

UTSA@50

Celebrating the First 50 Years of
The University of Texas at San Antonio



BOOK STORE



Getting Started 1969-1978



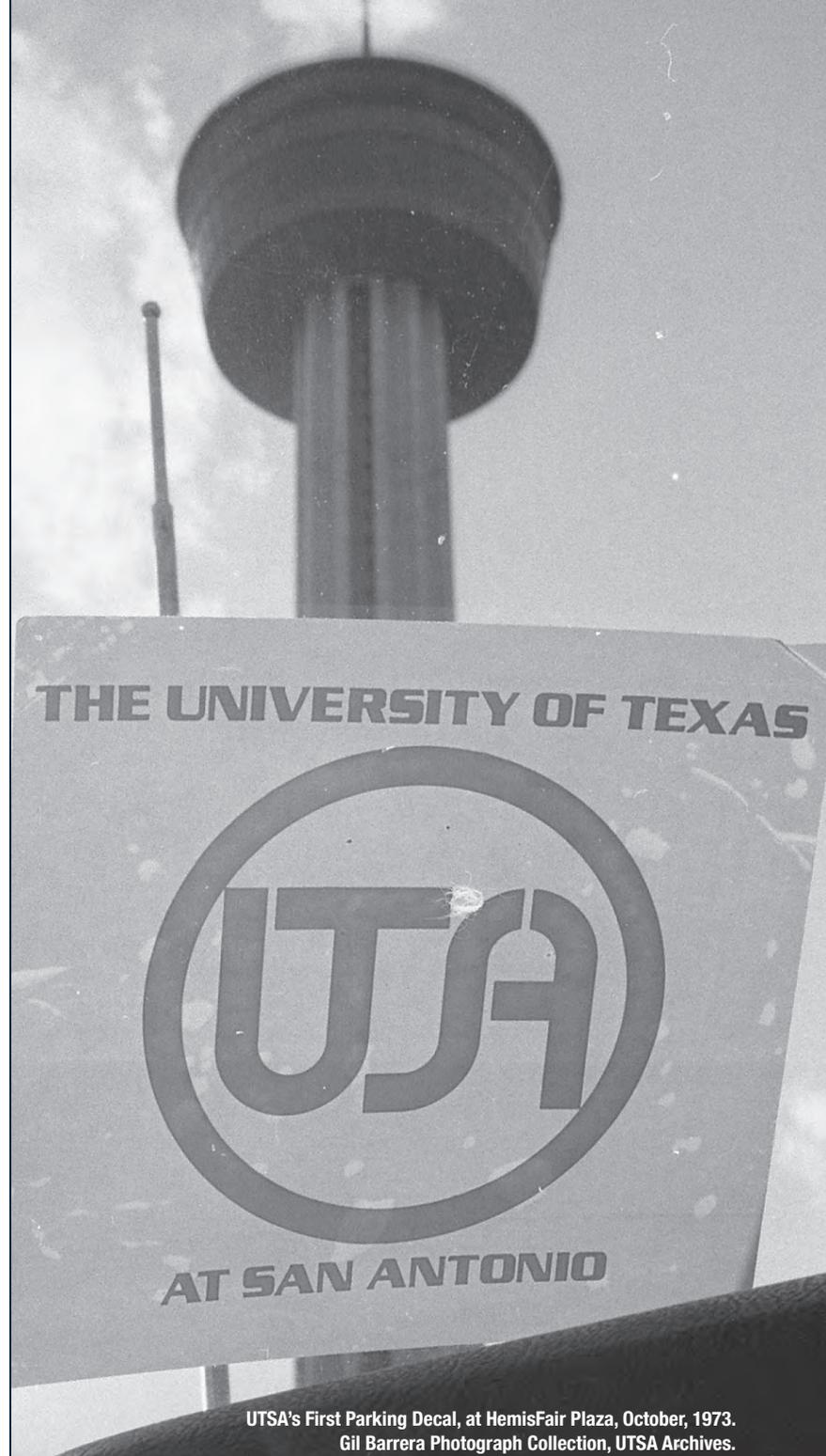
Defining a new university's mission, program, and student body is a complicated process.

As with the other branch campuses, there would be many cooks in the UTSA kitchen, including the Coordinating Board for Higher Education, the UT Board of Regents, the San Antonio business community, the presidents of the local private colleges, and UTSA's first two presidents. Each of these cooks had their own recipe for success, and some had more formal power than others. Complicating matters further, the personal perspectives and political influence of these chefs also played crucial roles in the initial planning. And once UTSA opened for business, its students would have a surprisingly important role in amending and expanding the definition of its mission.

First, though, the community had to settle where to build the new campus.

The bruising battle over HemisFair as that site even before the legislature approved the creation of UTSA essentially eliminated the downtown as a location. After Governor Smith signed the law establishing the University, the Regents began collecting proposals for land donations for its campus. The Downtowners Association tried to resurrect their proposal to use HemisFair, but the City Council had asked the Chamber of Commerce to restudy the use of that land after the Fair ended in 1968. While the Chamber conducted its review several other individuals and groups submitted their own proposals.

By the spring, 1970, the Regents had received nine offers. Local land owners had apparently taken to heart Mayor Walter McAllister's off-hand remark during the battle over the HemisFair site that the new university should be on the fringe of the city because seven of those offers were beyond the city limits. One offered a site just north of Helotes; another was on a Bexar County ranch twenty miles west of downtown. Just one site was within the city limits, between the Medical Center and Southwest Research Institute. (Its location remained undisclosed.)



UTSA's First Parking Decal, at HemisFair Plaza, October, 1973.
Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

“Fringe,” though, was a flexible term considering the distance some of these sites were from the downtown. All of them did, however, have a common theme. They all expected UTSA to act as a magnet to attract urban development around them. San Antonio's population was growing rapidly and developers who had been fortunate enough to own land around the new Medical Center had done very well building homes, apartments, and commercial space around the Center. USAA, at this point located at Broadway and Hildebrand, was planning to build a new, huge headquarters on I-10 West close to the Medical Center.

The far north side – beyond Loop 410 – was becoming the next great boom area for San Antonio’s expanding middle and upper class residents.

