

# In Pursuit of the Vision



Texas A&M University

The Next Five Years

February 1, 2002

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Greetings:

*In Pursuit of the Vision* presents an outline of our plans for the years 2002 through 2006. The plan builds on the strategic planning efforts of faculty, staff, and administrators throughout Texas A&M University. In that respect, it is an overview. The college, division, and other unit plans present a more detailed perspective of the University's course for the next five years. These strategic plans are accessible on the University's home page at <http://www.tamu.edu/provost/reportpubs/>.

The imperatives identified in *Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence* (<http://www.tamu.edu/vision2020/>) have strongly influenced this strategic plan. Indeed, planning within individual units focused on the twelve imperatives and the overarching themes of diversity, globalization, and technology. In addition, the units were asked to ensure that their plans supported Texas A&M's land grant heritage—commitment to state and nation—that was reaffirmed as a Vision 2020 imperative. We have charted an uncompromising course toward academic excellence, and the imperatives illuminate the objectives that we must accomplish to serve our students, our state, and our nation with distinction.

This plan is published to give all readers a sense of our purpose and the resolve with which we will approach the next five years in our effort to join the ranks of the best public universities in America.

Sincerely,

Ray M. Bowen  
President

Ronald G. Douglas  
Executive Vice President and Provost

## FOREWORD

Texas A&M University aspires to be one of the best public universities in the country, fulfilling its historical commitment to Texas by providing excellent academic, research, and service programs for its citizens. This strategic plan outlines the course that the University will follow over the next five years in pursuit of this vision. The plan is based on unit plans developed by faculty, staff, and administrators throughout the University, and is guided by the twelve imperatives identified in *Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence* (<http://www.tamu.edu/vision2020/>). In addition, the plan focuses on the overarching themes of diversity, globalization, and technology, and reaffirms the University's commitment to the state and nation.

Because of the strong influence of *Vision 2020*, we have titled this plan *In Pursuit of the Vision*. This umbrella document outlines the larger themes and initiatives—most particularly those in academic affairs—rather than summarizing the individual plans developed by the units of the University. However, we recognize that it is through the collaborative efforts of all University units that this plan will become a reality. Readers who would like a comprehensive view of the University's long-range goals should study *Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence* and the earlier plan, *One Principle, Twelve Ideas*. In addition, the individual plans from each of the other vice presidential divisions, as well as those from the colleges, departments, and other academic units may be accessed on the Texas A&M University web site at <http://www.tamu.edu/provost/reportpubs/>.

*Vision 2020* follows in the tradition of culture-changing plans that have transformed Texas A&M University over the past four decades. *The Aspirations Study* in 1962 and *Target 2000* in 1983 each identified major goals for the University to reach by the end of the century in order to meet its commitment to Texas to provide excellence in teaching, research, and public service. By facing challenges, accepting change, and maintaining focus, the goals set forth in these plans were met, and by the end of the 1990s, Texas A&M University was regarded as a very strong public research university.

Then, the bar was raised! *Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence* set the goal of being recognized as a consensus top-ten public university by the year 2020. This aspiration, shared by the entire University community, resulted from an extensive planning process involving more than 250 people from on and off campus. It has shaped our planning ever since. In the four years since the 1997 strategic plan, *One Principle, Twelve Ideas*, was published, Texas A&M University reached three singularly important milestones in its evolution as a research university: articulating a quantifiable goal for achieving academic excellence; securing additional predictable and stable resources to help support academic excellence; and gaining admission to the Association of American Universities. The progress demonstrated by these achievements renewed excitement, heightened expectations, lifted aspirations, and engendered a new way of thinking about Texas A&M University. With this momentum and the direction and guidance provided by the *Vision 2020* process, the University is clearly poised to move academic quality to a higher level.

Support for the imperatives identified through the *Vision 2020* process have been widespread. Indeed, the resources committed to pursuing the imperatives were key to the progress that has been made since the 1997 plan was published. For example, in 1999, the voters of the State of Texas passed Proposition 17, which allowed the State's investment managers to have more flexibility to manage the

Permanent University Fund (PUF) by taking advantage of broader investment strategies. As a result, the Available University Fund (AUF) now provides increased revenue to help support excellence in higher education. Most important, the proposition did not increase the risk of the base investment of the fund or cost taxpayers additional money. Texas A&M has invested these resulting additional funds in programs that supported the twelve themes articulated in the 1997 strategic plan, *One Principle, Twelve Ideas*, and *Vision 2020*. Having these plans in place enabled the University to seize the opportunity and commit the new funds to the pursuit of academic excellence.

Investment in excellence is fundamental for Texas A&M University to meet the expectations that the citizens of Texas have for the University. Excellence in research, teaching, and public service is the goal. Our students, as well as the people of Texas, will be the best judges of our success. Nonetheless, external recognition of excellence is gratifying and provides independent validation of our achievements. Thus, Texas A&M's recent admission to the Association of American Universities caps the work of a great number of people over four decades and confirms the value of their efforts. This milestone on the journey toward academic excellence indicates that Texas A&M is pointed in the right direction, but there is still a long way to go over the next two decades.

*Vision 2020* compels us to take a long-term view of the University's course. It also provides a reference point on the distant shore that will guide us in the future. *In Pursuit of the Vision* offers our best thinking on how to navigate the winds and currents of change in the state and in higher education. Certainly, the journey ahead will be challenging, but Aggies have faced challenges in the past and are sure to do so again.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 1997 strategic plan, *One Principle, Twelve Ideas*, Texas A&M University charted a course toward educational excellence. The goals—or Targets 2002—articulated in that plan were reinforced by the imperatives identified in *Vision 2020: Creating a Culture of Excellence* (<http://www.tamu.edu/vision2020/>). Although progress toward some of the Targets 2002 has been greater than for others, the University has moved steadily toward its goals over the past four years. Continued progress will depend on the University's ability to be flexible and adapt to the rapidly changing environment for higher education in today's world while standing firmly upon its most fundamental reason for being—to serve citizens through excellence in research, teaching, and public service.

*In Pursuit of the Vision* is based on unit plans developed by faculty, staff, and administrators throughout the University and is guided by the twelve imperatives identified in *Vision 2020* with focus on the overarching themes of diversity, globalization, and technology. Support for the imperatives has been widespread and resources have been committed to achieving these goals. Continued investment will be critical to the University becoming one of the best public universities in the country.

### Aligning with the Vision 2020 Imperatives

*In Pursuit of the Vision* outlines the University's plans for 2002 through 2006 by building on the framework provided by *Vision 2020*. Consequently the plan is arranged according to the twelve imperatives, stated in *Vision 2020*. For each imperative, the current plan establishes specific short-term targets, called Targets 2006. Our long-term goal is providing the excellence in teaching, research, and service that the citizens of Texas expect.

#### Imperative 1—Elevate Our Faculty and Their Teaching, Research, and Scholarship

Educational quality goes hand-in-hand with the quality of the faculty's teaching, research, and scholarship. An excellent faculty in adequate numbers is the foundation to achieving educational excellence and all of the benefits that brings. Over the next five years, Texas A&M will continue to attract and retain top scholars, teachers, and researchers. We will continue to benchmark our progress against the best public universities. Comparing the successes and recognition obtained by our faculty with those of faculties at other universities will provide a measure of the relative strength of our faculty and the quality of educational opportunity at Texas A&M University. In addition, we will continue to support targeted interdisciplinary programs, including existing initiatives in the life sciences and biotechnology, telecommunications and informatics, visual and performing arts, and the arts and sciences. We will also establish interdisciplinary emphasis areas in sustainability and in children, youth, and families, as well as developing a research thrust in Border Studies.

