



# School of UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

View the full 2011-2012 report at [www.utexas.edu/ugs](http://www.utexas.edu/ugs)

**Mission:** 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 Center for Strategic Advising & Career Counseling** assists students who are unsure of their majors in identifying academic paths and related careers that suit their personalities and goals.

**Signature Courses** connect first-year students with distinguished faculty members in challenging, interdisciplinary courses. Incoming students develop college-level skills in research, writing, speaking, and discussion.

**Wayfinder**, an award-winning online advising tool, is a one stop shop for information about UT majors. Current and prospective students log on to explore their academic options and learn about related careers. [www.utexas.edu/ugs/wayfinder](http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/wayfinder)

**First-year Interest Groups (FIGs)** bring 10-25 incoming students with similar interests together to take classes and establish a learning community. Peer mentors facilitate a weekly seminar to help students adjust to college academics and student life.

**Freshman Reading Round-up** connects incoming first-year students with top-notch faculty and like-minded peers through small book clubs that meet the day before fall classes start.

**Sanger Learning Center** provides tutors, learning specialists, peer academic coaches, and study group programs to help students tackle challenging coursework and sharpen their study skills.

**The Bridging Disciplines Program (BDP)** offers 11 interdisciplinary certificates that supplement students' degrees by integrating required courses, research, and internships.

**Office of Undergraduate Research** gives every undergraduate the opportunity to partner with a faculty member and conduct research.

**Longhorn Scholars Program** provides specialized advising, peer mentoring, and a supportive community to high-achieving students from historically underrepresented Texas high schools.

**Core Curriculum** ensures that every UT student, no matter their major, has a broad foundation and a set of strong transferable skills such as quantitative reasoning, writing, and critical thinking.

**University Honors Center** offers a variety of enrichment programs for undergraduate honors students and supports the campus activities of selected national honors societies.

- Updated Fall 2012**
- 2,116** undeclared students are in the School of Undergraduate Studies.
  - 16%** of the incoming fall 2012 undergraduates enrolled in the School of Undergraduate Studies.
  - 200** students per academic advisor makes UGS caseloads the smallest on campus.
  - 23** Signature Course faculty members are in the Academy of Distinguished Teachers.
  - 62,000** people accessed Wayfinder for major and career information this past year.
  - 89%** of FIG students surveyed felt that FIGs "helped me feel more part of the UT community."
  - 67.5%** of BDP alumni are enrolled in graduate programs or working in positions directly related to their BDP certificates.

# New Initiatives for 2012-2013

## Core Curriculum Transformation, 2014-16

### *Flag requirements*

The School of Undergraduate Studies is working with the other schools and colleges to ensure all undergraduate degree programs will require all of the flags beginning in the 2014-16 catalog.

### *Core objectives*

UT will be required by the Coordinating Board to embed six new objectives into the core curriculum by the 2014-16 catalog. UGS is preparing guidance for instructors of core courses to ensure the university's compliance with these new requirements.

## College Readiness

New state requirements and UT's already high academic expectations have resulted in a focus on new and enhanced services, including non course-based methods for remediation, such as online modules, tutoring, and supplemental instruction for students not prepared for college. Two grants totaling \$1.4M have supported development of assignments for use in high schools across the state to improve readiness.

A new Texas Success Initiative advisory committee including faculty from Math, English, and Rhetoric will guide the developmental courses we offer for some of these students.

## Development & Facilities

The school's remaining piece of the capital campaign represents a \$3 million goal over the next two years. Our new development director is working with our Advisory Council and with the leadership in the school to determine funding priorities and build endowments to meet our needs. The Paul B. Woodruff Professorship is at \$500K.

The Dean's Office recently moved to renovated space in Main 202, of which the centerpiece is a large conference room for council meetings, faculty panels, seminars, and more.

The Sanger Learning Center renovation of the Jester mezzanine is now complete, creating a welcoming tutoring and study area for students. A dedication reception in honor of Dr. Sanger's gift that provided construction funds is set for November 12 at 3pm.

## Creation of a Campus-wide Interview & Recruiting Center

The result of a student-driven initiative, the newly nicknamed HireTexas Interview Center will be a premier facility where employers create company profiles, post jobs, and interview UT students from across campus. The Center will work with the existing career centers across campus to serve all students in all academic disciplines and ensure greater access to employment opportunities.

## Enrollment Management & Graduation Rates

### *Student progress & Wayfinder*

The data from our fall 2009 cohort demonstrates that the school is succeeding in its mission to help students identify the majors that will allow them to graduate. Of the students who made up our initial class who are still enrolled or have already graduated, 84% remain in the majors they selected when leaving UGS. Students spend up to four long semesters in UGS, completing core coursework that counts toward any degree.

77% of students in that first entering class selected Undergraduate Studies as their first or second choice.

Of the students who did not select us as their first or second choice, 55.2% ended up in their first-choice major when they transferred out of Undergraduate Studies.

The 4-year graduation rate of our initial class is predicted to be strong, especially when compared with UT's overall rate. Of the 709 students who entered Undergraduate Studies in fall 2009, more than 66% are on track to graduate in four years or less. This is 16 percentage points higher than the university's overall 50% 4-year graduation rate. (Source: [texastribune.org](http://texastribune.org))

Beginning October 2012, the school's interactive major exploration website, Wayfinder, will be a requirement for every applicant to UT Austin. As part of the Provost's efforts to champion 4-year graduation rates, a new portion of the site provides a formative experience that encourages prospective students to consider alternate majors that would result in steady progress to graduation.

### *Interdisciplinary degrees*

We continue to work with groups of faculty on the development of college-bridging new degrees that will ease demand on traditional degrees. These are robust contemporary majors designed to prepare students for an array of new career fields while aligning university resources in ways that improve graduation rates. Students benefit from access to multiple disciplines and graduate on time with the credentials they want and need.

## Academic Support

### *Strategic advising and career counseling*

With the acquisition of the Sanger Learning Center, we have combined services into one student-friendly center, where academic advisors and career counselors help students select coursework, choose majors, and find paths to graduation.

### *Map-Works*

MAP-Works is a pilot first-year intervention program that helps students establish roots at UT Austin and develop positive academic and social skills. Participation increases first year success by aligning student expectations with actual outcomes. The system builds a network of informed faculty and staff that can intervene early if a student is having trouble.