San Antonio’s northward lurch inflamed an old long-festering sore on the Southside. World War II had transformed Kelly and, to a lesser extent, Brooks, Air Force Bases into major employers, which had stimulated significant housing and commercial development through the early 1950’s. Southside development, however, had never matched the Northside’s, aggravating an old resentment that first emerged as far back as the 1920s about the unequal distribution of opportunities for growth – and community development – within San Antonio. Southsiders believed that locating the new university in their community would redress that historic wrong, and they had a powerful champion for their cause in County Commissioner A. J. Ploch.

“Fringe,” though, was a flexible term considering the distance some of these sites were from the downtown.

Ploch assembled a powerful coalition of politicians and Southside developers who proposed to locate the new university just beyond the city’s far southeast boundary, on an almost 400-acre Countyowned property called Southton. His coalition included several members of the Good Government League; ex-Governor Connally’s brother (who was a state legislator); a very prominent Southside developer; and a political confidant of both ex-Governor Connally and Regent John Peace. Demonstrating that Southside loyalty trumped political ideology, Commissioner Albert Pena, as liberal as Ploch was conservative, also supported the Southton proposal.

Opposing Ploch was another alliance that, according to various rumors, wanted to create a medical-educational complex on the Northside. Although the members of this alliance remained anonymous, in May, 1969, John Peace had described UTSA as part of an “educational complex” on the Northside that would become “one of the great academic centers in the

South, as well as one of the major economic factors in San Antonio and South Texas.” He was therefore on record as favoring a north side location a year before the actual decision would be made.

While those opposing alliances fought the newest battle over the direction of San Antonio’s growth, the Regents’ staff assembled the criteria for deciding among the competing site proposals. One item in particular seems to have been crucial: the staff set the minimum size for a site at 500 acres. Most of the private developers who had initially offered much less land than that promptly increased the size of their offers to match or exceed that minimum. Ploch, however, could not increase the size of his offer without authorization from the Commissioners Court to purchase of additional land, and he apparently did not seek that authority. The Southton site therefore remained smaller than the required minimum.

Not surprisingly, the Regents chose among three northside sites that became the finalists based on the staffs’ criteria. Rather predictably, the Regents emphasized the 1604 site as “the best possibility for coordination and centralization of academic and health programs,” echoing Peace’s comment a year previously. In effect, the Regents had paid homage to a widely accepted belief that locating similar economic activities close to one another created opportunities for more dynamic growth.

That rather ethereal idea, however, ignored the political realities of San Antonio. Commissioner Ploch immediately denounced the 1604 choice as a political gift to northside developers, ignoring the obvious fact that selecting the Southton site would have benefitted southside developers (including John Peace and John Connally, who jointly owned 900 acres of land close to Southton). As far as he was concerned, the Southside had once again lost an opportunity for community development, which was certainly true.

It was, however, reactions from to the Westside Mexican-American community that transformed the site decision into a major controversy. In the late 1960s San Antonio had become an important center of the Mexican-American civil rights revolution. Education was a particularly sensitive issue. San Antonio’s local system of independent school districts,

with their widely disparate property tax bases, had guaranteed that minority students could not have access to quality education. In addition, the curricula at such schools deliberately focused on vocational training, depriving students of preparation for college as a viable option in their lives. Ironically, since the 1940's, jobs at Kelly Air Force Base had gradually created a sizeable Mexican-American middle class on the Westside that was becoming increasingly insistent on access to a college education for its children. Anger over the lack of educational opportunities passed the boiling point in 1968 when students at Edgewood and Lanier High Schools launched a protest movement to end decades of systematic discrimination.

Peace wanted to create opportunities for cooperation between the UT Health Science Center and UTSA that would require strong undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the sciences and engineering.

The Regents' site decision became a flash point in the local battle over civil rights. A few days after they announced their decision, a conference of civil rights activists meeting at St. Mary's University denounced the decision as a deliberate attempt to discourage Westside residents from attending UTSA because it was so far away. In point of fact, the Southton site was not particularly convenient to the Westside either, but the denunciation recast the site debate into a question of social justice that would plague perceptions of UTSA for more than twenty years.

In the meantime, the Regents' decision temporarily confirmed Peace's vision of what kind of university UTSA should be. His desire to create an "educational complex" on the Northside apparently reflected his understanding of the growing importance of medical schools as a source of economic development in America at the time. Thus, Peace wanted to create opportunities for cooperation between the UT Health Science Center and UTSA that would require strong undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the sciences and engineering. His vision was a reasonable interpretation of the Legislature's stated intention that UTSA should be a "university of the first class."

Unfortunately for Peace, there were other visions of what UTSA should be. The Coordinating Board, in a decidedly frugal mood, mandated that UTSA should be a commuter – rather than a traditional – university with a relatively small student enrollment and no doctoral programs, which were expensive but also indispensable to Peace's vision. San Antonio's private colleges posed another problem. They feared that UTSA's inexpensive tuition would drive them out of business (which did not happen). In an attempt to avoid that possibility, the UT System's Vice Chancellors who were supervising UTSA's development bent over backwards to assure the presidents of those colleges that UTSA would not duplicate any of their programs. Although such a promise would turn out to be impossible, their pledge of non-duplication complicated the creation of programs appropriate for a comprehensive university.

The Vice Chancellors also had a seriously different idea of how to ensure that UTSA's programs had broad appeal within the community. Even before formal planning began, they publicly and repeatedly argued that UTSA should specialize in Latin American Studies. Their interest in that idea apparently arose from two practical issues. First, Westside school districts had already responded to high school student demands for better and more relevant educational opportunities by introducing bilingual programs at Edgewood High School and elsewhere. Officials trying to define a focus for UTSA would naturally seek ways to appeal to the local community interest in such programs. Secondly, System officials needed ways to define a "regional specialty" for each of the new branch campuses. Exactly what that meant was and is obscure, but it does imply specialized teaching and research related to the culture of a particular place. It also implied that UTSA would establish its national reputation by focusing on a liberal arts program rather than on science and engineering, as Peace wanted.

Although the number of cooks contributing to the evolving recipe for UTSA's vision and mission was becoming quite large, there was yet one more whose presence in the kitchen would become the most disruptive of all. In May, 1970, the Regents appointed UTSA's first president, Dr. Arleigh Templeton. At the



Arleigh Templeton (seated), UTSA's First President, with (from left to right) Douglas Hodo, Dean of the College of Business; Louis Rodriguez, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Jacinto Quirarte, Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts; and Richard E. W. Adams, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

time, he seemed to be an excellent choice. Born and raised in poor, rural East Texas, Templeton combined intelligence, ambition, and a talent for politics to rise from a small town school teacher to president of a junior college and then to president of Sam Houston State College by 1964. He also earned a doctorate in education from the University of Houston. At each stage of his career his innovative approaches to education and his administrative abilities earned him the respect and support of a large number of influential

Templeton's political connections with key Legislators who oversaw budget issues gave him a funding for UTSA.

state politicians.

