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# FOR
# ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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**Austin, Texas**

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*Christina Melton Crain*
*R. Steven Hicks*
*Janiece Longoria*
*Nolan Perez*
*Stuart W. Stedman*

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| 3. **U. T. San Antonio: Approval to establish a Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular Microbiology and Immunology degree program** | **Action**<br>*President Eighmy* | **Action** | **178** |
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| **Adjourn** | *1:45 p.m.* | | |

**1. U. T. System Board of Regents: Discussion and appropriate action regarding Consent Agenda items, if any, assigned for Committee consideration**

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Consent Agenda items assigned to this Committee are Items 15 - 60.

**2a. U. T. Arlington: Discussion and appropriate action regarding proposed changes to admission criteria for the Master of Science in Nursing - Neonatal Nurse Practitioner degree program**

## RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve changes to the criteria for admission to the Master of Science in Nursing - Neonatal Nurse Practitioner degree programs at U. T. Arlington as described below.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Arlington requests approval to make changes to the admission criteria with an addition of a separate, more descriptive, experience requirement for neonatal nurse practitioner (NNP) applicants.

Graduate nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). According to CCNE, programs should follow the recommendation of their national specialty organizations for Nurse Practitioners (NP) population-specific education. In 2017, the National Association of Neonatal Nurses/National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners reaffirmed the need for NNP students to have two years of nursing experience in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) within the past five years. Other NNP programs have a similar experience requirement including those at Emory University, Duke University, Vanderbilt University, and U. T. Medical Branch - Galveston.

Students with recent bedside nursing experience in a Level III or IV NICU (highest level of neonatal care) are more likely to be successful in the program and on the NNP certification exam after graduation. Preceptors also require this experience prior to accepting students for clinical preceptorships. Without the requisite experience, students will not be able to secure a preceptor for the 600 hours in a Level III or IV NICU, which is required for certification and ultimately Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) licensure. Under the proposed changes, only students with the required experience will be admitted to the program to ensure readiness for clinical experiences.

| Current Unconditional Admission Criteria | Proposed Unconditional Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| • GPA on last 60 hours of Undergraduate Program (BSN) (as calculated by Graduate Admissions of UTA) – 3.0. | • No change |
| • GRE two highest GRE scores will be used in admission process – Not required. | • No change |

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|---|---|
| • TSE (Test of Spoken English) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) – TSE: Score of 40 or higher or TOEFL: Minimum of 550 on paper-based test, 213 on computer-based test, or 79 on the internet-based test and achieve the following minimum scores on subtests: Writing, 22; Speaking, 21; Reading, 20; and Listening, 16 or IELTS minimum score of 7.0. | • No change |
| • Clinical Experience – For all high-acuity MSN NP Programs, (Acute Care Pediatrics, Neonatal and Adult Gerontology Acute Care), two years clinical experience as an RN in an acute care setting within the previous five (5) years is required. (Evaluated by the Associate Dean and/or designee.) | • Clinical Experience – For all high-acuity MSN NP Programs, (Acute Care Pediatrics, Neonatal and Adult Gerontology Acute Care), two years clinical experience as an RN in an acute care setting within the previous five (5) years is required. For the Neonatal NP Program, two (2) years full time clinical experience as an RN in a Level III or IV NICU within the previous five (5) years and current employment (minimum of one shift per week) in a Level III or IV NICU. (Evaluated by the Associate Dean and/or designee.) |
| • Current and unencumbered RN License from Texas, a compact state, or other state board of nursing – Evaluated by Associate Dean or designee. | • No change |
| • Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) – Required only for the Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Program. | • No change |
| • BSN from ACEN or CCNE Accredited Program – Evaluated by Associate Dean or designee. | • No change |
| • Undergraduate Level Statistics – Minimum grade of “C”. | • No change |
| • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation – Required for all. | • No change |

| Current Conditional Admission Criteria | Proposed Conditional Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| • GPA on last 60 hours of Undergraduate Program (BSN) (as calculated by Graduate Admissions of UTA) – 2.8 – 2.99. | • No change |
| • GRE Two highest GRE scores will be used in admission process – Verbal: 430 or 149 or Quantitative: 430 or 141 or Analytical Writing: 3.5, Analytical: 430. | • No change |

**2b. U. T. Dallas: Discussion and appropriate action regarding proposed changes to admission criteria for the Master of Science in Biotechnology, Master of Science in Molecular and Cell Biology, Master of Science in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, and Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular and Cell Biology degree programs**

## RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve changes to the criteria for admission to the Master of Science in Biotechnology, Master of Science in Molecular and Cell Biology, Master of Science in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, and Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular and Cell Biology degree programs at U. T. Dallas as described below.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Dallas requests approval to remove the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) requirement for admission to the Master of Science in Biotechnology, Master of Science in Molecular and Cell Biology, Master of Science in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, and Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular and Cell Biology degree programs. Institutional analyses suggest that the GRE is not a predictor of student success in these graduate programs. Furthermore, a review of graduate programs in biological sciences at U. T. Dallas's seven aspirational peers show that six out of the seven do not require submission of GRE scores.

| Current Unconditional Admission Criteria | Proposed Unconditional Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| • M.S. in Biotechnology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year. | • M.S. in Biotechnology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. ~~A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year.~~ |

