Strategic Plan for Development of a Center for Undergraduate Excellence And Engagement

Vision: The Center for Undergraduate Excellence and Engagement is committed to enhancing the educational experience of all undergraduate students.

Mission: The Center for Undergraduate Excellence and Engagement supports, encourages and stimulates the academic experience by serving as a unique entry point into mentored research and internships, community outreach, workshops and professional development activities. As a student centered, seamless resource for information and referral, it welcomes student inquiries and requests for assistance. The Center enhances the intellectual community of the university and the overall student experience.

Goals

- To promote academic excellence
  - Deliver workshops on study skills, time management and other tools for student success
  - Provide tutoring
  - Design peer mentoring experiences

- To encourage academic engagement
  - Connect students to the university community faculty mentoring in research, scholarly activity, creative projects; referrals to student organizations, student services, Study Abroad and Honors programs, etc
  - Serve as a liaison between the students and the local community, internships, outreach and employment

- To ensure post-baccalaureate success
  - Develop professional skills: resume, demeanor, etiquette, presentation skills, interviewing, etc
  - Offer prep courses and guidance to ensure graduate and professional school matriculations
Overview
The Center for Undergraduate Excellence and Engagement (CUEE) is a student centered resource to enhance the intellectual community and overall student experience. It is dedicated to ensuring that students succeed and connect with the university and the local community. CUEE addresses eight of the 12 imperatives contained in the president’s Momentum 2015 vision, Momentum 2015 is summarized at the end of this document.

CUEE is a one-stop university resource center for undergraduate students. It provides unique programs and opportunities to enhance the academic excellence and engagement of undergraduate students, as well as serves as a point of referral for other student needs. The Center is an umbrella organization designed to supplement and augment the endeavors of other offices. The synergy among the units allows a seamless student enhancement, support and referral system.

CUEE Units
Undergraduate Research/Scholarly and Creative Activity (Imperatives I, II, V and VI). The center will provide faculty mentored experiences in research, scholarly and creative activities for undergraduate students. This rich research-oriented, student centered experience will complement academic programs by reaching beyond the classroom to contribute new knowledge and creative products. CUEE will complement and support the university’s plan to achieve doctoral comprehensive status.

Civic Engagement (Imperatives VIII and IX) CUEE will provide outreach and internship opportunities for undergraduate students. The Center will coordinate outreach activities with local schools, university groups and community organizations. These activities will engage students in their community, provide opportunities for them to be role models and instill a sense of civic responsibility. The Center will organize internship opportunities with community professionals and collaborate with the Alumni Association to find mentors for internship experience.

Professional Development (Imperatives I, VI, VIII, and IX) Workshops and lectures will target the welfare and success of students, enabling them to be both successful as undergraduates and in their post-baccalaureate goals. The center will provide students with the tools to improve critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as develop leadership abilities, allowing them to advance in a global environment. Alumni will be recruited to deliver workshops and lectures, thus fostering university/community partnerships.

University Honors Program (Imperatives I, III, IV, VI) The center will be a point of referral for students to the University Honors Program. The center will collaborate with the Honors program to provide enriching opportunities for Honors students to participate in leadership training, research/scholarly and creative activities and Study Abroad opportunities, thereby contributing to a superb undergraduate education. The center will assist the Honors Program in recruiting, retaining, and graduating highly-qualified students.

Mentoring (Imperatives I, II, III, IV, VI, VII, IX) The Center will connect undergraduate students with faculty, peer, alumni, and community mentors, thereby fostering academic excellence, while promoting the retention and welfare of students. Committed mentors will provide student-centered one-on-one interaction with students to stimulate life-long learning and discovery. The mentoring program will bolster undergraduate education, the scholarship of learning and civic engagement. Mentoring by community professionals will benefit the entire Coastal Bend area.
Tutoring (Imperatives I, VI): The CUEE will work with the Tutoring and Learning Center to meet student demands for supplemental learning, and stimulate formation of student-centered, student-initiated cooperative study groups, thereby enhancing student retention and welfare and the overall student experience.

Study Abroad (Imperatives I, II, III, IV, VI): CUEE will enrich the educational experience by providing study abroad activities that allow students to learn beyond the classroom and appreciate global perspectives. Study abroad activities supplement undergraduate education, promote problem-solving and leadership capabilities, and enable students to compete in the global marketplace.

