

May 10, 2004

Members of the Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness
Members of the University Leadership Council
Members of the Faculty Council Executive Committee
Members of the Staff Council Executive Committee
Members of the Presidential Student Advisory Committee

Dear Colleagues:

I have digested the report of the Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness and all of the commentary that has come to me in writing or in conversation, and I am now prepared to set some conclusions and alternatives before our campus community. To facilitate references in follow-up correspondence, I number each of my main points and gather them under topical headings.

Background and goals for the process:

1. The Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness was convened in the spring of 2003, in the wake of several incidents that highlighted, once again, the racial frictions that prevent our University community from realizing optimum mutual benefits for the whole community or for individual members. In this regard, what can be said of our university is also true of other universities, and of Texas, the nation, and the world.
2. Each of us has a large stake in improvement. We would all gain if we could find ways to reduce the frictions and to promote more harmonious habits, while retaining the variety, the vivacity, and the atmosphere of intellectual challenge that marks The University of Texas at Austin. The University would work better toward what each of us hopes to attain in our own lives while we are here, and it would better prepare us for contribution and success in the outside world.
3. The American experiment of synthesizing a new society from a varied people derived from other societies is a story that we have heard frequently told. We Americans take pride in it. But it is not a history; it is a tale still in the telling. We are still learning how to do the synthesis – how to achieve the most effective ways to live and work, how to establish workable forms of communication and decision-making. America is not static, so the challenges themselves evolve. Those of our time are as great as ever, for we are the first to try to build an America shaped by new expectations of peoples long disadvantaged within our society, and by instantaneous global

communication, inexpensive global transportation, and an integrated global economy.

4. This scene can be daunting, but we cannot afford to let it immobilize us with lethargy or fear or wistfulness for a simpler time. The success of the new American experiment is critical indeed for the success of the globe at large. We have to learn, individually and collectively, how to reduce racial and cultural barriers to our own success, or we simply will not realize our own best future. I have spoken here of America, but our place of action is Texas, and especially The University of Texas at Austin. This is where we are, and this is where we work.
5. The largest goal of the Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness was to work toward these ends, but I also asked the members to undertake three particular tasks:
 - To review relevant procedures of the UT Police Department and to examine the cross-cultural educational programs available to our police officers.
 - To examine the University's ability to exert greater influence over behavioral standards in student organizations.
 - To examine the representation of the University's student populations in highly visible groups on the campus, as well as in official publications.

The Task Force was also given license to undertake work toward other topics that they might deem particularly productive.

Core recommendations of the Task Force:

6. The report of the Task Force is elaborate and contains many distinct suggestions for action. In this response, I will not address every point advanced by the Task Force, because I believe that it is important for me to create a stronger focus on a few of the larger matters. Many of the individual ideas are worthy of consideration in one or more of the University's operating portfolios, and I request all vice presidents and deans to review the whole report once more for ideas beyond those covered here that may be appropriate for action in their areas.
7. Here is a list of what I perceive to be the core recommendations of the Task Force:
 - (a) Establish a top-level leadership position with the responsibility and strength to oversee and to improve progress in the development of a more diverse university.
 - (b) Include a course requirement in the undergraduate general curriculum such that each student must take a course bearing on diversity.

- (c) Adopt an honor code that can help to promote greater civility and respect toward individuals and populations within our community.
- (d) Develop a more aggressive strategy for recruiting a more diverse faculty and staff.
- (e) Develop a more aggressive strategy for recruiting a more diverse student population.
- (f) Develop methods for reflecting the “face of the University” more fully and accurately in student groups with strong symbolic value and in official publications and video presentations.
- (g) Reexamine the University’s practices regarding the representation of historical figures in statuary.
- (h) Defer the freshman rush period in fraternities and sororities to the beginning of the spring semester.
- (i) Consider a stronger certification process for student organizations.
- (j) Provide a mechanism for community oversight of the UT Police Department and give greater attention to the training of members of the department for service in a diverse community.

In separate sections below, I will comment on each element of this list.