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|---|---|
| • M.S. in Molecular and Cell Biology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year. | • M.S. in Molecular and Cell Biology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. ~~A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year.~~ |
| • M.S. in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year. | • M.S. in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. ~~A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year.~~ |

| | |
|---|---|
| • Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year. The actual scores required for admission are higher, especially for PhD applicants. | • Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology: The student should have a good background in calculus, general physics, organic chemistry, biochemistry, and general biology, including genetics and cell biology. Entering students not having this background may be required to take some additional coursework in their first year or in the summer immediately preceding entry. Students intending to do research in computational biology should have some background in mathematics and in programming. Admission is competitive. ~~A minimum GRE score of 295 (verbal plus quantitative) with a minimum of 147 for the verbal component is required. Average test scores for admitted students vary from year to year. The actual scores required for admission are higher, especially for PhD applicants.~~ |

**2c. U. T. Permian Basin: Discussion and appropriate action regarding proposed changes to admission criteria for the Master of Science in Geosciences degree program**

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve changes to the criteria for admission to the Master of Science in Geosciences degree program at U. T. Permian Basin as described below.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Permian Basin requests approval to remove the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) requirement for admission to the Master of Science in Geosciences degree program. U. T. Permian Basin found the GRE was not a good predictor of success and that the references were more indicative of what the student knows and how ambitious they will be to complete the program.

| **Current Unconditional Admission Criteria** | **Proposed Unconditional Admission Criteria** |
|---|---|
| • Bachelor's degree in geosciences or closely related field from an accredited college or university. | • No change |
| • GPA of 3.0 or better for all undergraduate work, no exceptions. | • No change |
| • One-page statement of interests in graduate education in the geosciences and related interdisciplinary fields. | • No change |
| • Two letters of recommendation from the applicant's most recent academic advisor, professor, or current supervisor at their place of employment. | • No change |
| • GRE scores | • ~~GRE scores~~ |
| **Current Conditional (Probationary) Admission Criteria** | **Proposed Conditional (Probationary) Admission Criteria** |
| • Bachelor's degree in geosciences or related fields from an accredited college or university. | • No change |
| • GPA of 2.75 or better for all undergraduate work. | • No change |

| | |
|---|---|
| • One-page statement of interests in graduate education in the geosciences and related interdisciplinary fields. | • No change |
| • Two letters of recommendation, one letter from the applicant's most recent academic advisor, and one letter from the applicant's supervisor at their current place of employment. | • No change |
| • At least one year of work experience in the geosciences or the related interdisciplinary field they are interested in pursuing. | • No change |
| • In rare circumstances, an applicant with GPA below 2.75 may be considered if they have substantial work experience (three or more years) in the geosciences or the related interdisciplinary field they are interested in pursuing. | • No change |
| • GRE scores | • ~~GRE scores~~ |

**2d. U. T. Permian Basin: Discussion and appropriate action regarding proposed changes to admission criteria for the Master of Science in Computer Science degree program**

## RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve changes to the criteria for admission to the Master of Science in Computer Science degree program at U. T. Permian Basin as described on the following pages.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Permian Basin requests approval to propose new changes to the Master of Science in Computer Science degree program. The changes are as follows.

For unconditional admission:

- Eliminate submission of Graduate Records Examination (GRE) scores,
- Add the submission of a 500-word Personal Statement and,
- Add the submission of a resume to include the contact information of three references.

For conditional admission:

- Add a list of math and computer science courses that must be completed with a grade of B or better,
- Eliminate submission of GRE scores (GRE Scores, although no longer required, can still be used to support an application for conditional admission),
- Change the Minimum GPA from a range of 2.75-3.0 to a range of 2.5-2.99,
- Add the submission of a 500-word Personal Statement and,
- Add the submission of a resume to include the contact information of three references.

Institutions of higher education are moving away from requiring the GRE scores for graduate admission. Initial institutional analyses suggest a weak correlation between the GRE and student success. Studies elsewhere recommend alternative potential indicators of student success, including the submission of Personal Statement.

| Current Unconditional Admission Criteria | Proposed Unconditional Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| • Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. | • No change |
| • GPA of 3.0 or better in the last 60 credit hours. | • No change |
| • GRE: Verbal Reasoning: Minimum 145 or better.<br>Quantitative Reasoning: Minimum 148 or better.<br>Analytical Writing: Minimum 3 or better. | • ~~GRE: Verbal Reasoning: Minimum 145 or better.~~<br>~~Quantitative Reasoning: Minimum 148 or better.~~<br>~~Analytical Writing: Minimum 3 or better.~~<br>A 500-word Personal Statement, which describes your computer-related experience/skills, and what you wish to accomplish in the program.<br><br>Criteria for assessing a personal statement:<br>▪ Reasons for decision to study in the computer science field<br>▪ How engaged with computer science<br>▪ Aspirations and goals for the future<br>▪ Programming skills based on computer-related experience |
| | • Resume with contact information for three references |

