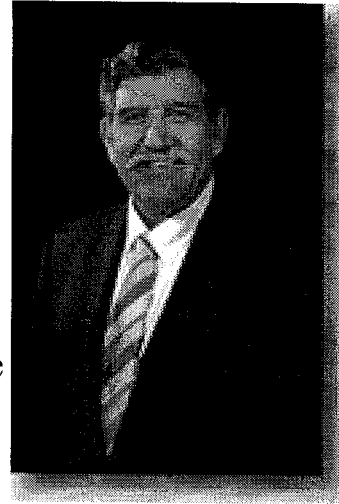


Ricardo Romo became the fifth president of The University of Texas at San Antonio in May 1999. He leads one of the fastest growing institutions of higher education in Texas and the nation. Under his leadership, UTSA now is poised to become one of the state's premier research universities.



Romo has led strategic efforts to enhance both access to education and excellence in scholarship and service at the university.

During Romo's tenure, UTSA's enrollment has grown nearly 50 percent, and the university has added numerous programs and facilities to enhance student life. He also has implemented new student-support programs designed to help students succeed at earning a university degree. The number of advisers has tripled, and with nearly 30,000 students, UTSA is recognized as a leader in "Closing the Gaps," a statewide initiative by the Legislature to enroll more Texans in higher education.

A native of San Antonio's West Side, Romo graduated from Fox Tech High School and attended the University of Texas at Austin on a track scholarship. He served as captain of the track and cross-country team and earned All-American honors in 1966. Romo was the first Texan to run the mile in less than four minutes, and his mile record lasted 41 years. He earned a B.S. degree in education.

He holds a master's degree in history from Loyola Marymount University and a Ph.D. in history from UCLA. A nationally respected urban historian, Romo is the author of "East Los Angeles: History of a Barrio," now in its ninth printing (including a Spanish edition).

In 1980, Romo returned to UT Austin to teach history before becoming vice provost for undergraduate education. In 2002, President Bush appointed him to the President's Board of Advisers on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In 2004, former Secretary of State Colin Powell appointed Romo U.S. representative to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization. In 2005, he was appointed to the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, San Antonio branch, and was reappointed in 2007; he currently serves as vice chair. In 2008, Romo

received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Texas Exes Alumni Association.

In 2006, Romo was honored by the UT Austin Friar Society as Outstanding Friar Alumnus. He was elected chairman of the board of the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (the largest U.S. Hispanic Chamber organization) for 2006. In 2007, Gov. Rick Perry appointed Romo to serve on the Commission for College Ready Texas. He serves on nearly 20 boards, many of them in San Antonio. He is active on several museum boards and is especially proud of his work with United Way.

Romo is married to Harriett Romo, UTSA professor of sociology, director of the UTSA Mexico Center and creator of the Bank of America Child and Adolescent Policy Research Institute (CAPRI) at UTSA. They have one son, Carlos, who graduated from Stanford University and the University of Texas School of Law. Their daughter, Anadelia, attended Princeton University as an undergraduate, received a doctoral degree from Harvard University and presently teaches at Texas State University.

One of Romo's most recent honors was the Isabel la Catolica award, the highest award given to non-Spanish subjects, bestowed upon him by King Juan Carlos of Spain.

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JOINT HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE TESTIMONY
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO (UTSA)
DR. RICARDO ROMO
August 19, 2010

Good afternoon. My name is Ricardo Romo, and I am President of the University of Texas at San Antonio. Thank you for your service to Texas. I know all of you have been working hard with various hearings around the State in preparation for the upcoming 82nd. So I just want you to know that I appreciate all that you have been doing and continue to do for higher education and particularly hosting this joint hearing with both the Senate and House Committees on higher education.

As my colleagues have mentioned earlier this is an exciting time for higher education in Texas with the passage of HB 51. It has sent a message to the rest of the country, that Texas is serious about higher education. We are fortunate to have visionary leaders like you at the helm setting the pace for higher education.

My colleagues among the seven emerging research universities would all agree that with HB 51 we need to maintain the momentum that you have established for Texas. Each of us in our respective communities is experiencing a growth of support and excitement about elevating to the next level. The friendly and spirited competition for the Texas Research Incentive Program (TRIP) funding last summer has created a heightened sense of awareness for the importance of philanthropy in support of our research mission. For example, Valero Energy Corporation invested **\$2.5 million**, matched by **TRIP**, making this one of our largest corporate gifts. I would urge continuation of this program.

There is not a day that goes by where I am not asked what a Tier One is, and how long will it take UTSA to get there, and what others can do to help. In San Antonio and on our campus there is new excitement about UTSA, certainly about football, but more importantly about striving to become a Tier One. This Tier One buzz that has helped us recruit faculty, students, has positioned us to establish research partnerships that we once thought were never possible. I believe San Antonio now understands the benefits and the pay offs of having a Tier One university in their hometown. Our community understands that UTSA cannot do this alone, and they also understand that Legislative funding alone will not raise UTSA to the next level.