Campus-level leadership:

8. The Task Force recommended that a new vice presidential position be created so that one individual would have clear, central responsibility for our efforts relating to inclusion and cross-cultural effectiveness. This recommendation has received substantial attention in correspondence I have received and conversations in which I have been engaged since the release of the report. People are divided over it.
9. Those in support believe that such a portfolio is necessary to assure that continuous attention is given to the University’s goals and progress in the areas of concern here.
10. Many who are opposed simply believe that this kind of reorganization cannot work effectively, because it would separate responsibility for inclusion and cross-cultural effectiveness from the operational portfolios where broader policies are determined and financing occurs. For example, the Provost, the deans, and the departmental leadership inevitably determine how resources will be committed to the hiring of faculty members. Can it be effective to separate responsibility for achieving a more diverse faculty from this structure? Analogous questions can be raised about the hiring of

staff, the recruitment of graduate students, the administration of financial aid, and other specific operational concerns.

11. Other people have advised that this structure will tend to isolate both responsibility and attention to inclusion and cross-cultural effectiveness, and will consequently reduce the attention given by operational officers such as the deans and department chairs. In the view of those raising this point, it is everyone's responsibility to achieve progress, and we should not retreat from giving that message to all officers.
12. In my view, all of these points are valid.
13. We do need a structure that can provide for more consistent attention to inclusion and cross-cultural effectiveness. Making them everyone's responsibility all of the time tends to make them no one's responsibility much of the time, despite good intentions. On the other hand, it is not realistic to expect that a single portfolio could contain the wide range of relevant activities relating to faculty hiring and development, staff hiring and development, admissions and recruitment of students at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels, financial aid, course offerings, advising, curricular development, outreach, and student life. The areas that I have named span every vice presidential portfolio and every college or school. Localizing such a span of responsibilities under one vice president is to assure ineffectiveness.
14. What, then, are the practical options? It seems to me that the two fundamental principles are a) that we do need some structural change supporting a steadier focus and b) that stimulation and facilitation, rather than management, are what we require centrally. The central officer could be a vice president, a vice provost, or an associate of the president. I will discuss those alternatives below.
15. In my view, the central officer needs to have these four assets:
 - A charge to chair and to maintain energy within a campus-wide network
 - Ready access to the President, the Provost, the vice presidents, and the deans
 - Resources to sponsor beneficial programs across the University
 - A charge to report annually on progress to the leadership of the University and to the public
16. The network is important. As I have indicated above, the range of operational areas bearing on representation and cross-cultural effectiveness is very great – so great that a single officer cannot realistically have daily oversight of it. However, a central officer can facilitate and monitor progress broadly if he or she regularly convenes the officers charged with progress in each of the relevant operational areas. I propose to establish a

University Council on Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Effectiveness, whose members would all be designees of vice presidents, including the Executive Vice President and Provost. Each would have the responsibility to oversee and foster progress in his or her vice presidential portfolio. In general, such officers are not now designated, so a part of this plan is their identification and empowerment. The particular responsibilities and powers exercised by any one of them will obviously depend on the scope and nature of the vice presidential portfolio. The Council would meet at least once per semester with the President and the Provost.

17. The Provost's designee in the Council would have the added responsibility of chairing a similar council made up of the designees of the deans. It is essential that each of the deans identify and empower someone in their colleges or schools, because so many of the relevant processes are organized and so many relevant decisions are made at the collegiate level.
18. The resources are also important, because they underlie the stimulation of progress. Each year, the central officer should have a pool of recurring and non-recurring funds that can be committed toward initiatives of high priority, which might be in any of the relevant operational areas. I do not believe that these resources, once committed, should stay under the control of the central officer, because I think it is critical that we have consistency in the local management of programs. Vice presidents, deans, department chairs, program directors, and other leaders can be encouraged to innovate and improve through the availability of resources beyond their normal channels, but they should not have to answer continuously to two supervisors of their resources. The initiatives and their ground rules should be developed annually by the central officer in collaboration with the Council and in consultation with the President and the Provost.
19. The charge to report annually is important, too. The light of publicity is one of the best ways to promote progress and integrity.
20. The large remaining question concerns the organizational identity of the central officer whose duties have been laid out here. Here are the options that I see:
 - (a) The officer could be a vice president, as recommended by the Task Force. The advantage is that there is substantial weight in the title. A counter point is that the envisioned role – principally that of facilitator – is not the normal function of a vice president, who is typically a line officer. Moreover, I am reluctant to add another vice president. We already have a larger number than most universities, and I do not believe that we require more to cover the full scope of operations here. If the central officer envisioned here is to be a vice president, then I believe that he or she would also have to take

