

Legislative Appropriations Requests, January 2009
81st Texas Legislature

EXCEPTIONAL ITEM 1

Tuition Revenue Bond to complete the Engineering Research Complex

Given the significant increase in construction costs experienced over the last 18 to 24 months, the current project budget is not sufficient to finish out the building. Up to 45 percent of the Engineering Research Building will remain unfinished shell space when the building opens in 2011. Approximately \$31 million is needed to finish the building.

The Engineering Research Building and the Engineering Lab Building renovation/expansion will increase the teaching, research and office space of the College of Engineering (COE) by more than 40 percent. This will enable the COE to increase enrollments to more than 4,000 within five years. It will also enable the COE to accommodate an additional 25 faculty members within five years and to increase annual research funding to \$50 million within 10 years. This growth will position the COE to reach the Top 50 in national rankings and to have at least two programs in the Top 25.

The Science component of the building will provide research labs and offices for researchers involved in 18 laboratories in biology, chemistry and biochemistry, physics, neuroscience and computational mathematics who will be hired over a period of five years. This space will allow the College of Science (COS) to accommodate expansion in these areas and enable the COS to interact more effectively with engineering researchers. The additional research activities facilitated by this expansion will enable the COS to achieve its goal of tripling the level of external funding in 10 years to \$30 million in annual expenditures.

The tuition revenue bond estimated issue date is Sept. 1, 2009 in the amount of \$31 million. Debt service assumptions to complete are 20 years at 6 percent interest.

FY2010: \$2.7M

FY2011: \$2.7M

EXCEPTIONAL ITEM 2

Establish the UT Arlington Regional Nursing Education Center

To address the critical shortage of registered nurses in the state, the Regional Nursing Education Center will allow UT Arlington to effectively double the number of licensed nursing graduates from 200 to 400 a year by 2012. Essential elements include expanding the use of the Smart Hospital as a simulation learning facility locally and in rural areas, leveraging existing public-private partnerships, instituting a centralized clinical placement system to maximize use of clinical sites and facilitate increased enrollment in the North Texas Nursing programs, and rapidly preparing an increased number of new faculty to accommodate more students.

This center will allow UT Arlington to increase pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing enrollments from 400 to 800 students by 2012 with the expanded use of simulation experiences and reducing the hours in clinical sites based on Board of Nursing criteria. Doubling the number of BSN graduates and assisting other schools of nursing to increase their enrollments will significantly address the severe nursing shortage in our region and the state. Additionally, providing expertise to other schools will enable them to expand their own simulation use and will lessen the need for scarce hospital space.

As one of the 20 largest schools of nursing in the country, with more than 1,000 students and 87 full-time faculty members, we have perfected the use of innovative strategies to grow and maintain our quality programs. Our Smart Hospital is a nationally recognized leader in the use of simulation, especially for clinical practice. Our commitment to supporting rural health and education has been demonstrated for over 30 years with our Rural Health Outreach Program and distance sites in the RN-BSN program. Within the next 10 years, it is estimated that 70 percent of the current 2000 faculty members in Texas nursing schools will be retiring. We need to replace and increase the number of faculty in order to increase enrollment in Texas. The Regional Nursing Education Center will meet these challenges for the future needs of all Texans.

FY2010: \$5M

FY2011: \$5M

EXCEPTIONAL ITEM 3

Expand the UT Arlington Fort Worth Higher Education Center

In order to provide access to Tarrant County residents who cannot travel to Arlington, the University established the UTA/ Fort Worth Higher Education Center in downtown Fort Worth in 2007. This facility primarily focuses on graduate programs. Now, with the recent announcement of the new Tarrant County College campus in downtown Fort Worth, UT Arlington has a unique opportunity to partner with TCC by providing four-year degree offerings in critical need areas that seamlessly mesh with offerings at the community college. These expanded activities will provide access for both undergraduate and graduate programs. Special item funds will be used for additional faculty and staff, leasing of available classroom space at TCC, expansion of the digital library, as well as for needed instructional equipment and operational costs.

The UT Arlington Fort Worth Center has experienced a double digit enrollment increase each semester since opening in downtown Fort Worth. In an effort to serve residents of the Fort Worth in obtaining a seamless transition between high school, community college and bachelor degree education, it is important for UT Arlington to collaborate and combine resources with Tarrant County College.

FY2010:\$2M

FY2011: \$4M

EXCEPTIONAL ITEM 4

Support for improving four- and six-year graduation rates

Improving four-year and six-year graduation rates (13.4 percent and 42 percent, respectively) for first time, full-time students remains a high priority. This initiative is aimed at significantly improving these rates by implementing major retention and student success programs. This includes doubling the number of academic advisers, instituting formal freshman year experience courses, increasing the size of freshman learning communities, enhancing online self-advising tools, dramatically increasing supplemental instruction opportunities and enhancing career services and counseling for students. The goal is to improve four-year and six-year graduation rates by at least 10 percentage points by 2015.

Improving student retention and graduation rates is extremely people intensive. This is especially true with today's college student, who is more likely to be a first-generation student and an ethnic minority. Providing attentive and plentiful personnel to assist with college adjustment and advising has been proven to be a key to retention and graduation at many universities. UT Arlington currently lacks sufficient numbers of professional academic advisers and instructors to appropriately guide students and lead important supplemental learning experiences. The University also lacks the resources to staff a planned freshman seminar that will be required of all entering freshman students.

The requested funding will provide salary support for academic advisers, instructors for the freshman seminar, supplemental instruction session leaders and peer mentors. Additionally, the increase in advisers will require some renovation of existing work space to accommodate the additional personnel.

FY2010: \$6.5M

FY2011: \$6.5M

EXCEPTIONAL ITEM 5

Tuition Revenue Bonds for NanoFab Building addition

UT Arlington is a leader in the area of Nanotechnology. This proposal seeks tuition revenue bonds for new construction to the existing Nanofab Building for wet and dry research labs, clean rooms, lab support space and faculty offices. The proposed expansion is essential for UT Arlington to expand its nanotechnology research programs and will provide space for eight new faculty members, a corresponding growth in graduate students, and 16 new laboratories including additional clean room space. More specifically, the additional space will allow UT Arlington to expand its research activities to include nano-bio technology that encompasses medical and bio-energy applications, and will enable us to address national priorities in the healthcare and alternative energy arenas. We anticipate that external funding will at least double as the new facility matures.

The project is a part of a concentrated effort of building on excellence in nanotech research. UT Arlington is involved in a number of collaborative partnerships that are synergistic with this expansion. The Nanoelectronics Research Top Talent Initiative involves UT Arlington, UT Austin, UT Dallas, UT System, Texas Instruments, SEMATECH and the State of Texas. That partnership would benefit substantially from

this expansion. The University also is involved in the Texas Alliance for Nanoelectronics (TxAN). This expansion project directly addresses many of TxAN's goals, including the upgrade of the nanoelectronics infrastructure available to Texas researchers, providing access to shared facilities among universities and the private sector, and attracting more federal funds to Texas. Current research thrust areas are focused on biomedicine, renewable energy, optical communications, commercial electronics and national security, all externally funded by federal agencies such as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, the National Health Institutes, as well as companies such as Texas Instruments, Semiconductor Research Company, Freescale Semiconductor, Motorola, National Semiconductor, SEMATECH, IBM, Lockheed Martin and others.

The estimated issue date on this tuition revenue bond is Sept. 1, 2009 in the amount of \$60 million. The debt service assumptions are 20 years at a 6 percent interest rate.

FY2010: \$5.2M

FY2011: \$5.2M