The positive momentum associated with the creation and passage of HB 51 and voter approval of proposition 4 that created the National Research University Fund, is priceless! I would hope that we as a State do not lose sight of this momentum you have created for Texas. The impacts of HB 51 reach beyond a single biennium. HB 51 forces us to begin looking at what kinds of universities, communities, and what kind of State economy we want to develop in the next 10 to 20 years. It is strategic and it forces us to plan way ahead. That is vision. I understand that this coming session we must face the reality of addressing the State budget shortfall. But I would hope that we will not lose sight of what you have challenged us to accomplish as presidents of emerging research universities.

Let me share with you a few things we have done in our path to Tier One, since HB 51 passed:

We have **recruited several outstanding “high quality faculty”** and endowed Chairs, a couple of whom I would like to highlight here. **Dr. Les Shephard** - Robert McDermott Endowed Chair in Engineering has been appointed to head up the new Texas Sustainable Energy Research Institute, Texas SERI. Dr. Shephard started with us in April, 2010. By June 2010 he had helped UTSA finalize a partnership with City Public Service (our public utility) that involves a \$50 million grant over 10 years for research initiatives in sustainable energy and energy systems research. That is a significant pay off in less than 60 days!

Dr. Fred Chang – AT&T Distinguished Chair in Infrastructure Assurance and Security. Dr. Chang has some 30 years experience at the National Security Agency and at SBC Communications as President of Technology Strategy. He is crucial for UTSA as San Antonio has made national news in the area of information and infrastructure assurance and security. It’s no big secret we have in San Antonio the 24th U.S. Air Force Cyber Command, this is the crown jewel for UTSA’s potential in this important field.

We have currently some 550 Doctoral students enrolled at UTSA. We are committed to “high quality graduate education” as one of the criteria mentioned in HB 51. We have 21 Doctoral programs with 3 additional programs undergoing the approval process. We are a 40 year old university, located in a part of Texas that historically has not had an adequate number of doctoral degree programs and buildings for laboratories and classrooms. Madam Chair, Zaffirini, you understand this more than anyone in this room. It was through your leadership and the South Texas Border Initiative that UTSA was able to gain some ground with doctoral degrees. Today we are still playing catch up. I believe we have made significant progress in carefully selecting PhD programs that address market demands as well as local economic needs. But with only 21-24 programs, graduating 200 doctoral students per year, as indicated by the statute, (HB 51) will be extremely difficult.

UTSA’s total research spending has increased by 34% over the previous fiscal year, essentially doubling since 2005. It is now at \$46 million. Intellectual Property generation has grown at double digits over 1 year {500% (yes five-hundred percent) in patents filed, 33% in new licenses signed, 33% in new invention disclosures, 29% in entrepreneurs trained at boot camp}. UTSA also signed an agreement with Merck & Co. Inc. to develop a vaccine for Chlamydia. This was UTSA’s first big commercial revenue generating license. Much of this is due in part to our quality faculty and the number of research partnerships we have established.

This fall we will enroll some 30,000 students. The quality of students has improved with tighter admission standards. We are committed to addressing the State mandate for an emerging research university to ensure that we have a “freshmen class with high academic achievement”, and, as a result we are slowing down the train of fast growth. Growth is good, but without adequate space to plan for and accommodate growth we are challenged. We will continue to provide access, but with greater emphasis on excellence. We intend to expand our pool of graduate students as we become more selective with undergraduate students.

UTSA is an efficient university. As a fast growing, young university, we have historically had to do more with less. We are employing new software tools to help us with the management of resources and faculty productivity. We have realigned the academic budget structure to place more responsibility in the hands of department chairs to manage instructional resources and hold the line on instructional costs. We have also reduced internal invoicing and have re-aligned the distribution of F&A funds from sponsored projects so that more funding is accumulated at the department level and less at the individual PI level.

We have many cost containment programs, but also have very thin margins for error. UTSA's student-faculty ratio is 24.5, higher than most institutions in the State of Texas and the highest among the seven emerging research institutions.

The number of credit hours taught per UTSA tenured and tenure-track faculty member are among the highest in the state at 220 student credit hours taught per semester. Our non-tenure track faculty teach over 500 student credit hours per faculty FTE. Overall, this is equivalent to every full-time equivalent faculty member teaching about 115 students each semester in a three-credit class.

We continue to experience a significant space deficiency, equivalent to 1 million square feet of E&G space less than recommended by THECB standards. UTSA's gross square feet per student ratio is only 70% of the Texas average. Another way to look at this deficiency is that our campus is designed to only accommodate 21,000 students, but we serve 30,000. We continue to have one of the highest classroom utilization rates in Texas. Space deficiency impacts our faculty recruitment and research activities.

Overall, UTSA has had to learn how to be very efficient. But going into a Legislative Session with further cuts, moves us in the opposite direction. How much more efficient can we become when we are striving to achieve Tier One quality?

In conclusion, I am very appreciative for your work as our State Legislators in creating this momentum for 7 emerging research universities. I thank you for your leadership and for providing us this opportunity to visit with you today. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have. With me this afternoon is our Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. John Frederick.