 (57%) is derived from existing and reallocated university resources. This resource analysis does not include indirect support that will be necessary to provide infrastructure for these initiatives, including facilities, facility support, and other forms of administrative overhead which have not been included above.

***B. New Resources Needed***

While existing and reallocated institutional resources provide significant support for the initiatives in this plan, new revenues are needed to hire faculty, staff, and technical support; to provide programmatic funding; and to offer student financial aid through incentives and enhanced employment opportunities.

In Table 8, the proposed revenue sources for these needs, organized by type, are identified. Note that the designated tuition financial aid set-aside has not been included in the implied totals for new resources in the previous section.

**Table 8. Proposed New Revenue Sources**

<i>Undergraduate Tuition/Fees</i>	<i>Designated Tuition</i>		<i>Special Fees: Advising</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>FY 2013</i>	<i>FY 2014</i>		
Personnel— New Faculty	\$ 906,069	\$2,854,000		\$ 3,760,069
Support staff	\$ 300,000	\$ 46,000		\$ 346,000
Advisors			\$1,700,000	\$ 1,700,000
Programmatic support	\$ 983,000	\$ 125,000		\$ 1,108,000
Financial Aid— Grants	\$ 865,000	\$1,047,500		\$ 1,912,500
Designated Tuition Set-aside*	\$ 741,828	\$ 989,104		\$ 1,730,932
<b>Total— Undergraduate</b>	<b>\$3,795,897</b>	<b>\$5,061,604</b>	<b>\$1,700,000</b>	<b>\$10,557,501</b>

\*Tuition set-asides are applied to need-based student financial aid as required by Texas Education Code.

**Appendix A. UTSA Student Enrollment and Degree Completion, 2001-2011**

**Table A-1. Admissions and Student Persistence, 2001-2011**

Year	Applicants	Admitted	Freshman Enrollment	Persist 2nd year (%)	Persist 3rd year (%)	Persist 4th year (%)	Persist 5th year (%)	Persist 6th year (%)	Still Enrolled*
2001	5,414	5,381	1,911	1,154 (60.4)	882 (46.2)	804 (42.1)	636 (33.3)	302 (15.8)	39
2002	6,480	6,436	3,003	1,765 (58.8)	1,368 (45.6)	1,182 (39.4)	874 (29.1)	461 (15.4)	68
2003	9,685	9,618	4,131	2,160 (52.3)	1,722 (41.7)	1,529 (37.0)	1,097 (26.6)	579 (14.0)	109
2004	10,331	10,260	4,246	2,460 (58.0)	1,858 (43.8)	1,564 (36.8)	1,133 (26.7)	588 (13.8)	167
2005	9,149	9,092	4,367	2,594 (59.4)	1,881 (43.1)	1,634 (37.4)	1,184 (27.1)	600 (13.7)	302
2006	11,293	10,122	4,693	2,748 (58.6)	1,960 (41.8)	1,691 (36.1)	1,239 (26.4)	613 (12.7)	
2007	11,475	10,163	4,836	2,831 (58.6)	2,121 (43.9)	1,867 (38.6)	1,315 (27.6)		
2008	13,259	10,949	4,763	2,671 (56.1)	2,097 (44.1)	1,850 (38.8)			
2009	12,270	10,426	4,561	2,607 (57.2)	2,040 (44.7)				
2010	13,603	10,724	4,816	2,997 (60.7)					
2011	14,513	11,367	4,901						

\*As of Fall 2011 semester.

**Table A-2. Graduation Rates by HS Rank, 2001-2011**

Year	Total No. Freshmen	Top 10% Students				Top 11-25% Students				All Students			
		Cohort Size	Grad. in ≤ 4 yrs	Grad. in 5 yrs	Grad. in 6 yrs	Cohort Size	Grad. in ≤ 4 yrs	Grad. in 5 yrs	Grad. in 6 yrs	Grad. in ≤ 4 yrs	Grad. in 5 yrs	Grad. in 6 yrs	Grad. in > 6 yrs
2001	2,641	11.6%	14%	24%	12%	23.4%	9%	20%	9%	7.2%	14.6%	7.9%	6%
2002	3,003	10.5%	20%	21%	12%	25.5%	8%	15%	10%	7.8%	13.1%	7.6%	5%
2003	4,131	9.7%	23%	17%	9%	27.5%	9%	14%	8%	7.5%	11.4%	7.6%	5%
2004	4,246	8.5%	19%	23%	8%	24.4%	9%	15%	6%	7.4%	12.4%	6.5%	3%
2005	4,367	9.1%	20%	22%	9%	24.7%	10%	15%	6%	8.0%	12.7%	6.5%	
2006	4,693	7.9%	24%	16%		24.7%	13%	13%		9.1%	14.5%		
2007	4,836	7.0%	27%			22.3%	12%			9.6%			
2008	4,763	8.8%				26.7%							
2009	4,561	8.7%				29.1%							
2010	4,816	9.9%				30.5%							
2011	4,901	11.5%				33.7%							

Note: The six-year graduation rate is obtained from this table by summing the percentage of students in the initial cohort who graduated in four, five, and six years. Thus, for the 2005 cohort, the six-year graduation rate would be 8.0% + 12.7% + 6.5% = 27.2%.

**Appendix B. Enrollment Management and Student Population Projections, 2011-2021**

UTSA’s enrollment management plan over the next ten years (2011-2021) has as its primary goals admitting a freshman class that is college-ready, increasing the chances of a high rate of timely completion, while continuing to provide access through transfer admission to those students who have demonstrated capacity to succeed in higher education. These goals are framed by several guiding principles:

- UTSA will maintain its current total student enrollment over the next ten years while focusing on enhancing the quality of the education it provides and on increasing positive outcomes for students.
- UTSA’s graduate enrollment will increase to 17.5% of its total enrollment, requiring a net increase of 1000 graduate students and a corresponding decrease of about 500 undergraduates from the current mix of students.
- The proportion of freshman students admitted to UTSA from the top decile (10%) and the top quartile (25%) of their high school classes will expand significantly through proactive recruitment activities. Our admissions criteria will continue to grant automatic admission to students who graduate high school in the top quartile of their classes.
- UTSA will maintain its current level of transfer student admissions (about 2500 per year) to ensure that it continues to provide access to regional students.
- UTSA will continue to enhance its student diversity as it enriches the academic qualifications of its student population.

UTSA’s admissions targets, as projected to support the Enrollment Management Plan goals, are found in Table B-1.

**Table B-1. Admissions Projections, 2011-2021**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Complete</i>	<i>Top Decile</i>		<i>Top 11-25%</i>		<i>Other Students</i>		<i>CAP</i>
	<i>Applics.</i>	<i>Admitted</i>	<i>Enrolled</i>	<i>Admitted</i>	<i>Enrolled</i>	<i>Admitted</i>	<i>Enrolled</i>	<i>Enrolled</i>
2011	14,513	1,706	564	3,804	1,653	5,857	2,684	879
2012	15,740	1,907	614	3,921	1,745	5,455	2,455	791
2013	16,593	2,118	660	4,026	1,800	5,032	2,219	703
2014	17,447	2,268	703	4,128	1,849	4,639	1,992	615
2015	18,300	2,406	742	4,216	1,892	4,248	1,775	527
2016	19,153	2,533	777	4,291	1,929	3,860	1,568	439
2017	20,007	2,651	809	4,352	1,960	3,471	1,370	351
2018	20,860	2,757	837	4,399	1,985	3,085	1,182	263
2019	21,713	2,855	862	4,433	2,004	2,700	1,003	175
2020	22,567	2,936	882	4,454	2,017	2,320	835	87
2021	23,420	3,012	900	4,463	2,025	1,937	675	0

Table B-1 illustrates how UTSA will need to approach student recruitment over the next ten years. For example, the number of top decile applicants will need to nearly double, from 1,700 to 3,000, and the number of top 11-25% applicants will need to increase by 660 over that time. The

net gain in enrollment for these two cohorts would be about 340 in each case— targets that should be achievable within that time frame. Students from lower quartiles and from non-ranking high schools will be admitted through holistic review and will only comprise a cohort of about 675 students in ten years.

In order to reach its goals for enrollment management, UTSA will also need to balance its effort to recruit top students with the efforts described in this plan to help all students complete degrees in a timely manner. Thus, the enrollment strategy should factor in some improvement in the university’s ability to help students complete degrees within four years.

Once students are admitted to the university, the success of this plan requires that student year-to-year persistence rates improve in order to achieve the four-year graduation rate goal. As the discussion accompanying Chart 1 in the text indicates, this plan seeks to increase by a factor of 1.5 the completion percentage of students who have persisted to a given year. For the most recent years’ data, 2.9% of students who persisted into the third year, 21.4% of those who persisted to the fourth year, 46.2% of those who persisted to the fifth year, and 48.9% of those who persisted into the sixth year graduated by the end of those respective years. UTSA’s goal is to increase these percentages to 4.35% (3rd year completion), 32.1% (4th year completion), 69.3% (5th year completion), and 73.3% (6th year completion), respectively.

