

Office of Academic Affairs

L. Maximilian Buja, M.D., executive vice president

“We have completed the creation of a multi-year Strategic Plan (see box, at right) for the institution, which has been signed off on by Drs. Willerson and McKinney. This plan was developed over several sessions with input from deans, vice presidents and representatives of faculty and staff.



L. Maximilian Buja, M.D.

“My colleague Deanne Hernandez worked with me on putting together the details of this plan. It’s got to be viewed as a living document, not cast in stone. It will have to be reviewed. We are developing key performance indicators that we would review against it over time.

“This joins the compact process that has been in place since the chancellor instituted it several years ago. We have just completed the third round of this process, which included a review of milestones met and included plans for 06 and 07. The strategic plan is designed to run through 2013.

“We are in the process of redesigning and updating the Office of Academic Affairs Web site, which will include the Strategic Plan Web site, which will contain all the planning documents and the accomplishments documents. It will also include the Compact, the UT System accountability report and the Fact Book. We will roll the new Web site out in FY07.

“In another major area, we have formally started the process of reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges

and Schools (SACS) for the institution as a whole. We will be rolling out an institutional SACS Web site for the entire community in the near future. This is going to require a lot of organization, planning, documentation, attention to student outcomes. The end of the road would be the accreditation site visit and reaffirmation of accreditation by the SACS Commission on Colleges in 2010.

“SACS is one of the regional accrediting authorities that gets its authority from the federal government. SACS accreditation is a requirement to have federal financial aid for students, and it requires a comprehensive analysis and adherence to standards that look at the overall finances of the institution, its organization, educational programs and qualifications of the faculty. So it’s a broader and more comprehensive look than occurs at the individual schools, which respond to different accrediting agencies.

“Another part of my job is working with the deans of the schools on their academic programs. The Medical School, Nursing and Dental School are increasing class sizes to better serve the needs of the state. The Strategic Plan calls for increasing enrollment collectively by 1,000 students and faculty by 270.

“There has been exciting growth relating to my role as Chancellor’s Health Fellow. We have formed a system-wide UT Academy of Health Science Education. The first 13 fellows were nominated by the presidents and we have elected an additional 24 fellows. This is, we think, the first such system-wide academy in the country. It reflects a strong commitment on the part of the Chancellor and Vice

Chancellor for Health Affairs.

“The third conference on Health Care Innovation will take part in Austin, Oct 5

and 6. I am coming to the end of my term, both as a fellow and president of the Academy. It has been very gratifying.” ★

Strategic Directions 2007-2013

Broad themes include the cultivation of focused, collaborative academic and research programs, successful recruitment and retention programs aimed at attracting — and keeping — top notch, diversified students, faculty and staff; the provision of appropriate and compassionate patient care; and the creation of a sound infrastructure that supports these priorities. At its core, the plan adds close to 1,000 students and 250 faculty by FY 2013 to meet the State of Texas’s growing need for health care professionals and scientists. Specifically, the six strategic directions are:

Strategic Direction 1 — Educate health professionals and scientists in a diverse and interdisciplinary academic community

Strategic Direction 2 — Provide leadership and advance scholarship in biomedical sciences, health professions, health promotion, public health policy and health care delivery

Strategic Direction 3 — Create and evaluate new knowledge — through basic science and applied research — as it relates to disease prevention, treatment and cure

Strategic Direction 4 — Model appropriate, culturally sensitive, and compassionate clinical care

Strategic Direction 5 — Support key mission areas with an enhanced infrastructure

Strategic Direction 6 — Maintain and enhance strategic alliances

While ambitious, this plan has the potential to position the health science center as an institution upon which Texans and the nation can rely consistently. Recognizing that such ambition is not cost-free, the latter part of the plan lays out projected financial implications as a first step in an effort to more closely link planning activities with budget decisions. A key principle of this plan is fiscal responsibility; close monitoring of plan-related finances will occur regularly. If actual expenses begin to exceed anticipated revenues, plan adjustments will ensure that the institution realizes positive operating margins. Being fiscally responsible yet still responsive to the needs of the State of Texas — be it by educating students, conducting research or providing patient care — is paramount. For the complete plan, visit <http://www.uth.tmc.edu/spia/planindex.htm>.

Office of Research

Peter Davies, M.D., Ph.D., executive vice president

“I’ve been at this university 27 years and I think this past year and the year to come has seen and will see a remarkable transition within the university. On the institutional level, the development of new research facilities played a big impact last year and will continue to have an impact in the next few years. We are embarking on a period of enormous change for research resources and capabilities for the institution.



