Graduation Rate Improvement Plan
Strategies, Team Leaders, and Tasks

A. Student Academic and Social Preparedness

1. Rigorous Preparation of High School Students (Rachel Ruiz)
   a. Identify participants (P-20 Initiatives)
   b. Develop assessment instruments (Academic departments)
   c. Administer assessments and evaluate (P-20 Initiatives, Testing Services)
   d. Devise individual students' plans for college readiness (P-20 Initiatives, Academic departments)
   e. Design developmental curriculum for students (Academic departments)

2. Increased Admissions Standards (George Norton)
   a. Analyze success data from recent entering classes (OIR, Admissions)
   b. Design admissions criteria (Admissions, Student Affairs, Provost Office)
   c. Prepare admissions criteria for review and approval (Admissions, Provost Office)
   d. Market admissions standards to prospective students (Admissions, Provost Office)

3. Top Scholars Recruitment (Lisa Firmin)
   a. Develop strategic plan for top scholar recruitment (Admissions, Provost Office) b. Organize Top Scholar Dinner in January/February (Admissions, Provost Office) c. Develop recruiting materials to attract top scholars (Admissions, Provost Office, Marketing)
   d. Communication with top scholar applicants (Admissions, Provost Office, Academic departments, Colleges)
   e. Devise financial aid strategy for top scholar recruitment (Admissions, Financial Aid Office, Provost Office, Colleges)

4. Bridging Programs (Rachel Ruiz)
   a. Organize and deliver Math Boot Camp (Math department) and Jump Start programs (Science departments, P-20 Initiatives)
   b. Strategize other areas in need of bridging programs (Academic departments)

5. Academic and Social Support for Freshmen (Leticia Duncan)
   a. Develop implementation plans for forming freshman cohorts and block-scheduling (Freshman Focus Initiative)
   b. Organize upper class peer mentor program (Student Affairs)
   c. Design peer tutoring programs for difficult bottleneck courses (Colleges, Tomas Rivera Center, Academic departments)

6. Online Resources (Leticia Duncan)
   a. Study availability of online resources for tutoring assistance (Academic departments, Tomas Rivera Center)
   b. Develop online tools for courses at UTSA that assist students (Academic departments)
   c. Communicate availability of online resources (Tomas Rivera Center)

B. Curriculum Structure and Course Delivery

1. Freshman Focus Initiative (Nancy Martin)
   a. Create implementation plans for initiative (Freshman Focus Initiative)
   b. Develop pilot programs and timeline for implementation (Freshman Focus Initiative)
   c. Identify freshman-level courses needed for entry to major (Academic departments)
   d. Develop guidelines for math, writing proficiency needed for majors (Academic departments)
   e. Create information sites and recruiting events for prospective majors (Academic departments)

2. Streamlined Curriculum (Bridget Drinka)
   a. Study major curriculum and enrollment patterns of students to determine obstacles to timely progress (Academic departments, OIR)
   b. Map curriculum and ideal student progress through each major (Academic departments)
   c. Design plans to streamline students' progress through the major curricula (Academic departments)
   d. Identify courses that may be modified to address multiple curricular needs (Academic departments)
   e. Make necessary changes to undergraduate catalog by Fall 2013 (Academic departments, Dean of the University College)

3. Course Prerequisites and Competency-Based Assessment (Edwin Barea-Rodriguez)
   a. Dissect all prerequisites required for major courses and determine what topics from those courses are needed in subsequent courses (Academic departments)
   b. Study feasibility of using competency-based assessment to satisfy course prerequisites (Academic Departments).
   c. Develop appropriate assessment tools to demonstrate proficiency equivalent to knowledge gained from prerequisite courses (Academic departments)
   d. Determine feasibility of multiple courses to satisfy needed prerequisite skills (Academic departments)

4. BA in Multidisciplinary Studies (implemented) (Gabe Acevedo)

5. Course Availability and Scheduling (Joe DeCristoforo)
   a. Study distribution of classroom sizes in inventory and determine optimal distribution (Class Scheduling, Office of Space Allocation)
   b. Explore alternative class scheduling options (Class Scheduling, Academic departments)
   c. Study student enrollment needs and use as input for setting class schedules (OIR, Academic departments)
   d. Design registration process to be responsive to student needs (Registrar, OIT)

6. Student-Faculty Ratio (John Frederick)
   a. Study data related to student enrollment patterns, trends (OIR)
   b. Establish faculty position priorities (Colleges, Academic departments)

    c. Devise overall prioritization based on enrollment, curriculum, and strategic needs of university (Provost Office)

    d. Appoint new faculty (Colleges, Academic departments)

7. Credit by Examination (Joleen Reynolds)
    a. Determine courses for which standardized tests (e.g. CLEP, DSST) could be accepted for credit (Academic departments)
    b. Develop criteria enabling students to challenge a course by exam (Academic departments)
    c. Design a protocol for publicizing and offering exams for course credits (Testing Services)
    d. Create web site(s) to inform students about process for credit by exam (Testing Services, Marketing)

8. Alternative Course Delivery (Sunay Palsole)
    a. Expand availability of training for hybrid courses (OIT)
    b. Develop selection process for hybrid course training (OIT, Academic departments)
    c. Study feasibility of offering select courses in online-only format (Academic departments)
    d. Promote pedagogically-sensible use of technology (Academy of Distinguished Teachers)
    e. Study efficacy of different models for hybrid course delivery (Academic departments, OIT, TLC)