For these performance goals to result in the desired four-year graduation rate, data simulations indicate that three quarters of all freshmen must persist at UTSA until the third year, and two-thirds must persist to the fourth year. This implies corresponding targets for overall persistence to the second, third, fourth, and later years. In particular, the first-to-second year persistence rate must improve from 60.7% to 85%, a 40% relative gain. Of those students who continued to the second year, the year-to-year persistence to the third year must improve from 73.6% to 88%, resulting in a net retention rate of 75% of the original freshman cohort persisting into the third year ( $0.85 \times 0.88 = 0.75$ ).

Table B-2 below tabulates the target persistence rates as a percentage of the original freshman cohort over the next ten years.

**Table B-2. Projections/Targets for Student Persistence Rates, 2011-2021**

Year	Cohort Size	Student Persistence Rates (Percentages)				
		to 2nd Year	to 3rd Year	to 4th Year*	to 5th Year*	to 6th Year*
2011	4,901	60.3	47.1	41.6	29.7	13.4
2012	4,814	62.4	49.5	43.6	30.4	13.0
2013	4,679	64.5	52.0	45.8	31.2	12.7
2014	4,544	66.7	54.5	48.1	32.1	12.3
2015	4,409	69.0	57.1	50.5	33.1	12.1
2016	4,275	71.4	59.8	52.9	34.0	11.7
2017	4,140	73.9	62.6	55.5	35.0	11.5
2018	4,005	76.5	65.5	58.1	36.1	11.1
2019	3,870	79.2	68.5	60.8	37.1	10.8
2020	3,735	82.0	71.6	63.7	38.3	10.5
2021	3,600	85.0	75.0	66.7	39.6	10.3

Table B-2 provides some ambitious targets for UTSA’s student persistence rates through improvement in its academic and student services. In effect, the first-to-second year persistence rate must improve by an average of 3.4% per year, and the relative second-to-third year persistence rate must improve by 1.8% per year to meet these targets.

Using these enhanced student persistence rates and targets for the percentage of graduating students from each cohort at various stages, the overall graduation rates can be projected. Table B-3 shows the resulting graduation rates for students completing degrees in four years or less, during the fifth year, and during the sixth year. The six-year graduation rate is projected to double from 30.2% for the 2006 freshman cohort to 62.7% for the 2021 freshman cohort. The graduation rate percentages shown below are all projections, with the exception of the four-year rates for the 2006 and 2007 cohort and the five-year rate for the 2006 cohort. These projections are based on a linear interpolation between current graduation rates and the target rates identified in Table B-2.

One should note that the column displaying total undergraduate degrees awarded does not refer to the completion success of the freshman cohort of that year, but refers to the total number of students from earlier cohorts who happened to graduate in that year. This information is actual data for 2011 and all years prior to that, and projections for 2012 and later.

**Table B-3. Targets for Student Graduation Rates, 2006-2021**

Year	Entering Cohort Size	Graduation Rates (Percentages)			Undergraduate Degrees Awarded/Proj.
		≤ 4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	
2006	4,693	9.1	14.5	6.6	3,492
2007	4,836	9.6	14.7	6.8	3,649
2008	4,763	9.7	14.8	6.8	3,596
2009	4,561	9.9	15.0	6.8	3,841
2010	4,816	10.3	15.2	7.2	3,968
2011	4,901	10.3	15.6	7.3	4,131
2012*	4,814	11.6	16.7	7.4	4,031
2013*	4,679	12.9	17.9	7.6	3,986
2014*	4,544	14.3	19.1	7.7	4,097
2015*	4,409	15.7	20.3	7.8	4,178
2016*	4,275	17.1	21.6	8.0	4,275
2017*	4,140	18.6	22.9	8.1	4,340
2018*	4,005	20.1	24.3	8.3	4,394
2019*	3,870	21.7	25.7	8.5	4,446
2020*	3,735	23.3	27.2	8.7	4,492
2021*	3,600	25.0	28.8	8.9	4,515

\*Degrees awarded are projected based on targets identified for graduation rates and typical degrees awarded to transfer students and later-year graduates.

It is interesting to observe the relative numbers of new freshmen enrolling at UTSA and the number of undergraduate degrees awarded each year. As the entering freshman class decreases in

size over the next ten years, and the completion rate of students improves, the university will reach a point at which the number of graduates produced exceeds the number of new freshmen admitted, thanks to the success of transfer students. Under this model, that transition will take place in 2016-17. By 2021, 915 *more* degrees will be awarded than the number of new students enrolled. The small decline in degrees awarded in the next couple of years is a result of smaller full-time freshman cohorts enrolled in 2008 and 2009 without a compensating enhancement of those students' persistence at UTSA.

Finally, all of this information can be used to construct projected total student undergraduate enrollment over the next ten years, as is shown in Table B-4. The decrease in the size of the freshman class is compensated by higher retention rates so that the number of second-year students remains roughly constant. The university should experience substantial increases in the number of third- and fourth-year students, however, while the number of fifth- and sixth-year students should peak within the next five years, then decline slowly over the next several years. For the purposes of this projection, the number of new and continuing transfer students has been assumed to stay constant, while the number of graduate students is modeled to increase from 4,523 to 5,500 by 2021.

**Table B-4. Projections of Total Student Enrollment, 2011-2021**

Year	Admitted as Freshmen						Transfers		Grad Students	Total Student Population
	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Yr. 5	Yr. 6	New	Cont.*		
2011	4,901	2,997	2,040	1,850	1,315	613	2,455	10,293	4,456	30,972
2012	4,814	2,985	2,342	1,775	1,318	640	2,429	9,865	4,560	30,728
2013	4,679	3,003	2,333	2,061	1,258	634	2,398	9,741	4,665	30,772
2014	4,544	3,019	2,383	2,057	1,472	589	2,500	9,775	4,769	31,108
2015	4,409	3,032	2,431	2,099	1,470	686	2,500	9,684	4,874	31,185
2016	4,275	3,044	2,476	2,145	1,463	664	2,500	9,728	4,978	31,273
2017	4,140	3,052	2,516	2,187	1,462	625	2,500	9,799	5,082	31,363
2018	4,005	3,058	2,555	2,227	1,459	594	2,500	9,900	5,187	31,485
2019	3,870	3,062	2,590	2,263	1,458	561	2,500	9,900	5,291	31,495
2020	3,735	3,064	2,622	2,297	1,453	533	2,500	9,900	5,396	31,500
2021	3,600	3,062	2,650	2,327	1,450	502	2,500	9,900	5,500	31,491

\*Includes students admitted as freshmen in year seven or later.

The net effect of the decrease in the size of the freshman class, the increase in student persistence, the increase in percentage completion, and the increase in graduate student population is a total student population that stabilizes around 31,500 students. If persistence improves, but graduation rates do not increase as targeted, then the student enrollment will stabilize at a larger total population.

## Appendix C—Factor 1: Student Academic and Social Preparedness

Historically, a significant number of our incoming students have not possessed adequate academic skills to ensure success in college, as measured by high school class rank and/or scores on standardized examinations. This lack of adequate academic preparation has proven to be a challenge for our freshmen. Although the average SAT of the fall 2011 freshman class increased, 27% of freshman students are enrolled in at least one developmental education course. Because these courses do not count toward degrees, they extend the time required to complete a degree and increase the cost of education. Increased time and cost often prevent the student from remaining continually enrolled in college, or may force the student to drop out altogether. In addition, underprepared students struggling in classes other than developmental coursework may experience similar negative outcomes.

### **Strategy 1: Rigorous Preparation of High School Students**

*UTSA Ready* is an academic preparation/intervention program to assist interested high school students in meeting UTSA college readiness and admissions standards. A diagnostic will be used to detect academic deficiencies and develop an online learning path consistent with the strengths and weaknesses exhibited by the student. The students will be assigned an academic coach/mentor who will assist them with their learning path assignments and be responsible for identifying any additional tutoring needs. The project will begin with 200 high school juniors from Northside ISD, 200 from San Antonio ISD and 100 from Harlandale ISD.

#### Timetable for Implementation:

Spring 2012

- Identify high school student participants.

Fall 2012

- Use diagnostic tests to determine math, reading and writing levels of performance.
- Academic coaches assist high school students with needed academic interventions.

Fall 2013

- First cohort of graduating HS seniors ready to enroll at UTSA

#### Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short-term:*

- Profile of student compliance with TSI standards
- Percentage of *UTSA Ready* participants needing dev. courses beyond matriculation

*Long-term:*

- Longitudinal measurement of student performance on assessment instruments
- Overall percentage of students needing developmental education
- Time to degree for participants in *UTSA Ready*
- Average number of credit hours taken by “first-time freshmen” to earn degree

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

**Strategy 2: Increased Admissions Standards**

As discussed in our Profile, students with stronger academic preparation historically are retained at higher rates and graduate within shorter time frames at all universities. We began implementing more rigorous admissions standards with the incoming fall 2008 freshman class and plan to continue gradually raising those standards. We are currently preparing the next phase of our more rigorous admissions standards for fall 2013 admissions.

The table below reports changes made to raise admissions standards over the past four years.

