MEMORANDUM

To: The University Community

From: Sandra Harper

Re: Response to Draft of Institutional Vision, Mission, Institutional Principles, and University Goals

Background

During the 1998-1999 SACS Self-Study process, the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Steering Committee advanced this Recommendation: "The Institution must periodically study its Institutional Mission Statement to ensure that the Statement reflects both internal changes and any changes in responsibilities to its constituencies" (Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Self-Study for Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 1998-1999, p. 40). The Steering Committee was very complimentary of the extensive planning process that preceded the composition of the Academic Plan, which gave direction to the university as it proceeded to fulfill its mission during the decade of the nineties. Since Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has changed so dramatically over the past decade with the doubling of its student population and the addition of freshmen and sophomores, a doctoral program, intercollegiate athletics, and a variety of new student activities, the Steering Committee suggested that it was time again for a thorough campus discussion of the institutional mission.

To address this recommendation, President Furgason appointed a subcommittee of the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council (SPBC) in June 2000 to coordinate the effort to study the statement and determine whether or not it needed modification. The SPBC subcommittee consisted of Sandra Harper (Provost and chair of the subcommittee), Eliot Chenaux (Vice President for Student Affairs), Blair Sterba-Boatwright (Faculty Senate Speaker), Dee Edgar (Staff Advisory Council President), Diane Lawrence (President of the National Alumni Association of A&M-CC), and the President of the Student Government Association (Cassidy Johnson).

In the summer of 2000, the SPBC subcommittee decided that an appropriate plan of action would be to discuss the issue with smaller groups to determine whether or not there was a consensus to change the mission statement and, if so, to get some suggestions about what should be included in the statement. The Provost had the Extended Provost's Council study the mission statements of our aspiration institutions as well as our current mission statement and institutional philosophy at a Provost's Council Retreat. The Faculty Speaker discussed the issue with the Faculty Senators during a series of individual meetings. The Provost presented the statement to the Staff Advisory Council for its consideration. Dean Avila of University Outreach discussed this with her staff. Diane Lawrence communicated with the alumni to ask for their feedback and received
responses from 74 alumni. Each of these groups felt that the current mission statement should be changed. Most of the general comments noted that the current statement is too long and reads more like a course catalog than a mission statement. Coupled with the Mission Statement is a companion document entitled Institutional Philosophy. Most of the people who have reviewed this document felt that this is more a set of institutional principles rather than a philosophy.

At the January 2001 University Faculty Meeting, a call was issued for additional commentary as well as volunteers to serve on the Institutional Mission Statement Drafting Committee. Professors David Billeaux, Susan DeVany, Mollie Lewin, David Mead, Pam Meyer, Ross Purdy, and Robert Wooster volunteered to serve on the drafting committee. These individuals, as well as members of the SPBC subcommittee, circulated a draft that incorporated the feedback from the constituent groups to the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council, the Faculty Senate, the Provost’s Council, and the Division of Student Affairs for additional review and modification. These constituent groups agreed with a suggestion that the institution should consider a format for the document which included a vision (what we would like to be in 2010), a mission statement (what we do), a set of institutional principles (how we do it), and a set of university goals (specific statements of how we will achieve the vision and implement the mission). At the same time, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board asked all the public universities in the State to explain how each would help to “Close the Gaps” in Texas higher education in participation, success, excellence, and research.

In October 2001, the Institutional Mission Statement Drafting Subcommittee (with current Staff Advisory Council President Norma Cantu and current Student Government President Josh Osborne and Vice President Rachel Cayce) met again to finalize the draft to circulate to the entire University Community for public comment.

**Institutional Vision, Mission, Institutional Principles, and University Goals**

To help the university have a planning framework, the Institutional Vision, Mission, Institutional Principles, and University Goals document needs thoughtful consideration by the entire university community. Once the document is finalized, it is intended to inform other planning efforts throughout the university. That is, each university unit will need to ask itself how it can contribute to achieving one or more of the university goals. Thus, the university goals segment will eventually be a much larger document after a series of planning sessions coordinated by the various units on campus.

October 15, 2001-November 15, 2001 will be the public comment period for Draft G1 of the attached document.

Each member of the university community should read the document. Members of the Institutional Mission Statement Drafting Subcommittee are particularly interested in receiving answers to the following questions:

1) *Does this document clearly describe the vision, mission, institutional principles, and university goals that the university should pursue during the next decade?*

2) *Are there additional ideas that should be included in this document?*

3) *Are there ideas that need further debate or that should be deleted from this document?*

4) *Are there wording changes that would improve the document?*
Please submit your comments to sharper@falcon.tamucc.edu during this 30-day comment period.

At the end of the comment period, the Institutional Mission Statement Drafting Subcommittee will review the comments and will host a forum to discuss the document and the commentary. Feedback from the public comment period and the forum will be taken into consideration before submitting the final draft to the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council.