Summary: Units of the Center for Undergraduate Excellence

I. Undergraduate Research/ Scholarly Activity / Performance / Creativity

II. Civic Engagement
   • Outreach
   • Internships
   • Collaborate with alumni association

III. Professional Development
   • Resume, demeanor, dress, etiquette, interviewing (Office of Counseling and Career Development)
   • Leadership workshops
   • Study skills, time management

IV. University Honors Program

V. Mentoring
   • Peer Mentors
   • Faculty Mentors
   • Community Mentors

VI. Tutoring
   a. Personal referral to the Tutoring and Learning Center
   b. Connect to private tutors

VII. Study Abroad
Implementation: Tasks And Times

1) Develop proposal 'September 1, 2007
   a Propose activities and anticipated outcomes
   b Timeline for implementation
   c Decide what data are needed to substantiate the proposal
   d. Assemble data
   e. Develop project budget
   f. Plan for sustainability
   g. Prepare proposal with executive summary
2) Present proposal to President Flavius Killebrew. early September
3) Identify and appoint an external Advisory Council
4) Identify key players that can provide input to help each unit succeed
5) Develop more undergraduate research fellowships/internships. throughout AY 07-08
6) Increase number and variety of outreach activities throughout AY 07-08
7) Offer leadership and professional workshops throughout AY 07-08
   a Engage alumni and local leaders to deliver leadership workshops
8) Develop assessment and data gathering tools throughout AY 07-08
   a Outcome of participants versus nonparticipants in all areas
   b Mentor surveys
9) Seek endowment AY 07-08
10) Seek federal and foundation funding AYs 07-09
11) Prepare Center request for legislature AY 08-09

Momentum 2015

Dynamic Innovative. Distinguished Influential Words defining a great university with a bold vision Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has reached the next level on its pathway to excellence. Now, through the visionary leadership of faculty, staff, students and friends, the University launches Momentum 2015, a ten-year vision charting the next course for the University, one that will establish Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi as the flagship university for South Texas.

In its short history, this University has become a highly regarded institution vital to the Coastal Bend and to the future of young people throughout the state and nation. Now, A&M-Corpus Christi is poised to foster a culture of excellence and engagement, while experiencing dynamic student growth reflecting the face of Texas.

The goal is clear. By 2015, A&M-Corpus Christi will be the flagship university of South Texas. And, its compass is the vision that is Momentum 2015, a commitment to maintaining excellence in learning, discovery and engagement.
**Imperative I: Build and Sustain Academic Excellence and Competitive Programs**

Academic excellence is the heartbeat of a university and is born of visionary, dedicated leadership and committed faculty and staff. And while the University has achieved excellence and recognition in certain areas, the future is limitless.

By 2015, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will achieve a national reputation for high quality graduates by providing a rich research-oriented learning environment with strong, comprehensive undergraduate programs and recognized graduate programs in areas important to the region. To achieve this goal, the University will strengthen and grow its infrastructure to support existing and promising new programs.

Services and operations dedicated to student recruitment, retention and welfare will be expanded to meet increased student demands and enhance the educational experience for all.

**Imperative II: Enhance a Culture of Discovery and Innovation**

Lifelong learning and discovery become reality through research and scholarly activities.

By 2015, A&M-Corpus Christi's focus on undergraduate research will be instilled across all disciplines, and faculty scholars will continuously reach beyond the classroom to contribute new knowledge and creative products or services.

New centers will capture unique research and development expertise of faculty and staff. The region's Mexican-American heritage will be a niche area of scholarly research activities.

**Imperative III: Instill Global Perspectives into the Academic Life of the University**

Advances in technology and critical world events require educational institutions in the 21st century to adopt global perspectives. To prepare its students for the global village, the Island University of 2015 will incorporate worldwide perspectives across subject areas and encourage multidisciplinary exploration of global issues. The University will host nationally and internationally known artists, performers and speakers, as well as provide the site for regional and national conferences, symposia, and festivals.

An International Studies Task Force will design and secure funding to increase international student recruitment, international research collaborations, faculty and student exchange programs, and a Study Abroad program will coexist, driven by partnerships with international universities.

**Imperative IV: Establish Targeted Areas of State, Regional and National Recognition and Distinction**

Highly qualified, well prepared and internationally competitive graduates will be the trademark of the University, whose programs will serve areas important to the region and to the needs of students competing in an international marketplace.
The University will be committed to a superb undergraduate education and to the scholarship of learning and civic engagement. It will remain committed to enriching the South Texas region, as a Hispanic-Serving Institution. Its location on the Gulf of Mexico will serve as its focus of research and scholarly activities for national and international prominence.

**Imperative V: Achieve Doctoral Comprehensive Status and Aspire to Emerging Research Designation**

South Texas requires more doctoral opportunities, and A&M-Corpus Christi will address this significant regional need.