**Table C-1. Changes in UTSA Undergraduate Admissions Standards**

<b>FRESHMEN</b>	<b>2007 &amp; Earlier</b>		<b>2008-2010</b>		<b>2011-2012</b>	
<b>High School Class Rank</b>	<b>Minimum Combined SAT</b>	<b>Minimum Composite ACT</b>	<b>Minimum Combined SAT</b>	<b>Minimum Composite ACT</b>	<b>Minimum Combined SAT</b>	<b>Minimum Composite ACT</b>
Top 10%	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission
Top 25% (Not in top 10%)	830	17	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission	Guaranteed Admission
Second 25%	870	18	920	19	960	20
Third 25%	920	19	970	20	I.R.*	I.R.*
Fourth 25%	970	20	1020	21	I.R.*	I.R.*
Unaccredited HS, Home School, GED	970	20	1020	21	I.R.*	I.R.*
Accredited Non-Ranking HS	970	20	1020	21	I.R.*	I.R.*

\*I.R. – Individual Review

The more rigorous admission process has resulted in improved academic preparation and retention. From fall 2010 to fall 2011, the proportion full-time, first time- freshmen in the top quartile of their high school classes (for those schools that reported class ranks) improved from 41% to 45%. In addition, retention from the freshmen to sophomore classes for the fall 2010 class increased from 57% to 62%, a significant increase of five percentage points. UTSA must include Coordinated Admissions Program (CAP) students who transfer to UT Austin in our retention rate, which artificially decreases it. Without the CAP students, UTSA’s retention rate for freshmen who come to UTSA intending to complete degrees here (“native” students) is close to 70%.

The table that follows compares the proportion of entering students from various high school class rank ranges for the UTSA freshman class from 2010 to 2011.

**Table C-2. Change in Freshman Class— Fall 2010 to Fall 2011**

<i>Rank Category</i>	<i>Fall 2010</i>		<i>Fall 2011</i>		<i>Difference</i>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	
Top 10%	485	10.1%	564	11.5%	+1.4%
11-25%	1468	30.5%	1653	33.7%	+3.2%
Second Quartile (26-50%)	1576	32.7%	1454	29.7%	-3.0%
Third Quartile (51-75%)	762	15.8%	600	12.2%	-3.6%
Fourth Quartile (76-100%)	199	4.1%	137	2.8%	-1.3%
Unranked*	326	6.7%	493	10.1%	+3.4%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4936</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4901</b>	<b>100%</b>	—

\*Unranked means either that the high school attended by the student does not rank its graduating class, or the student was home-schooled.

We note that the percentages cited in the table are percentages of students in each rank relative to the total number of freshmen (including those from non-ranking high schools). If we include only those freshmen from high schools that rank their classes, then 2249 of 4488, or slightly more than half of our students came from the top quartile. We also observe that the average ACT/SAT scores of our unranked students was higher than the corresponding average scores of our top quartile students.

Timetable for Implementation:

Spring 2012

- Seek Board of Regents approval for adjusted admissions standards.
- Provide notice of new admissions standards to schools (pending Board approval).

Fall 2013

- Implement new admissions standards

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short-term:*

- Percentage of freshman class coming from top quartile of high school class
- Freshman-to-sophomore retention rate
- Average ACT/SAT scores of entering freshmen

*Long-term:*

- Persistence rates for two, three, and four years
- Percentage of students needing developmental courses

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

**Strategy 3: Top Scholars Recruitment**

Beginning in 2010-11, in coordination with our raised admission standards, UTSA began a formal program to actively recruit freshmen who graduated in the top quartile of their high school classes across the state and region. Ultimately we will expand the program to include all our prospective students. Academic Affairs and Student Affairs partnered to establish an annual Top Scholar Dinner event and created a Top Scholar Recruitment Committee to focus on the recruitment of high-quality diverse students. The Top Scholar event provides an opportunity for the finest students and their parents to engage in scholarly conversation with faculty and key staff at UTSA. The goal is to raise their awareness of the outstanding research and educational opportunities available, as well as the excellent student life offered on our campus. The first event, held in February 2011, contributed to a 10% increase in fall 2011 in our freshman class who ranked in the top 20% of their high school classes (74% of those students who attended the event enrolled at UTSA).

In addition, UTSA will be utilizing its well-established summer enrichment program, the Pre-freshman Engineering Program (PREP) as a means of identifying and recruiting top students into STEM programs. While some departments currently recruit PREP students, a more concerted and strategic recruitment effort by admissions will be implemented to attract more PREP students to UTSA. For PREP students who have completed PREP III, a college credit version, University PREP, is designed to allow high school students to take UTSA courses during the summer for college credit. The students who do well in these courses will be targeted by admissions as they not only have UTSA credits, but they are more likely to graduate.

Timetable for Implementation:

January 2012

- Hold the next Top Scholar event.
- Continue Top Scholar event annually thereafter.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short-term:*

- Number of applicants that meet criteria to be invited to Top Scholar dinner
- Percentage of students who attend Top Scholar dinner event who eventually matriculate at UTSA
- Number of former PREP III students who enroll at UTSA

*Long-term:*

- Number and percentage of total students who ranked in the top decile of their HS classes
- Number and percentage of total students who ranked in the top quartile of their HS classes

New resources requested to support initiative: None (internal reallocation of resources).

**Strategy 4: Bridging Programs**

As admissions standards increase, fewer students will require remediation before enrolling in university courses. However, for those who do, UTSA's Math Boot Camp and the *Jump Start* programs, held during the summer before the students enroll in their first semester of university classes, provide a bridge to develop skills needed to succeed in college math and science courses.

**4.1 Math Boot Camp:** The Math Boot Camp is a voluntary three- to four-day program where students are provided intensive practice to build competence on the math fundamentals. During the four years since implementation, over 50% of the participants improved their math placement by at least one course, so that they were able to enroll in a math course that counts toward the major and, thus, toward graduation.

**Timetable for Implementation:**

Fall 2011/Spring 2012—

- Coordinate and advertise the offerings available to incoming students.
- Create on-line camp opportunities.

Summer 2012

- Provide expanded programming to more student participants and market new programming.

Fall 2012

- Complete reports on cohort results.

**Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:**

*Short-term:*

- Academic performance (UTSA GPA) of participants
- Math GPA of participants in math courses in fall and spring semesters following completion
- Relative math course performance of participants to non-participants

*Long-term:*

- Longitudinal data for Math Boot Camp cohorts' GPAs and course completion until graduation
- UTSA persistence rates for each Boot Camp cohort

**New resources requested to support initiative:** Programmatic support.

**4.2 Jump Start Program:** For students whose scores indicate that they do not need developmental coursework, but whose skills in Math and General Chemistry I may be rusty, the Jump Start program helps refresh those skills through the intensive instruction provided by UTSA faculty and tutors. The participants place into higher-level courses, earn higher GPAs, and complete more courses, thus advancing their degree plans and graduating earlier than otherwise would have occurred.

Timetable for Implementation Program of *Jump Start Program*:

Fall 2011/Spring 2012

- Begin collaborations with campus departments and offices to bring together the various pieces of the program to ensure that participants successfully complete the program.
- Expand services to reach more participants.
- Begin recruiting participants for summer 2012 programming in math and chemistry through email and direct contact.

Summer 2012

- Provide expanded programming to more student participants.
- Increase awareness of programs through presentations during Orientations and through collaboration with Testing Services.

Fall 2012

- Complete reports on cohort results.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness of *Jump Start Program*:

*Short-term:*

- Performance of those who complete the program (participants)
- GPA of participants in math courses in fall and spring semesters following completion
- GPA of participants in above math courses relative to that of students who did not participate in the program
- UTSA GPAs and all course completions of participants in fall and spring semesters following completion

*Long-term:*

- Monitor *Jump Start* cohorts' GPAs and course completion until graduation.
- Determine retention and four- and six- year graduation rates for each cohort.

New resources requested to support initiative: Programmatic support.

**Strategy 5: Academic and Social Support for Freshmen**

Upon entry, while some students do not require special bridge program help, they struggle with work in some of their core and gateway courses. Through the *Freshman Focus* initiative, all freshmen will be enrolled as cohorts in blocks of courses, with each cohort assigned an undergraduate peer mentor. By organizing the freshman academic experience this way, we provide students with a natural support group of fellow students, aided by an experienced upper classman who can help them navigate to appropriate university resources as needed.

In addition to this new support structure, the Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) will continue to offer both tutoring and supplemental instruction assistance. Both one-on-one and small group tutoring is provided for 74 courses. Supplemental instruction involves peer facilitated study groups for historically difficult core curriculum and gateway courses. (Historically difficult is defined as 30% or more of the grades in the courses are W's, D's or F's.)

The College of Engineering (COE) is experimenting this fall with a peer-tutoring study hall for freshman engineering students enrolled in foundation math and science courses. The study hall is meant to provide supplemental support for students in difficult STEM courses needed by engineering students to enter the major. This approach will eventually be applied to all colleges once the pilot is evaluated and needed space is identified in each of the colleges.

**Timetable for Implementation::**

2011-12

- Develop plan for organizing freshman class in cohorts and block scheduling.

2012-13

- Refine freshman curriculum, including block-scheduled courses.

2013-14

- Implement the *Freshman Focus* pilot program.

2014-15

- Fully implement the *Freshman Focus* initiative.

The TRC and COE programs are already implemented.

**Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:**

*Short-term:*

- Monitor course subjects accessed by students seeking tutoring
- Number of student contacts for tutoring services
- Number of students served using TutorTrac
- Frequency for the same students using tutoring services
- Compare course outcomes for participants versus non-participants (A's and B's earned versus D's, F's and Withdrawals).

*Long-term:*

- See above for both tutoring and supplemental instruction.

New resources requested to support initiative: None (internal reallocation of resources).

