

An Engine of Community Change

Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi

Fiscal Year 2002

Report 1

**A Decade of Change and Growth:
1992-2002**

An Engine of Community Change is a series of five reports sponsored by the Office of University President Robert Furgason and prepared under the supervision of Dr. Paul Orser, Associate Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. Each report examines the relationship of the University to a separate aspect of local community life.

Report 1. A Decade of Change and Growth: 1992 - 2002

Report 2. Business and the Economy

Report 3. Culture and Leisure

Report 4. Kids and Families

Report 5. Gathering Talent – Changing Lives

Written by:

John M. Richards,

Dean Emeritus, College of Business

Gale S. Stuart,

Prashant Kumar,

Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

The University and the Community

The Bond Between a University and Its Community

A typical small “college town” has constant, daily reminders that the university plays an important role in community life. For example, in College Station, Texas where the combined faculty and student body of Texas A&M University make up 71% of the town’s population, there is a vivid awareness of the impact of the University. In the case of a smaller university in a metropolitan area, however, the impact of the academic world is often obscured by the complexity of the community. Such is the case in Corpus Christi and its University.

This Introduction and the studies that follow seek to describe and measure some of the relationships between the broad, metropolitan community of Corpus Christi and its university, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. The purpose of the studies is to provide information to the public describing how Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi influences the life of the community, often in ways that go largely unnoticed. The studies examine current impact, but also point to the future as the University continues to grow and change. As the University continues to develop, the community will benefit from the development.

The Reports That Follow

An Engine of Community Change is a series of studies that examine various areas of community life. Each report in the series examines an aspect of the local area and its relationship with the University. For example, the second report concerns “Business and the Economy.” It is a study of the University’s impact on the community’s total economy. Subsequent reports focus on different areas of community life, such as cultural activities, athletics, talent brought into the area, and even kids and families.

Growth and Change in the University

Change in University Structure*

Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi is experiencing a period of dramatic change and growth, with the end not yet in sight. This change was initiated by legislation passed by the Texas Legislature in 1989. That legislation accomplished three major features that are still impacting the University and the community of Corpus Christi. These features are:

- ✚ The University System of South Texas dissolved and governance of the University was passed to the Texas A&M University System.
- ✚ The University ceased acting as an Upper Division institution, permitting its first freshmen and sophomores to enroll in 1994.
- ✚ The University received adequate funding to provide for a larger body of students.

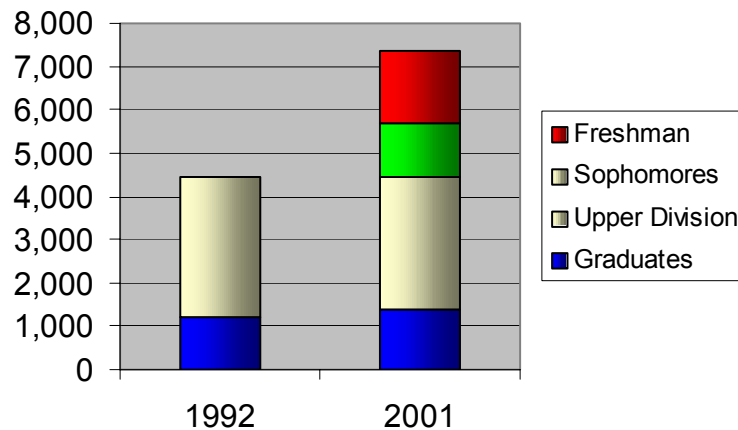
A final part of this transformation occurred in 1993 when the University Regents chose the current name to replace Corpus Christi State University.

Between 1989 and the addition of new students in fall of 1994, no one knew for sure just what growth and change would result. As it turned out, the conversion from a predominantly local institution to one associated with a widely recognized name had a major impact. These changes became quickly apparent in the growth and composition of the students coming to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

Growth and Change in the Student Body

Beginning in 1994, the University went through a metamorphosis in attracting students. This brought not only increased enrollment, but also a change in the make-up of the student body. Fundamental to this change was that the University was now able to compete statewide for graduating high school seniors. As indicated in Figure I.1, an increase of nearly 3,000 students represented a 66.5% increase from 1992 to 2001. Most of these new students were freshmen and sophomores. Undergraduate enrollment increased 85.3%, compared to a much smaller rise in graduate students.