9. Summer School Expansion (Larry Williams)
    a. Collect data to identify high-demand courses needed in summer (OIT, OIR)
    b. Examine policies for summer compensation (Provost Office)
    c. Develop summer base schedule in early fall each year (Academic departments, Colleges, Provost Office)
    d. Make summer school offerings known at time of spring, fall registration periods (Registrar, OIT)

C. Advising and Student Support Services

1. University College (Larry Williams)
    a. Determine which components should be included in University College (Provost Office)
    b. Re-organize staffing and establish reporting lines for advising centers (Provost Office)
    c. Organize structure, activities for moving students into college-based majors by end of freshman year (Provost Office, Colleges)
    d. Streamline communications among support services and academic departments for freshman year academic success (Provost Office)

2. Four-Year Degree Plans of Study (Ken Pierce)
    a. Construct four-year degree maps for each major curriculum (Academic departments)

      b. Examine third-party software platforms for creating four-year degree plans (OIT, Advising Centers)

      c. Create degree-plan data uploading capability to a database accessible by departments to plan curricula (OIT, Advising Centers, University College)

      d. Train freshman advisors in counseling students about four-year plans (Advising Centers, Dean of the University College)

      e. Create a course database that can respond to student queries for meeting core requirements, major requirements, Q-course requirements, free electives (OIT)

3. Online Degree Audit System (Ken Pierce)

      a. Examine third-party software platforms for suitability for online degree audits (OIT, Advising Centers, Colleges, Academic departments)

      b. Implement degree audit system (OIT, Advising Centers)

      c. Train advisors in use of online degree audit (OIT, Advising Centers)

      d. Provide resource web site that guides students through online degree audits (OIT)

4. Advising Quality and Access (Barbara Smith)

      a. Adopt a standard set of advising forms (Advising Centers)

      b. Establish a schedule for advising students utilizing all advisors strategically (Provost Office, Dean of the University College, Advising Centers)

      c. Create an "ideal" advising protocol for students as they navigate through the curriculum (Advising Centers, Dean of the University College)

      d. Implement recommendations of Advising Task Force (Advising Centers)

      e. Create "Ask Rowdy" web site for frequently-asked advising questions (OIT, Advising Centers)

      f. Market advising during off-peak cycles to students (Advising Centers, University College, Marketing)

      g. Expand advising staff (Dean of the University College)

5. Electronic Early-Alert System (Ken Pierce)

      a. Examine third-party software platforms for suitability as an early-alert system (OIT, Institutional Effectiveness)

      b. Establish policies for keeping grades in Blackboard (Provost Office, Colleges, Academic departments)

      c. Design system for porting sensitive grade information securely between Blackboard and early-alert system (OIT)

      d. Train advisors in use of early-alert system (Advising Centers, OIT, Registrar)

D. Policies and Incentives

1. Enrollment Policies Review (Sandy Welch)

      a. Study student enrollment patterns to determine frequency of multiple enrollment in the same course, late withdrawals, etc. (OIR, Provost Office)

      b. Collect enrollment-related policies from institutions with higher student completion rates for comparison (Institutional Effectiveness)

      c. Identify existing enrollment-related policies and assess for impact on student completion (Dean of the University College, Provost Office)

d. Formulate alternative policies that encourage faster completion (Provost Office, Institutional Effectiveness)

e. Revise enrollment policies that take summer school completion into account (Provost Office, Institutional Effectiveness)

2. Wait-Lists for Courses (Ken Pierce)

   a. Design software infrastructure to support wait-lists for courses (OIT, Academic departments)

   b. Identify heavily-enrolled courses that frequently close enrollments due to full capacity (Registrar, OIR)

   c. Implement wait-lists for heavily-enrolled courses and tie to subsequent semesters' registration (Registrar, OIT, Academic departments)

3. Freshman/Sophomore Tuition and Fee Incentive Grants (Lisa Blazer)

   a. Determine budget available to support incentive grant program (Financial Aid, Academic Budget Office)

   b. Study student enrollment patterns and formulate effective eligibility requirements for incentive grants (Registrar, OIR, Institutional Effectiveness)

   c. Tailor eligibility requirement for incentive grants to align with available resources (Financial Aid)

   d. Advertise availability of grants (Advising Centers, University College, Marketing)

4. Finish in Four Incentive (Kristi Meyer)

   a. Determine budget available to support incentive grant program (Financial Aid, Academic Budget Office)

   b. Formulate appropriate eligibility requirements for grants (Registrar, OIR, Graduation Initiative)

   c. Tailor eligibility requirement for incentive grants to align with available resources (Financial Aid)

   d. Advertise availability of grants (Graduation Initiative, Advising Centers, University College, Marketing)

5. On-campus Employment Opportunities (Sam Gonzales)

   a. Develop campus employer targeted marketing plan (Student Affairs, Colleges, Marketing)

   b. Develop plan to market on-campus employment to students (Student Affairs, Marketing)

6. Four-Year Completion Marketing (Rebecca Luther)

   a. Identify opportunities for marketing the advantages of four-year degree completion (Student Affairs, Provost Office Communications, SGA, Marketing)

   b. Enlist peer mentors to counsel freshmen about the advantages of four-year completion (University College)

   c. Implement marketing campaign to tout four-year completion (Marketing, Provost Office Communications)