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**Strategy 6: Online Resources**

While UTSA's academic support services through the Tomás Rivera Center are extensive and have recently been enhanced through relocation to the university library, the university has not yet taken full advantage of online tutoring resources, many of which are available free of charge to students. As a means of reaching more students and providing them with academic assistance, particularly in technical disciplines, we will facilitate access and increase student awareness of the Khan Academy and other publicly available online tutoring and resource sites to augment our supplemental instruction and tutoring services.

The Khan Academy is a free online tutoring resource available to anyone. It has an extensive video library covering subject matter relevant to students' needs. The site also offers knowledge maps, practice exercises, and assessments. It is a custom, self-paced learning tool and may be found at <http://khanacademy.org>.

Timetable for Implementation

2011-12 Academic Year

- Market online tutoring sites among academic departments and through the Tomás Rivera Center, particularly in STEM disciplines.

Fall 2012

- Implement a Student Academic Resource website with links to online tutoring resources and other learning aids.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness

*Short term:*

- Number of courses providing online learning resource information in syllabi
- DFW rates in STEM courses

*Long Term:*

- Retention rates in STEM majors
  - Number of students re-taking STEM courses

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

## Appendix D— Factor 2: Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery

Programs' curriculum structure and course delivery at UTSA can present a variety of challenges for students in their quest to graduate. Freshman students often experience a difficult transition period when they arrive at UTSA. They struggle to understand course scheduling and to utilize the various resources available to them.

While firm and specific degree requirements help establish and build the stability needed for high quality programs, these same requirements can become problematic for a number of students who do not fit neatly into specific degree structures. Some of the leading issues raised by the major curricula include:

1. Some majors are fairly inflexible due to specialized accreditation requirements (*e.g.* in professional disciplines like engineering, architecture, accounting, etc.), leaving few elective course options. This reduced flexibility means that students must take and pass courses when they are offered to remain on schedule for a four-year degree.
2. Many courses require prerequisites, some of which are taught by other departments, and these courses must be coordinated if students are to complete their requirements on schedule.
3. Resource constraints can limit the frequency with which certain upper-level courses are offered, thereby delaying a student's completion of a degree.
4. When majors require a fairly rigid curriculum, students who change majors may need to take additional courses to meet the needs of their new major, slowing their progress toward a degree.
5. To manage enrollment with limited faculty resources, colleges are increasingly requiring higher academic standards for students to enter certain high-demand majors. Thus, a student may be denied entry to a major, though remain in good academic standing at the university, and the need to enter a new major requires additional coursework (see previous point).
6. UTSA serves a large population of transfer students, some of whom enter the university with courses that we articulate, but which do not contribute seamlessly to any of our existing degree programs. This, too, necessitates taking additional courses and extending time to degree.

In addition to curriculum structure issues, students who try to finish their degrees in four years find it challenging to complete all prerequisites and required courses. Two key factors that influence course availability are the ratio of students to faculty, and classroom availability. After several years of decreasing the student/faculty ratio, this ratio increased to 25:1 in fall 2010, one of the highest in the state. In addition, UTSA continues to be among the top institutions in the state in both classroom and laboratory utilization rates. Average weekly use of classrooms and of laboratories is 41.56 and 28.6 hours per week, respectively. These numbers mean that there is limited flexibility to add more class and laboratory sections during peak demand times – our students' needs continue to outpace our growth in resources. Therefore, we seek alternative avenues for students to earn course credits and shorten their time to graduation.

Surmounting these issues with curriculum and course delivery requires a multi-faceted approach that includes additional focus on our students' freshman year, improved monitoring of the delivery of core curriculum courses, streamlining to the extent possible the curriculum in our majors, increased delivery of courses that create a "bottleneck" in the curriculum, providing flexible degree program options for our students who transfer in extensive coursework earned at other institutions, including veterans, development of a new degree program for undergraduates, and improvements to advising (see Advising and Student Progress Monitoring, Factor 3 below).

We have identified nine strategies to address the curriculum-related barriers, one of which has been implemented, three of which are in progress, and five of which we plan to implement in the coming semesters.

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***Strategy 1: Freshman Focus Initiative***

During the 2010-2011 Academic Year, the University Freshman Academic Experience Task Force developed recommendations for a comprehensive freshman program. The result, UTSA's *Freshman Focus*, is a new initiative currently in its implementation planning stage.

The *Freshman Focus* initiative is a major undertaking designed to provide freshman students with a more effective academic transition from high school to UTSA (see Factor 1, Strategy 5). Freshmen will be introduced to college-level work through a standardized curriculum made up of courses that will contribute to their degree programs regardless of their ultimate major, and courses that will provide a firm foundation for later coursework (including mathematics and writing). The goal is to increase freshman-to-sophomore year persistence at UTSA and ultimately increase student success through degree completion.

The initiative implements the recommendations of the provost's Freshman Academic Experience Task Force (2010-11), which are posted online at <http://provost.utsa.edu/home/docs/Report-Freshman-Experience-Task-Force.3.pdf>. This initiative is in the early stages of implementation.

To facilitate the transition from high school to college-level academic expectations, all first-time, full-time freshmen will be required to enroll in a seminar course designed to provide students with (1) a combination of institutional support and academic challenge and (2) an environment where quality faculty-student relationships can develop. Course sections of this seminar, as well as in fundamental math and writing courses, will be kept to moderate enrollment levels and block-scheduled with other courses.

The seminar course will be implemented as one of UTSA's component options for the Core Curriculum; thus, it will not require students to take additional credits to complete a degree. One further feature is that students who begin with developmental coursework in either writing or mathematics will be required to continue enrollment in mathematics or writing courses each semester until they complete core curriculum level Math and Writing requirements.

The *Freshman Focus* is designed to expose students to college-level learning and study skills in a cross-disciplinary context, guide students into pre-majors and into majors for which they are well-suited, and create an individualized four-year class schedule using online tools (for example, *MyEdu*). With a strong foundation laid in the first year along with better preparation for university-level coursework, students will be more likely to take advantage of improved curricular opportunities, and less likely to require additional semesters and financial aid to complete their studies.

Timetable for Implementation:

2011-2012

- Analyze obstacles and solutions.

2012-2013

- Develop recruitment and admissions publications.
- Revise the Undergraduate Catalog.

2013-2014

- Partially implement the *Freshman Focus* program as a pilot study.

2014-2015

- Fully implement the *Freshman Focus* program.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Percent of freshmen classified as sophomores one year after matriculation
- Freshman-to-sophomore year retention rate

*Long term:*

- Persistence rates for two, three, and four years
- Average number of credit hours completed by “native” students to earn degree

New resources requested to support initiative: Instructional, advising and administrative support.

**Strategy 2: Streamlined Curriculum**

The Provost's Office will undertake a multi-step process, in coordination with the colleges, to evaluate current degree programs. Departments will be required to review their undergraduate degree programs in an attempt to streamline the programs. The goal will be to increase the flexibility of degree requirements without increasing the minimum number of credits required to complete the degree by performing one or more of the following:

- Removing irrelevant or redundant courses
- Increasing the number of free electives in the degree program
- Reducing the number of designated courses required for the major and increasing the number of electives in the major
- Providing more flexibility by requiring a certain number of hours in the major to be selected from a menu of courses

Departments will report on the progress in streamlining each of its degree programs, or provide a rationale for not being able to do so. For example, some degree requirements may be mandated by external entities such as accreditation agencies, and cannot be changed.

Timetable for Implementation:

November 2012

- Reports from the departments will be due.

Spring 2013

- Review and adjust major curriculum revisions.

Fall 2013

- Incorporate changes into next iteration of the Undergraduate Catalog.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number of undergraduate degree programs that are streamlined

*Long term:*

- Average number of credit hours completed by “native” students to earn degree

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

**Strategy 3: Course Prerequisites and Competency-Based Assessment**

UTSA is planning to implement a process whereby each department will be required to review the prerequisites listed for all courses it offers and eliminate those not needed for students to succeed in courses. Each department will be required to report on the review of its prerequisites, identify the prerequisites that have been eliminated, and certify that all remaining prerequisites are needed to provide background material considered necessary for student success. This process will be implemented periodically (every three years) to ensure that the prerequisites remain current and valid.

In lieu of prerequisite courses, we will also be exploring the identification of particular prerequisite topics needed for a given course and the use of online assessment tools to allow students to demonstrate adequate competency in needed skills so that they can register for courses without prior completion of prerequisites.

Timetable for Implementation:

September 2012

- Department review of prerequisites will be due.

Spring 2013

- Implement reduced set of prerequisites.

2014

- *2014-16 UTSA Undergraduate Catalog* reflects reduction of prerequisites.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number of courses for which prerequisites are eliminated

*Long Term:*

- Average number of credit hours completed by “native” students to earn degree

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

**Strategy 4: Bachelor of Arts Degree in Multidisciplinary Studies**

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Multidisciplinary Studies is a new degree program that allows students much-needed flexibility in designing degree programs that relate to their personal academic and career goals. Students will complete the University Core Curriculum requirements and take a cohesive set of courses from three different disciplinary areas. This program will provide a pathway to a meaningful and quality degree for students who have changed majors, with little or no loss of credits. The multidisciplinary nature of the program is designed to develop students' ability to combine different fields into a structured format. Since the program involves coursework from departments across the university, it offers students opportunities to capitalize upon diverse personal interests and talents through a combination of study and academic experiences appropriate to meet their educational and long-term career goals. This flexible pathway toward a degree should serve to reduce the time to graduation for numerous students.