Figure I.1. Enrollment Change - Fall 1992 to Fall 2001



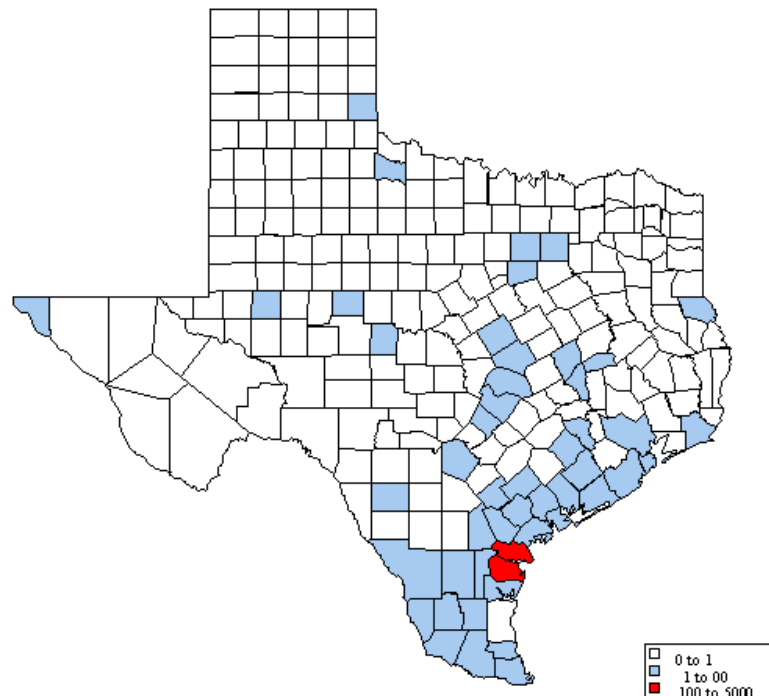
Source: Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Most of the added students were younger, and the average age of undergraduate students fell dramatically from 31 in 1992 to 24 in 2002. The proportion of full-time students represents another shift in the composition of the University over the last decade. In 1992, only 45% of students were enrolled full-time, compared with 78% in the fall of 2001. These numbers indicate not only rapid growth, but also a basic change from an institution that served mostly part-time and non-traditional local students to a more “typical” university serving a large number of younger full-time students from throughout the state.

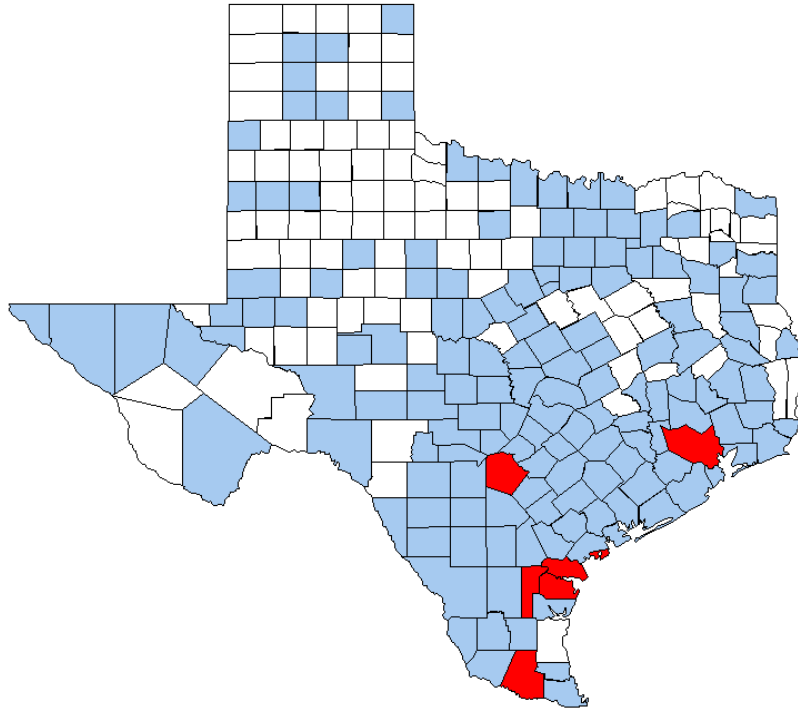
A Shifting Student Geography

During the last decade the student body has not only grown vertically in numbers, but also horizontally in the geographical location of student hometowns. The horizontal growth is observed in the geographical impact of the University as enrollments have spread from across the state (see Figures I.2 and I.3). Between 1990 and 2001 enrollment increased by 3,566 students with only 775 more students coming from the immediate Corpus Christi area. This trend of importing students from out of the area demonstrates that Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has become a true Texas-wide institution as opposed to a local one. The importance of this transformation will be discussed in other studies that follow.