responsibility for line duties now carried by one of existing vice presidents. In other words, the new vice presidency would have to be created by redefining one of the current vice presidencies, and perhaps by shifting responsibilities among some of the other vice presidential portfolios.

- (b) The officer could be a vice provost. The main advantage of this concept is organizational proximity to most of the relevant action – in faculty hiring and development, undergraduate recruitment and admissions, curricular development and course offerings, and advising and academic support. My guess is that these matters make up 75% of all campus-wide activity relevant to inclusion and cross-cultural effectiveness. Placement of the central officer in this position would imply that the officer would simultaneously have leadership both within the Provost's portfolio and across the campus, in the latter case as chair of the University Council on Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Effectiveness. In that respect, the central officer would be strategically very well placed. A counter point is that work across the boundaries of the other vice presidential portfolios might be more cumbersome with this organizational placement.
- (c) The officer could be an associate to the president, with responsibilities largely as delineated here. This plan has the advantages of strength of focus on the intended role and an organizational position that naturally facilitates work across vice presidential lines. The counter point is that such an officer would, in operational terms, be further from the deans, with whom a very large fraction of business must be coordinated.

- 21. I would like to receive more reaction from the vice presidents, deans, and other members of the campus before settling upon a particular structure. The choice will be made by the middle of the summer. In the meantime, specific comment on this point is invited.

Undergraduate course requirement bearing on diversity:

- 22. The Task Force recommended that we adopt a change in degree requirements such that each undergraduate student becomes required to take one course promoting cross-cultural knowledge and better ability to live and work in a diverse world.

23. I support this concept. It is concordant with the following passage in my last "Address on the State of the University:"¹

One of the questions that we must continually ask ourselves—as a major public university that has long played a central role in the intellectual and cultural development of Texas—is this: "How can we better prepare leadership for the next generation in Texas and beyond?"

Toward that end, I call upon every member of our community to join in finding systematic, effective ways to build the knowledge and skill among students, faculty, and staff necessary to learn and to work across cultural boundaries. This recommendation was born, I freely admit, in the difficult experiences of our community during last winter; however the idea is not really about fixing obvious defects in our current society, but rather about getting to a future that we can already see.

Even in this heterogeneous America, virtually all of us grow up and spend most of our lives in a homogenous culture, often, but not always, racially or ethnically delineated. We do not have from experience a proper basis for understanding even the other principal cultures of America, much less those of the larger world. It should be no surprise that we are fearful, tentative, and clumsy in our efforts to make contact and to understand across cultural lines. We have made do. But making do in the same way will not be good enough if America is to be prosperous, healthy, and stable in the decades ahead. As a center of higher learning, and as a place where the leadership of the next generation is educated, we have an obligation to help our students—and in the process to help ourselves—to become much more capable citizens.

24. The idea for the cross-cultural requirement has been under discussion at the University for some time, and I believe that there is already broad agreement that it should not be interpreted as a call for a single, specific course, but rather as a call for a subject-area elective chosen by each student from a list of eligible courses. The list would be certified by the faculty in the manner now employed for other requirements in which the student is given some degree of choice. A single, specific course could not be effectively staffed and would not meet the varied educational needs of students from different backgrounds and majors.
25. In my judgment, it is impractical simply to add this requirement to the list of requirements now in place. Instead, it needs to be crafted thoughtfully into a redesigned general curriculum. Degree programs across the campus have been defined with the current general curriculum as a basis. Each has a budget of semester-hours allocated to the curricular needs deemed critical when the program was designed. Adding any new

¹ Address on the State of the University, September 13, 2003.
<http://www.utexas.edu/president/speeches/utexas120.html> .

requirement into all programs without rethinking the whole portion dedicated to general requirements will have important unintended consequences, including protracted time to graduation and increased cost to students.

