

State of the School of Undergraduate Studies January, 2011

The School of Undergraduate Studies serves students by sustaining a dynamic common curriculum and by enriching the undergraduate experience through innovative advising, learning communities, interdisciplinary programs, and undergraduate research.

The common curriculum refers to UT's unique way of satisfying the state-mandated core curriculum, including the First-Year Signature Course. It also refers to flag requirements in writing, ethics, quantitative reasoning, independent inquiry, global cultures, and ethnic diversity as implemented in each degree program. Undergraduate Studies is charged with managing this in a way that addresses faculty priorities and the needs of students.

Innovative advising, mainly through the Center for Strategic Advising, helps students find four year paths through the university and forward into careers or graduate school. Undergraduate Studies is the initial home for students who choose not to select a major on applying to UT. Additional advising offices support interdisciplinary study, undergraduate research, learning communities, and other student populations as described below.

Students. In fall 2010, 1,183 new students enrolled in UGS, bringing the total enrollment to 1,570. All were students in exploration mode, seeking majors in which they could successfully graduate. No student remains in UGS after the fourth semester.

Governance

UGS Advisory Committee: 7 faculty members, 6 associate deans, and 2 students.

Bridging Disciplines Programs Committees: 125 faculty members

Flag Committees: 41 faculty members

Summary of programs

First-Year Experience

First-year Interest Groups (FIGs) are cohorts of up to 25 first-year students who develop community by taking clusters of two to four classes together. 2,997 students participated in 177 cohorts in fall 2010.

Signature Courses begin UT students' academic experience with top faculty teaching a wide range of intellectually rigorous classes, and are required for all students graduating under the 2010-12 catalog. 8,591 students have enrolled in 183 classes during fall 2010 and spring 2011.

Bridging Disciplines Programs

Undergraduates earn an interdisciplinary certificate, recognized on their official transcripts, through study integrating classroom, research, and internship experiences. The 11 BDPs currently have 575 students actively enrolled. Since the program's inception in 2002, 350 students have graduated with BDP certificates.

Center for the Core Curriculum

Oversees flag approvals as well as faculty development in newly emphasized curricular areas such as writing, ethics and leadership, and independent inquiry. Coordinates with colleges in implementing core and flag requirements. 1,410 course flags approved to date.



Office of Undergraduate Research

Informs undergraduates of research opportunities and serves as a university-wide resource for involving students in research. Co-hosts annual Research Week with the Senate of College Councils. 570 students attended information sessions in 2010.

Archer Fellows Program

Supports competitive student internships in Washington, D.C. 32 students are selected as Archer Fellows from the UT system each semester; 15 were selected from UT Austin for the fall of 2010, and 15 for the spring of 2011.

Freshman Reading Round-Up

UT's best professors are asked to sponsor books for summer reading and to lead small discussions with incoming students. 53 book sessions involved 859 students in 2010, up from 50 book sessions with 853 students in 2009, and 735 students in 2008.

University Honors Center

Serves as the focal point for campus honors activities by providing administrative support for five national societies and coordinating programming for the university's seven first-year academic honors programs hosted in several colleges and schools. Coordinates scholarships and grants by supporting the nomination process for national scholarships, and by developing and awarding grants specific to the School. Supports the school's student governance structure via the UGS Student Council, a member of the Student Senate.

Runs the **Honors Colloquium**, a recruitment program in which more than 500 high-achieving rising high school seniors from throughout Texas experience college classes and life at UT for a summer weekend. Over 88% of all attendees apply to the university; of those admitted, 96% enroll.

Longhorn Scholars Program

Since its inception, this recruitment and retention program for underrepresented students has worked with over 3,400 students from 70 Texas high schools. Participants are typically first-generation students facing substantial financial barriers. They benefit from a scholarship program, academic advising, peer mentoring, and opportunities to develop leadership skills. A record 395 first-year students entered the program in 2010, bringing the total current population to 1,300 students enrolled in schools and colleges across campus.

Center for Strategic Advising

Works closely with other advising centers across campus to provide academic advising, including major exploration assistance, to undecided and transitional students at the university. About 800 students enrolled in UGS in 2009-10, of which over 400 have transferred to the colleges in which they will graduate. 1,570 students enrolled in UGS for fall 2010, including 1,183 new students.

Texas Success Initiative

For students not meeting state college-readiness standards, law requires that UT provide programs to help them transition to college. 83 students were identified as needing services for the fall of 2010, of whom 63 were enrolled in Developmental Studies courses.

Wayfinder

A website that assists current and prospective students in choosing a major. Currently contains specifics on about half the majors offered at UT, along with career and certificate information. Funded by a grant from the AT&T Foundation and developed by the Center for Strategic Advising, this resource will be coordinated with the university's admissions messages and publicized widely after additional majors and features are added this spring.