| Current Conditional (Probationary) Admission Criteria | Proposed Conditional (Probationary) Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| • Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university. | • Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. If an applicant's degree is not a computer science or a related field (e.g., cyber security, data science, information technology, software engineering, etc.), the student may be admitted conditionally with the requirement that any course in the following list not already completed be completed with a grade of B or better before beginning the actual degree program.<br>▪ COSC 1430, 2430 – CS 1 and 2, with programming experience in Java<br>▪ COSC 3310 Digital Computer Organization<br>▪ COSC 3312 Discrete Mathematics<br>▪ COSC 3315 Information Systems<br>▪ COSC 3420 Data Structures<br>▪ MATH 2413, 2414 Calculus and Analytic Geometry 1, 2 |
| • GPA below in 3.0 - 2.75 in the last 60 credit hours – or – Minimum 3.0 cumulative undergraduate GPA in all Computer Science and Mathematics classes. | • GPA ~~below in 3.0 - 2.75~~ falls in 2.5 - 2.99 in the last 60 credit hours ~~– or – Minimum 3.0 cumulative undergraduate GPA in all Computer Science and Mathematics classes~~. |

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| • GRE:<br>1. Verbal Reasoning: Minimum 145 or better<br>2. Quantitative Reasoning: Minimum 148 or better<br>3. Analytical Writing: Minimum 3 or better | ~~• GRE:~~<br>~~1. Verbal Reasoning: Minimum 145 or better~~<br>~~2. Quantitative Reasoning: Minimum 148 or better~~<br>~~3. Analytical Writing: Minimum 3 or better~~<br>A 500-word Personal Statement, which describes your computer-related experience/skills, and what you wish to accomplish in the program.<br><br>Criteria for assessing a personal statement:<br>▪ Reasons for decision to study in the computer science field<br>▪ How engaged with the computer science<br>▪ Aspirations and goals for the future<br>▪ Programming skills based on computer-related experience |
| | • Resume with contact information for three references |
| • Other Evidence:<br>1. 3.0 or better GPA in all computer science and math courses | • Other Evidence:<br>~~1. 3.0 or better GPA in all computer science and math courses~~<br>1. GRE: Verbal: Minimum 145 or better<br>2. GRE: Quantitative: Minimum 148 or better<br>3. GRE: Writing: Minimum 3 or better |

## 2e. U. T. Permian Basin: Discussion and appropriate action regarding proposed changes to admission criteria for the Master of Arts in Psychology degree program

### RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve changes to the criteria for admission to the Master of Arts in Psychology degree program at U. T. Permian Basin as described below.

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Permian Basin requests approval to change graduate admission criteria as follows:

- Calculating the Grade Point Average (GPA) based on all undergraduate work for the Bachelor's degree, not only the last 60 hours.
- Including guidelines on what to include in the statement of interest.
- Revising unconditional admission criteria to include a statement of interest, letters of recommendation, and a writing sample in place of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) test scores.
- Revising conditional or provisional admission criteria to include a statement of interest, letters of recommendation, a writing sample, and either Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT) scores or GRE scores.

Institutions of higher education are moving away from requiring the GRE scores for graduate admission. Initial institutional analysis suggests a weak correlation between the GRE and student success. Studies elsewhere recommend alternative potential indicators of student success, including the submission of a writing sample.

| Current Unconditional Admission Criteria | Proposed Unconditional Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| • Bachelor's degree in psychology or closely related field from an accredited college or university. | • No change |
| • All necessary course pre-requisites. | • No change |
| • Three letters of recommendation (two must be from professors). | • No change |
| • GPA of 3.0 or better in the last 60 credit hours. | • GPA of 3.0 or better ~~in the last 60 credit hours~~ for all hours of undergraduate work. |

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| • Statement of intent (this should be no longer than two typed pages and explain reasons for applying to the psychology program). | • ~~Statement of intent (this should be no longer than two typed pages and explain reasons for applying to the psychology program).~~<br>• A statement of interest in graduate education in psychology which includes a statement of the concentration one is interested in (Experimental or Clinical), the interest in the program, and the advisor he or she wishes to work with among graduate faculty.<br>• Letters of recommendation. |
| • GRE scores at average percentile or better. | • ~~GRE scores at average percentile or better.~~<br>• A writing sample with preference for research proposals, theses, or literature reviews written recently as an undergraduate student. If no recent undergraduate work has been done, candidates may write an essay regarding their educational journey to the master's degree. |
| • Entrance score (ES): 1600 or above: ES = (GPA x 200) + [ (GRE Verbal + GRE Quantitative) x 3.44]. | • No change |
| **Current Conditional (Probationary) Admission Criteria** | **Proposed Conditional (Probationary) Admission Criteria** |
| • Bachelor's degree in psychology or closely related field from an accredited college or university. | • No change |
| • All necessary course pre-requisites. | • No change |
| • Three letters of recommendation (two must be from professors). | • No change |
| • Other evidence: A written explanation describing extenuating circumstances that contributed to low GPA. Personal Interview (telephone or face-to-face). | • No change |