26. Consensus is building within the University that we should soon undertake the kind of review of the general curriculum that would be required to include a cross-cultural requirement. I expect that such a process will begin in the next academic year. Of course, authority for determining the general curriculum rests with the faculty, which would examine proposals for revision and approve any changes.
27. In the meantime, we will continue to encourage students to develop their cross-cultural knowledge and skills by choosing one of their free electives from courses on a list that the Provost's office has assembled and updated prior to each of the last three long-semester registration periods. It is available on the Connexus website:

<http://www.utexas.edu/student/connexus/crosscultural/index.html>

28. In addition, I will be convening groups of faculty members, students, and academic officers to talk about lessons gained from the January summit and symposium on "Educating for a Diverse America." The charge that I gave to each attendee at this event was to take away one or more specific ideas for implementation in academic work or student life. Many from our university participated, so I am hopeful that ideas have already begun to be implemented. The planned discussion groups will serve to test for actions growing out of "Educating for a Diverse America," and will help us to identify ideas warranting development on a larger scale.

Honor code:

29. The Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness recommended that the University adopt an honor code that could encourage and promote civility within our community. Extensive discussion about a code also proceeded outside the Task Force, especially among student leadership. The development of ideas was far enough along for me to issue the following call in my last "Address on the State of the University:"¹

My interest in an honor code stems from my belief that we could become a much more powerful, much more useful university if we had a simple, effective means for reminding all of our members—students, staff, faculty—of their own interest in standards of integrity and civility. I do not seek, nor do I recommend an elaborate honor code with an attendant justice system and penalties for transgressions. Neither would I support any sort of required oath. One sound sentence, widely embraced, could do it—just a steady reminder that civility and

integrity do have meaning and that there are legitimate expectations concerning these virtues within our university.

I do not have the sentence. My belief is that leadership on this matter must come from our students. I congratulate the Senate of College Councils for its work to date, and I express the hope that a sound, widely supported honor statement will emerge by collaboration among student leadership during this academic year.

30. A specific proposal did emerge from student leadership, and it was accepted as well by faculty and staff leadership. On April 29, I provided notice to the University of our adoption of this text:

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

31. I will shortly be appointing a committee of faculty members, staff members, and students to recommend ways to bring the new honor code regularly to the attention of all members of our community.
32. Occasionally I have been asked why I think the adoption of an honor code to be especially important now. The answer is that our university is both more complex in cultural terms and more intense academically than ever before. It is easy in these circumstances to focus inward and to forget obligations to uphold the basic virtues that make civilization possible. Our new honor code exists to keep those obligations in front of us.

Recruiting a more diverse faculty and staff:

33. It will continue for quite some time to be important that we make a special effort to recruit a more diverse faculty and staff, not least because our students have become substantially more diverse themselves. They need to see their world and their background in their teachers and in those who support their learning here. Also, Texas looks broadly to this university as a symbol and bellwether of its future, but its people will cease doing that if the University begins to seem disconnected from the future that Texans can see in the faces of their youth.
34. A parallel issue exists in the representation of women in the faculties of quite a few disciplines. For two years now we have had a program to bring women faculty to campus for short visits to present lectures and to interact with faculty and students in disciplines where women have been traditionally underrepresented. Lessons learned from this effort can be applied to help us develop a broader set of effective strategies.