A Faculty Program Coordinator for the degree program has been appointed to manage the degree program, and the Multidisciplinary Faculty Oversight Committee is in place to provide faculty guidance. The existence of the program will be publicized to our students through a variety of venues.

Timetable for Implementation:

Fall 2011— Program implemented

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number of students majoring in Multidisciplinary Studies

*Long term:*

- Average time to graduation for Multidisciplinary Studies graduates

New resources requested to support initiative: None (internal reallocation of resources).

**Strategy 5: Course Availability and Scheduling**

A common concern for the timely completion of one's studies is the availability of required classes. This availability is determined by several factors including having enough faculty to teach needed sections, having enough classrooms available in which to hold those sections, and having sufficient enrollment for a given class to be offered. We are in the process of auditing this issue on our campus and preparing to address it in several ways, including:

- adding rooms to our classroom inventory;
- expanding the size of our faculty to ensure that enrollment demands can be met; and
- exploring innovative class scheduling models.

Another reason for exploring class scheduling innovations is to increase the number of offerings of high-demand courses that use specialized classroom and laboratory space during non-traditional time periods. Innovations may include very early and very late course offerings (before 8:00 A.M. and after 10:00 P.M.) or amending class schedules to regularly include Saturday. The latter may be attained by altering our current schedule, with classes meeting every other day (Monday-Wednesday-Friday and Tuesday-Thursday) for a schedule with classes meeting every third day (Monday and Thursday; Tuesday and Friday; and Wednesday and Saturday), or by offering a full slate of classes on Saturday.

**Timetable for Implementation:**

2011-2012

- Study feasibility of alternate schedules and determine interest of students in such schedules

**Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:**

*Short term:*

- Completion of feasibility study
- Student interest in alternative scheduling

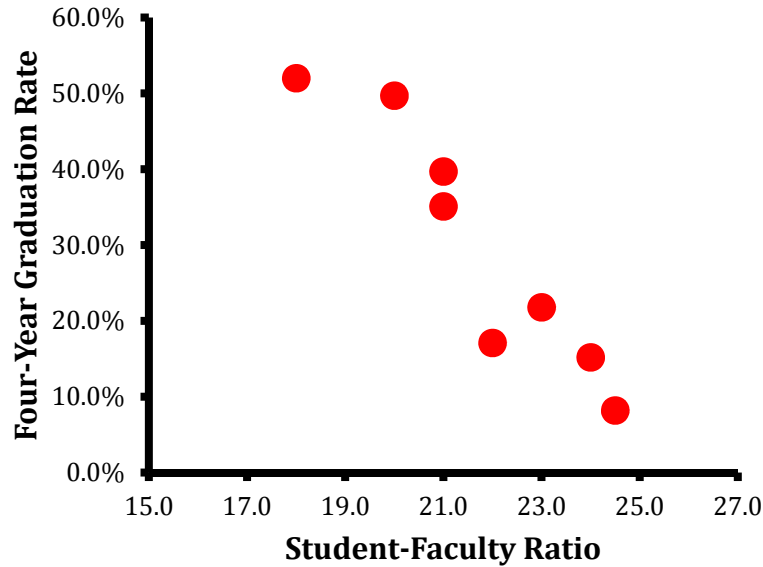
*Long term:*

- Implementation of schedule innovations expected to be successfully utilized

**New resources requested to support initiative:** Instructional support.

**Strategy 6: Student-Faculty Ratio**

While a large per faculty instructional workload may appear to be a means for maximizing faculty productivity, it unfortunately correlates with lower four-year completion rates, as indicated in Figure 1 below. Using a rough linear interpolation, these results suggest that a 25% four-year graduation rate typically correlates with a student-faculty ratio between 22 and 23. To attain this ratio while keeping UTSA’s overall student population relatively constant would require the addition of approximately 100 new full-time faculty. For UTSA to achieve its strategic goal of a student-faculty ratio of 20:1 requires the addition of 200 new full-time faculty— this would correlate with a four-year graduation rate of about 40%.



**Figure D-1.** The relationship between four-year graduation rates and student-faculty ratios for Texas public research universities (includes emerging research universities, UT Austin, and Texas A&M). Source: THECB institutional data.

Timetable for Implementation:

2011-2021

- Increase faculty size by an average of 20 new positions each year

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Long term:*

- Number of faculty members
- Student FTE-to-faculty FTE ratio

New resources requested to support initiative: Funding for faculty salaries, benefits and other necessary support.

**Strategy 7: Credit by Examination**

Students currently can earn credit for courses by testing out of them, rather than by participating in class for the entire semester. We will proactively encourage students planning to attend UTSA to take Advanced Placement exams and dual-credit courses, and to obtain credit by taking standardized tests: CLEP and DSST (DANTES) exams. In addition, we will encourage departments to permit students to challenge courses, for which mastery may be measured via examinations, by taking a cumulative examination of course material within the first three weeks of classes. Credit by examination frees up the student to take other courses, or to have more time to devote to the most difficult courses. Either way, the student has an improved chance of completing the degree in a timely manner.

**Timetable for Implementation:**

Fall 2011

- Publicize the availability of completing courses by examination at various events and venues, including:
  - Freshman Advising
  - Sophomore Fair Day and UTSA Day
  - Graduation Initiative office and Testing Services will target special student populations through mail and e-mail

Spring 2012

- Build a repository of study material and other resources to improve pass rates on CLEP and DSST exams

Spring - Summer 2012

- Streamline the course challenge process

**Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:**

*Short term:*

- Number of students completing courses via CLEP, DSST exams
- Number of students completing courses via ‘challenge by exam’

*Long term:*

- Average credit hours completed by graduates via examination

**New resources requested to support initiative:** None (internal reallocation of resources).

**Strategy 8: Alternative Course Delivery**

The paradigms for teaching a university-level course are rapidly evolving as the internet and other classroom-based technologies are providing a wealth of options and capabilities for instructors to use. Through this initiative we hope to take advantage of the latest innovations in course delivery and encourage our faculty to utilize those innovations in their teaching. This will require a combination of training, modeling new methods, and providing infrastructure support for the conversion of existing courses.

Electronic course delivery can partially alleviate the issues with which UTSA must deal regarding both classroom shortages and faculty shortages. UTSA currently offers about one percent of its classes in a fully online format, and another 1.6 percent in a hybrid format. In addition, approximately one percent of our classes are offered at two locations simultaneously via two-way interactive video.

Hybrid courses offer the student a combination of once-a-week face-to-face traditional class sessions during which they can interact with their professors in person, with once-a-week sessions offered online. Thus, our students can get to know their instructors (and vice versa), a preference they have voiced, but can access course content equivalent to a second weekly session online at their convenience. From the university's perspective, one classroom can be used for two sections of the same course during the time period that normally only one section could meet in the classroom.

Offering fully online versions of the courses allows students the flexibility of accessing a course without encountering scheduling conflicts with other required face-to-face courses or with work demands. Online class sections reduce the challenges associated with finding a classroom for additional sections of courses in high demand, and eliminates the need to locate additional instructors to teach in a classroom setting. Students can take a full schedule of classes, staying on track toward graduation.

**Timetable for Implementation:**

- Online course delivery has been implemented, and technological support for building and managing online course materials is being provided to instructors. The university is providing training for additional instructors regarding online pedagogy and technology.

**Fall 2011-Spring 2012**

- Identify perennial bottleneck courses, including prerequisite and required courses, as well as courses not offered more frequently due to scheduling conflicts.

**Spring 2012**

- Identify key academic subject matter experts (SMEs) for identified courses.

**Summer - Fall 2012**

- Develop online courses with assistance of Instructional Design staff.

Summer 2013

- Pilot delivery of new online courses, with continued training provided to SMEs.

Fall 2013

- Deliver new online courses.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number and percent of UTSA courses taught fully online
- Percentage of students who achieve sophomore status by third full semester in residence
- Percentage of students who achieve junior status by fifth full semester in residence

*Long term:*

- Percentage of graduates completing degree with at least one online course
- Percentage of graduates completing degree with at least 10% of courses delivered either in a hybrid or online format

New resources requested to support initiative: None (internal reallocation of resources).

**Strategy 9: Summer School Expansion**

To assist students with meeting their graduation targets, beginning with the summer 2010 semester, the colleges developed a more robust summer schedule by guaranteeing specific course offerings that more closely aligned with students’ long term academic planning. One-time funding has been provided over the past two years to support an increase in the number of summer courses/sections offered. The data in the charts below indicate that this action allowed more students to enroll, and for them to enroll in significantly more credit hours than they would otherwise have been able to do.