It was in fact those politicians who had promoted his administrative career. Their faith in him had been justified by the results he achieved. He transformed Sam Houston State from a small college into a respectable university by focusing on practical academic programs that provided students with solid training. When the Board of Regents began looking for UTSA's first president, Templeton's reputation and political connections made him a natural choice.

As chairman of the Board of Regents, Frank Erwin dispensed with the usual formalities in selecting a president. He and Peace simply asked Templeton whether he was interested. Templeton said yes on the condition that there would be no search committee or interview process. Erwin expedited the appointment process by surveying the other Regents by telephone while Templeton sat with him waiting for the results.

Templeton's political connections with key Legislators who oversaw budget issues gave him a remarkable ability to arrange funding for UTSA. His own success and the support he enjoyed among those Legislators, however, also encouraged him to believe that his own ideas for designing and operating a university would prevail in an already crowded field of competing recipes. From his own vantage point, he defined

himself as the master chef.

Templeton's ideas about a university, unsurprisingly, were rooted in his personal history. Having spent his early career serving the needs and aspirations of rural Texans, he believed in practical training that prepared students for employment. Despite having earned a doctorate, he had little patience for research of any sort that was not immediately practical to students. His nationally acclaimed program in criminal justice



Michael Kelly, who served with distinction as Dean of the Library from 1972 to 2005. UTSA Archives.

at Sam Houston State illustrated how he designed programs to emphasize practical training and research. Templeton also believed in centralized administrative power that supported student needs. As President at Sam Houston State, he personally intervened to solve students' problems with their courses and took an interest in guiding many of them into successful careers. Viewing a college education from a student perspective, Templeton had a dim view of his faculty, believing that they were too inclined to engage in useless research and that they "hated students."

In sum, Templeton did not believe in the kind of university that John Peace and other San Antonio businessmen hoped to build. Shortly after Templeton's appointment, the Express-News expressed their hopes that UTSA would promote San Antonio's economic development because "one of the surest lures for new space age plants is the existence of a major university nearby." Although Templeton's focus on student success was certainly something businessmen could endorse, his disdain for research and for a university that defined its success by the national reputation of its graduate programs was going to be a bitter disappointment to them.

Templeton quickly established a headquarters at HemisFair where he and his small staff spent



Dewey Davis, Professor of Education, teaching a class at the Koger Center, June 7, 1973. Professor Davis was the first faculty member hired by President Templeton.

their days visiting Westside high schools, meeting with advocates for various versions of UTSA, and pondering its organization and programs. By August, 1970, he had decided that a university-wide bilingual curriculum would be a “special emphasis” available to all students who were proficient in Spanish and English. He also proposed creating a school of paramedical studies in cooperation with the Health Science Center. Both proposals reflected Templeton’s determination to create programs for minority students and to graduate every student with practical skills. In proposing paramedical studies he also sought to deal with expectations that UTSA would have cooperative programs with the Medical Center. His version of cooperation reflected his dislike of research as well as his apparent disdain for administrators at the Center, whom he referred to as “med heads.”

He also nipped a budding campaign for football at UTSA. Representative Frank Lombardino may have been the first to promote this idea when he issued a challenge to Texas Christian University to schedule a football game against an as yet nonexistent UTSA football team. TCU’s coach responded coolly that his team’s schedule was too full for the next twenty years to accommodate such a match. Local sports fans joined this discussion, lobbying for a football stadium at the University which would also provide a venue for an equally nonexistent San Antonio professional football team. Templeton disliked athletics in general and ended these speculative hopes by announcing that: “I’m going to build a university. Football can take care of itself.”

Having settled that, Templeton sent a comprehensive proposal for the administrative organization and programs to the Regents. His plan proposed five colleges: Humanities and Social Sciences; Sciences; Business; Fine and Applied Arts; and Education. Interestingly, he proposed a School of Engineering in the College of Sciences, which may have been a concession to the business community, which had long sought such an asset for the city. On the other hand, Templeton wanted some very practical programs such as home management, which he placed under “Domestic Arts,” and secretarial studies, which he located in the College of Business. In the College of Sciences he sought degree programs in medical technology, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

Templeton had also made his final decision about a program that would gain national prominence for UTSA. He announced that he intended to work toward making the University “first in the nation in bilingual education in five years.” As an emerging field of study, bilingual education met Templeton’s goal of focusing on an idea that reflected San Antonio’s culture as the best way for UTSA to acquire academic distinction.

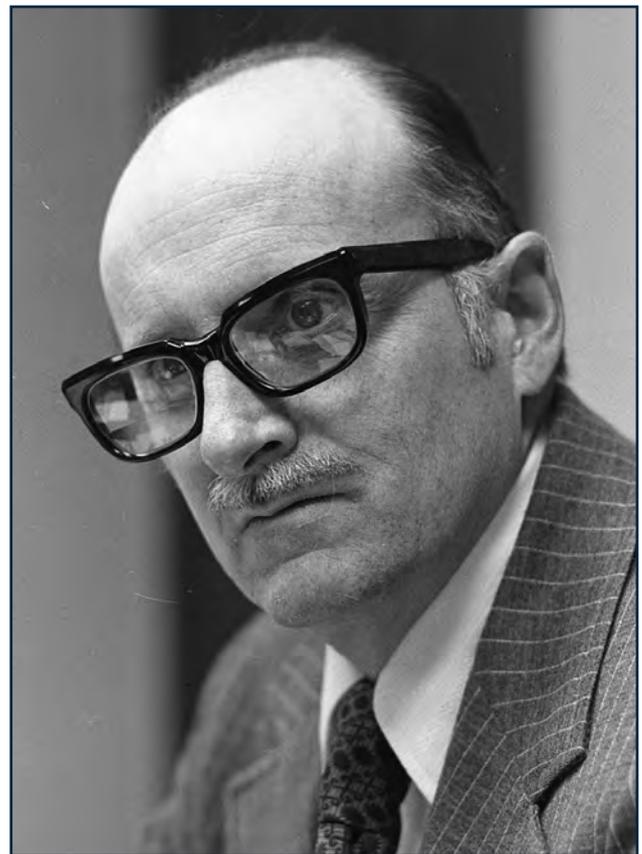
He submitted his plans to the Regents in early 1971 and then to the Coordinating Board in April. Professor June Hyer, Templeton’s Vice President for Academic Affairs, commenting on the Board’s approval of twenty-six bachelors and thirteen master’s degree programs, noted that “the UTSA and Coordinating Board Staff attempted to set up programs that were not already represented as strong areas in existing schools in San Antonio.” She singled out Bilingual-Bicultural Studies and Environmental Management for special mention because they “focus on people rather than on the scientific and technical areas.”