35. Finding the diverse faculty that the University requires is a difficult problem because America is producing far too few Hispanic and African-American Ph.D. graduates. At UT Austin, we have been recruiting for several years at two to three times the overall national availability,² and we need to continue to strive for that level of success or better for years more.
36. Search committees for both faculty and senior staff appointments should be consciously diversified to the greatest extent that can be achieved without placing an unreasonable burden on our Hispanic and African-American colleagues.
37. I believe that we could gain much more benefit from a still more deliberate effort to invite Hispanic and African-American scholars to visit our departments and programs, even if only to present a seminar. Faculty and students will benefit from seeing them more frequently, and our programs will benefit from their seeing what is happening here. Candidates will inevitably arise from this contact, and not just from among the visitors themselves. We need to make fuller use of this strategy in all units. The Provost already has resources to make it happen. They are available to unit leaders upon request, and the pool will be enlarged if the demand rises.
38. Strategies that can help the University to recruit a top-quality, diverse faculty and staff should be part of the discussion every year between the University Council on Inclusion and Cross-Cultural Effectiveness, the President, and the Provost.

Recruiting a more diverse student population:

39. The University has made substantial, consistent improvement in the inclusiveness of its freshman classes and its first-year law classes since the nadir after the *Hopwood* decision. However, we are not yet approaching the scale of leadership development that Texas needs for its future from the African-American and Hispanic communities.
40. In terms of diversity, we have lost ground steadily since *Hopwood* in the entering classes for graduate education in most fields.
41. The major innovation for the near term is the reinstallation of race-sensitive admissions at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. This will require a lot of effort and attention, and for now we must concentrate on making that change work legally, efficiently, and beneficially.

² That is, the percentages of new faculty at the University who are African-American or Hispanic are two to three times the percentages in the national candidate pool for all faculty.

Reflecting the “face of the University:”

42. Many people who have no daily contact with the University perceive its character and values implicitly from what they see in the media and in our publications. We need to pay closer attention to the messages that we send through the “face of the University,” as it appears in these ways.
43. I am asking the Vice President for Public Affairs to take up regularly with his campus-wide council of public affairs officers the accuracy with which we represent our student, faculty, and staff in the media and in official publications. This kind of discussion should be held at least every semester. It should include both an assessment of current status and the development of specific ideas for improvement. Once per year, the President and the Vice President for Student Affairs should be invited into this discussion.
44. I am also asking the Vice President for Public Affairs to discuss regularly with his campus-wide council of public affairs officers the effectiveness of our communications with the African-American and Hispanic communities. This should be done at least annually, and the President should receive a report on the outcome and on any planned initiatives.
45. I am asking the Vice President for Student Affairs to catalogue a list of student groups with especially high visibility to the public and to consider ways that we can promote a consistently fair and accurate representation of the University’s student population within these groups.

Representation of historical figures in statuary:

46. Our university is exceptional among American campuses for the extent and quality of statuary displayed on our grounds.³ There are widely noted and beloved pieces such as “The Family Group” and “The Torchbearers,” both by Charles Umlauf, and “The Mustangs” by Alec Phimster Proctor. There is a centerpiece in the elaborate work by Pompeo Coppini in the Littlefield Fountain. There are works evoking the cultural symbols of student life and of life in Texas. Within buildings, there are works depicting individual people of importance to the University’s own history.
47. Of all this statuary, the only elements that generate recurring, sometimes passionate, discussion are the statues of the historical figures on the South Mall. The seven represented there are George Washington, Jefferson Davis, Woodrow Wilson, Robert E. Lee, James Stephen Hogg, Albert Sydney Johnston, and John H. Reagan. Most of the reaction is evoked by the statues of the leaders of the Confederacy, especially Jefferson Davis and Robert E. Lee, who had no direct connection to Texas.

³ See the Virtual Statue Tour, <http://www.utexas.edu/tours/statues/> .