**Figure I.2. Enrolled Students – Fall 1990 (Total = 3,791)
3,016 from Nueces County**



**Figure I.3. Enrolled Students – Fall 2001 (Total = 7,369)
3,803 from Nueces County**



Growth on the Island

The physical plant of the University has been expanded to accommodate the influx of students. At one time, in 1994, the campus had over 24 construction and renovation projects either underway or waiting to be started. The end result of this expansion is shown in Figure I.4, and includes classrooms, labs and student housing as well as quarters for research and other special centers and offices. The University started with 18 buildings and demolished 3 of these while adding 37 more structures. These efforts have resulted in an entirely new and different campus atmosphere.

**Figure I.4.
Corpus Christi State University in 1991 – 18 buildings**



Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi in 2002 – 52 buildings



Other Measures of Change and Growth

Many other things were also growing and changing at the University in addition to the changes in the student body and the physical plant. Some of these are briefly outlined in Table I.1.



Table I.1
Summary of University Change, FY 1992 to FY 2002
(Monetary values rounded to nearest thousand)

Item	FY1992	FY2002	Change	Change %
University Revenue	\$22,600,000	\$96,300,000	\$73,700,000	326%
Financial Aid				
- Scholarships	\$1,098,383	\$1,742,000	\$643,617	59%
- Others	\$8,400,000	\$16,300,000	\$7,900,000	95%
University Operating Expense	\$21,099,000	\$75,014,000	\$53,915,000	255%
Employees	378	1,205	827	218%
Undergraduate Enrollment	3,220	5,966	2,746	85%
Graduate Enrollment	1,205	1,403	198	16%
Endowment	\$11,779,261	\$81,294,343	\$69,515,082	590%
Average Age of Undergraduates	31	24	7	-30%

Source: Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Horizons

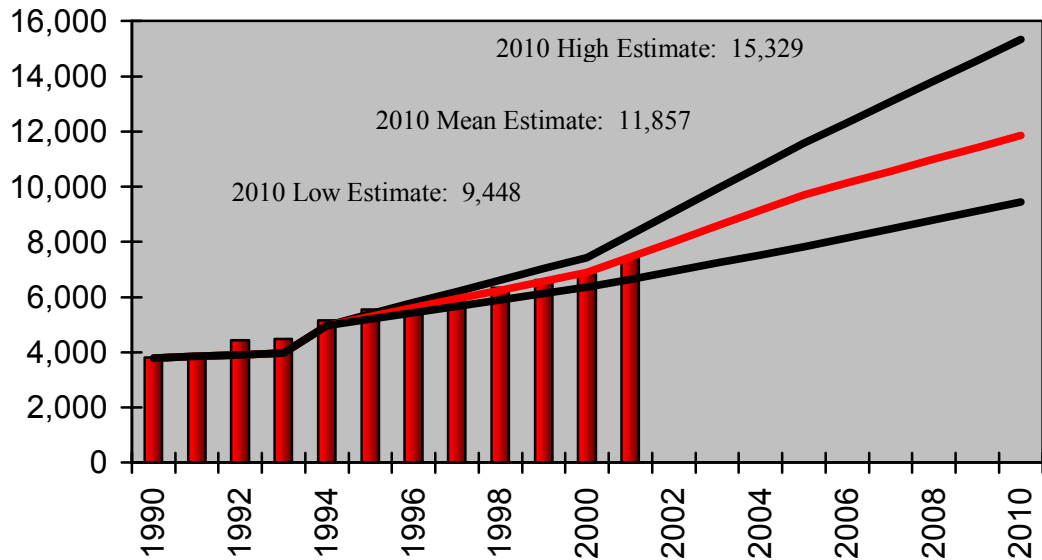
Each separate study will make an attempt to foresee what the future holds in store for the University and the Corpus Christi area. Currently, two forces appear to dominate, among many others, in influencing the future of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and the vicinity. They are:

-  Increasing enrollment
-  Increasing stature of the University

Increasing Student Enrollment

Current estimates reveal that the student body will expand by over 4,000, to reach a total of over 11,000 students by the year 2010. If this enrollment prediction holds true, and past projections have been exceedingly accurate, other things will also have to increase.

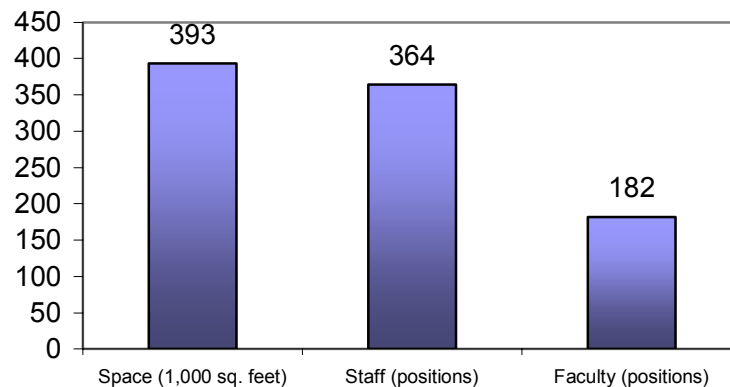
Figure I.5. Enrollment projections to 2010



Source: Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Given current ratios of faculty, staff and space to support students, the need for expansion in these areas is shown in Figure I.6. Filling these needs could cost up to an additional \$40.3 million in annual operations as well as \$78 million in new construction costs between now and 2010. As these changes take place, the local community will begin to feel their impact in many ways.