## **Imperative 2—Strengthen Our Graduate Programs**

Graduate education is important to Texas because it provides the intellectual capital that will drive the future. In addition, graduate education prepares the faculty that Texas will need to teach the students of tomorrow. Thus, enhancing graduate education is extremely important to the future of Texas and the service that Texas A&M University provides to the people of Texas. For the last four years, we have conducted reviews of our doctoral programs. We will continue the doctoral program reviews with an expectation of reviewing all of our doctoral programs by 2006. Furthermore, learning outcome assessments will be developed and implemented for all graduate degree programs as part of our reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Thus far, the doctoral reviews have shown that we have strengths as well as areas that need improvement. Common concerns include the fact that Texas A&M's graduate student stipends and faculty salaries are low compared to national averages and that the University does not provide insurance to fellowship holders. In addition, the reviews indicate that the University needs to improve its efforts to recruit a greater number of high-quality graduate students. Texas A&M will continue to move toward parity with graduate student stipends and faculty compensation at peer institutions, as well as improving the benefits for supported graduate students. As we progress in these areas, we anticipate that our recruiting efforts will also grow in strength.

## **Imperative 3—Enhance the Undergraduate Academic Experience**

When we admit undergraduate students to the University, we commit to their success as students. That success requires that we provide them with quality learning and mentoring experiences and that we have the appropriate infrastructure to support those experiences. Enhancing the undergraduate academic experience will require investment on many fronts. To begin, we will assess the effectiveness of our degree programs. All colleges will develop and implement mechanisms to evaluate whether students are achieving the faculty-determined learning outcomes at the appropriate intervals. Learning outcome assessments will be developed and implemented for all degree programs as part of our reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. We also will continue to invest in our libraries and our information technology capabilities, as well as in the research and scholarship of our faculty members. Finally, Texas A&M has a distinctive culture and rich tradition that bind students and graduates to the University. We must continue to foster a campus climate that provides high-quality, co-curricular experiences that instill the values undergirding the Aggie Spirit. We believe that these investments coupled with outcome assessments and subsequent modifications should help ensure a quality educational experience for undergraduate students.

## **Imperative 4—Build the Letters, Arts, and Sciences Core**

To accomplish the Vision 2020 goal of achieving recognition as a top-ten public university, we must strengthen the arts and sciences at Texas A&M University. Arts and sciences programs are administratively located in the Colleges of Liberal Arts, Geosciences, Science, and Agriculture and Life Sciences. The

University will continue to steadily increase the quality of the faculties in letters, arts, and sciences, focusing efforts on developing a plan to achieve top-20 status for at least one additional degree program within each of the associated colleges. Previous initiatives focusing on the performing and visual arts have led to the creation of a bachelor's degree in music and the formation of the Department of Performance Studies. Further, an Academy for the Performing and Visual Arts has been created to provide a locus for faculty planning and development in the performing arts and visual arts. As the Academy matures, a variety of component programs will be created to foster scholarship and creative activity among faculty and students. Investments in building the letters, arts, and sciences will impact the wider University by strengthening the faculty overall and enhancing the core curriculum.

### **Imperative 5—Build on the Tradition of Professional Education**

Texas A&M University serves the state and nation by educating graduates in the professions. The Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business, the Dwight Look College of Engineering, the College Architecture, the College of Education, and the College of Veterinary Medicine have long traditions of graduating professionals who have strengthened schools, businesses, the engineering infrastructure, and the animal industries across the state and nation. These colleges are highly regarded by their peers and continue to grow in the quality of programs. Other colleges contribute to the education of the students of these colleges and, in some cases, have direct responsibility for professional programs. The University will continue to develop linkages between professional disciplines and other disciplines within the University. The goal will be to identify opportunities for establishing interdisciplinary specialty programs to enhance existing professional education. These programs would be five-year programs and participating students would receive both bachelor's and master's degrees when they graduate.

### **Imperative 6—Diversify and Globalize the Texas A&M Community**

As society moves toward globalization, we find that many parts of the world, including the United States, are riven with ethnic and racial tensions and fragmentation. However, we also find that there is an opposite trend toward a deeper appreciation of the strength and richness of diversity among ethnic groups, languages, and racial heritages. Texas A&M University will provide our increasingly diverse student body with the range of creative and intellectual perspectives needed to prepare them for life in a diverse, global society. In addition, we will intensify our efforts to increase the proportion of underrepresented populations among our faculty, our students, and our administrative teams. We will also provide our students with the range of creative and intellectual perspectives that they will need to function in the multicultural environment of the global village. Through seminars, workshops, entertainment opportunities, and other activities, the University will increase its efforts to develop a campus and a wider community climate that welcome and support diverse faculty, student, and staff populations. In addition, our research programs will continue to involve international faculty, scholars, and students.

## **Imperative 7—Increase Access to Knowledge Resources**

Access to information, whether in traditional or electronic format, is fundamental to an excellent university education. Texas A&M will continue to invest in the library and its allied information technologies. Advances in information technology are rapidly changing the way that we as a society produce and market products and communicate and exchange ideas. The advances that Texas A&M has made in library services have come about through the sustained investment of appropriated funds, student fees, and gifts to the University. We will continue this investment. The overlap between the virtual library and the traditional library will continue to develop in a planned way. We will also continue to enhance the information technology infrastructure and provide more bandwidth. In addition, we will improve the systems that support administrative and service functions across campus, and we will continue to explore innovative technology that supports our teaching, research, and service, including investments in the telecommunications and informatics interdisciplinary initiative, high performance computing, and the faculty workstation program.

## **Imperative 8—Enrich Our Campus**

The physical environment of the Texas A&M University campus will be welcoming and offer a safe and attractive setting that is conducive to scholarly work and study. The campus and all of its facilities will be well maintained and efficient. Texas A&M and its administration and employees are committed to providing excellent infrastructural support to facilitate an excellent learning environment as part of fulfilling the University's commitment to Texas. We will achieve this goal by providing technologically current resources, customer service, leadership, and innovative practices throughout the University. As the campus expands to the west, we will seek to continue the pedestrian friendly scale and green space that characterize the main campus. Most importantly, we will develop a flexible campus master plan that supports the imperatives of Vision 2020 and provides the planning framework that will allow us to efficiently use our existing resources and seize opportunities to plan and construct the facilities that will be needed in the future.

## **Imperative 9—Build Community and Metropolitan Connections**

Historically, the University has had strong connections with the agricultural areas of Texas. We want to preserve those ties. But, we also want to establish connections with Houston and other metropolitan areas of the state. Connections with a metropolitan area affect our ability to be a diverse institution, to provide employment opportunities for faculty spouses, and to provide cultural and entertainment activities. The way we relate to these areas, as well as to our historic constituencies, will have a powerful effect on the University and on the communities supporting and supported by the University. In that regard, we also want to maintain and enhance our relationship with the local community by identifying areas of mutual interest and concentrating our collective efforts on even greater cooperation between the University and the community. Texas A&M has many existing partnerships with school systems, community colleges,



industries, and governmental bodies. These partnerships are strong because the University participates as a partner rather than as a patron. The continuation and expansion of partnerships based on research, teaching, and service is an important part of our future.