48. From time to time over the past few decades, there have been calls for removal of one or more of these statues. The path chosen has been to leave them in place, but to emphasize current values by adding to the campus new statuary in prominent places. The realization of the Statue of Martin Luther King and the commitment to new statues honoring Barbara Jordan and Cesar Chavez are concordant with this idea.
49. The report of the Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness causes me to reexamine the question of the South Mall statues, and I now convey my analysis.
50. To begin, I would like to make the point that I do not see this as a sharp or simple issue. It is not, in my mind, just a matter of tradition vs. change or of right vs. wrong, because a number of values, all broadly shared in our community, are wrapped up in it:
 - (a) First, there is the value of the hospitable environment. We do seek to welcome here all of Texas, even all of the world. There is no question that many from all races interpret some of our statues as displaying a kind of institutional nostalgia for the Confederacy and its values. Most who receive that message are repelled.
 - (b) There is also the value of understanding history in human terms. Statues like those at issue here are meant as reminders of large events and deeds that may have occurred long ago, but that shaped the lives of those who follow, even generations later. Progress through struggle is often a part of what is depicted. Some of the actors are understood in later years as having been on the wrong side, even though they may have been honored in their lifetimes (and even long afterward in their communities) for political stature or ability or courage or still other qualities. There have been no saints in the histories of nations, but real people were certainly involved in titanic matters. The same will be true in our time. This is an important historical message, and it is one that can be conveyed through statuary, but not if representations of those on the wrong side are consistently erased. The question is less one of erasure than of proper representation.
 - (c) A related, but somewhat different, value is the academic instinct to preserve the cultural record, which is undeniably a part of the reaction by many scholars in this debate. Writings, artifacts, and artwork are all part of that record. Many are unique and have unknowable value to future generations. It is wise that we generally resist the tendency to eliminate any part of that record for any reason.

(d) Further, there is the value of institutional continuity. Every university is a tapestry woven by its generations. It becomes what it is through the construction of its physical place and through the accumulation of holdings and customs chosen by those who have gone before. Customs evolve as ideas change, but the relative constancy of a campus is both expected and important to members of the community, both old and new. Related to this desire and expectation is a mostly healthy disposition among any generation to allow choices made by predecessors to stand, even as contemporary members add their own choices. Naturally we also expect our choices to be preserved by those who follow, even generations beyond us.

(e) Finally, there is the value of artistic creation. The statues were created by Pompeo Coppini at the same time as his centerpiece in the Littlefield Fountain. They are recognized works of art, and in that respect deserve preservation and display.

51. So we have a continuous argument. One side seeks removal of some of the statues as a way of promoting hospitality and moving away from any implication of nostalgia for the Confederacy. The other side resists that change on grounds of artistic merit or institutional continuity or preservation of the historical record. The statues undeniably cleave some members away from our community. Removing them clearly will cleave others away, most of whom would believe, fundamentally, that the University has failed to fulfill central responsibilities of an academic institution.
52. Official policy over the past couple of decades has been essentially determined by the value of institutional continuity. We have allowed choices of statuary made by our predecessors to stand, even as we are adding new choices.
53. Maintaining the status quo is obviously a possibility, but I believe that we can do better. There are two steps that might allow us to preserve all values together, or at least to realize a larger portion of all values simultaneously. Their practicality will be explored in the period ahead.
54. To explain the first possibility, I need to delineate the original concept of Pompeo Coppini, the sculptor commissioned to do all of the work on the South Mall, including that in the Littlefield Fountain.⁴ The work within the fountain is clearly a memorial to American participation in the First World War. Not obvious at all is the relationship of any of the other sculpture on the South Mall to this memorial. Coppini's well documented idea was to

⁴ Pompeo Coppini, "From Dawn to Sunset," Press of the Naylor Company, San Antonio.

show how the American effort in World War I brought about the final reunification of our nation after the rupture of the Civil War.⁵ He originally intended to have a court of figures at the fountain centered on the “war presidents,” Jefferson Davis from the old Confederacy and Woodrow Wilson from the modern Union, “to prove that in World War I both North and South were solidly welded in one great Nation, without Dixie Line distinction.”⁶ Other members of the “court” were favorites of Major Littlefield, a regent and the principal donor.⁷ Coppini’s full plan was underfinanced and could not be realized as planned. Eventually it was overtaken by architect Paul Cret’s reconception of the central campus plan. Coppini complained in his autobiography that Cret had “used my memorial, or rather the sculptural parts of the Major Littlefield Memorial, as a dismembered conception, and as a pure decoration to his general scheme...”⁸ Thus figures who were to participate in a more obvious reunion were distributed around the South Mall, so that each statue became, by default, an isolated representation of the depicted individual, with no clear theme underlying the selection of individuals.⁹

55. The first step that I propose is to examine as thoroughly as possible the practicality of rearranging the statuary so as to allow Coppini’s intention of symbolizing a reunited country to be realized more closely and to be fully explained in a nearby plaque. This is a question of history, art, and architecture, so the idea needs to be examined by a group of technically proficient people especially charged for the purpose. I will appoint such a group to undertake that investigation.