| | |
|---|---|
| • GPA below 3.0 – 2.5 in the last 60 credit hours. | • GPA below 3.0 ~~– 2.5 in the last 60 credit hours~~ or better for all hours of undergraduate work. |
| • Statement of intent (this should be no longer than two typed pages and explain reasons for applying to the psychology program). | • ~~Statement of intent (this should be no longer than two typed pages and explain reasons for applying to the psychology program).~~<br>• A statement of interest in graduate education in psychology which includes a statement of the concentration one is interested in (Experimental or Clinical), the interest in the program, and the advisor he or she wishes to work with among graduate faculty.<br>• Letters of recommendation. |
| • GRE scores at average percentile or better. | • ~~GRE scores at average percentile or better.~~<br>• A writing sample with preference for research proposals, theses, or literature reviews written recently as an undergraduate student. If no recent undergraduate work has been done, candidates may write an essay regarding their educational journey to the master's degree. |
| • Entrance score (ES): below 1600 but is above 1400: ES = (GPA x 200) + [(GRE Verbal + GRE Quantitative) x 3.44]. | • ~~Entrance score (ES): below 1600 but is above 1400: ES = (GPA x 200) + [(GRE Verbal + GRE Quantitative) x 3.44].~~<br>• One of the following: A GRE test score, or scores from Psychology ACAT test. |

**2f. U. T. Tyler: Discussion and appropriate action regarding proposed changes to admission criteria for the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology degree programs**

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve changes to the criteria for admission to the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology degree programs at U. T. Tyler as described below.

U. T. Tyler requests approval to remove the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) requirement for admission to the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology degree programs. The GRE requirement is no longer seen as a good predictor of success in graduate studies and a potential barrier to diversity and inclusion in higher education. U. T. Tyler will continue to have admission standards that incorporate at least two predictive measures. These measures include undergraduate grades, previous graduate study grades (if applicable), and professional recommendation letters and ratings.

In addition, applicants will be asked to provide a curriculum vitae, which other clinical psychology programs have begun to require as well.

| Current Admission Criteria | Proposed Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| 1. Hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution. | 1. No change |
| 2. Submit official transcripts from all institutions attended. | 2. No change |
| 3. Submit official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores obtained within the last five years | ~~3. Submit official Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores obtained within the last five years~~ |
| 4. Submit a Department Information Sheet which includes a Statement of Purpose. | ~~4.~~3. Submit a Department Information Sheet which includes a Statement of Purpose. |
| 5. Submit three (3) Evaluations of Academic Potential forms. | ~~5.~~4. Submit three (3) Evaluations of Academic Potential forms. |
| 6. Complete the background check. | ~~6.~~5. Complete the background check. |

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| 7. If proof of English proficiency is required, the program has the following requirements:<br>a. The minimum TOEFL or IELTS scores are 560 on the paper and pencil test, 220 on the computer-based test, or 87 on the internet-based test (TOEFL/IBT), or overall band score of 7.0 (IELTS) with 6.5 or greater in each subsection. TOEFL and IELTS test scores are valid for only two years. | ~~7.~~6. If proof of English proficiency is required, the program has the following requirements:<br>a. The minimum TOEFL or IELTS scores are 560 on the paper and pencil test, 220 on the computer-based test, or 87 on the internet-based test (TOEFL/IBT), or overall band score of 7.0 (IELTS) with 6.5 or greater in each subsection. TOEFL and IELTS test scores are valid for only two years. |
| | 7. Submission of a curriculum vitae, which provides an opportunity for students to outline previous education, research, and life experiences. |

| Current Admission Criteria | Proposed Admission Criteria |
|---|---|
| 1. A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution. (Applicants with a master's degree in Psychology or a related field may apply as well. | 1. No change. |
| 2. Minimum 3.0 overall GPA. | 2. No change. |
| 3. Adequate preparation in Psychology. Successful applicants will have 12 or ore credits in Psychology including coursework in Statistics, Research Methods, History and Systems of Psychology, and Abnormal Psychology. If students do not have these classes, they will be required to complete them during their program. | 3. No change. |
| 4. Submission of satisfactory Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores taken within the last five years. | ~~4. Submission of satisfactory Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores taken within the last five years.~~ |
| 5. Submit a statement of purpose. | ~~5.~~4. Submit a statement of purpose. |
| 6. Three academic letters of reference. | ~~6.~~5. Three academic letters of reference. |

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|---|---|
| 7. If proof of English proficiency is required, the program has the following requirements:<br><br>a. The minimum TOEFL or IELTS scores are 560 on the paper and pencil test, 220 on the computer-based test, or 87 on the internet-based test (TOEFL/IBT), or overall band score of 7.0 (IELTS) with 6.5 or greater in each subsection. TOEFL and IELTS test scores are valid for only two years. | ~~7.~~6. If proof of English proficiency is required, the program has the following requirements:<br><br>a. The minimum TOEFL or IELTS scores are 560 on the paper and pencil test, 220 on the computer-based test, or 87 on the internet-based test (TOEFL/IBT), or overall band score of 7.0 (IELTS) with 6.5 or greater in each subsection. TOEFL and IELTS test scores are valid for only two years. |
| | 7. Submission of a curriculum vitae, which provides an opportunity for students to outline previous education, research, and life experiences. |

**3. U. T. San Antonio: Approval to establish a Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular Microbiology and Immunology degree program**

## RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and the institutional president that authorization, pursuant to Regent's *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40307, related to academic program approval standards, be granted to

a. establish a Doctor of Philosophy in Molecular Microbiology and Immunology degree program at U. T. San Antonio; and

b. submit the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and appropriate action.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Program Description

U. T. San Antonio proposes the establishment of a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree program in Molecular Microbiology and Immunology. The program is a collaborative educational and research effort built on the existing strengths in areas of molecular microbiology and immunology at U. T. San Antonio, Texas Biomedical Research Institute, and the U. S. Army Institute of Surgical Research at San Antonio Military Medical Center. The program is designed to prepare graduates with advanced knowledge in molecular microbiology and immunology to develop research and educational skills to support the economic growth of San Antonio and the State of Texas.