### **Imperative 10—Demand Enlightened Governance and Leadership**

To achieve status as a consensus top-ten public university, the University must have strong, enlightened, stable, and forward-thinking leadership, focused on academic quality. We must encourage and reward faculty participation in campus governance, following the strong college model that was affirmed in the 1997 strategic plan. The practice of shared governance has proved beneficial to our academic progress and will continue to be our method of operation. The colleges, their faculties, the Faculty Senate, the vice presidents, and the president collaborate to achieve agreed upon University objectives. By stating our goal of achieving status as a consensus top-ten public university, we ask all University leaders to create and maintain a culture of excellence. Searches to fill administrative positions must be intense and rigorous, seeking individuals of integrity, academic strength, intellectual vigor, and the capacity for further growth. We must also enhance the leadership capabilities of new and existing administrators by requiring and supporting continuing professional development for all administrators. In addition to high-quality administrative leadership, the University must recognize that the thousands of staff members at Texas A&M University are essential to academic excellence. We must continue to value staff support of academic excellence. Compensation, benefits, professional development packages, and strong organizational culture all help attract and retain outstanding faculty, staff, and administrators.

### **Imperative 11—Attain Resource Parity with the Best Public Universities**

In recent years, a combination of rapid population growth, demand for government services, and a fluctuating economy have strained the Texas treasury. Consequently, the resources available for higher education are limited. Over the past two decades, the State created a good and widely dispersed university system, providing greater access to higher education for the growing population. But, for Texas to remain competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, access alone is not enough. The states with the best public universities have long recognized the value of comprehensive research universities and in many cases are currently investing twice as much funding per student as Texas A&M University. To be recognized as a consensus top-ten public university, we must enhance Texas A&M's multiple revenue sources. The foundation of the University's revenue will continue to be public support from the State of Texas. We must realize that the continuation of that support is contingent on many factors, perhaps most importantly on the public trust and the confidence of the Legislature that are born of the University serving Texas with distinction. As we consider strategies for enhancing State support, our enrollment objectives must take into account formula funding. Finally, we also must continue to seek private support, focusing on gifts to support chairs, professorships, fellowships, scholarships, and support for academic programs.

## **Imperative 12—Meet Our Commitment to Texas**

Texas A&M was created by the State of Texas as a land-grant college whose mission was to prepare educated problem-solvers to lead the state's development. The modern Texas A&M University remains true to its land-grant heritage and is committed to serving the citizens of Texas. The diverse population of Texas should have access to the best public higher education at all levels without having to leave Texas. In addition, the University must extend its historic commitment in outreach to help solve the most pressing modern societal problems, including public education, crime, the environment, and enhancing the economic development of Texas. Commitment to Texas is a fundamental part of Texas A&M University. By meeting the goals set forth in the first eleven imperatives, Texas A&M will in large part meet its historic commitment to Texas. The education and research that can be provided by a top-quality public university will contribute greatly to solving the state's problems and promoting a prosperous future for all.

### **Putting the Imperatives in Context**

The twelve imperatives of Vision 2020 provide the planning structure that the University must have to meet its long-term goals. Although we believe that they are a sufficient framework, we want to underscore the fact that they must be approached with an uncompromising commitment to excellence and a strict adherence to the University's fundamental mission of providing excellent educational opportunities to as many citizens as our resources will allow. Our commitment to Texas is the principle that guides our planning and will continue to undergird our actions. Through this plan and our ongoing planning processes, we commit to provide our students with excellence in educational opportunity and to prepare them well for enduring learning and the several pursuits and professions of life.

## DEMONSTRATING THE PRINCIPLE

The 1997 strategic plan, *One Principle, Twelve Ideas*, asserts the principle that Texas A&M University's purpose is to provide excellence in educational opportunities to prepare students for the pursuits and professions of life. Twelve overarching themes, stated in the plan, support this purpose. Appendix A of this document, *In Pursuit of the Vision*, illustrates how these themes align with the twelve imperatives of *Vision 2020*.

*One Principle, Twelve Ideas* sets forth several fundamental commitments that affect all facets of institutional life. For each idea, the plan stated one or more specific, quantifiable goals to be accomplished by the end of fiscal year 2002. Each of these goals was labeled as a "Target 2002." A complete list with an interim assessment of progress toward each of the targets is available on the University's web site (<http://www.tamu.edu/provost/reportpubs/>). By way of summary, we can make a number of observations about interim progress. A final assessment will be made at the end of the current fiscal year (FY 2002). The observations correspond to the themes published in the 1997 plan.

- Strong College Model of University Leadership.—Over the four years since this goal was published, the University has moved steadily toward strengthening the strong college model. An important example of how the model works is the involvement of faculty members in determining the allocation of the additional funds made available following voter approval of Proposition 17 in 1999. As a result of this process, funding was invested in several theme areas and used to affirm others. Principal choices included: a matching program to create faculty chairs; creation of faculty and graduate student positions to support faculty-driven research/scholarship initiatives—especially interdisciplinary programs; recruitment of outstanding graduate students; retention of outstanding faculty members; and strengthening the libraries. The strong college model was affirmed again when funds were provided by the colleges to leverage the additional AUF funding to achieve various academic objectives. This type of participation and partnering indicates that the leadership, governance, and management of the colleges is evolving as envisioned in the 1997 strategic plan and confirms widespread support for the ideas that became the Vision 2020 imperatives.
- Academic excellence.—To date, almost \$30 million of additional funding has been invested in faculty positions, faculty chairs, graduate student support, and strategic initiatives specified in the 1997 plan. As a measure of excellence in research, Texas A&M's research expenditures have increased but do not meet the target set in 1997. However, since the 1997 plan was published, the College of Medicine and the Institute of Biosciences and Technology have separated from the University to become part of The Texas A&M University Health Sciences Center. As a result, the University will recalibrate this goal.
- Information technology.—Expenditures to support improvements in the University's information technology capabilities have increased by more than \$8 million annually between 1997 and 2000.

- Libraries.—Library expenditures have increased almost \$4 million annually since 1997. As a result, our American Research Libraries (ARL) ranking, which is based in part on total library expenditures, among the 121 ARL libraries has climbed from 41<sup>st</sup> in 1996-97 to 36<sup>th</sup> in 1999-00. Among the peer group of U.S. public universities, Texas A&M ranks 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Diversity.—Texas A&M University has not met its goals for increasing the proportion of underrepresented groups on its faculty or in its student body. Faculty diversity has increased only slightly and student diversity has not increased at all. However, the number of minority students submitting freshman applications and subsequently enrolling is beginning to rise.
- Graduate education.—Although graduate student stipends and benefits have improved, they are not competitive with those of our peers. The University established a tuition scholarship fund, which continues to grow, but there is need for much more improvement.
- Quality of campus life for students.—Improvements in information technology capabilities, particularly wiring the dormitories for Internet access and increasing off-campus access to the Internet, and new facilities in the library have improved the quality of campus life for students. In addition to providing high quality facilities and services, a major factor in determining the quality of student life is the interaction between faculty and students. The 1997 plan committed the University to increasing the quality, frequency, and regularity of faculty-student interaction particularly as it relates to academic advising. The results of recent surveys indicate that students appear to be satisfied with academic advising.
- Balance between undergraduate and graduate enrollment.—A goal of the 1997 plan was to maintain undergraduate enrollment and increase graduate enrollment by 20 percent. Graduate student enrollment has increased, but not as much as stated in the 1997 goal—in particular, the percentage of graduate students in the overall student population has increased only slightly.
- Outreach through educational offerings.—Enrollment in distance education courses has increased dramatically from a total of 535 in FY 1998-99 to a total of 2,001 in FY 2000-01.
- Outreach through foreign study experience.—Student participation in foreign study experiences has increased and is moving closer to meeting the goal set in 1997, which was that 25 percent of the graduating students in 2002 should have had a foreign study experience. However, the events of September 11, 2001, have slowed our progress toward meeting this goal. These experiences include study abroad programs, exchange programs, field trips, internships, and employment among others.
- Public learning through private giving.—The number of endowed chairs and professorships has increased from 241 in FY 1997-98 to 286 in FY 2000-01, meeting the goal set in 1997. In addition, the funding for and the number of scholarships for undergraduate students has increased by more than 15 percent and meets the 1997 goal. Scholarship aid for graduate students has increased dramatically, but the University still needs to attract more fellowships.

