



**TABLE OF CONTENTS
FOR
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Committee Meeting: 5/11/2016

Board Meeting: 5/12/2016
Austin, Texas

*Ernest Aliseda, Chairman
Alex M. Cranberg
R. Steven Hicks
Brenda Pejovich
Sara Martinez Tucker*

	Committee Meeting	Board Meeting	Page
Convene	<i>10:30 a.m. Chairman Aliseda</i>		
1. U. T. System Board of Regents: Discussion and appropriate action regarding Consent Agenda items, if any, assigned for Committee consideration	<i>10:30 a.m. Discussion</i>	Action	115
2. U. T. Rio Grande Valley: Approval to extend the delegation of authority to the Chancellor to approve certain contracts for U. T. Rio Grande Valley	<i>10:31 a.m. Action President Bailey</i>	Action	115
3. U. T. Permian Basin: Approval to create a College of Nursing	<i>10:36 a.m. Action President Watts</i>	Action	116
4. U. T. Rio Grande Valley: Approval of preliminary authority for a Doctor of Philosophy in Physics	<i>10:41 a.m. Action President Bailey</i>	Action	117
5. U. T. System: Approval of \$5 million in Available University Funds (AUF) to support the Agreement of Cooperation in Higher Education and Research with The National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico; and finding that the expenditure of AUF for this purpose is appropriate	<i>10:47 a.m. Action President Romo Dr. Leslie</i>	Action	118
6. U. T. System: Discussion and appropriate action regarding termination of the Educational Partnership Agreement between U. T. Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (TSC) effective July 1, 2016, and abolition of U. T. Brownsville effective July 1, 2016	<i>11:02 a.m. Action Dr. Leslie</i>	Action	120
Adjourn	<i>11:15 a.m.</i>		

1. **U. T. System Board of Regents: Discussion and appropriate action regarding Consent Agenda items, if any, assigned for Committee consideration**

RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Consent Agenda is located at the back of the book. Consent Agenda items assigned to this Committee are on [Pages 269 - 298](#).

2. **U. T. Rio Grande Valley: Approval to extend the delegation of authority to the Chancellor to approve certain contracts for U. T. Rio Grande Valley**

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Deputy Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and President Bailey that the U. T. System Board of Regents extend the delegation of authority to the Chancellor or his delegate to approve contracts with a value of less than \$5 million for U. T. Rio Grande Valley that would otherwise require approval by the Board of Regents pursuant to the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 10501, Delegation to Act on Behalf of the Board.

This extended delegation is recommended to be conditioned upon the current requirement that the Chancellor provide a quarterly report to the Board of Regents of those contracts approved under this delegation of authority. The recommended extension will terminate as of August 31, 2016.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On February 12, 2015, the Board of Regents approved the original delegation of authority with effective dates beginning February 12, 2015, and terminating on April 30, 2016, to facilitate the expeditious and efficient handling of contracts needed to establish and begin operations of U. T. Rio Grande Valley. The recommended extension is needed to allow U. T. Rio Grande Valley to most efficiently process several pending contracts related to the U. T. Rio Grande Valley transition.

3. U. T. Permian Basin: Approval to create a College of Nursing

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Deputy Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and President Watts that approval be granted to create a College of Nursing at U. T. Permian Basin.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Permian Basin proposes to create a College of Nursing to establish an infrastructure to support the current nursing program and future programmatic development, with a reporting line directly to the provost.

The nursing program at U. T. Permian Basin, which is delivered in both a traditional face-to-face mode of instruction and in an accelerated, online Registered Nursing to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-to-BSN) mode, has achieved several notable milestones and successes. In November 2015, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) granted accreditation to the program effective February 4, 2015, the first date of CCNE's official site visit. The program graduated its first class in May 2015. The pass rate on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) for that class was 91%, and the Texas Board of Nursing granted full approval to the program.

The College of Nursing will be led by a dean and served by coordinators in three areas: Academics and Research, Clinical Education and Simulation, and RN-to-BSN Program. There will be no new hires. Funding in support of the dean's position would be provided by the Medical Center Health System Endowment, which was specifically established to support the nursing leader. Stipends for existing nursing faculty to serve as coordinators would come from institutional funds. Total costs for the first five years would be \$154,000, with \$100,000 covered by the Endowment and \$54,000 covered by the institution.

The creation of the new College has been approved by the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs pending approval by the Board. Upon approval by the Board of Regents, the Office of Academic Affairs will notify the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board of the change so that the U. T. Permian Basin administrative unit structure may be updated.

Texas Education Code Section 65.11 authorizes the Board of Regents to provide for the "administration, organization, and names of the institutions and entities in The University of Texas System in such a way as will achieve the maximum operating efficiency of such institutions and entities[.]"