<b>Summer - Sections</b>				<b>2 Yr Increase</b>
<i>Course Level</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>09-11</i>
Lower Division	325	352	355	9.23%
Upper Division	494	547	546	10.53%
<b>Total Undergraduate</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>10.01%</b>

<b>Summer Student Credit Hours</b>				<b>2 Yr Increase</b>
<i>Course Level</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>09-11</i>
Lower Division	26,460	29,007	30,095	13.74%
Upper Division	28,563	32,488	32,807	14.86%
<b>Total Undergraduate</b>	<b>55,023</b>	<b>61,495</b>	<b>62,902</b>	<b>14.32%</b>

Timetable for Implementation:

Each Fall Semester

- Colleges identify courses needed in summer sessions and appropriate class scheduling for those courses.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number of students enrolled in 2012 summer session
- Number of student credit hours earned in 2012 summer session

*Long term:*

- Percentage of degree-seeking students continually enrolled at UTSA (fall, spring, and at least one summer term)
- Number of graduates with at least one summer course

New resources requested to support initiative: Programmatic support.

## Appendix E— Factor 3: Advising and Student Support Services

Almost half of all UTSA undergraduates are first-generation college students, which means that they require special attention and additional assistance to navigate through their university studies. To help these students succeed, the university must provide a robust infrastructure of academic support and advising services to help them stay on track for their degrees. These services become a barrier to student success when (i) they are insufficient for the size of the student population, (ii) they are not optimally organized to provide access to services when students need them the most, and (iii) there are limited opportunities for students to help themselves through self-service.

As one example, first-year students are often unaware of the degree of self-monitoring required at the university level, and may not track the status of their work in their courses. As a consequence, by the time they become aware of a poor overall grade, it may be too late to recover and succeed in the course. They then may drop, or earn a D or an F in the course, which negatively impacts their progress and costs them money when they have to retake the course. The quality of our academic support services, then, is critical to our students' ability to complete a degree within four or six years.

We have identified six strategies that we believe will improve advising and academic support: one is currently implemented with plans for improvement, and five will be implemented in the coming semesters.

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### **Strategy 1: University College**

A University College will be developed to oversee the *Freshman Focus* initiative and provide a cohort learning experience as well as social, academic, and financial literacy support for all first-year students. All first-year students, as well as all students having pre-majors and all undecided majors, will be members of the University College.

The University College will develop strategies to encourage its students to satisfactorily complete at least 30 semester credit hours within one calendar year, to successfully address any deficiencies identified in their academic preparation for college, and to choose and qualify for majors that are best suited to their aptitudes, interests, and career goals. This last point is important as we wish to decrease the likelihood that students will change majors after the initial year of matriculation at the university.

An important aspect of the University College will be to provide intensive academic counseling and guidance in helping our freshmen adjust to college. The current freshman advisors for declared majors and the current advisors for all undecided majors, including those admitted provisionally, will advise all students belonging to the University College. The University College academic advisors will also be responsible for monitoring the academic performance of University College students and intervening when a decline in performance is detected. By

establishing a more robust process for gathering timely academic performance data through a selected electronic early warning system and providing more effective interventions for the students, the University College will work with its advisors to enhance the present early warning programs which are designed to identify early and assist freshmen who are in academic difficulty.

The University College will organize first semester freshmen into cohorts of 25 students each, enrolling them into block scheduled courses of mathematics, writing, and a new academic inquiry course designed to improve critical thinking and problem solving skills in a collaborative environment. Academic advisors will assist the students in supplementing their block schedules with other courses based on the students' capabilities and interests. They will also help cohort members think about choices for majors and assist them with developing four-year degree plans.

Each cohort of students will be assigned an upperclassman to serve as a peer mentor for the group to help ease the transition into college for these first-time-in-college students. Peer mentors will reach out to the members of their groups to aid the students' adjustment to the university both academically and socially. They will contribute to instructing freshmen in the development of essential study skills including effective time management abilities, provide an orientation to campus life, and generally welcome them into the Roadrunner family. As successful students themselves, peer mentors will serve as role models for our incoming freshmen providing a template for their own success. The peer mentor program should contribute significantly to increasing the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of our students.

During the freshman year, the University College will also facilitate information sessions to increase knowledge and awareness of the various degree plans available to students and help students select a major that meets their educational and career goals.

Finally, the University College will oversee all the various academic support services offered at UTSA, including tutoring services, supplemental instruction, the writing center, the quantitative reasoning lab, and additional counselors to serve as "success coaches" for freshmen.

After earning 30 semester credit hours of course work, declaring a major, and removing any identified deficiencies in their academic preparation for college, University College students will be permitted to transition into the college of their major.

#### Timeline for Implementation:

##### Fall 2012

- Officially establish University College.
- Enroll all students with undecided majors in the University College.

##### Fall 2013

- Enroll a small cohort of first-time, first-year students in the University College as a pilot.

##### Fall 2014

- Enroll all first-time freshmen and all pre-majors, even those beyond the first-year, in the University College.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Freshman-to-sophomore retention rate
- Percent of freshmen completing at least 30 credit hours during one calendar year
- Percent of freshmen requiring developmental coursework after one calendar year

*Long Term:*

- Average length of time for new, first-time freshmen to transition out of University College and into the college of their selected major
- Four-year graduation rate
- Six-year graduation rate
- Average number of total credit hours taken by graduates

New resources requested to support initiative: Administrative and operational support. Additional resources will be needed to provide additional counselors to serve as “academic success coaches” for freshmen and the support infrastructure necessary to make the University College successful.

### **Strategy 2: Four-Year Degree Plans of Study**

UTSA intends to be an active participant in the implementation of tools resulting from the recently announced partnership with *MyEdu*. The degree planning functionality, partnered with completion/progress data will give students an improved way of tracking their degree progress. The four-year degree plan of study for every freshman will be entered into *MyEdu* during the students' participation in the *Freshman Focus* programs. Degree plans appropriately adjusted for the number of credits that transfer students have earned will be entered when they meet with their advisors.

These degree plans will be based on four-year degree maps prepared by departments, and will be maintained in an online database that will be updated periodically as students' enrollment needs change. In each plan, critical courses that represent potential bottlenecks to progress will be identified as gateways in students' studies. Most importantly, these plans will encourage students to think of their studies at UTSA more holistically and will provide a mechanism for students to assess their progress toward completing their degrees, as described in Strategy 3 below. As indicated above (in section B, #5), the four-year plans of study will also aid departments in developing class schedules each semester as they will have an early indication of the expected enrollment demand for courses. By registering their degree plans, students' progress may be monitored. These online degree plans will also assist departments in projecting enrollment demands for courses so an appropriate number of sections can be planned.

As the *MyEdu* working committee and local implementation team put together more concrete deliverables and plans for the planning functionality, they will be incorporated into a locally developed project plan. Should the *MyEdu* project *not* produce the outcomes we seek, we will begin a vendor selection process for alternative tools.

#### **Timetable for Implementation:**

The timetable on this implementation will be tied to the implementation plan established by the *MyEdu* implementation team. It is anticipated that we would be able to implement initially in the 2012-2013 academic year.

#### **Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:**

##### *Short term:*

- Implementation of degree planning system
- Number of students utilizing system

##### *Long Term:*

- Percentage of students with validated degree plans in the system
- Number of course schedule changes
- Average number of total credit hours taken by graduates
- Percentage of students on schedule for graduation within four years

**New resources requested to support initiative:** None (pending outcome of *MyEdu* implementation).

**Strategy 3: Online Degree Audit System**

Our current degree audit program (CAPP) is up-to-date and in use, but could be augmented with more user-friendly online tools that will encourage more widespread use by students and advisors. We will also be comparing the functionality proposed here with other commercially available tools such as DegreeWorks that integrate with our current student information system. In all cases, our goal is to integrate our student information system with a user-friendly and streamlined tool to allow students to build, maintain, and track their degree progress.

As the *MyEdu* working committee and local implementation team put together more concrete deliverables and plans for the degree audit functionality, they will be incorporated into a locally developed project plan. Should the *MyEdu* project *not* produce the outcomes we seek, we will begin a vendor selection process for alternative tools.

Timetable for Implementation:

The timetable on this implementation will be tied to the implementation plan established by the *MyEdu* implementation team. It is anticipated that we would be able to implement initially in the 2012-2013 academic year.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Implementation of online degree audit system
- Number of students utilizing system

*Long Term:*

- Average number of total credit hours taken by graduates
- Percentage of students on schedule for graduation within four years

New resources requested to support initiative: None (pending outcome of *MyEdu* implementation).

**Strategy 4: Advising Quality and Access**

UTSA will improve advising quality and access by addressing three aspects of this function. First we will increase advising resources available to students. These include online advising resources, the number of academic advisors available, hours of operation of the academic advising centers, separating the academic advising component from Freshman Orientation, and allowing more individual advising appointments after admission prior to Orientation. We will begin exploring and utilizing additional tools to identify and enhance the rapport of the advisors with potential freshman at-risk students sooner. In addition, we will continue to provide one-on-one advising, freshman retention programs and outreach to students via phone, email, Blackboard, and Face book. We will also provide more intrusive advising and outreach to freshman students who are not meeting or making academic progress in their intended major.

The second aspect of advising to be addressed is communication. This includes resources to answer commonly asked questions, common advising forms, an “Ask Rowdy” website for Academic Advising, student surveys to find what they wish they would have known before they began or registered for the fall semester, and marketing of off-peak academic advising cycles.

The third aspect to be addressed is our advising personnel. To improve their skills, we will develop a yearly compliance training module that all academic advisors must complete; hold an all-advisor workshop in the fall and spring semesters to discuss any new policies and/or procedures; identify areas for yearly compliance training and in developing appropriate modules; identify directors that could take the lead in further developing and implementing the solutions university-wide; and propose an advising fee increase to make funding available for providing and maintaining quality academic advisors.