Many of the indicators presented in the previous observations are numerical and tightly focused. Although they do not tell the whole story, they do show that our efforts to date have been successful in bringing about progress on many fronts. Still there is a lack of progress on others. Although the current strategic plan will continue to assess progress in all areas, it will focus effort and resources in those areas that have not shown sufficient progress.

In assessing progress on the Vision 2020 goals, we have found progress in other dimensions. A report on that progress is available on the web (<http://www.tamu.edu/provost/reportpubs/>).

## **EVOLVING STRATEGIES FOR A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT**

The events of September 11, 2001, changed the world. The priorities of individuals, businesses, governments, and universities shifted. However, the change introduced by those tragic events, overlays the rapid change in the overall environment for higher education. Like other institutions, Texas A&M University must be flexible and adapt to progress in order to fulfill its mission in a changing world. To move forward effectively and smoothly, institutions just as individuals must first have a firm footing. To that end, the University will respond to change while standing resolutely on its most fundamental reason for being—to serve citizens by discovering new knowledge, promoting teaching and learning, and disseminating knowledge through service. Excellence in research, teaching, and public service is our goal. That has always been our touchstone and will continue to be so.

The currents of change are many and varied, affecting resources and shaping the expectations and demands of our constituencies as well as the way we conduct business. Major environmental factors include: the economy—state, national, and global; population growth and demographic shifts in Texas; rapid changes in technology, particularly new and faster information systems; a global shift toward consumerism; and the emergence of multicultural values in the global village. The University community is keenly aware of these issues and has tried to include them in the planning process.

Within the last two years, the United States' economy has moved quickly from unprecedented prosperity to mild recession. As a result, resources from the State, as well as from private philanthropies, are diminished at the same time that demand for resources is growing. Increasing demand on State resources and services is due, in part, to the growing population and shifting demographics of Texas. At the same time, the public looks to higher education to provide solutions to societal problems and help with economic development. Thus, as a public institution of higher education, Texas A&M is both affected by diminished resources and expected to provide greater services. The State of Texas and its citizens expect and demand excellence in return for the substantial investments made in Texas A&M University. Over the last four decades, the University's development as a major public research university has been fueled from various sources. During the 1960s and 1970s, growth in student numbers and a well-funded State formula for supporting higher education enabled the University to develop programs beyond the traditional ones in agriculture and engineering. In the 1980s, although enrollment increased at a slower rate, significant

increases in the Permanent University Fund provided substantial Available University Fund resources to attract top-flight faculty and nationally visible research programs. Finally, further development in the 1990s was supported by increases in Board-authorized tuition, revenue from the University's first Capital Campaign, and, in 1999, increased AUF funding. Texas A&M University is committed to providing the excellence in teaching, research, and service that the citizens of Texas expect. Continued progress toward fulfilling this commitment and achieving the goals of Vision 2020 will require that we develop multiple sources of revenue while continuing to focus on efficient operation without sacrificing the quality of our academic programs.

### **Aligning with the Vision 2020 Imperatives**

*Vision 2020* clearly articulates the framework for Texas A&M University's course over the next two decades. But, the framework not only guides long-term plans, it also provides direction and emphases for the incremental plans leading to 2020. Correlation between each of the incremental plans and the imperatives will maximize progress toward the long-term goals of Vision 2020. The following section provides specific short-range targets, each called a "Target 2006," for activities and objectives related to the Vision 2020 imperatives. The planning efforts in the individual units address similarly supportive targets and goals. This section is organized according to the imperatives.

#### **Imperative 1—Elevate Our Faculty and Their Teaching, Research, and Scholarship**

The quality of education that Texas A&M provides goes hand-in-hand with the quality of the faculty's teaching, research, and scholarship. Jeff Madrick, editor of *Challenge Magazine*, made the following observation in an article in the business section of the *New York Times*, "Now, economists believe educational attainment is the foremost economic resource of a nation." Similarly, Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, said, "If we are to remain preeminent in transforming knowledge into economic value, the U.S. system of higher education must remain the world's leader in generating scientific and technological breakthroughs and in preparing workers to meet the evolving demands for skilled labor." An excellent faculty in adequate numbers is the foundation to achieving the goal of excellence in education and all the benefits that brings. Using the additional funds provided by the enhanced AUF, Texas A&M will continue to support targeted interdisciplinary programs. In addition, we will endeavor to attract and retain top scholars, teachers, and researchers. As stated in *Vision 2020*, this will mean that we will need to continue to review and strengthen our hiring and tenure policies, enhance compensation, focus on scholarship, and transform our administrative culture. Even with lean budgets, we will develop resources for salary enhancement and seek funding for endowed chairs and professorships as well as for the faculty fellows program, which supports the "rising stars" among our faculty.

We will continue to benchmark our progress against the best public universities. Although rankings and numbers do not always tell the whole story, comparing the successes and recognition attained by our faculty with those of faculties at other universities (e.g., National Academy memberships, Nobel prizes), total and Federal research funding, National Research Council rankings, and other indicators provides an

idea of the relative strength of our faculty and the quality of educational opportunity at Texas A&M University. In addition to these benchmarks, we will use the measures developed by the Association of American Universities to make other comparisons. We will continue to nominate and promote our faculty for national awards.

Faculty-driven, interdisciplinary scholarship is a key to the future of Texas A&M. Individuals and teams of researchers at work in interdisciplinary centers will most likely solve the problems of the modern world. In the implementation of the 1997 strategic plan, we initiated several interdisciplinary areas. Faculty task forces were formed and charged to provide direction and determine funding priorities for the initiatives. The two major areas of focus were: life sciences and biotechnology, and telecommunications and informatics. In addition, task forces made recommendations concerning a program in the visual and performing arts and for enhancing the University's programs in the arts and sciences. We have also supported smaller interdisciplinary projects in the George Bush School of Government and Public Service and the Race and Ethnic Studies Institute. Support will continue in all of these areas. With this strategic plan we will establish two more interdisciplinary emphasis areas. These will each define a niche and move the University in directions that are different from existing programs at peer institutions. The new initiative areas are: sustainability, and children, youth, and families.

- Sustainability.—Sustainable environments and resources must be our legacy for future generations. These include natural, built, and social environments, as well as renewable resources. Texas A&M has the opportunity to contribute to a wide variety of sustainability issues locally, nationally, and globally. The concept of sustainability is very broad; so, the task force of faculty defining this initiative will need to determine its focus.
- Children, youth, and families.—In all societies, the future is in the hands of the next generation. The readiness of that generation for handling increased change and the challenges inherent in the world will greatly affect the way the future unfolds. This interdisciplinary initiative will focus on areas of scholarship that can positively affect the preparedness of that generation, including: sound emotional and physical development, educational delivery systems, public policy, geography, economics, technology, and similar factors influencing children, youth, and families.