4. **U. T. Rio Grande Valley: Approval of preliminary authority for a Doctor of Philosophy in Physics**

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Deputy Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and President Bailey that the U. T. System Board of Regents approve

- a. preliminary authority for U. T. Rio Grande Valley to include a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Physics; and
- b. notification of the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

U. T. Rio Grande Valley's College of Sciences requests preliminary authority for a Doctor of Philosophy in Physics. While a strict needs analysis suggests that the supply of Ph.D.s in physics will be greater than the demand, the concentration of excellence in the area of gravitational wave physics and astronomy research in the U. T. Rio Grande Valley Department of Physics strongly suggests that a stand-alone Ph.D. program could quickly achieve national and international prominence. The well-recognized departmental excellence, along with the close proximity to the SpaceX launch site, will provide unique opportunities to conduct doctoral research that are unavailable at other institutions. Such distinction will likely make graduates of the program highly competitive in both the academic and industry job markets. Further, the core faculty within the department has extensive experience teaching and mentoring doctoral students in the cooperative Ph.D. program in physics with U. T. San Antonio and the cooperative Ph.D. program in physics with U. T. Arlington.

Once preliminary authority has been approved, U. T. Rio Grande Valley will submit the degree program for approval by the U. T. System Board of Regents and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

5. **U. T. System: Approval of \$5 million in Available University Funds (AUF) to support the Agreement of Cooperation in Higher Education and Research with The National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico; and finding that the expenditure of AUF for this purpose is appropriate**

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Deputy Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs that the U. T. System Board of Regents

- a. authorize \$5 million in Available University Funds (AUF) to support the Agreement of Cooperation in Higher Education and Research with The National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico for four years; and
- b. find that expenditure of AUF for this purpose is appropriate under the U. T. System's responsibilities to coordinate the activities of the U. T. System institutions participating in the program, including support and maintenance of the participation of U. T. Austin in the program, with the intent that the expenditure will benefit a broad number of U. T. System institutions.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On August 25, 2015, during an event at U. T. San Antonio, Chancellor McRaven and Enrique Cabrero Mendoza, General Director of CONACYT, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing the basis for programs of cooperation between the two parties to promote and strengthen relations between both countries in regards to higher education and research. Using the MOU as a platform, this Agreement of Cooperation in Higher Education and Research represents the initial funded series of programs. A summary of the Agreement may be found on the following page.

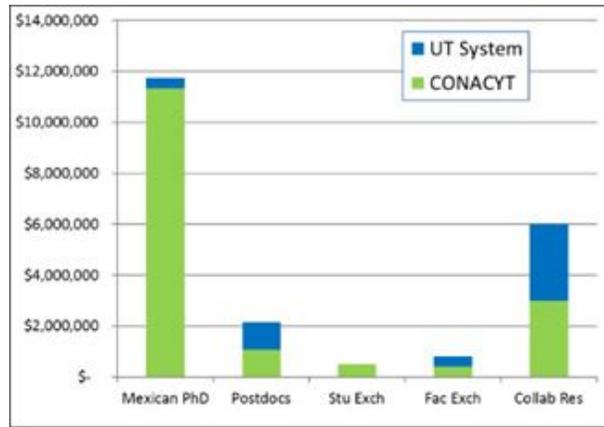
The programs supported through this Agreement include Mexican Ph.D. student education at U. T. System institutions, exchange of postdoctoral fellows, exchange of nondegree students and faculty, and collaborative research projects. The proposed funding provides program and administration support for four years.

The partnership with CONACYT is a U. T. System program to be administered through an office located on the U. T. San Antonio campus. The office will function under contract with U. T. System Administration through the Office of Academic Affairs. U. T. System Administration will reimburse the institution with the allocated AUF based on invoices submitted or other appropriate means. The allocation of AUF will also be used to reimburse U. T. Austin for expenses related to U. T. Austin's participation in the program. Funds provided by CONACYT will be used to reimburse the cost of institutional participation for those U. T. System institutions choosing to participate. Most U. T. System institutions have previously participated individually in educational programs funded by CONACYT.

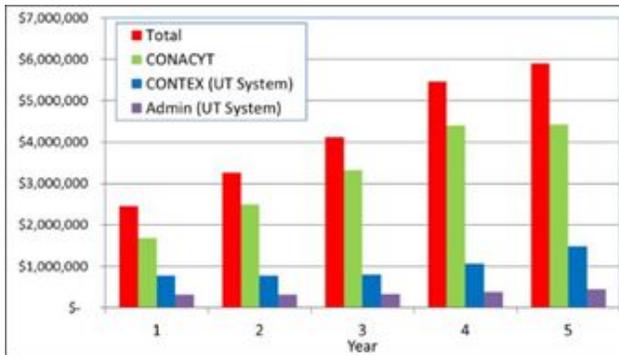
Agreement of Cooperation in Higher Education and Research

This will be the first agreement under the MOU signed in August 2015 establishing programs of cooperation between Mexico’s National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) and UT System. The programs supported through this Agreement include Mexican PhD student education, exchange of postdoctoral fellows, exchange of non-degree students and faculty, and collaborative research projects. During the 5-year time period to fully implement the Agreement, the total funding commitment could reach \$21.6 million. During this time period this would require a \$16.3 million commitment from CONACYT and \$4.9 million from UT System. The Agreement will be administered for UT System and CONACYT through the *CONTEX* program office, a component of UT System and located at UT San Antonio.