Figure I.6. Additional support required for 4,000 more Students

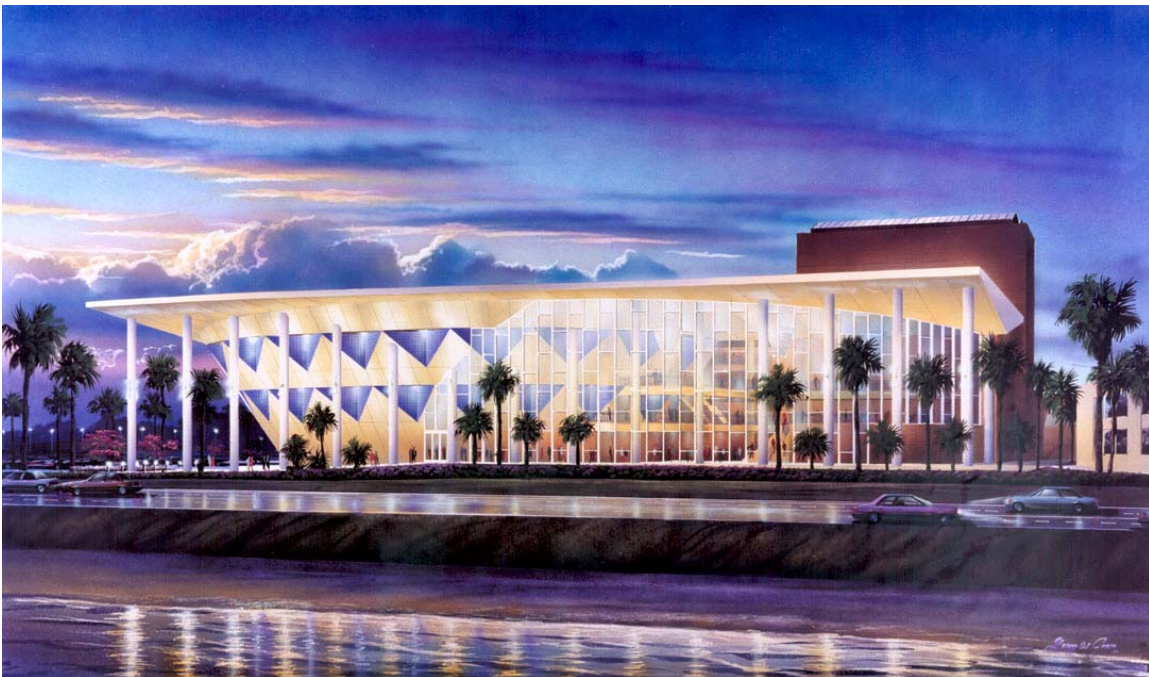


Source: Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Increasing Stature of the University

In the final analysis, the stature of any university is measured by the public's faith and trust that the institution will serve them well, now and in the future. One sign of increased public trust is private gifts that have escalated dramatically in recent years. Between December 1999 and September 2001, the University received over \$103 million in private gifts and grants. The two families of Ed Harte and Michael O'Connor contributed more than half of this amount. These private funds have been reinforced by public funds to assist in the construction of three new buildings in the near future. One building, the new Performing Arts Center, will be under construction soon.

Figure I.7 Proposed Performing Arts Center



Many of the University's programs and degree centers have recently received national awareness and accreditation. Because of this recognition, both parents and students have appeared to gain more faith in the University. For example, over 18% of first year students graduated in the top ten percent of their high school class and nearly half of all students graduated in the top one quarter. These figures indicate that students value the University's commitment to excellence.

This high caliber of students shows that Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is increasingly viewed as a prime educational alternative for both local and other families. The increased prominence of the University will have both direct and subtle impacts upon Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's host community. The effect the University's impact on Corpus Christi will be examined in the studies that follow.

* Information concerning the data and methodology used in this and subsequent reports is available from any of the authors or from the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi. Most of the data and information was obtained from internal documents, including the Annual Reports of the University, its various centers and associated foundations, and other reporting documents. Primary data also was collected as the result of surveys of faculty, staff and students. On occasion, information about projects and activities was gathered from oral and written communication of Administrators and Directors at the University and is stored in the records of the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.