In addition to these initiatives, we will begin developing a research thrust in Border Studies, which broadly conceived is the study of interactions, exchanges, and cultural transformations over political or ethnic boundaries. Texas A&M is in a distinctive position to pursue Border Studies that focus initially on the confluence of European, African, and native American cultures, and the contemporary legal and economic ties that extend throughout the Atlantic world. This program will not duplicate programs at other institutions. Because Texas is a border state, we believe that such an initiative will be an important mechanism through which we can fulfill our commitment to Texas.

### **Targets 2006**

- Attract and retain excellent faculty and work to create parity between Texas A&M University faculty salary structures and those of national peer institutions.
- Increase the Federal research portion of Texas A&M University's research expenditures from 37 percent to 50 percent.
- Work cooperatively to enhance the support for research provided by the Division of Administration.

- Add two senior faculty members each year to the membership of the National Academies.
- Maintain the priority of expenditures of Proposition 17 funds for excellence.

## **Imperative 2—Strengthen Our Graduate Programs**

Strong graduate programs are essential and underpin research at universities. For the last four years, we have conducted reviews of our doctoral programs. One of the sub-objectives of these reviews has been to link program quality and growth to the goals of Vision 2020, as well as to link with the overarching goals of the strategic plan for the University. To date, 35 doctoral programs in 26 departments have been reviewed. Teams of external reviewers have carried out each of these reviews. We will continue the doctoral program reviews with an expectation of reviewing all of our doctoral programs by 2006. Furthermore, learning outcome assessments will be developed and implemented for all graduate degree programs as part of our reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Thus far, the doctoral reviews have shown that we have areas of real strength as well as areas that need improvement. However, several common concerns have emerged, including the fact that Texas A&M's graduate student stipends and faculty salaries are low compared to national averages and that the University does not provide benefits to fellowship holders. In addition, the reviews indicate that the University needs to improve its efforts to recruit a greater number of high-quality graduate students. As needed, additional resources have been and will continue to be provided to make those improvements. As our faculty strength grows and graduate stipends increase, we anticipate that our recruiting efforts will also grow in strength.

Graduate education is important to Texas' future not only because it will provide the intellectual capital that the state will need to solve problems but also because it will provide the college and university faculties for the future. Although the value of graduate education in the preparation of leaders and problem solvers is well known, the upcoming need for faculty members for colleges and universities may not be as obvious. According to projections by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board about 500,000 students will be applying annually for admission to universities and colleges in Texas by 2006. During the same period, the number of faculty members is expected to decrease. The average age of faculty members now teaching in Texas' four-year institutions of higher education is approximately 55 years, and it is likely that a large proportion these faculty members will retire over the next 15 years. Thus, to replace them and prepare new faculty members to help educate the increasing number of students, the University must be committed to providing strong, expanded, high-quality graduate programs. The need for faculty in the future, coupled with the continuing need for intellectual capital, makes graduate education extremely important to the future of Texas and the service that Texas A&M University provides to the people of Texas.

In addition to the academic quality of our graduate programs, the distinctive culture of Texas A&M University provides quality learning and mentoring experiences for graduate students both in the classroom and in co-curricular activities. We believe that co-curricular activities provide a more complete educational experience and better prepare our graduates for life after graduate school. We must continue to extend the benefits of co-curricular activities to a larger percentage of the graduate student body.



### **Targets 2006**

- Add 10 graduate scholarships and fellowships each year to support high-achieving doctoral students at Texas A&M University.
- Increase doctoral student enrollment by 4 percent each year and master's student enrollment by 5 percent each year.
- Reach parity with graduate student stipends at peer institutions.
- Double the number of graduate students supported on training grants and provide tuition assistance for all State-supported graduate assistants by 2006.
- Provide high-quality service and developmental opportunities through co-curricular activities targeted toward graduate students.

### **Imperative 3—Enhance the Undergraduate Academic Experience**

When we admit undergraduate students to the University, we commit to their success as students. That success requires that we provide them with quality learning and mentoring experiences and that we have the appropriate infrastructure to support those experiences. To determine the effectiveness of our degree programs, all colleges will develop and implement mechanisms to evaluate whether students are achieving the faculty-determined learning outcomes at the appropriate intervals. Learning outcome assessments will be developed and implemented for all degree programs as part of the Quality Enhancement Plan written in conjunction with our reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Based on the results of the outcome assessments, we plan to implement intervention strategies for students who fall behind at critical junctures in their degree programs.

Effective advising is another factor influencing success. Although students currently indicate that they are satisfied with advising, we will continue to monitor our performance. In addition, to provide exceptional opportunities to our undergraduates, we need to take a serious look at our enrollment policies and the ways in which we manage enrollments coming to and transferring within the University. In addition, we need to look at the challenges that undergraduate students face in obtaining classes to meet core curriculum requirements.

Enhancing the undergraduate academic experience requires investment on many fronts. We will continue to invest in our libraries and information technology capabilities, as well as in the research and scholarship of our faculty. We believe that these investments coupled with outcome assessments and subsequent modifications should help ensure a quality educational experience for undergraduate students.

Texas A&M has a distinctive culture and rich tradition that bind students and graduates to the University. We must continue to foster a campus climate that provides high-quality, co-curricular experiences that instill the values undergirding the Aggie Spirit, such as mutual respect, honesty, integrity, hard work and dedication, loyalty, commitment to family and community, leadership and personal effectiveness, inclusiveness and equal opportunity, optimism, and a sense of the value of history and tradition. We will continue to encourage all students to be involved in these co-curricular activities especially because such activities enhance the leadership capabilities of our students. As a part of this effort, we will continue to enhance the quality of the development opportunities offered by the Corps of Cadets, the Memorial Student Center, Student Government, and other broad-based student organizations.

## **Targets 2006**

- Decrease student-faculty ratio by adding 25 additional tenured or tenure-track faculty members each year.
- Develop student learning outcomes in research, diversity, technology, and globalization consistent with the University's Quality Enhancement Plan.
- Implement all aspects of the recent additions to the core curriculum.
- Enhance the effect of co-curricular programming on student leadership, learning, and success.
- Increase the number of five-year bachelor's/master's degree programs.

## **Imperative 4—Build the Letters, Arts, and Sciences Core**

To accomplish the Vision 2020 goal of achieving recognition as a top-ten public university we must strengthen the arts and sciences at Texas A&M University. As Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, said at the annual meeting of the American Council on Education in February 1999, “[T]he ability to think abstractly will be increasingly important across a broad range of professions. Critical awareness and the abilities to hypothesize, to interpret, and to communicate are essential elements of successful innovation in a conceptual-based economy. . . .there is a remarkable and broad presumption that the ability to think abstractly is fostered through exposure to philosophy, literature, music, art, and languages. Liberal education is presumed to spawn a greater understanding of all aspects of living.” To that end, Texas A&M University is working to build its programs in the letters, arts, and sciences.

In the past four years, we have seen improvements in a number of arts and sciences programs. In particular, economics and political science have joined chemistry and statistics as programs ranked among the top-twenty in their respective fields at public institutions nationally. Faculties in the letters, arts, and sciences, which are located primarily in the Colleges of Liberal Arts, Science, Geosciences, and Agriculture and Life Sciences, benefit from the AUF resources applied to their research initiatives, to new faculty positions, and to graduate student enhancement. Continued investments in the letters, arts, and sciences will have wider University effects by strengthening the faculty overall and enhancing our core curriculum.