Templeton’s own public statements reinforced that focus on people. An early planning document, for example, declared that “an institutional philosophy is being forged that will call for a maximum of student-faculty interaction . . . Research will be very much a secondary concern of the University’s faculty, who will be expected to devote more than an average number of hours per week in direct contact with their students.”

San Antonians interested in UTSA's potential to help with economic development by offering graduate programs and cooperating with the Health Science Center were now fighting a losing battle. In the fall 1971 they suffered another defeat when Templeton submitted what would become his final version of UTSA's academic organization. He retained his original idea for five colleges, but he substituted a College of Multi-Disciplinary Studies for a College of Education. He placed his two favorite programs, Bicultural-Bilingual Studies and Environmental Studies, in that College, which also contained three program areas for Education.

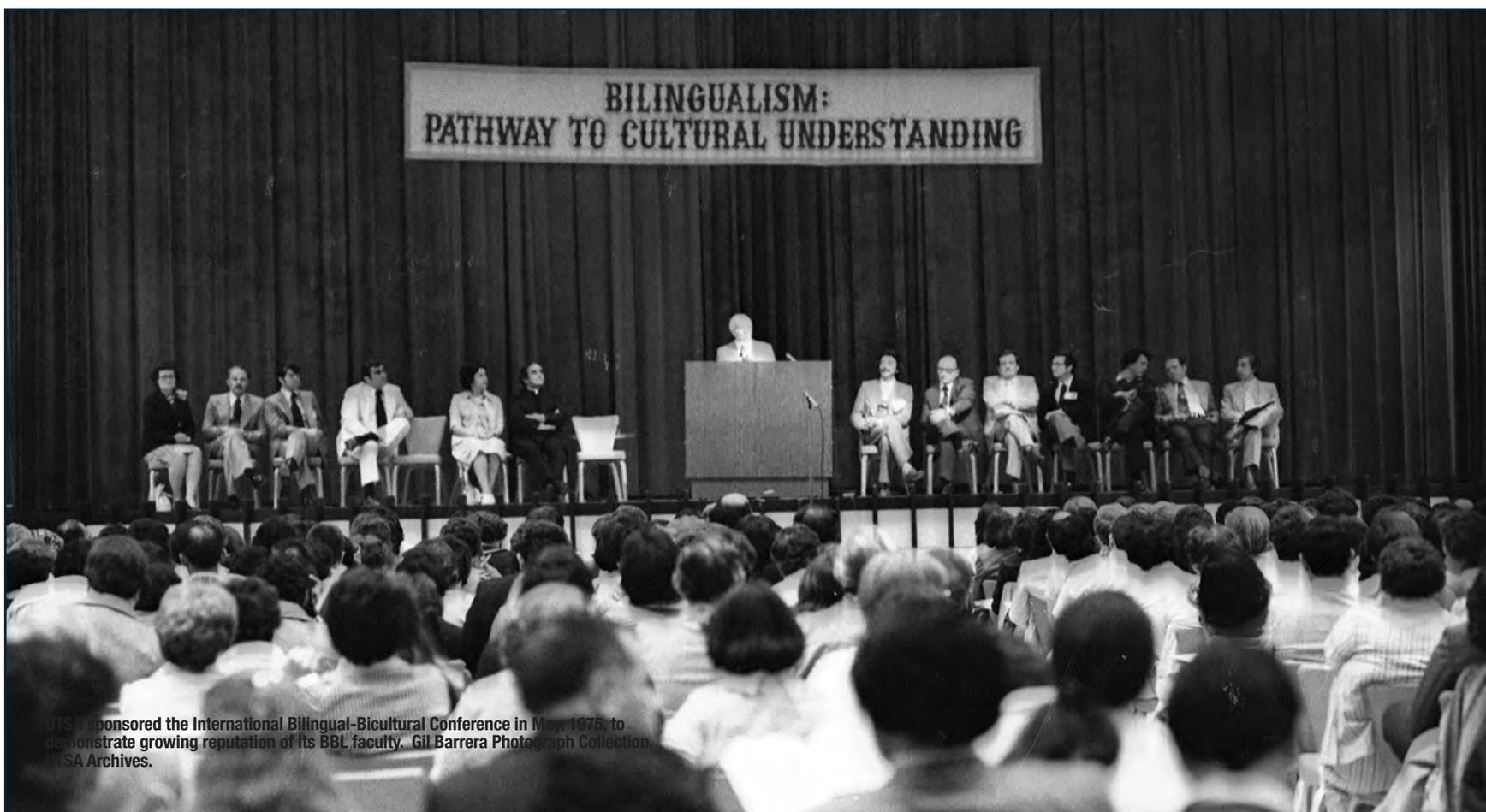
Since Templeton disliked the idea of separate academic departments, he created seventeen Divisions that he distributed among the five Colleges. Each Division contained faculty from related disciplines. For example, he assigned anthropologists, geographers, historians, psychologists, political scientists, and sociologists to the Division of Social Sciences. According to this arrangement, faculty would (in theory) learn to cooperate across disciplines to offer a multi-disciplinary education to their students.

For John Peace, though, Templeton's proposals contained fatal flaws. Templeton had eliminated a School of Engineering, and his plans for a Science



Peter Flawn became President of UTSA as a result of John Peace's concerns about the University's development. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, January, 1973. UTSA Archives.

Building did not include laboratories for faculty research and student training. The absence of an engineering program and science laboratories would affect the business community's interest in UTSA, doom any efforts to develop cooperative programs with the Health Science Center, and seriously undermine faculty research activities.