The degree requirements are dependent on the academic levels of the students. Students with a B.S. in Microbiology or a related discipline are required to complete a total of 76 Semester Credit Hours (SCH) including 15 SCH of required courses, while those with a master's degree are required to complete a total of 67 SCH including 6 SCH of required courses. All accepted applicants will be expected to maintain a Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 for the entire program. Upon completion of required coursework and written and oral qualifying exams, students will be required to complete a research dissertation project. The research project is designed to be equivalent to 2 or 3 peer-reviewed publications in standard journals in the student's field of specialization.

### Need and Student Demand

The 60x30TX strategic higher education plan adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordination Board, calls for 60% of Texans in the age group of 25 to 34 to hold a degree or certificate, which includes graduate degrees in life sciences that fall within a high demand category of programs. The Texas Workforce Commission predicts there will be a 18.1% increase in employment of microbiologists from 2014-2024, as well as a 20% increase in employment for food scientists & technologists, an 18.9% increase in jobs for soil and plant scientists, a 20.7% increase in medical scientists, and a 19.4% increase in life scientists. In

addition, job opportunities for medical and research immunologists are projected to grow by 11.4% between 2016-2026. Moreover, from 2004 to 2018, there was a significant increase (32.13%) nationally in the number of employment positions for microbiologists with annual increases of 5.36% each year.

In 2018, the total number of job postings in the United States requiring Ph.D.'s in areas of microbiology and immunology was 56,530, according to the Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies). The San Antonio/New Braunfels Metro Statistical area ranked 23rd in the nation with a higher demand than average for these jobs and placed third in the State of Texas after Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington and Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land Metro Areas in the high-demand employment category.

The number of doctoral degrees in biological sciences, including microbiology, awarded in the United States increased from 69,941 in 2004 to 79,146 in 2016. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Texas ranked third in the nation for the highest employment level in microbiology and in positions requiring doctoral degrees in this field.

Currently, only U. T. Austin and Texas A&M University offer Ph.D. degree programs in microbiology in Texas, with a combined total of 20 students graduating each year. No major public or private university in San Antonio, the 7th largest city in the U.S., offers this doctoral program. Additionally, this doctoral program at U. T. San Antonio—a Hispanic-Serving Institution—is projected to increase the number of highly trained graduates to fill an unmet need to expand the diversity of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) workforce.

The projected number of students in the program during the first year will be 7, growing to 45 by the fifth year. An average of one or two students are projected to be lost to attrition per year. The projections are based on the number of students who have either completed or are currently pursuing their dissertation projects in laboratories focused on microbiology and immunology, but that are enrolled in other related doctoral degree programs. The projected number of students is also predicted on the extramural funding levels of core and support faculty.

Program Quality

The molecular microbiology and immunology Ph.D. program will be supported by 18 current core faculty members with a primary research emphasis in a broad range of research topics at the cutting-edge of microbiology and immunology. Areas of research include identification of biomarkers of infection and inflammation; development of novel antibacterial, antifungal, and antimalarial drugs; validation of vaccines to safeguard against fungal infections and biothreat agents; prevention and treatment of vector-borne diseases; deployment of a broad array of postgenomic tools to address unmet needs in infectious diseases; and enhancement of human, animal, and plant host-responses against infectious agents. All 18 core faculty members have significant research productivity reflected by numerous publications in top-tier journals with an impact factor comparable to faculty members at universities with similar doctoral programs.

Collectively, these efforts have established the South Texas Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases (STCEID), the most successful research center at U. T. San Antonio with both the physical infrastructure and the required expertise in many subdisciplines of microbiology and immunology. In the past ten years, the Center has secured more than $40 million in extramural

funding with average annual research expenditures over $3 million per year. Support faculty with significant funding from the Texas Biomedical Research Institute and the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research (Department of Defense) also increase the range of dissertation research topics available for doctoral students to pursue.

Revenue and Expenses*:

| Expenses | 5-Year Total |
|---|---|
| *Graduate Students* | |
| Teaching Assistants Salaries & Benefits | $ 750,000 |
| Graduate Research Assistants Salaries & Benefits | $1,900,000 |
| Student Scholarships | $ 570,000 |
| *Staff & Administration* | |
| Staff Salaries & Benefits | $ 93,750 |
| Program Administration | $ 75,000 |
| *Other Expenses* | |
| Supplies and Educational Materials | $ 50,000 |
| **Total Expenses** | **$3,438,750** |

| Revenue | 5-Year Total |
|---|---|
| *From Student Enrollment* | |
| Formula Funding | $ 750,000 |
| Tuition and Fees | $ 633,809 |
| *From Institutional Funds* | |
| Reallocation of Existing Resources | $ 925,000 |
| *From Grant Funds* | |
| Extramural Federal Support | $1,900,000 |
| *From Other Revenue Sources* | |
| Other support for graduate studies | $ 500,000 |
| **Total Revenue** | **$4,708,809** |

*This table represents the incremental funding model for revenue and expenses, after accounting for existing faculty annual salaries and benefits ($13,347,619).