Previous initiatives have led to the creation of a bachelor's degree in music and the formation of the Department of Performance Studies. In addition, the recommendation of the faculty Task Force on the Performing and Visual Arts has led to the creation of an Academy for the Performing and Visual Arts, which will provide a locus for faculty planning and development in the performing arts and visual arts. Currently, arts programs are housed and supported in three colleges (visual arts in Architecture; music, theatre arts, and film studies in Liberal Arts, and dance in Education). The creation of the Academy will help promote and coordinate campus-based arts programs; serve as a liaison office with arts programs and organizations in the larger community; assist in developing academic programs in the performing and visual arts within their respective colleges; and work to develop resources to support the arts at Texas A&M University. As the Academy matures, a variety of component programs will be created to foster scholarship and creative activity among faculty and students.

In all areas of the letters, arts, and sciences, the University is committed to helping the affected colleges seek private support for endowed chairs, professorships, and graduate fellowships. In addition, the University will develop a plan for providing quality space for faculty and classrooms.

### **Targets 2006**

- Increase the quality of the faculties in letters, arts, and sciences. In each of the associated colleges, develop a plan to achieve top-20 status.
- Increase opportunities for multiple interactions between letters, arts, and sciences faculty members and undergraduate students, both in and out of class.
- Build a complete complement of programs at the doctoral and the master's levels.
- Continue development of performing and visual arts degree programs in collaboration with the Academy for the Performing and Visual Arts.
- Develop programs that will be effective in recruiting students to the letters, arts, and sciences major areas of study.

### **Imperative 5—Build on the Tradition of Professional Education**

Texas A&M University serves the state and nation by educating graduates in the professions. The Lowry Mays College and Graduate School of Business, the Dwight Look College of Engineering, the College Architecture, the College of Education, and the College of Veterinary Medicine have long traditions of graduating professionals who have strengthened schools, businesses, the engineering infrastructure, and the animal industries across the state and nation. These colleges are highly regarded by their peers and continue to grow in the quality of programs. Other colleges contribute to the education of the students of these colleges and, in some cases, such as Biological and Agricultural Engineering in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, have direct responsibility for professional programs. The investment of the additional funds from the AUF is contributing to further growth of program excellence in professional education.

Experience with the engineering ethics program, developed by the Dwight Look College of Engineering and the College of Liberal Arts; the program in science and technology policy, developed by the George Bush School of Government and Public Service; and the Border Studies and Sustainability initiatives, mentioned previously, leads us to expand more connections between the professional disciplines and other disciplines within the University. In particular, we will explore the possibility of establishing five-year programs that incorporate these interdisciplinary connections. Students who enroll in these programs would receive both bachelor's and master's degrees when they graduate. The new interdisciplinary initiatives in Sustainability and in Children, Youth, and Families will provide multiple opportunities for additional linkages. In the latter case, the involvement of the College of Education in programs, such as the Regents' Initiative and the Great City Initiative in Houston, to prepare more teachers will be key elements to consider in the planning process.

### **Targets 2006**

- Raise the national rankings of existing professional programs.
- Increase the number of graduates in five-year professional programs and programs with a significant professional component, ending with the granting of both a bachelor's and master's degree.

- Support outreach efforts that focus on continuing education.
- Connecting to the rest of the plan, invest in developing more high-quality professional programs, particularly those that will have nationwide effect and visibility.

## **Imperative 6—Diversify and Globalize the Texas A&M Community**

To reflect the growing richness of demographic diversity and the range of creative and intellectual perspectives afforded by such a society, and to provide effective classroom and mentoring experiences for the increasingly diverse student body, we will intensify our efforts to increase the diversity of the Texas A&M University faculty. Our goal is to provide all of our students with the range of creative and intellectual perspectives needed to prepare them for life in a diverse, global society. In addition, we will intensify our efforts to increase the proportion of underrepresented domestic populations among our faculty, students, and staff. As society moves toward globalization, we find that many parts of the world, including the United States, are riven with ethnic and racial tensions and fragmentation; so, a focus on domestic diversity is critical. However, we also find that there is an opposite trend toward a deeper appreciation of the strength and richness of diversity among ethnic groups, languages, and racial heritages.

Enrolling international students at Texas A&M is an equally important and effective way to diversify the overall climate of the University while establishing the basis for future international partnerships between Texas A&M and the world. As we seek to diversify the Texas A&M community, we will continue to foster a welcoming campus environment for all students, faculty, and staff—domestic and international.

One of our educational challenges is to integrate a deeper appreciation of the value of diversity into the curriculum so that we can capitalize on, rather than be constrained by, increasing diversity. Texas A&M is committed to diversity and globalization and will continue to expand domestic and international educational opportunities for students and faculty. Expansion will mean diversifying the types of programs available as well as the regions and areas of study. In addition to offering only traditional study-abroad programs to our students, we will implement new programs focusing on research, internships, independent study, and other types of domestic and international educational experiences for students at all levels and for all majors. The enhanced foreign language requirement for graduation as well as the increasing the amount of foreign language instruction that is part of study-abroad efforts will also support this imperative.

As an internationally known research university, Texas A&M has responsibilities to the world community. The University needs to prepare its students not only to think globally but also to work cooperatively in multinational strategic research alliances. To prepare a new generation of global researchers, the University will seek out and cooperate with the best research scientists and engineers in the world through partnership arrangements, such as the agreement between Texas A&M and the National Science Council of Mexico (CONAYCT). This agreement establishes strategic research partnerships, including student exchange programs, in areas of mutual national interest. In addition to being a good model for international alliances, the agreement with CONAYCT provides opportunities for further alliances to study Texas-Mexico border issues that are important to Texas. The recently established European Union Center, supported by the European Commission, will similarly provide a means for increasing partnerships with European institutions. Texas A&M will continue to form these types of strategic alliances with appropriate partners around the world. Through increased international partnerships, Texas A&M will move

toward becoming one of the most internationally oriented of the top-ten public universities in the U.S.

#### **Targets 2006**

- Increase the diversity of the student body, faculty and staff, and administrative leadership teams.
- Increase the diversity of the curriculum.
- Increase the proportion of graduating students who have had a foreign study experience from less than 25 percent to 30 percent.
- Compete successfully for the International Ocean Drilling Program.

#### **Imperative 7—Increase Access to Knowledge Resources**

Access to information, whether in traditional or electronic format, is fundamental to an excellent university education. Texas A&M will continue to invest in the library and its allied information technologies. Advances in information technology are rapidly changing the way we as a society produce and market products and communicate and exchange ideas. As Peter McGrath, president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, said in his 1999 address to Texas A&M's Academic Convocation, "Cyber education, the digital and information technologies, are fundamentally affecting—perhaps even transforming—America's universities. They have had a huge impact on how we discover knowledge, transfer it to all who can profit from it, and apply it through our outreach and engagement with the communities and social and economic interests that we serve. All of the world's universities are going to be vastly changed—and they must take charge of that change."

The advances that Texas A&M has made in library services have come about through the sustained investment of appropriated funds, student fees, and gifts to the University. This investment will continue. The overlap between the virtual library and the traditional library will continue to develop in a planned way. We also will continue to enhance the information technology infrastructure and provide additional bandwidth. We also will improve the systems that support administrative and service functions across campus. These activities, which range from student advising to student financial aid to energy conservation, support decisionmaking and depend on the availability of timely, accurate information. Over the time span of this plan, we will develop and implement a new student information system and a new human resources information system. We will continue to explore innovative technology that supports our teaching, research, and service, including investments in the telecommunications and informatics interdisciplinary initiative, high performance computing, and the faculty workstation program.

