



THE UNIVERSITY

OF TEXAS

AT ARLINGTON

Office of the President

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Dear Colleague,

The highest priority for all colleges and universities should be the academic success of our students. Their education is informed by the scholarship, teaching and service of our outstanding faculty who offer a first-class education. Across the nation, including here in Texas, universities and colleges are being held increasingly accountable by legislators, governing boards, parents, and students for the academic achievement of today's students.

Over the years, UT Arlington has implemented a number of successful programs designed to help students succeed. Programs such as Supplemental Instruction (SI), Maverick Scholars, and Freshman Interest Groups (FIGs) document that these programs enhance student success. We know, for example, that students who participate in these programs earn higher grades and are more likely to remain in school.

Despite the success of our current efforts, many of our programs are limited in scope and have developed in isolation from other complementary efforts on campus. I believe we can, and must, do more to assist our students. The students we are likely to see in today's classrooms are increasingly first generation students many of whom lack the proper preparation and support to succeed at the college level. This is not unique to UT Arlington; however, it demands our attention.

The academic success of our students is something every member of the UT Arlington community has a responsibility to promote. Each of us has a responsibility to do all that we can to see that our students return for the next semester and graduate in a timely manner. To assist us in developing an institutional strategy aimed at improving our undergraduate student success, I have asked Michael Moore, Senior Vice Provost, to lead a Task Force which will examine student academic success, with a special focus on the crucial first year of college. Dr. Moore will announce the members of the Task Force, which will have broad representation from faculty, academic support specialists, student life, and student enrollment services, in the coming days. I have asked that the Task Force develop an integrated, comprehensive strategy for improving the academic success of our students before the end of the fall semester.

I look forward to receiving the Task Force report and to our renewed effort to enhance student academic achievement.

Sincerely,

James D. Spaniolo
President