Coordinating Board Criteria

The proposed program meets all applicable Coordinating Board criteria for new doctoral degree programs.

**4. U. T. Rio Grande Valley: Report on the Long Range Financial Plan for The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**

President Bailey will report on the long-range financial planning at U. T. Rio Grande Valley using the PowerPoint on the following pages.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS RIO GRANDE VALLEY

# The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

## Long-Range Financial Planning

Guy Bailey, President

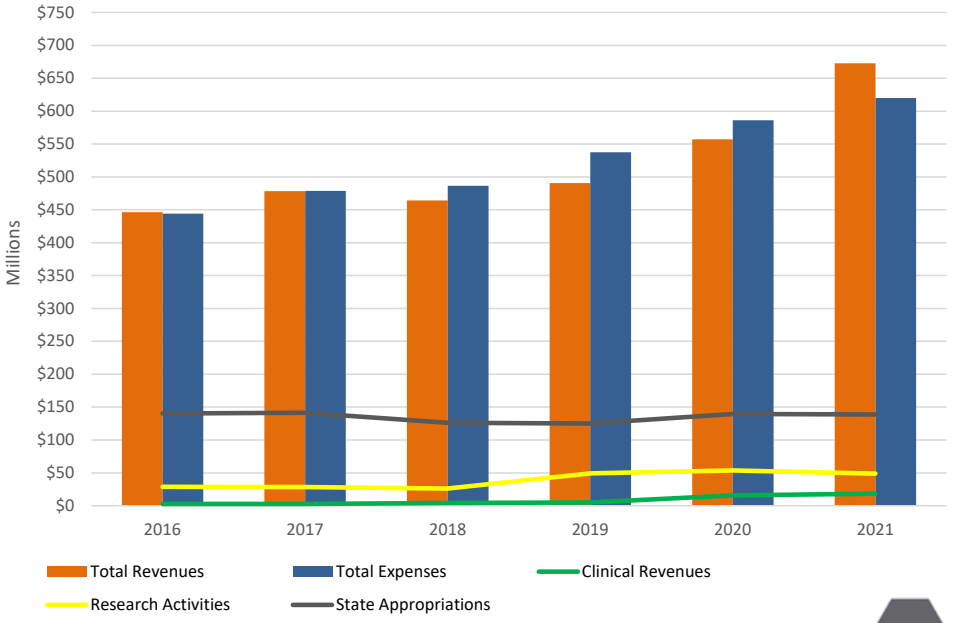
U. T. SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS MEETING

August 2021

# Long-Range Financial Planning

## For Academic Transformation and Clinical Expansion

# Current Financial State and UTRGV's Transformation Plan




**The Goal**

***To be a national leader in higher education, providing general and professional education of the highest quality for students while maintaining low student debt loads and creating opportunities that serve as catalysts for transformation in the Rio Grande Valley***

**The Journey**

- Steady revenue growth with slight margins
- Modest increases in state and tuition revenues to cover increasing general instruction and operational costs due to rising enrollment
- Continued expansion of clinical services and clinical faculty and an increased footprint of UT Health across the Rio Grande Valley
- Accelerated research activities with a rapid ramp-up of clinical research
- Executed Clinical Transformation Plan
  - ✓ Phase 1 - Expanded clinical services through UT Health Clinical Laboratory
  - ✓ Phase 2 - New Surgery Center, especially to serve Phase 3
  - ✓ Phase 3 - New Cancer Center

# Transformations – Key Take Aways


1. *Transformation of the undergraduate student body*
2. *Transformation of campus life*
3. *Clinical expansion to transform health care in the Rio Grande Valley*

# Financial Planning

## For Strategic Investment

# Achieving Our Goal

*Achieving our goal will require*

- *Implementation of merit-based scholarships (and especially Pinnacle Scholars Program)*
- *Development of a rich campus life, including additional housing and dining options through public-private partnerships*
- *The expansion of clinical facilities and opportunities throughout the Rio Grande Valley to expand healthcare access*

*The challenge is to do this in a context of limited resources and in a way that helps maintain low debt loads for students. It requires leveraging our resources to make strategic investments in our university and our students*

# Investments that Help Achieve Our Goal

| Academic Transformation and Health Care Expansion |
|---|
| Ambulatory Surgery and Imaging Center |
| Cancer Center, Advisory relationship with MD Anderson |
| Renovation of existing space to address current needs |
| P-3 partnerships for student housing, dining, shopping |
| Pinnacle Scholars Program for high-performing students |

| Financial Resources Available | *in millions* |
|---|---|
| RFS Debt, Phases I-III | $ 175.0 |
| Remaining PUF, SOM Allocation | 17.0 |
| Gifts, SOM needs | 3.0 |
| Unrestricted Cash | 50.0 |
| Philanthropy for Pinnacle Scholarships | 40.0 |
| **Estimated Available** | **$ 285.0** |

# Transforming the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Body

We will use the **Pinnacle Scholars Program** to recruit the best students in the Rio Grande Valley and elsewhere in Texas. This program will include provisional admission for students out of high school to any professional or graduate program that UTRGV offers (including SOM and podiatry) and will cover:

1) full tuition and fees for all four undergraduate years
2) housing for the first two years of college
3) full tuition and fees for up to four years for the professional or graduate program to which the student was provisionally admitted

The goal is for students to graduate debt free, not only from college but also from professional/ graduate school. We will encourage students who become Pinnacle Scholars to live and work in the Rio Grande Valley after graduation.