#### **Targets 2006**

- Implement new student, human resources, and payroll administrative computing systems.
- Invest in service resources for the library that will enable the University to attain a position of national leadership.
- Enhance the library's overall ranking among the members of the Association of Research Libraries.
- Install technology that supports instruction in 100 more classrooms and laboratories.

#### **Imperative 8—Enrich Our Campus**

Learning environments affect the academic and social development of students and the effectiveness of faculty and staff. The physical environment of the Texas A&M University campus will be welcoming and offer a safe and attractive setting that is conducive to scholarly work and study. The campus and all of its facilities will be well maintained and efficient. Texas A&M and its administration and employees are committed to providing excellent infrastructural support to facilitate an excellent learning environment as part of fulfilling the University's commitment to Texas. We will achieve this goal by providing technologically current resources, customer service, leadership, and innovative practices throughout the University. As the campus expands to the west, we will seek to continue the pedestrian friendly scale and green space that characterize the main campus. Most importantly, we will develop a flexible campus master plan that supports the imperatives of Vision 2020 and provides the planning framework that will allow us efficiently use our existing resources and seize opportunities to plan and construct the facilities that will be needed in the future. Our goal is to have such a master plan in place by the end of this strategic planning period so that we may make the best use of the bonding capacity that will become available at that time. Through our stewardship of the campus we affirm our commitment to Texas, particularly to those citizens who are our students or who visit the campus to attend conferences, athletic events, or any of the host of public activities that take place every day throughout the year. In addition, we believe that a commodious learning environment extends to the students we reach through distance education. To that end, we will support positive personal interaction and intelligent use of technology in order to convey the welcoming, caring nature of our campus environment. Similarly, we will use publications, video productions, webcasting, and other available media to "take the campus" to remote constituents. The goal of these communication pieces will be to portray the strengths and unique character of Texas A&M University that one finds on the physical campus.

### **Targets 2006**

- Develop a state-of-the-art, dynamic, renewable campus master plan, focused on the continued development of the University as a learning community committed to providing excellent educational opportunities to citizens.
- Ensure that facilities and the overall campus environment support the Vision 2020 imperatives and provide an environment that is efficient and effective as well as conducive to scholarly work and study.
- Plan and construct new facilities to support the life sciences/biotechnology initiative.
- Provide enhanced space for student activities and for the range of women's and men's athletic programs.

### **Imperative 9—Build Community and Metropolitan Connections**

Since its beginning, the primary mission of Texas A&M University has been to serve the people of Texas through teaching, research, and public outreach. Historically, the University has had strong connections with the agricultural areas of the state. We want to preserve those ties. But, we also want to establish connections with Houston and other metropolitan areas of the state. Connections with a metropolitan area affect our ability to be a diverse institution, to provide employment opportunities for faculty spouses, and to provide cultural and entertainment activities. The way we relate to these areas, as well as to our historic constituencies, will have a powerful effect on the University and on the communities supporting and supported by the University. In that regard, we also want to maintain and enhance our

relationship with the local community by identifying areas of mutual interest and concentrating our collective efforts on even greater cooperation between the University and the community. We recognize that our relationship with the local community is critical. The schools, housing, industries, businesses, and entertainment opportunities available locally are important factors in our ability to attract and retain a diverse, high-quality faculty, staff, and student body. Similarly, the presence of the University in the community brings a wealth of activities, talented people, and business opportunities that benefit the community.

Texas A&M University has many existing partnerships with school systems, community colleges, industries, and governmental bodies. These partnerships are strong because the University participates as a partner rather than as a patron. The continuation and expansion of partnerships based on research, teaching, and service is an important part of our future that will allow each of the parties to leverage resources and advance shared goals. An excellent example of partnership is the collaborative partnership that Texas A&M's Center for Housing and Urban Development has with State agencies and the colonias along the Texas border with Mexico. This partnership brings health and human services to people in south Texas who previously received few, if any, services. Another example is the College of Education's Great City Initiative in Houston, which strives to enhance public school education for the children of Houston. These projects, as well as a number of others, are examples of the University's commitment to Texas and its efforts to establish and support connections with the communities of Texas.

As a final step in this effort, we need to communicate the benefits of collaboration to other communities, businesses, industries, school districts, and community colleges throughout the state. By increasing the number of collaborative partnerships, we will be able to reach a larger number of Texans.

### **Targets 2006**

- Establish more robust, well-supported partnerships.
- Continue to support the Outreach Centers in metropolitan areas of Texas and plan for additional centers.
- Increase research expenditures for projects based on public/private partnerships with communities by 20 percent.
- Continue support for the College of Education's Great City Initiative in Houston.

### **Imperative 10—Demand Enlightened Governance and Leadership**

If Texas A&M University is to achieve status as a consensus top-ten public university, it must have strong, enlightened, stable, and forward-thinking leadership, focused on academic quality. As stated in *Vision 2020*, "We have made progress, but we must guard it zealously." In all things the University administration must be steadfast in its demand for quality. From regents to staff members, individuals must be identified and selected for their leadership abilities and their abilities to understand and operate among the complexities of university governance. In addition, we must encourage and reward faculty participation in campus governance, following the strong college model that was affirmed in the 1997 strategic plan. The practice of shared governance has proved beneficial to our academic progress and will continue to be our method of operation. The colleges, their faculties, the Faculty Senate, the vice presidents, and the president collaborate to achieve agreed upon University objectives. The search processes used to select administrators

are participatory with committees composed of individuals from various internal and (often) external constituencies with a stake in the responsibilities of the position. To seek the best academic leadership, administrative searches will continue to be nationally and internationally based.

By stating our goal of achieving status as a consensus top-ten public university, we ask all University leaders to create and maintain a culture of excellence. Leadership in strong support areas, such as finance and administration, underpin the academic mission. Searches to fill administrative positions must be intense and rigorous, seeking individuals of integrity, academic strength, intellectual vigor, and the capacity for further growth. We must also enhance the leadership capabilities of new and existing administrators by requiring and supporting continuing professional development for all administrators. We have begun this process with a seminar series especially for new academic administrators. In addition to high-quality administrative leadership, the University must recognize that the thousands of staff members at Texas A&M University are essential to academic excellence. We must continue to value staff support of academic excellence. Staff members ensure that the campus environment at Texas A&M University is welcoming to visitors and a great place to live, work, and study. The University must continue to foster a work environment for staff that promotes quality, encourages resourcefulness, recognizes achievement, and provides for growth in responsibility so that excellence can be achieved at all levels. Compensation, benefits, professional development packages, and strong organizational culture all help attract and retain outstanding staff.

### **Targets 2006**

- Require all incumbent administrators to complete at least one week per year of continuing higher education leadership development or management education.
- Identify and develop current faculty and staff with leadership capability.
- Develop and install student and human resource information management systems to inform administrative decisionmaking.
- Develop programs to communicate the University's values, goals, priorities, decisions, and actions to the public and, in particular, to local, state, and national leaders.