UTSA sponsored the International Bilingual-Bicultural Conference in May, 1975, to demonstrate growing reputation of its BBL faculty. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

Student unrest at the University of Texas at El Paso created an opportunity for Peace to deal with his concerns over the direction of UTSA's development. The Regents took a very dim view of student protests that had been erupting occasionally in Austin, and the situation at El Paso convinced them that they needed a strong leader there. Templeton had a well-earned reputation for low tolerance of student and faculty protests, which made him a natural choice to solve the problems at El Paso. Peace quickly arranged with Frank Erwin to transfer Templeton to UTEP and to replace him with Peter Flawn, whose academic experience differed significantly from Templeton's.

In August, 1973, Flawn announced the creation of UTSA's first research center, the Center for Studies in Business, Economics, and Human Resources led by Professor Antonio Furino.

Flawn had the sort of credentials that Peace needed to modify Templeton's approach to designing UTSA. First, he was a very distinguished geologist, which meant that he was personally well-acquainted with the role of faculty research in creating a major university. In addition, he was a seasoned administrator who had risen to the position of Executive Vice President at UT-Austin, which gave him a broad understanding of the essential ingredients for building a new institution. Flawn was also well acquainted with Mexico because of his professional research interests and spoke fluent Spanish – which Templeton did not.

As President, though, Flawn would have only limited opportunities to redirect UTSA's mission toward Peace's vision because the Regents and Coordinating Board had already approved Templeton's basic plan. He could, however, make some critical adjustments. Flawn arrived in San Antonio on December 27, 1972, and quickly surveyed the plans for UTSA's first buildings. When he discovered that the Science Building had no laboratories, he became concerned that their absence would jeopardize his ability to hire the kind of faculty he wanted and to develop cooperative programs with the Health Science Center. Flawn attempted to deal with those problems with

the help of Professor Bernard Sagik, a distinguished microbiologist at UT-Austin, whom he would also convince to become the first Dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics. With Flawn's help, Sagik not only created space for laboratories in the Building, he also managed to find the money for a separate small laboratory building on the "West Campus" to augment UTSA's initial research capabilities.

Flawn also made some important adjustments in the content of Bicultural Studies. Templeton had planned some programs that were more appropriate to a junior college curriculum than to a university. Flawn eliminated those and also established a more academically rigorous mission for the Division of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies. Then In February, 1973, he hired Joseph Michel, a Mexican-born Professor of Foreign Language Education and Director of the Foreign Language Education Center at UT Austin as Dean of the College of Multidisciplinary Studies.

Templeton's understandable preoccupation with planning issues also created another opportunity for Flawn. He had only begun to pay attention to hiring



Tomas Rivera, President Templeton's second faculty hire, became a well-respected administrator at UTSA. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

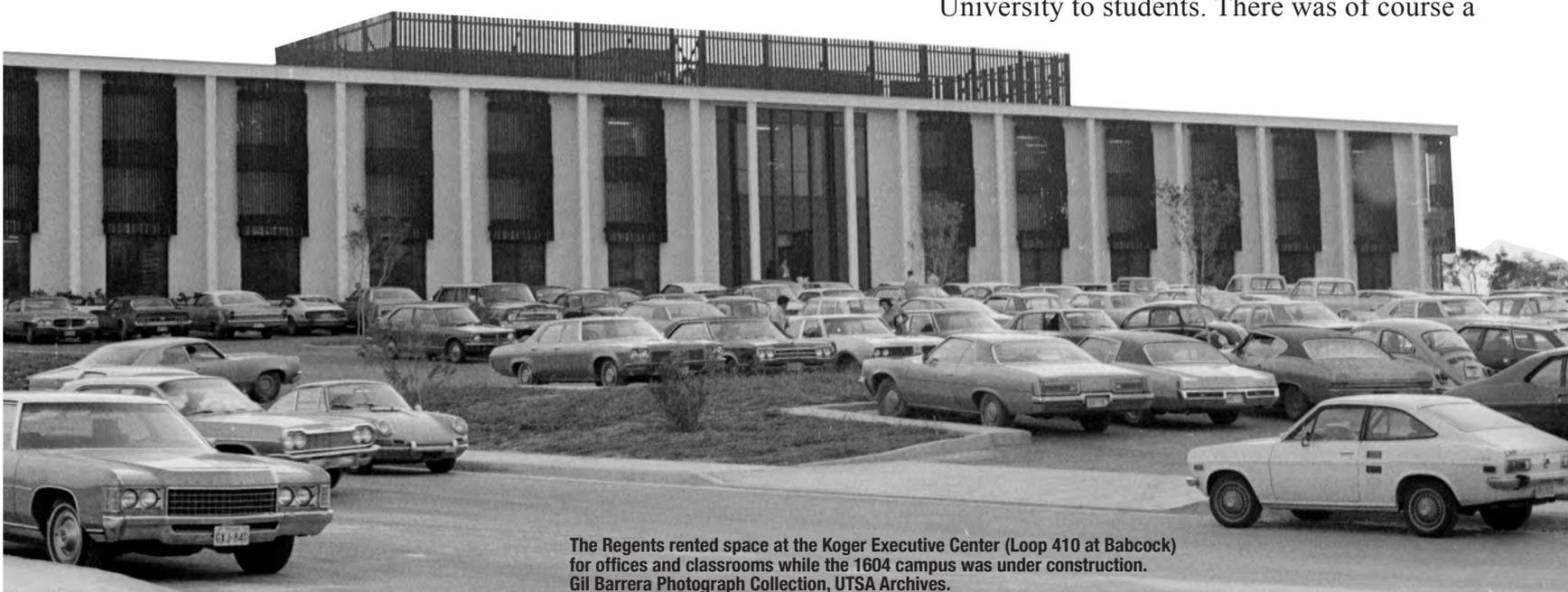
faculty and staff by the fall of 1972. His first, and only, faculty hires were Dewey Davis, a Professor of Education who would enjoy a long and successful career at UTSA, and Tomas Rivera, from Sam Houston State University, who became Professor of Spanish Language and Director of the Division of Foreign Languages. Rivera was a nationally known poet and expert on Mexican-American literature, who would become a highly respected administrator during his years at UTSA. In addition, Templeton had only managed to hire three Deans: Richard W. Adams, a distinguished Anthropologist, as Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences; Louis Rodriguez, as Dean of the College of Business; and Jacinto Quirarte, a wellrespected member of the arts community, as Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts. Michael F. Kelly had also joined the staff as Director of Libraries. He would perform superbly at the very challenging task of building a university library collection.

