

# Providing better academic support

For the last 18 months, several task forces have been working on a set of plans that will not only enhance UTMB student and academic support services, but also improve the way these services are administered across the four schools. With the sponsorship of an academic executive council, these task forces have developed plans for integrating academic support services into three component groups: Academic Resources, Institutional Analysis and Student Support Services.



"I am pleased of the way leadership across the campus has come together to restructure academic services. Educating the health care professionals of tomorrow is a vital part of our institutional mission, and I look forward to our ability to enhance this process for all our students and faculty."

President John D. Stobo

## ACADEMIC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

### PURPOSE

- To provide a forum for the exchange of information and ideas among the senior academic leadership.
- To formulate university policies concerning academic matters of importance and interest to all four schools.
- To provide guidance and oversight of academic support services activities that serve the general academic mission of the university.



### School of Allied Health Sciences

"It's been an extensive proposition to look at all the services on campus that support students and faculty and develop plans to make them more user-friendly. But in breaking down barriers and getting people to think outside the box, we've been able to come up with some wonderful proposals. Now it's exciting to actually begin implementing them."

Dean Charles H. Christiansen



### Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

"I was pleased and privileged to be a part of the effort, sponsored by the Academic Executive Council, to restructure academic support services at UTMB in order to deliver our services to faculty and students more uniformly, more effectively, and in a more cost-effective manner. The faculty, staff and facilitators who worked long and hard on the redesign and implementation process deserve our deepest gratitude."

Dean Cary W. Cooper



### School of Medicine

"Academic restructuring emerged from an impressive collaborative effort of faculty and administrators. It promises increased availability and more effective support services in every corner of the university. The AEC will continue its valuable role of providing academic oversight of this process."

Dean Stanley M. Lemon



### School of Nursing

"As with everything else in our society, changes in medical education are occurring very rapidly. In order to keep pace with these changes, we as an institution have to be willing to rethink how we deliver services, both to our students and faculty. By making access to information and services easier and more efficient, we will undoubtedly improve the educational outcome for students and faculty in all four of UTMB's schools."

Dean Mary V. Fenton

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A question and answer with Dean Charles Christiansen about the restructuring.

### Business and Administration

(ex officio member of the Academic Executive Council)

"This is the second time that I have been involved in a major restructuring effort utilizing a collaborative design methodology. I must say that I am most impressed with the contributions of the participating staff, and particularly of the faculty involvement—they really went to work on this initiative. I anticipate that the university community will recognize the fruits of these efforts as we move forward implementing these changes in the service delivery structure."



Richard S. Moore  
Vice President for Business and Administration

## ACADEMIC RESOURCES

Brett Kirkpatrick  
Associate Vice  
President Academic  
Resources



### PURPOSE

To provide coordinated services that support research and teaching and facilitate learning

### EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS

- Oversees the operation of learning resource centers
- Oversees computer testing center
- Provides assistance with Web-based course design

### DEPARTMENTS

- Library
- Biocommunications
- Learning centers
- Academic computing

"The mission of Academic Resources is to provide an integrated and systematic approach to helping faculty, staff and students create a wide variety of academic products. These can include anything from photographs or charts for publication to complex database designs for research projects. Four existing service units (Library, Biocommunications, Learning Resource Center and Academic Computing) are being combined into a new entity, Academic Resources. Plans call for providing improved services that are focused on customer needs and are more accessible to all customers across the institution. For the first time, the component parts of Academic Resources will be using a common service philosophy and approach to service delivery. A key element of the service plan includes working with an active advisory committee of customers."

Brett Kirkpatrick

## INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Dr. Chris Stroup-Benham  
Interim Director



### PURPOSE

To provide a central entity for the collection, analysis and reporting of academic information

### EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS

- Collects and provides information for accreditation reporting
- Prepares reports on academic activities for institutional decision making or benchmarking

"The mission of this office is to help university leadership make informed decisions by collecting and analyzing data and reporting reliable information in a proactive manner. Some types of inquiries the office anticipates handling could include someone wanting to know why there is a sudden downturn in applications for a clinical study, why there is an abrupt upswing in board scores, or how to get the latest UTMB facts and figures, such as the number of faculty or students. The Office of Institutional Analysis and its newly formed staff of six, located in the Gail Borden Building, will handle a wide range of facts, figures and information. Eventually, the office will have a Web site. Once we are all set up, we'll be a one-stop shop."

Chris Stroup-Benham

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Rudy Guerrero  
Interim Director



### PURPOSE

To provide services in support of administrative needs (registration, financial aid,) student wellness and campus life

### EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS

- Develops recruitment materials for the university
- Coordinates orientation of students
- Provides academic counseling

### DEPARTMENTS

- Registrar
- Financial Aid
- Campus Life
- Student Counseling
- Student Health Clinic

"This office will implement a student-centric service model that integrates people, processes, technology and facilities in order to streamline student access to services. Students and school officials will have improved access to information such as course descriptions, schedules and grades, using Web-based applications. Although the plan calls for some physical relocation, the vision for the new service delivery model doesn't have walls. It's process-driven. Since the purpose of the plan is to improve efficiency, the idea isn't to build new walls but to tear down barriers to providing services. All of these changes are designed to help foster the personal and professional development of students while easing their individual stress."

Rudy Guerrero