56. The second step is to provide histories on plaques beside each of our significant sculptures, whether, on the South Mall or elsewhere. When the work is a purely artistic creation, as in the case of “The Family” or “The Torchbearers,” the history can be confined to the story of the artist and how

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 255-256, 262-263.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁷ Robert E. Lee was, of course, the leading military figure on the Southern side. Albert Sydney Johnston was the leading Southern general from Texas. James Stephen Hogg was the first native born governor of Texas, whose political career came long after the Civil War and extended into the 20th century. A bridging figure is John H. Reagan, a Texan who was Postmaster General in the Confederacy, but who also had a long record of public service in the preserved Union.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 264.

⁹ It is interesting that this theme of reunion was developed by Coppini in exactly the period when the rival members of the Board of Regents who had served on opposite sides in the Civil War, George Washington Littlefield and George Washington Brackenridge, were themselves taking steps toward reconciliation. See pp. 255-256 in the Coppini autobiography regarding Major Littlefield. See the following websites regarding the partnership between Brackenridge and Littlefield to underwrite the University’s entire budget during a political crisis in 1917: <http://txtell.lib.utexas.edu/stories/d0003-full.html> and http://www.utexas.edu/supportut/core_values/opportunity.html.

the work came to be. When a historical figure is the subject, the history can also cover more about the role of the subject. This idea seems clearly realizable, and the histories will be useful to members of our community and to visitors alike. Practically no one who looks at the statue of James Stephen Hogg recognizes him as the first native governor of Texas and as a champion of education. And hardly anyone can discern why Woodrow Wilson, who had no connection to Texas at all, is represented in such a prominent place. Histories can cure those deficiencies. More important, they can also go far to disarm perceptions of nostalgia for the Confederacy.

57. I do not believe that the status quo serves the University well, nor do I see a need to maintain it. At the same time, I cannot judge that simple removal is a sound action for us. There is, for me, a tone of censorship in the action that seems fundamentally unhealthy. Surely we can find a wiser path.

Deferred rush period for fraternities and sororities:

58. In the absence of other considerations, I believe that it would be better for our first-year students if fraternity and sorority rush were deferred until January. Accordingly, I am asking the Vice President for Student Affairs to work with Greek leadership to explore the feasibility of instituting such a change. In the process, I hope they will look closely at practices at peer campuses where rush is deferred now.
59. The major benefit would come from simply providing our freshmen with more time to get their feet on the ground, academically and socially, before becoming so intensely engaged in Greek life. This university is now a very demanding place for newcomers. Deferred rush could lead to better decisions being made all the way around.
60. The benefit of most interest to the Task Force is to increase the likelihood that Greek organizations might become somewhat more diverse, if students were given a longer time on campus before making a decision about Greek life. I believe that this is indeed a potential benefit.
61. I do recognize some serious obstacles to deferred rush, one of which is the financial impact on the chapters.
62. In general, I am positively disposed toward Greek organizations, because I see them as furnishing, at least in one well understood pattern, the smaller communities that are so important for the daily lives of students in a large university. I have been in the academic world long enough to have seen countless demonstrations of the rich friendships that students make in Greek organizations and the exceptionally strong ties that students in Greek organizations seem to establish with their universities. These are good things.

63. Certainly I recognize the behavioral challenges that these organizations must overcome, and I encourage progress. Racially disrespectful behavior dramatically degrades the individuals and organizations perpetrating it and must be eliminated.
64. I also express here the hope that each Greek organization will take much more seriously the value that they and their members could derive by becoming electively more diverse.