**Timetable for Implementation:**

Fall 2011

- All advising centers adopt a standard set of advising forms.
- Students surveyed to provide feedback about areas of greatest need.

Fall 2011 and Spring 2012

- Develop website areas: “Ask Rowdy” and FAQ section.
- Market advising services to students during off-peak cycles.
- Develop training module for advisors.
- Examine student scheduling software options as a means of facilitating registration.

Spring 2012

- Develop advising resources to be sent to new students post-admission beginning with the fall 2012 new admits.

Fall 2012

- Begin participation in pilot study with freshman cohort utilizing ACT developed ENGAGE™ (formerly known as Student Readiness Inventory (SRI)) assessment).

- Utilize a tracking system to identify reasons students come in for advising other than at outreach times, such as Mid-term Maintenance/Checkpoint and registration.
- Send advising resources information to students one to two weeks after admission (for Fall 2012) to answer commonly asked questions about advising and registration.
- Implement use of advisor online training modules.
- Expand advising staff.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Student exit surveys following advising sessions
- Average delay before advising appointment
- Percentage of students utilizing online scheduling software
- Access statistics for “Ask Rowdy” advising website

*Long Term:*

- Student-advisor ratio
- Average credit hours completed by graduates
- Percentage of students who achieve sophomore status by third full semester in residence
- Percentage of students who achieve junior status by fifth full semester in residence

New resources requested to support initiative: Advising positions. In addition, resource reallocations will be used to provide the needed infrastructure to support this initiative.

**Strategy 5: Electronic Early Alert System**

UTSA is examining systems that interface with the Banner student information system and Blackboard course management system to provide early alerts for students whose academic performance declines suddenly. One example of such a system is Zogotech's Student Engagement (SE) module, which UTSA purchased recently in conjunction with a data warehouse.

This system supports advising by aggregating information from Banner and other data sources into a single interface to promote early intervention. The system calculates at-risk indicators defined by the university, and also enables advisors and others to create targeted and personalized communications for subsets of students, such as emails sent to all students receiving financial aid who have dropped below 12 hours. The SE module is a secure, FERPA-aware, reporting platform for a student's support network to indicate academic, social and other concerns. It places at-risk indicators at the fingertips of the people who can help and can reduce the time from flag initiation to problem resolution by alerting the correct academic support team.

The College of Engineering is piloting another potential online academic monitoring system in 2012 that will track academic performance of students, enable efficient degree audits, help with course selections and advising, and can send early warning messages to students whose overall semester GPA declines drastically. It can also identify students who are in academic trouble and direct them to advisors, provide an easy way for students to monitor their degree plans, and even send congratulatory messages to students whose grades improve.

In addition to the early alert system, UTSA will create a comprehensive web page with all Academic Support Services available from a freshman resource page (portal).

Timetable for Implementation:

Fall 2012

- Investigate and select an early alert system.

Fall 2013

- Train academic support and advising staff and pilot test.

Fall 2014

- Fully implement system along with the *Freshman Focus*.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Early alert system purchased and fully implemented
- Percentage of freshman courses with grades entered into system at or before midterm

*Long term:*

- Freshman-to-Sophomore retention rates
- Number of students accessing academic support services
- Course completion rates

New resources requested to support initiative: None (internal reallocation of resources).

## Appendix F— Factor 4: Policies and Incentives

The research that contributed to this plan uncovered additional factors that may impede our students' ability to graduate in four years. These factors are related to enrollment policies and financial issues and incentives, some of which have been observed to have effects opposite of those that were desired.

For example, UTSA has implemented and adjusted policies with the goal of helping students struggling with coursework earn higher GPAs. However, some of these policies may have an adverse impact on completion. For instance, one policy allows an undergraduate student to withdraw from a course just before finals week, thereby consuming a whole semester's time in the course without successfully completing it. If the course is required for the student's major, it must be repeated. Another policy has made it easy for a student to take the same course repeatedly (even five or six times) in an attempt to improve the grade. While both of these policies may result in a marginally better GPA, they always extend the time to graduation, and perhaps worse, often allow a student to remain in a major for which s/he is not likely to be successful.

In addition to policies that may inadvertently encourage students to make poor enrollment decisions (at additional costs of time and money), the availability of financial aid is a critical element in enabling post-secondary access, persistence and completion, especially for under-served student populations. The cost of a higher education, even under the best performance circumstances, is a critical factor for the student population that UTSA serves. Approximately 68% of UTSA students require some form of financial aid to pursue their education. Recent reductions in the amount of federal and state-based (*e.g.* Texas Grants) student financial aid impose severe hardships on many of our students and complicate our ability to help them finish their degrees in four years.

For most of our students, the longer they take to graduate, the more loans they must take out. This leaves them with a debt burden upon graduation greater than would be the case had they graduated in a shorter time. Based on the most recent cohorts falling into the two categories below, the average debt for students who graduated in four years was \$18,067, while the debt burden for those who graduated in six years was \$23,748. Our students also work while attending school to make ends meet. Work creates a potential dilemma in which the student must choose between skipping class or losing a job. It also reduces the time available for study. Both outcomes reduce the likelihood for satisfactory course completion.

For financial aid funding to have an impact on four-year graduation rates, we need to examine how we package future increases in funding to encourage on-time completion. New supplemental financial aid funding will need to be awarded in a way that encourages completion of 30 semester hours over the course of fall, spring and summer terms. Thus, our approach to addressing this factor has two aspects: (1) providing financial incentives to encourage students to **get** on track for a four-year degree, and (2) providing financial incentives to encourage students to **stay** on track for a four-year degree.

In addition to the policy and financial issues that affect timely graduation, students are often taken by surprise by the consequences of their short-term decisions on their long-term circumstances. Such decisions include setting a goal to graduate later versus earlier, choosing to drop a class in which they could have ultimately succeeded, choosing to take fewer classes and work more hours, or taking out more loans. They do not know where to go for counseling to address these issues, and often make the decision without the benefit of experienced counseling.

We have identified five strategies related to policies and incentives: two related to policies and three related to financial incentives. None of the five has been implemented yet.

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### **Strategy 1: Enrollment Policies Review**

We will review policies related to student enrollment options, such as those noted above, in light of their long-term impact on time to graduation, if not on the likelihood of graduating at all, for the students who utilized their options.

#### Timetable for Implementation:

Spring 2012

- Compare students who used the option to those who did not (matched).
  - Calculate impact on time to graduation.
  - Calculate impact on amount of debt incurred.

Fall 2012

- Adjust or eliminate policies with long-term adverse consequences.

#### Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short-term*

- Course completion rate
- Persistence to next level (sophomore, junior and senior)

*Long-term*

- Course completion rate
- Persistence to next level (sophomore, junior and senior)
- Increase in four-year graduation rate

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

**Strategy 2: Wait-Lists for Courses**

Wait-listing allows students to “stand” in an electronic line when certain course sections are closed. When an enrolled student drops a class, the first student in the queue is notified that the class is available and ready for them to add. In addition to students being offered the opportunity to enroll in a class when a slot opens up, the system can send a report to department chairs providing the number of students on a wait-list. If the number is high, the chair may be able to add another section to accommodate student needs. Wait-listing should reduce the number of students who cannot obtain the classes they need in a given semester.

Timetable for Implementation:

Fall 2011

- Review wait-listing.
- Test technology.

Spring 2012

- Conduct pilot study with College of Engineering.

Fall 2012

- Expand pilot study.
- Implement corrections/improvements.

Spring 2013

- Fully implement wait-listing.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number of COE students utilizing wait-list
- Number of students who successfully enter courses from wait-lists

*Long term:*

- Number of students using (and abusing) course wait-lists
- Number of course sections added due to long wait-lists

New resources requested to support initiative: None.

**Strategy 3: Freshman/Sophomore Tuition and Fee Incentive Grants**

To encourage freshmen and sophomores to complete 30 hours in an academic year, thus **getting on track** for graduation within four years, this initiative will subsequently reward students with an opportunity to accelerate their progress using incentive grants that may be applied toward summer tuition and fees. We are proposing a \$1,000 tuition and fee grant if the student meets the following criteria:

- Classified as a freshman or sophomore
- Completed at least 30 credit hours during the previous fall/spring
- Maintained a cumulative 2.5 GPA
- Enrolled in at least 6 credit-hours that apply toward degree requirements during any combination of the summer terms immediately following their first and second year

Using current data, 1,009 students would qualify for the tuition and fee incentive grant. If we provided a \$1000 summer tuition and fee grant, this program would cost \$1,009,000 per year based on the current number of eligible students. Since not all eligible students would be incentivized to enroll in summer school, the following chart shows the pro-rated cost based on lower participation rates.

# of Students	Increase in Participation	\$1000 Grant Cost
1,009	100%	\$1,009,000
908	90%	\$908,000
807	80%	\$807,000
706	70%	\$706,000
605	60%	\$605,000
504	50%	\$504,000

Timetable for Implementation:

2011-12 Academic Year

- Develop summer grant plan and obtain necessary approvals.
- Market summer grants to students in advance of program.

2012-13 Academic Year

- Implement summer grants for summer 2013.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Long Term:*

- Number and percentage of students qualifying for summer grants
- Percentage of students who achieve junior status by end of sixth full semester (including summers) in residence

New resources requested to support initiative: Funding for summer grants (see chart).