Peter Davies, M.D., Ph.D.

“Among those are the new research facilities at the School of Nursing, the new Faye S. Sarofim Building of the Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine for the Prevention of Human Diseases and the soon-to-be-completed Research Replacement Facility at the Medical School. In addition to these new facilities, the recruitment of outstanding

researchers will have a large impact on the research programs of the university.

“There’s also a clear commitment of the institution to the next generation of research with new facilities in the UT Research Park: the Center for Advanced Biomedical Imaging and Research, a joint project with UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center; the new Neuroscience Research facility including Mental Sciences Institute research; a new building for the Dental Branch with new capabilities for supporting research in the area of dentistry and the stem cell research center, which will provide an expansion of our capabilities in these enormously important areas of research.

“The new buildings provide the opportunity both to allow for the expansion of some of our most successful and productive research programs as well as to recruit outstanding new researchers and research teams to the institution.

“One of the most promising developments over the last few years has been our success in developing inter-institutional and interdisci-

plinary collaborative research programs.

Examples of some of these initiatives include:

- the new Michael & Susan Dell Center for Advancement of Healthy Living in Austin;
 - the new inter-institutional University of Texas Department of Biomedical Engineering, a collaborative venture with UT Austin and M. D. Anderson;
 - the Alliance for NanoHealth, bringing together researchers from across the Houston-Galveston area and Texas A&M University;
 - several inter-institutional research programs developed by faculty at the School of Public Health’s regional campuses in areas of health disparities and Hispanic health research;
 - the Gulf Coast Consortium with its new educational and research programs in several areas including cheminformatics and chemical genomics research, computational and structural biology, and membrane biology.
- “Of potentially enormous importance is our decision to establish a new Center for Clinical

and Translational Sciences, to coordinate clinical and translational research at the health science center, the Memorial Hermann Hospital System and UT M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. We are awaiting final word on whether this new Center will be the recipient of one of the major Clinical and Translational Sciences Awards (CTSAs) recently developed by the National Institutes of Health as a part of the NIH Roadmap initiative.

“All of these exciting new developments are based on the foundation of excellence in research created by our many faculty, students and staff. It is the tireless efforts of this large community of researchers that provide the foundation of our institution’s research program; it represents the platform on which our new advances will be built.

“The real strength of our institution is in the talents of the investigators who are developing new programs, and we look forward to more and more of those successes in the years to come.” ★

School Accomplishments and Planning Ahead

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

George Stancel, Ph.D., dean

“In keeping with recent plans noted by the UT Regents and Dr. Willerson, for the state of Texas to maintain a competitive edge, we must increase the number of highly trained research scientists in the biomedical sciences and related areas. To that end, the GSBS will grow its student number accordingly and continue to enhance excellence. Given the demographics of Texas and the nation, achieving these goals will require that we increase the diversity of our student body.”

Accomplishments in 2005-2006

- Graduated 100 Ph.D.’s, master’s, and specialized master’s students in the biomedical sciences — one of the largest groups of new scientists in the state.
- Hosted the first faculty retreat in more than two decades (since 1981). It was attended by more than 100 individuals who reviewed substantive issues including curriculum, scale of faculty and students admitted, rigor of program, and diversity — much that will shape the image of graduate education for the future.
- Provided more than \$1 million in student stipend funding, fellowships, scholarships and awards, 20 percent through private philanthropy.

- Saw a record total enrollment overall, including a large increase in the number of M.D./Ph.D. students over recent years.
- Honored Distinguished Alumnus Bhudatt Paliwal, Ph.D., a world-renowned medical physicist. Paliwal spoke at the 2005-06 alumni reunion and a related seminar for faculty and students.
- As the lead institution of the Gulf Coast Consortium, received one of the first NIH Roadmap training grants of nearly \$3 million dollars to support the training of 15 graduate students and postdoctoral fellows per year for five years in the broad area of drug discovery and development. Dean Stancel is the grant’s principal investigator.
- Held the first out-of-state alumni reunion on the West Coast in spring 2006 for alumni residing in California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington.
- Offered the first alumni-sponsored career day provided for current GSBS students to hear and interact with experts in eight different career fields including academia, industry and law.
- Named a new Andrew Sowell-Wade Huggins Professor/Graduate Fellowship team, Gary Gallick, Ph.D., and his student Jing Zhang; and renewed two existing Endowed Professorships: Steven Norris, Ph.D., the Robert Greer Professor in the Biomedical Sciences; and Stephen Daiger, Ph.D., the Thomas Stull Matney Professor in Environmental and Genetic Sciences.

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