# Transforming Healthcare and Research

1. We will expand both the range of our residency programs and also the number of residents in the Rio Grande Valley (especially in Cameron County) by entering into new partnerships with hospitals in Brownsville and McAllen

2. We will expand healthcare options in the Rio Grande Valley by (1) building a surgery and infusion center on the newly acquired 495 property, (2) continuing to hire physicians in specialties that are underrepresented but needed in the Valley, and (3) exploring opportunities to “buy in” to other surgery centers and facilities, especially in Brownsville and Cameron County

3. We will build a research operation that will enable us to generate $100 million in total research expenditures within five years by ramping up our clinical research focus

# Financial Forecasting

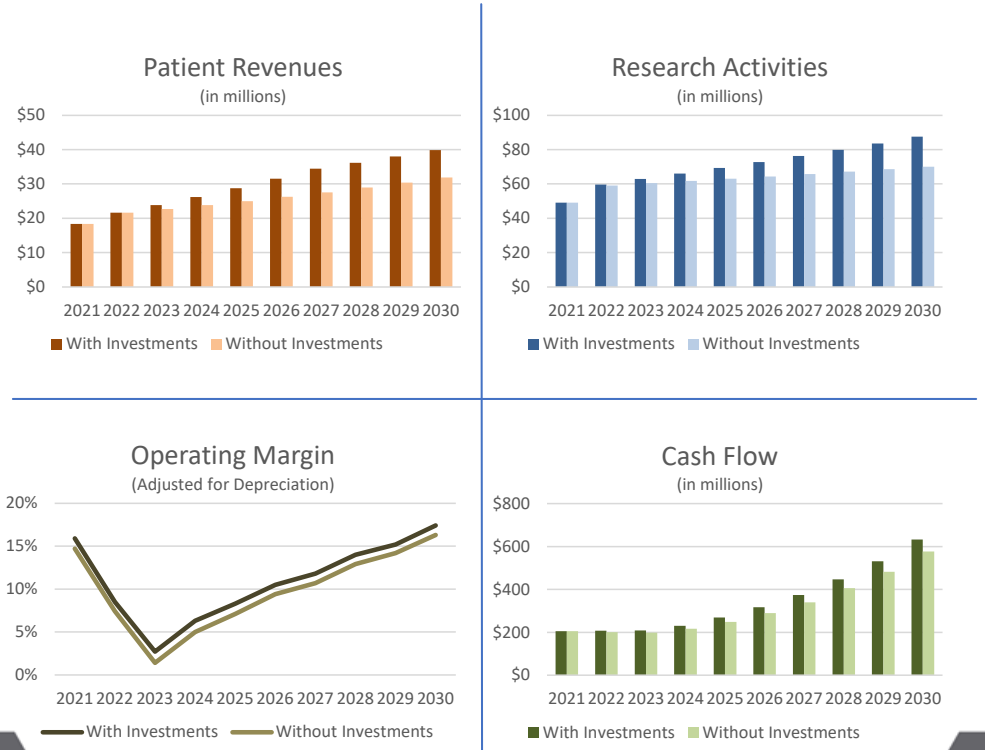
## 10-Year Outlook:

**Comparison of our future financial estimates with and without investments for**:

- Patient Revenue Growth
- Research Growth (Externally Funded)
- Operating Margin
- Cash Flow

**These investments will provide the needed margin and cash to continue the investment for our students and the Rio Grande Valley**

**Confirmed Scorecard rating (slide 13) stays healthy while maintaining positive operating margins**



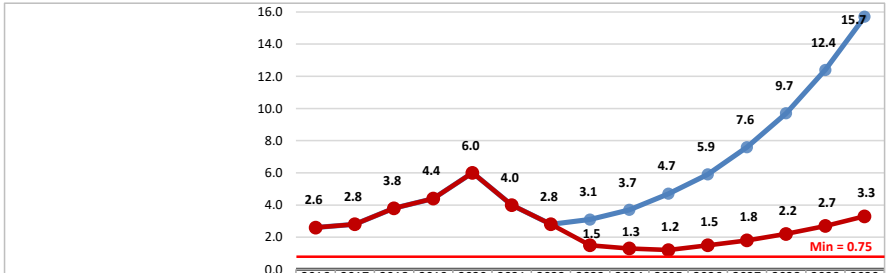
# Financial Forecasting

## 10-Year Outlook:

❖ **Financial Health Assessment**

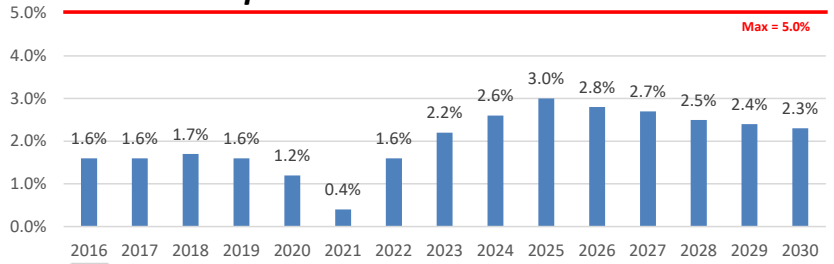
- Start-up costs incurred for the new clinical facilities and enhanced athletic facilities will affect operations between FY's 2022 and 2025
- New RFS debt acquired for clinical, educational, and athletic investments will affect debt capacity through FY 2027
- Operational costs are expected to increase over the upcoming years as educational and clinical activities expand
- Financial stress period is between FY's 2022 to 2025