With so few administrators and faculty on board, Flawn would have a major opportunity to hire people who shared his vision of a university. Flawn's personal experience at UT-Austin gave him a clear understanding of the time, effort, and resources required to build a major research university. He knew that he would not immediately be able to replicate that achievement in San Antonio, but he did want to lay the foundations for future development by creating an excellent regional university. The key to accomplishing that more limited goal was to hire faculty who were interested in research as well as teaching. Productive researchers, particularly in the

sciences, would establish the basis for cooperation with the Health Science Center, which was one of John Peace's major goals. In addition, a faculty actively engaged in research could benefit San Antonio's business, political, and social communities and could eventually help establish UTSA's national reputation.

Flawn devoted considerable attention to initiatives that linked faculty research to those communities. Very early in his presidency the Regents assigned the Institute of Texan Cultures to UTSA. Its staff were launching a variety of projects that would enhance the University's role in San Antonio, including a number of historical monographs on ethnic groups and an oral history program that collected the experiences of important cultural, business, and political leaders in the city. In August, 1973, Flawn announced the creation of UTSA's first research center, the Center for Studies in Business, Economics, and Human Resources led by Professor Antonio Furino. The Center became an important resource for local businesses and government agencies in assessing and solving economic issues. In October, 1973, Dean Richard Adams and Professor Thomas Hester directed a group of graduate students in an archeological search for relics at the Alamo. Their work soon evolved into the Center for Archeological Research, whose work on the Missions, the acequia system, and Native American sites became a valuable source of information on the early history and evolution of San Antonio.

While working to demonstrate the value of research to local communities, Flawn also had to open the University to students. There was of course a



The Regents rented space at the Koger Executive Center (Loop 410 at Babcock) for offices and classrooms while the 1604 campus was under construction. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



UTSA's first day of instruction, June 7, 1973. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

great deal of community interest in the details of when classes would begin, admission standards, tuition costs, student campus activities, and, especially, when the contractor would finish the first seven buildings that were currently under construction.

Flawn addressed those issues in a wide-ranging interview on April 1, 1973 with an Express-News reporter. He began by saying that construction delays on the campus' buildings meant that UTSA would



A major milestone: Students arriving for the first day of classes at the Koger Executive Center, June 7, 1973; Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Mrs. Peggy Jo Thelen became the first student admitted to UTSA in March, 1973, when the University began offering graduate degree programs at the Koger Executive Center in June. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

not begin accepting applications from undergraduate students until the spring, 1975 for classes beginning in September that year. He did expect enrollment to increase rapidly, reaching between eight and ten thousand by 1977. Tuition was set at \$4 a semester credit hour, and a full-time student would pay about \$120 per semester for tuition and all fees. Admission to the University would depend on a student's performance in high school and on their scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). For those who had been waiting a long time for an accessible, inexpensive college education, Flawn's answers about costs and admission standards were indeed very welcome news.

The reporter, who obviously had some knowledge of college campuses, asked about dormitories and student organizations. Since the Coordinating Board had already declared that UTSA would be a commuter school, Flawn responded that there were no plans for dormitories because students attending a metropolitan university normally lived throughout the city. He did think that private industry would eventually build apartments near the campus. With regard to student organizations, Flawn said that UTSA would encourage the formation of honor societies and service groups, but it would have no “formal relations of any kind with social societies [i.e., sororities and fraternities].”

In asking about dorms and student organizations the reporter neglected to probe an implication of Flawn’s reference to metropolitan universities. The Coordinating Board’s designation of UTSA as a commuter campus meant that there would be little, if any, space set aside for the evolution of a dynamic student culture on campus. Dorms and student organizations – which require space for meetings and events– were, and are, standard features of residential campuses. Because UTSA was to be a commuter campus, there was no need – from the Coordinating Board’s perspective – to plan for such things as a student center to support student campus activities. That situation would quickly become a major concern for UTSA’s first students.

UTSA’s controversial location arose in the reporter’s questions about transportation to the campus. Flawn sought to diffuse that issue by stressing plans for easy access to UTSA from all areas of the city. He noted that University officials had been discussing the use of express buses “from a number of conveniently located terminals in various parts of the city.” His answer implied that he expected most students to ride those buses, but the reporter, making a different assumption, also wanted to know whether there would be free parking on campus. Flawn disabused him of that notion, saying that “we shall charge only a nominal fee for a parking permit.”

When the reporter turned to athletics, he focused solely on football, asking whether there would be a team, when it would be formed, and in which conference it would play. Probably unaware of Arleigh Templeton’s prior, brusque response to



Representative Frank Lombardino assists President Peter Flawn in signing Ms. Bolando's degree. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Dean Douglas Hodo performing the hooding ceremony for Susan Bolando, UTSA first graduate, on August 8, 1974. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Launching a tradition: Mariachis at the first commencement. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



UTSA's first graduates pose at commencement ceremonies held in the University of Texas Health Sciences Center Auditorium, August 8, 1974. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Another milestone: The first final exams, July 12, 1973.

a similar question, Flawn defused the reporter's enthusiasm by saying UTSA would begin with "a strong intramural sports program and move into intercollegiate athletics when we can afford it. I imagine that our first effort will be in basketball."

The reporter turned finally to UTSA's economic impact on San Antonio. This had become a favorite topic of speculation in the local press, although the discussion focused on immediate, tangible effects rather than on more important, longer-range

possibilities that were not easily reduced to numbers. Flawn dutifully supplied him with the figures for the University's payroll, whose size would increase as staff and faculty numbers increased. He also mentioned the economic impact of buying materials and hiring workers locally to construct seven buildings.

Construction had by this point become a major roadblock in plans for UTSA's opening. Peace and other UT System officials had promised that UTSA would be fully operational by 1973.

Unfortunately, the contractor who won the bid for the first phase of campus construction quickly fell behind schedule, even though the Regents had been very prompt in awarding a contract once they had approved a site. By late 1972 the contractor had made little progress, and Templeton arranged to rent space for UTSA at the Koger Executive Center, a small group of buildings located at Loop 410 and Babcock.