Certification of student organizations:

65. A part of my detailed charge to the Task Force was to consider how the University might exert greater influence over behavioral standards in student organizations. In response, they proposed a system in which student organizations would be publicly certified and rated according to their adherence to a system of standards. The responses that I have received clearly indicate broad, strong opposition to this concept, basically because the standards that would be used and the body that would do the rating are undefined. In the absence of particulars, there is broad mistrust of the idea. There is also doubt that such a practice would be fundamentally healthy, even if the standards and the rating procedures were better defined.
66. My judgment is that we must look elsewhere for progress with the civil standards of our community. The new honor code will be the basis for the most immediate efforts.

Oversight and training of the UT Police Department:

67. I also charged the Task Force specifically to review relevant procedures of the UT Police Department and to examine the cross-cultural educational programs available to our police officers. They did their most detailed work in this area early in their process, and they provided a list of specific recommendations to me in their interim report last summer. All of the recommendations were communicated to the newly formed Police Oversight Committee, and they formed much of the basis for the Oversight Committee's work during the current academic year. For this reason, the University is already fairly far along in addressing the Task Force's recommendations regarding UTPD.
68. The Police Oversight Committee was established to become the principal institutional channel of communication between members of the university community and the UT Police Department. Its regular charge is "to assure that the policies, practices, and operations of UTPD promote the security of the University community effectively and in ways respectful of our constitutional rights and consistent with our academic values." The conversations that I have had with interested parties across the campus

suggest that the Oversight Committee has had a quite successful first year. Its required public report will be provided shortly. I believe that we can now have good confidence in the Oversight Committee's ability to fulfill its charge over the long term.

69. I am asking the Oversight Committee, Vice President Clubb, and Chief Van Slyke to take up the additional points made by the Task Force in its section covering issues related to UTPD.

This is a very long letter, because there are so many dimensions to building the kind of society that I described in the opening of this letter. Progress is hard, precisely because it requires us to become comfortable and adept outside our own culture.

The Task Force has laid down many ideas for helping us to do that. I have done my best here to translate them into organizational actions and priorities that we can undertake right away.

When I came back to the University as President in 1998, I chose as one of the six major themes of my administration an emphasis on a “broadened sense of ownership” by the people of Texas. This is what I meant by that phrase:¹⁰

As we position The University to help our state play a major role in the 21st century, we also must see that UT has meaning in the daily lives of Texans. They need to understand that they have a public asset of the first magnitude here in Austin. They need to feel that they can take advantage of it personally. That means we must ensure access. That means that our student body must reflect the diverse cultures of our state. That means welcoming Texans to this campus to visit, to use our resources, to feel the spirit of knowledge and possibility that makes this place special. The Tower is certainly the most famous collegiate symbol in Texas. It needs to be Texas's best symbol of hope, opportunity, and achievement.

We have committed effort and resources in great quantity toward this goal, because it is essential to our best service to Texas. We will continue.

Throughout all the planning and work before us, it will be my purpose to achieve the committed, diverse, but unified university envisioned in two of our statements of core values:

Responsibility - To serve as a catalyst for positive change in Texas and beyond.

Individual Opportunity - Many options, diverse people and ideas; one university.

¹⁰ Address on the State of the University, October 6, 1998.
<http://www.utexas.edu/president/speeches/utexas115.html> .

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In the weeks ahead, I will begin to carry out the actions indicated here, but there is time now for additional comment. I invite any ideas that you wish to convey by letter or by electronic mail.

Let me close with a note of deep, public thanks to Darlene Grant, Chair of the Task Force on Racial Respect and Fairness, and to the members of the Task Force for their enormous, intense effort on behalf of our University. Their work will serve to make us more valuable to the society we serve.

Sincerely,

Larry R. Faulkner
President

cc: Chancellor Mark G. Yudof
Executive Vice Chancellor Teresa A. Sullivan
Vice Chancellor Tonya Moten Brown
Counsel and Board Secretary Francie A. Frederick