The path is clear; identify and implement new doctoral programs, such as health psychology, English, nursing, and computer science. Increase the number of doctoral graduates. Produce a highly educated workforce which will bring specialized industries and economic development to the Coastal Bend. Provide international leadership in scientific and policy research programs focused on the Gulf Coast region. Generate $25 million yearly in external funding to support discovery and innovation.

Doctoral comprehensive status is imperative to A&M-Corpus Christi's aspiration to become a Research I university in the future.

**Imperative VI: Recruit, Retain and Graduate a Diverse and Highly Qualified Student Body**

The face of Texas is changing, as State Demographer Steve Murdock noted in his landmark book, *The Texas Challenge* more than eight years ago. As a result, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board launched its Closing the Gaps initiative. The goals of this initiative included enrolling an additional 120,000 Hispanic students in higher education by 2015. A&M-Corpus Christi will mirror the state population in its enrollment by recruiting, retaining, and graduating a diverse, highly qualified student body. A student-centered environment will enhance the intellectual community and overall student experience, helping to prepare and graduate students with the vital critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership skills necessary to excel and advance in an ever-changing global economy.

**Imperative VII: Recruit, Mentor and Retain a Diverse, Highly Qualified Faculty and Staff**

Recruiting, developing, and sustaining a quality faculty are core elements of any truly great university. The successful faculty furthers the University's prominence by producing great scholars. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will develop and sustain excellence in its faculty and staff through a focus on leadership, engagement, and academic excellence as the University strives to achieve doctoral comprehensive status and an enhanced research mission. A commitment to an enriched learning experience will remain at the University's core.

**Imperative VIII: Design and Cultivate Initiatives to Increase Lifelong Alumni Involvement**
One of the strongest bonds between the University and the greater community is its alumni base. Alumni have experienced the University first-hand and have spent many of their most memorable, formative and influential years involved with the University. By 2015, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi will provide a climate of lifelong alumni involvement with their alma mater. Current students, likewise, will thrive in a culture of involvement that fosters a commitment of service and contribution to the University.

**Imperative IX: Live, Learn and Work Together to Promote a Vibrant Coastal Bend Community**

Successful partnerships bring mutually beneficial outcomes. In the Coastal Bend, a classic university/community partnership has evolved—one that has resulted in an ongoing, interdependent relationship bringing an enhanced quality of life and preparing students for civic engagement. The thrilling performance of a basketball team against nationally known opponents, the performance of nationally recognized musicians at the Performing Arts Center—these belong to the greater community, as does the University.

Working with the greater community, by 2015 the Corpus Christi community and A&M-Corpus Christi will strive to make the Coastal Bend one of the most desired places in the country to live, learn and work.

**Imperative X: Extend the Reach of the Island University**

The University is growing beyond the parameters of Ward Island. Given the finite amount of space on campus, A&M-Corpus Christi needs to maximize its use of university space to facilitate its continued expansion. Relocating some university activities off campus by creating satellite sites would help the University expand. The University will examine innovative ways to acquire land and collaborate with community leaders to establish opportunities for expansion within the city, in locations that best serve the students and alleviate space constraints. But, through any change, the University will maintain its unique island setting and a unified campus.

**Imperative XI: Preserve and Foster an Inviting Island Environment**

Our Island University is unique. The natural beauty of the A&M-Corpus Christi campus will be in full bloom in 2015, a tropical location sensitive to its natural environment, contributing to the health and well-being of the university community. By 2015, the University will highlight inviting green spaces for meetings and conversation as well as a tasteful and inviting combination of architectural design.

Housing and parking accommodations will continue to meet expansion needs. As will appropriate dining and food service venues. The existing pedestrian infrastructure, including the hike and bike trail, will be expanded and improved to reinforce and encourage safe pedestrian use of the campus and the surrounding island environment.

And, by 2015, the University’s new campus master plan will support and maintain a cohesive island academic community with guidelines for overall campus layout and possible multi-story designs.
Imperative XII: Establish a Culture of Assessment, Investment and Stewardship

The excellence, engagement, and expansion thrusts of Momentum 2015 will become reality as the University creates business plans that maximize revenue opportunities, incorporates new programs of revenue enhancement, enlarges the base of university support, and increases its emphasis on stewardship.

To reach those goals, to make the Momentum 2015 vision a reality, the University will count on its most loyal supporters, the same supporters that have made possible the growth and achievement that have brought the University to its present status, plus a new cadre of alumni, friends and business partners who see the potential for greatness and desire to be a part of it.
Center for Undergraduate Excellence and Engagement

Provost

Director of Administration and Referral: Honors, Mentoring, Tutoring

Administrative Assistant  Coordinator of Undergraduate Research and Professional Development  Coordinator of Civic Engagement and Study Abroad

4 Student Workers