The Koger Center was too small to accommodate a full complement of students ranging from freshmen to graduate students, and there were not yet enough faculty hired to teach them (there would be only 52 faculty by June 1972). Since Flawn had neither the

staff nor the space to offer a comprehensive array of programs, he decided to open the University to students in June for summer sessions, but to limit enrollment to graduate students in a few selected programs (especially in Education, Business, and Bilingual Studies).

Mrs. Peggy Jo Tholen was UTSA's first student. She joined 834 others for the first summer session, most of whom were interested, as she was, in a Master's degree in Education. Bicultural Bilingual Studies and Spanish also attracted large numbers of students. For the academic year starting in September, graduate enrollments more than doubled, to 1,855.

Some of these first students were able to complete their degrees fairly quickly by attending school continuously. That enabled the University to award 74 master's degrees its first commencement, complete with mariachis, in August, 1974, at an auditorium in the Health Sciences Center. President Flawn, in an impromptu ceremony replicating Governor Shivers' signing of the legislation to create UTSA, signed the first diploma on the back of State Representative Frank Lombardino. That diploma was awarded to Mrs. Susan Bolado, a student in Business Administration, who became UTSA's first graduate.

A shortage of classrooms and offices at the Koger Center, however, restrained further growth in student enrollments for the next two years. As construction at the 1604 campus proceeded slowly, Flawn faced a difficult dilemma. He had no guarantee that there would be enough space available by August, 1975, to open UTSA to undergraduates, but he needed to be prepared to enroll thousands of students by that date. Established universities had or did many things routinely; UTSA, however, would be doing those things for the first time. Flawn, for instance, needed many more faculty to plan and teach courses for all the undergraduate degree programs. In addition, staffing had to increase dramatically to deal with the expansion of services that larger numbers of students would need.

In the Fall of 1974, Flawn gambled that the contractor would finish his work by the following January and announced UTSA would begin accepting undergraduate applications in March. He hedged



UTSA began recruiting its first Freshman class in the fall, 1975. Here, 200 seniors from Edgewood, Southwest, Fox Tech, Robert Cole, and Providence High Schools participate in a tour of the campus. November, 1975. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

his bet, though, by limiting applications to juniors and seniors and total enrollment to 4,000 students in order to avoid overloading his still fairly small faculty and staff. Staff trained as recruiters visited area high schools, including Edgewood and Fox Tech, to invite applications, and UTSA advertised its pending opening to undergraduates throughout the city. Mrs. Margaret Aguilar became UTSA's first undergraduate to gain admission in December, 1974.

Flawn won his gamble – barely – when 4,433 students and 180 faculty arrived for the first day of classes, September 2, 1975. Only the Humanities and Social Sciences Building had been finished in time for their arrival. The Library and Bookstore shared the small Athletic Building next to the Convocation Center with Flawn and his administrative staff, while the contractor completed work on the other buildings, which gradually became available over the next year. That allowed Flawn to welcome the first freshman class to UTSA in the Fall of 1976, when total enrollment reached 7,200 students.

With UTSA at last open for business at its permanent location, student expectations about the nature of their university experience began to emerge as an important issue. By definition a commuter campus lacked many attributes of a “real” university, and some students began to notice that rather quickly. Flawn himself expected that students would play a role in the evolution of UTSA, commenting that: “One benefit for students attending a new university is that they will have an impact on the development of its academic programs and on student life. They will leave their mark.”



Slow progress on constructing the 1604 campus caused a two year delay in opening the University to undergraduates. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.





Professor Marian Martinello assists a student in class, February 12, 1976. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

UTSA's first students would have more of an impact than usual on the development of campus life. Because the University started with graduate students and then added juniors and seniors in the fall of 1975, the first students were older (the average age of students that fall was 30), more mature, and more interested in organizing student life to enhance their university experience. There were some differences between graduate and undergraduate students regarding the kinds of organizations they wanted. Because many of them were already engaged in professional work, they sought to establish student societies that would improve their opportunities for success in their chosen fields. Undergraduates would be more interested in founding social and political groups and supporting activities that created the kind of campus student culture that existed at established universities.

As a faculty member and administrator at UT-Austin, Flawn understood the role of student activities on a university campus. Templeton had not had time to deal with this issue, but Flawn moved quickly to establish an administrative framework to accommodate student needs. In February, 1973, he created the Student Services Division and hired Dora Groosenbacher, who had been Dean of Women at St. Mary's University, to serve as Dean of the Student Services Division. The new Division initially had responsibility for



President Flawn recruited Dora Grossenbacher from St. Mary's University to serve as Dean of Students in early 1973. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

student financial aid, maintaining relations with junior colleges and high schools, and developing policies for its operations. Grossenbacher's staff, though, would quickly become a major source of support for various student organizations.

The urge to organize emerged even before completion of the new campus. In the fall, 1974, Graduate students at the Koger Center created Beta Upsilon, a



President Flawn and Dean Grossenbacher congratulate Mrs. Margaret Aguilar, UTSA first undergraduate student, December, 1974. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