### *Spendable Cash & Investment (C&I) to Total Debt*




| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spendable C&I to Total Current Debt | 2.6 | 2.8 | 3.8 | 4.4 | 6.0 | 4.0 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 3.7 | 4.7 | 5.9 | 7.6 | 9.7 | 12.4 | 15.7 |
| Total Current Debt | 58.8 | 62.9 | 58.3 | 53.4 | 49.4 | 51.4 | 73.4 | 68.1 | 63.0 | 57.8 | 53.4 | 49.3 | 46.0 | 43.0 | 40.2 |
| Spendable C&I to Total Future Debt | 2.6 | 2.8 | 3.8 | 4.4 | 6.0 | 4.0 | 2.8 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 3.3 |
| Total Future Debt | 58.8 | 62.9 | 58.3 | 53.4 | 49.4 | 51.4 | 73.4 | 136.8 | 184.4 | 225.7 | 217.8 | 210.1 | 202.9 | 196.0 | 189.2 |
| Spendable C&I | 151.5 | 178.3 | 220.7 | 235.2 | 297.9 | 205.6 | 207.2 | 208.4 | 230.8 | 269.4 | 317.3 | 374.1 | 447.2 | 530.9 | 632.5 |

### *Debt Service to Operations*



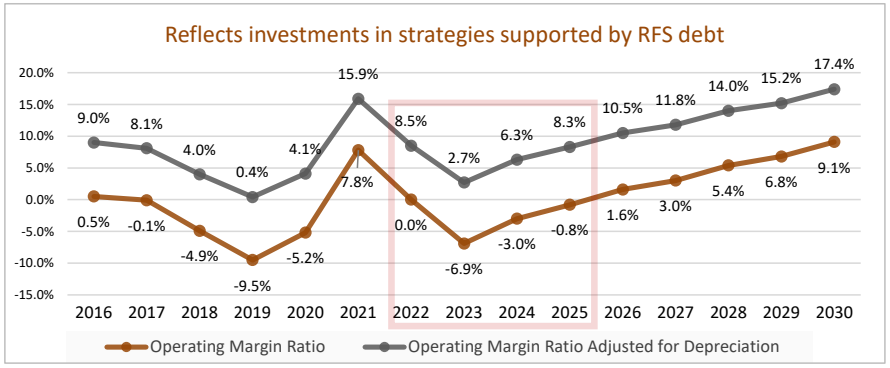
# Financial Forecasting

## Overall Scorecard Rating:

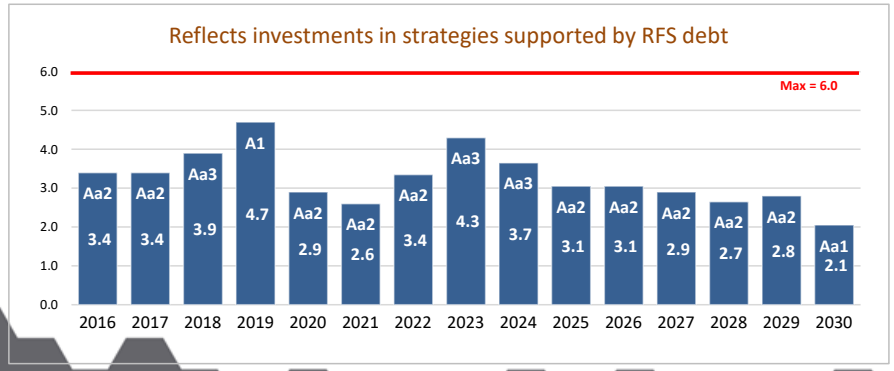
**Observations**

- We will remain cash positive before, during and after all investments
- We will steadily transform higher education as we expand access to health services by making strategic investments in School of Medicine's clinical operations and as we develop a robust, strategically focused research presence
- We will seek opportunities for operational efficiencies and cost reductions to improve in annual operating margin ratio
- Our investment in these initiatives will contribute to our ability to **transform UTRGV in the future**

### *Operating Performance*




### *Overall Scorecard*



# Financial Forecasting

## UTRGV's Current Process:

1. Develop detailed proformas for all new initiatives
2. Accumulate the proformas into a single long-range, 10-year forecast that includes projections for current operations, revenues and expenses
3. Review program performance each budget cycle
4. Make adjustments based on actual program performance (*continue the program or divest*)
5. Review cash and debt financing options with the U. T. System Office of Finance
6. Evaluate financial performance ratios to identify periods of operational stress