The largest financial commitment of this Agreement is for Mexican PhD student support, adding 30 students per year and reaching an ongoing number of 150 students. Financial support includes tuition, fees, health insurance, and a stipend. The first four years, where the student is largely involved with classroom study and significant research, is funded by CONACYT. The last year (year 5), if necessary, is funded by UT System. All students who participate in this program will meet entrance requirements of the hosting institution and be accepted for admission prior to commitment of financial support.



The collaborative research program will be jointly funded by UT System and CONACYT and is designed as seed funding to establish research programs involving faculty from UT institutions and Mexican institutions in research topics of mutual interest and bilateral significance. It is anticipated that the postdoctoral, non-degree student and faculty exchanges will be closely affiliated with the collaborative research program.



The annual UT System investment in this Agreement will increase from about \$770,000 in year 1 to about \$1.5 million in year 5, which reflects an ongoing level of support.

UT System support for this Agreement makes sense. Mexico remains the largest export market

for Texas products. Many of the Agreement programs PhD graduates will return to Mexico to work in higher levels of government, industry and as university faculty. It is a long-term benefit to Texas to have these individuals familiar with and supportive of UT System institutions, rather than another university within Texas, the U.S., or abroad. Recruitment and retention of well-qualified PhD students is always a primary objective for any research-active institution of Higher Education. UT institutions extend significant financial resources in these efforts, and PhD student support requires even greater funds from academic programs and/or individual faculty (at least in the STEM fields, the unfunded PhD student is a rare exception, and individual PhD student support for tuition, fees, health insurance and stipend easily ranges from \$40K to \$70K annually). This Agreement will provide well-qualified PhD students for UT institutions and cover a significant part of the associated costs. Furthermore, the additional international students will have a positive impact on the Texas economy (recent estimates suggest a positive impact in excess of \$22K per student annually). Additionally, this Agreement is consistent with recent bilateral efforts to enhance cooperation between Texas and Mexico.

6. U. T. System: Discussion and appropriate action regarding termination of the Educational Partnership Agreement between U. T. Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (TSC) effective July 1, 2016, and abolition of U. T. Brownsville effective July 1, 2016

RECOMMENDATION

The Chancellor concurs in the recommendation of the Deputy Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Executive Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs, and the Vice Chancellor and General Counsel that the Board of Regents approve the termination of the Educational Partnership Agreement between U. T. Brownsville and Texas Southmost College (TSC) effective July 1, 2016.

In addition, conditioned on approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to merge U. T. Rio Grande Valley and U. T. Brownsville, it is recommended that the Board abolish U. T. Brownsville effective July 1, 2016, and that the Board of Regents provide written notice of that action to the Texas Secretary of State as required by law.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Senate Bill 24 of the 83rd Legislative Session, which created U. T. Rio Grande Valley, required that the partnership agreement between U. T. Brownsville and Texas Southmost College be continued at least until September 1, 2015, to the extent necessary to ensure accreditation of the respective entities. On August 20, 2015, the Board of Regents approved an extension of the Educational Partnership Agreement between U. T. Brownsville and TSC until the earlier of August 31, 2016, or TSC achieving independent accreditation from SACSCOC.

U. T. Brownsville has remained operational with minimal administrative staff for the purpose of facilitating the partnership with TSC until independent accreditation is obtained. During its annual board meeting in December 2015, the SACSCOC approved TSC's application for independent accreditation, giving TSC the ability to provide educational opportunities and providing TSC students continued eligibility for federal financial aid.

Senate Bill 24 also directs the Board to choose a date of abolition of U. T. Brownsville. After the final transfer of assets, facilities, operations, programs, and liabilities to U. T. Rio Grande Valley, the Board of Regents may reasonably determine that the abolition of U. T. Brownsville on July 1, 2016, is appropriate. Accordingly, contingent upon action by SACSCOC at its June 2016 meeting related to the merger of U. T. Rio Grande Valley and U. T. Brownsville, the Chancellor and the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs recommend that the U. T. System Board of Regents abolish U. T. Brownsville effective July 1, 2016, and that on satisfaction of the contingency, written notice of the abolition be provided to the Texas Secretary of State as required by law.