### **Imperative 11—Attain Resource Parity with the Best Public Universities**

In recent years, a combination of rapid population growth, demand for government services, and a fluctuating economy have strained the Texas treasury. Consequently, the resources available for higher education are limited. Over the past two decades, the State created a good and widely dispersed university system, providing greater access to higher education for the growing population. But, for the state to remain competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, access alone is not enough. As acknowledged in the Texas Charter for Higher Education of 1987, Texas must have a few universities that offer educational opportunities equivalent to the best public universities. The Charter states, "We believe higher education is vital to human advancement and that support for higher education reveals a society's commitment to progress. An investment in education is an investment in this State's future development and prosperity." The states with the best public universities have long recognized the value of comprehensive research universities and are currently investing twice as much funding per student as is invested at Texas A&M University. To be recognized as a consensus top-ten public university, we must enhance Texas A&M's multiple revenue sources to support this goal. In the past, the revenue that funded growth in quality came from a variety of



sources: growth in the student body, changes in the policies associated with the Available University Fund, increases in appropriations from the State's general revenue, increases in tuition and fees, increases in grants and contracts, and private giving both through annual gifts and the "Capturing the Spirit" capital campaign in the 1990s. We must continue to take advantage of sources of additional revenue when they become available. For instance, we must seek to recover 100 percent of the indirect costs associated with research grants and use this funding to support growing research programs, which will help fulfill our commitment to Texas. In addition, we must place renewed emphasis on the identification and commercialization of inventions arising from our research endeavors. Commercialization creates economic development opportunities for the state and brings new sources of royalty income to the University.

The foundation of revenue for Texas A&M University will continue to be public support from the State of Texas. We must realize that the continuation of that support is contingent on many factors, perhaps most importantly on the public trust and the confidence of the Legislature that are born of the University serving the state with distinction. As we consider strategies for enhancing State support, our enrollment objectives must take into account formula funding because the formulas represent the will of the people of Texas as voiced by the Legislature

We must continue to seek private support. The "One Spirit, One Vision" campaign is an ambitious development effort, the success of which will depend on the relationships between the University's colleges and departments and the friends of Texas A&M University. The "One Spirit, One Vision" campaign is based on an internal needs assessment and a feasibility study based on the Vision 2020 imperatives. That study found that friends of the University were supportive of the imperative structure; so, the goals of the campaign will resonate with the imperatives. We will continue a strong focus on gifts to support chairs, professorships, fellowships, scholarships, and support for academic programs.

### **Targets 2006**

- Increase unrestricted endowments and the number of endowed chairs and professorships through the "One Spirit One Vision" campaign.
- Increase the number of fellowships and scholarships for students.
- Double research partnerships, focusing on the Texas A&M University Research Park.
- Encourage development of intellectual property with the goal of increasing total royalty income to the creators and the University.
- Meet our commitment to research leadership and economic development in Texas by working to retain 100 percent of indirect costs to be invested in infrastructure, such as facilities and equipment resources.
- Meet our commitment to provide educational quality and leadership for our students and the State of Texas, by working to increase the amount of State support per student.

### **Imperative 12—Meet Our Commitment to Texas**

Texas A&M was created by the State of Texas as a land-grant college whose mission was to prepare educated problem-solvers to lead the state's development. The modern Texas A&M University remains true to its land-grant heritage and is committed to serving the citizens of Texas. In his 1999 address to Texas A&M's Academic Convocation, NASULGC President Peter McGrath characterized land-grant universities

as the engaged universities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and projected his vision for the future. “[T]he leading and most useful universities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be those that expand their engagement with society. They will do so by providing educational expertise and service to communities in partnerships involving other organizations and interests. Their engagements will provide rich opportunities for students to learn and faculty to teach effectively through internships, community-based projects, and activities as varied as the human imagination.”

We believe that our aspiration to be recognized as a consensus top-ten public university is consistent with our land-grant heritage and the vision for the land-grant university in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The diverse population of Texas should have access to the best public education without having to leave Texas. In addition, the University must extend its historic commitment in outreach to help solve the most pressing modern societal problems, including public education, crime, the environment, and enhancing the economic development of Texas. Commitment to Texas is a fundamental part of Texas A&M University. By meeting the goals set forth in the first eleven imperatives, Texas A&M will in large part meet its historic commitment to Texas. The education and research that can be provided by a top-quality public university will contribute greatly to solving the state’s problems and promoting a prosperous future for all.

### **Targets 2006**

- Increase the freshman retention rate from 88 to 92 percent.
- Increase the undergraduate graduation rate from 70 to 75 percent.
- Provide new doctoral graduates to help provide the faculty members that will be needed to provide quality education to the students of Texas in the future.
- Increase the number of licenses for technologies developed at the University.
- Continue to benchmark our faculty and programs against the faculties and programs at the best universities in the nation.

### **Putting the Imperatives in Context**

The goal of the Vision 2020 process was to chart a course for the continued academic evolution of Texas A&M University so that it would generally be considered one of the ten best public universities in America by 2020, while retaining, or even enhancing, many of the unique features that have differentiated the University in the past. The twelve imperatives focus the vision and provide the planning structure that the University must have to meet its long-term goals. In writing this strategic plan, we considered the goals of Vision 2020 and the twelve imperatives. We believe that they are sufficient, but we want to underscore the fact that they must be approached with an uncompromising commitment to excellence and a strict adherence to the University’s fundamental mission of providing excellent educational opportunities to as many citizens as our resources will allow. Our commitment to Texas is the principle that guides our planning and will continue to undergird our actions. Texas A&M is a part of society, not the proverbial ivory tower. Our ability to serve the people and meet the needs of society will influence how society regards us and, consequently, how society will support us in our pursuit of excellence.

## **TAKING THE NEXT STEP**

*In Pursuit of the Vision* gives an overview of the general direction the University will take over the next five years. The plan was developed through participatory processes at the college, unit, and division levels, following on the goals and objectives of the past strategic plan. Similarly, the processes that will allow us to achieve the goals of this plan should be participatory and follow on the groundwork laid by existing plans. Previously appointed task forces, such as the Life Sciences and Biotechnology Task Force and the Telecommunications and Informatics Task Force will continue to operate. In addition, new task forces will be established to create “target plans” for attaining newly identified goals. As in the past, task forces will consist primarily of faculty members but also will include administrators, staff, and students, who will work together as teams. As was true for previous task forces, the charge to the new task forces will be to define tactics that will lead to the achievement of individual goals, while being responsive to the general strategies set by the plan. We believe that planning is an ongoing process, with detail and precision constantly emerging but never completed.

Texas A&M University is first and foremost an academic institution, with academic values and academic purposes. Through this plan and our ongoing planning processes, we commit to provide our students with excellence in educational opportunity and to prepare them well for enduring learning and the several pursuits and professions of life.

**APPENDIX–A Comparison of the twelve Vision 2020 imperatives and the twelve themes of One Principle, Twelve Ideas**

<b>Vision 2020 Imperatives</b>	<b>One Principle, Twelve Ideas</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevate our faculty and their teaching, research and scholarship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A challenging and rewarding work life for faculty.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen our graduate programs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The aspiring mind–the graduate student.</li> <li>Campus life for students.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the undergraduate academic experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interdisciplinary scholarship through teamwork.</li> <li>Curriculum and resources.</li> <li>Campus life for students.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build the letters, arts and sciences core.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interdisciplinary scholarship through teamwork.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on the tradition of professional education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interdisciplinary scholarship through teamwork.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversify and globalize the A&amp;M community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vitality through diversity.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase access to intellectual resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The spine of the university–the library.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enrich our campus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information processing, development, and management.</li> <li>Campus life for students.</li> <li>Staff support for academic excellence.</li> </ul>
Build community and metropolitan connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extending our reach–Texas and the world.</li> </ul>
Demand enlightened governance and leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strong college model of university leadership.</li> </ul>
Attain resource parity with the best public universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private giving–public learning.</li> </ul>
Meet our commitment to Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extending our reach–Texas and the world.</li> </ul>