**Strategy 4: Finish in Four Incentive**

The State of Texas has, for several years, mandated a program whereby students who graduate in four years with no more than three excess credit hours (above those normally needed for the degree they earn) are awarded a \$1,000 rebate. Each year, about 100 UTSA graduates qualify to receive this rebate. To encourage juniors and seniors to continue accumulating 30 hours in an academic year, thus **staying on track** for graduation within 4 years, this solution provides a small financial aid award and intervention designed to assure their on-time graduation. The program intervention would be similar to that which has proved successful with students in the Late Intervention Program, helping students navigate all facets of academic resources, policies and procedures. Participants would be identified in their fifth semester and assisted through their eighth semester and graduation. Students will be required to enter into a contract for this additional financial aid and academic support.

We are proposing a \$2000 financial aid award (maximum \$500 per semester for 4 semesters) if the student meets the following criteria:

- Completed 60 credit hours within four fall/spring semesters
- Maintained a cumulative 2.5 GPA
- Continues to complete 30 hours during an academic year (fall, spring, summer)
- Participates in Graduation Initiative intervention program

Using current data, 365 students would be eligible with 60 hours and a 2.5 cumulative GPA. Based on the UTSA late intervention program, we anticipate 256 students (70%) participating from each cohort beginning fall 2012. For the fall 2012 cohort, the \$2000 would be awarded from spring 2013 through spring 2014 with a \$500 maximum per term and may include summer to assist students in staying on track for graduation with 30 hours per academic year. During the next two years, two cohorts will begin in this program. Following are two charts outlining the costs of the program for 2012-2014 with a 70% and 100% participation rate:

**70% Participation Costs**

<b>Semester</b>	<b># of Students</b>	<b>Grant Costs per term</b>	<b>Costs/academic year</b>
<i>Spring 2013</i>	256	\$128,000	
<i>Summer 2013</i>	256	\$128,000	2012/13 = \$256,000
<i>Fall 2013</i>	256	\$128,000	
<i>Spring 2014 (includes 2 cohorts)</i>	512	\$256,000	2013/14 = \$384,000
		<b>TOTAL COST at 70%</b>	<b>\$640,000</b>

**100% Participation Costs**

<b>Semester</b>	<b># of Students</b>	<b>Grant Costs per term</b>	<b>Costs/academic year</b>
<i>Spring 2013</i>	365	\$182,500	
<i>Summer 2013</i>	365	\$182,500	2012/13 = \$365,000
<i>Fall 2013</i>	365	\$182,500	
<i>Spring 2014 (includes 2 cohorts)</i>	730	\$365,000	2013/14 = \$547,500
<b>TOTAL COST at 100%</b>			<b>\$912,500</b>

Timetable for Implementation:

2011-12 Academic Year

- Set up the Finish in Four program.
- Develop marketing plan.

2012-13 Academic Year

- Publicize program among students and implement initial round of awards.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Program development and marketing

*Long Term:*

- Number of students qualifying for program

New resources requested to support initiative: Funding for student grants (see charts).

***Strategy 5: On-Campus Employment Opportunities***

University offices that employ student workers appreciate the students' need to keep up with studies and coursework. UTSA currently supplements the federal work-study program by \$1.4 million each year to provide more on-campus work opportunities for students. This initiative seeks to expand on campus work opportunities by actively encouraging departments and administrative offices to utilize more student workers where feasible to meet administrative infrastructure needs. In addition, faculty in funded fields of research will be encouraged to include requests for funds for undergraduate researchers in their grant proposals.

Timetable for Implementation:

2011-12 Academic Year

- Develop employer marketing plan.

2012-13 Academic Year

- Implement program to fund more on-campus student employment opportunities.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Number of student workers on campus
- Number of student work positions advertised internally

*Long Term:*

- Number of students employed on campus

New resources requested to support initiative: None. Funding for student employment to be derived from current budgets.

***Strategy 6: Four-Year Completion Marketing***

Through freshman orientation programs, new student convocation, advising sessions, freshman cohort mentors, and other communication vehicles, UTSA will begin a concerted effort to raise student awareness of the benefits of finishing their degrees in four years. The goal is to create a culture of completing in four years among our students and faculty.

Timetable for Implementation:

2011-12 Academic Year

- Develop four-year degree marketing plan.

2012-13 Academic Year

- Implement marketing strategies.

Metrics to Determine Effectiveness:

*Short term:*

- Percentage of students enrolled in  $\geq 15$  credit hours

*Long Term:*

- Four-year graduation rates

New resources requested to support initiative: None (nominal costs to be absorbed by current budgets)

**Appendix G. Timetable for All Strategies**

Start Semester	Factor-Strategy
Pre-Fall 2011	1-3 Top Scholars Recruitment 1-4 Bridging Programs
Fall 2011	2-4 Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies 2-6 Student-Faculty Ratio 3-4 Advising Quality and Access
Spring 2012	1-1 Rigorous Preparation of High School Students
Summer 2012	2-9 Summer School Expansion
Fall 2012	1-6 Online Resources 2-7 Credit by Examination 3-1 University College 3-2 Four-Year Degree Plan of Study 3-3 Online Degree Audit System 4-1 Enrollment Policies Review 4-4 Finish in Four Incentive 4-5 On-Campus Employment Opportunities 4-6 Four-Year Completion Marketing
Spring 2013	2-3 Course Prerequisites and Competency-Based Assessment 4-2 Wait-Lists for Courses
Fall 2013	1-2 Increased Admissions Standards 1-5 Academic and Social Support for Freshmen 2-1 <i>Freshman Focus</i> Initiative 2-2 Streamlined Curriculum 2-5 Course Availability and Scheduling 2-8 Alternate Course Delivery
Summer 2013	4-3 Freshman/Sophomore Tuition and Fee Incentive Grants
Fall 2014	3-5 Electronic Early Alert System

**Appendix H. Implementation Metrics – Current and Long-Term**

<b>Long-Term Metric</b>	<b>Current Value</b>	<b>Long-Term Goal</b>
%-age of students needing developmental courses	27%	< 10%
Persistence rate of “native” students for two years	67%	85%
Persistence rate of “native” students for three years	51%	75%
Persistence rate of “native” students for four years	42%	70%
%-age of students who are sophomores or above in third semester	52%	60%
%-age of students who are juniors or above in fifth semester	39%	50%
%-age of students who are seniors or above in seventh semester	38%	45%
Course completion rates	90%	95%
%-age of “native” students on schedule to graduate within four years	N/A	
Average time to graduation for UTSA “native” graduates	5.5 yrs.	5 yrs.
Four-year graduation rate	10%	25%
N/A = not available		

**%-age of students needing developmental courses** – This comes from the first time full time cohort of students who were enrolled in developmental students during their first semester. For this measure the Fall 2010 cohort of first time full time non-cap students are used

**Persistence rate of “native” students for two years** – This comes from the Fact Book and is based on the Fall 2009 cohort of first time full time non-cap students.

**Persistence rate of “native” students for three years** – This comes from the Fact Book and is based on the Fall 2008 cohort of first time full time non-cap students.

**Persistence rate of “native” students for four years** – This comes from the Fact Book and is based on the Fall 2007 cohort of first time full time non-cap students.

**%-age of students who are sophomores or above in third semester** - This data is from the Fall 2010 cohort of first time full time non-cap students. Students who did not persist to the third semester were removed when looking at this percent.

**%-age of students who are juniors or above in fifth semester** - This data is from the Fall 2009 cohort of first time full time non-cap students. Students who did not persist to the fifth semester were removed when looking at this percent

**%-age of students who are seniors or above in seventh semester** - This data is from the Fall 2008 cohort of first time full time non-cap students. Students who did not persist to the fifth semester were removed when looking at this percent

**Course completion rates** – This measure is the percent of students who do not withdraw from their courses.

**%-age of “native” students on schedule to graduate within four years** – This measure will need to come from the UTSA advising center.

**Average time to graduation for UTSA “native” graduates** – This measure comes from the undergraduates who earned degrees in academic year 2010 – 2011. Only students who started as native students (non-transfer) were included in this average.

**Four-year graduation rate** – This comes from the Fact Book and is based on the Fall 2006 cohort of first time full time non-cap students.

**Initiative-Specific Metrics**

Long-Term Metric	Current Value	Long-Term Goal
Time to degree for participants in <i>UTSA Ready</i>	N/A	5 yrs.
%-age of total students who ranked in the top 10% of their HS classes	11%	25%
%-age of total students who ranked in the top 25% of their HS classes	45%	75%
Average credit hours completed by graduates via examination		
%-age of graduates completing degree with at least one online course		
%-age of graduates with at least 10% of courses delivered online		
%-age of students registering for multiple semesters at one time	N/A	
%-age of class-offerings changes due to student enrollment demand		
Number of graduates with at least one summer course	3,547 (86%)	
Number of students using course wait-lists		
Number of course sections added due to long wait-lists	N/A	
Number of students accessing academic support services		
Student-advisor ratio	320	< 300
%-age of students with validated degree plans in online system	N/A	90%
Number of course schedule changes		
Retention rates in STEM majors	69%	
Number of students re-taking STEM courses		
Number of students qualifying for rebate	510	1000
Average time to graduation for Multidisciplinary Studies graduates	N/A	5 yrs.