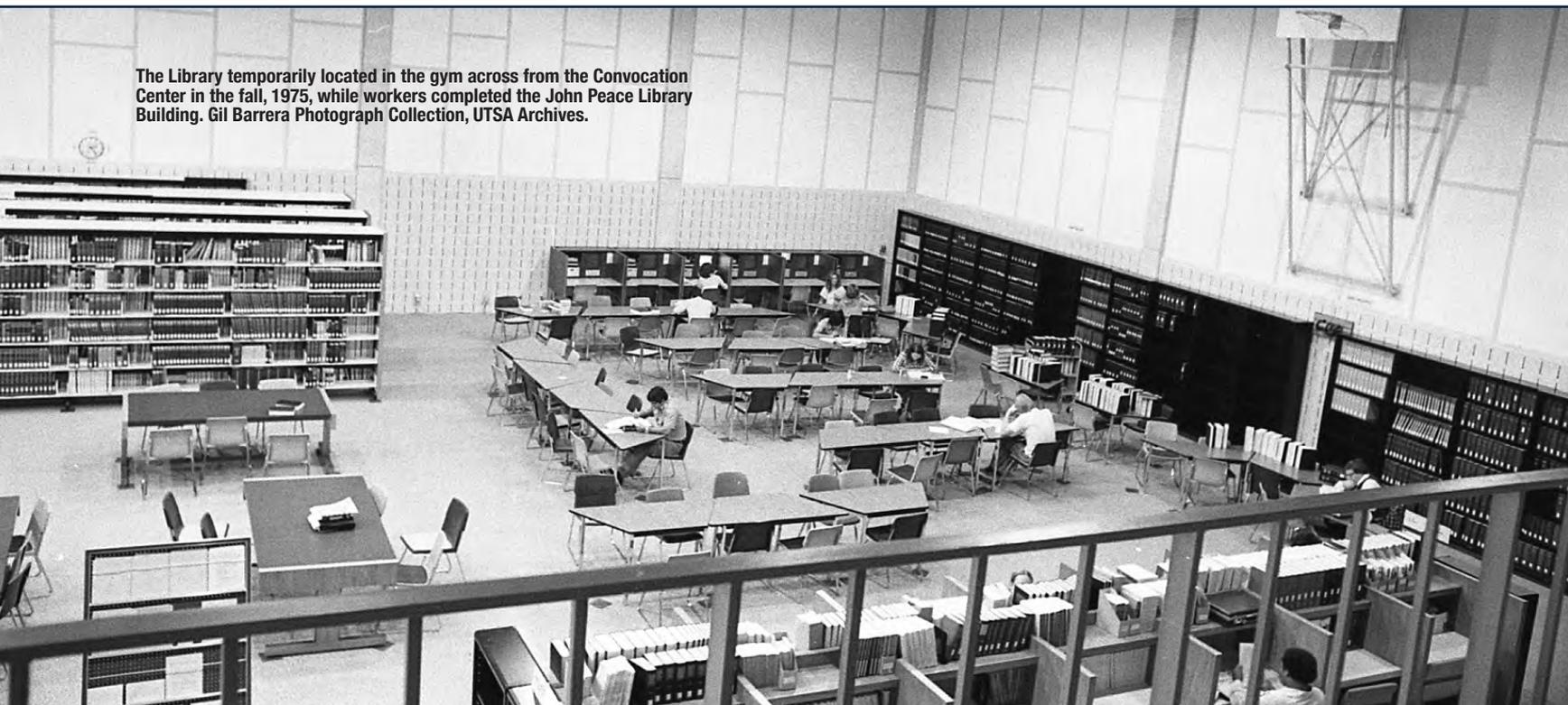
Student nicknames for their new University initially included "UT South of Austin" and "UT-Boerne" to emphasize the campus' location. Photo circa 1975. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Students and faculty arriving by bus on the first day of classes, September 3, 1975. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



UTSA Boulevard in 1976. Bus service to UTSA was infrequent and insufficient, reinforcing a strong preference for commuting by car to reach the campus. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



The Library temporarily located in the gym across from the Convocation Center in the fall, 1975, while workers completed the John Peace Library Building. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Students and faculty tread carefully up the temporary staircase between the Convocation Center and the Humanities and Social Sciences Building on the first day of classes, September 3, 1975. Gil Barrera Photograph, UTSA Archives.

chapter of Phi Sigma (a national honorary science society); the Financial Management Association (an affiliate of a national honor society of the same name); and the Environmental Management Students' Association. Associate Professor Helen Oujesky served as faculty advisor for Phi Sigma; Visiting Professor Frank Keller was the advisor for the Management Association; and Assistant Professor Richard Tangum acted as advisor for the Environmental Management group. These societies reflected their members' interest in establishing organized approaches to advancing their careers. Honor societies, for instance, created opportunities to invite established professionals in the community to speak at their meetings, mingle with the members, and perhaps develop contacts that might evolve into opportunities for future employment.

While graduate students focused on professional organizations, undergraduates had a broader range of concerns. Anticipating a surge of requests from them, Dean Grossenbacher expanded her staff. She hired Patricia Graham in October, 1974, to serve as Associate Dean, thus launching the career of one of UTSA's most distinguished and beloved staff members. Graham, and others such as Jane Findling (Burton), would become crucial contributors to the creation of an increasingly complex student community life which would, over time, play a major role in transforming UTSA from a commuter to a residential campus.

UTSA's first class of juniors and seniors turned out to be enthusiastic organizers. Having attended junior college or, in some cases, other universities,



Dr. Patricia Graham joined the Office of Student Services in 1973, launching a career as one of the most productive and respected staff members at UTSA. Photo courtesy of Jane Findling (Burton).

they already had some experience with a normal array of student organizations on a college campus. Accordingly, they initially focused on founding familiar groups. By the fall 1976, they had founded the Mexican American Student Organization, the Black Student Caucus, the Young Democrats, College Republicans, the Pre-Law Society, and a several other clubs.

These initial efforts focused on the needs of particular groups of students, which was an essential part of college life. But none of them could assume the role of dealing with the needs and interests of the entire student community. That would require a different kind of organization that could gradually resolve the challenge of creating space and programs for a student campus culture.



Registration for classes in the Convocation Center required patience in the days before computers streamlined the process. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Rudy Davalos joined UTSA as Athletic Director in September, 1976, and developed UTSA's intercollegiate basketball program. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

Many of UTSA's first students were shocked by the gap between their expectations (based on previous experience) and the reality of life on the new campus. Determined to make reality match their expectations, they launched what would become a long, but ultimately successful, campaign to implement their vision.

Organizing a student government was an early, crucial building block in that campaign because it could help provide continuity for efforts to develop student activities. Recognizing that need, members of the new student clubs met to organize a government in the spring, 1976. They elected a committee that reflected the diversity of the student body to write a draft constitution. Its key members were Michael Tidwell, Craig Youngblood, and Ernest Bromley, all of whom had already founded some of the campus' first student organizations. Tidwell was a graduate of Sam Houston High School and San Antonio College. Having visited UT-Austin while waiting for UTSA to open, he had practical knowledge about student life on a major campus. Shortly after enrolling at UTSA he helped organize the Black Student Caucus and became its first Vice President. Youngblood had attended Rice University; at UTSA he founded the Pre-Law Society and was active in several other organizations. Bromley, an Hispanic (Puerto Rican) deeply interested in social justice issues, graduated from Jefferson High School and had been President of the Student Government at San Antonio College. He had founded UTSA's Young Democrats and assisted other groups to organize as well.

Tidwell chaired the constitutional committee, which worked through the summer to write a draft. He also worked with Dean Grossenbacher to secure President Flawn's approval. Flawn was supportive but also had to consider the effect of student activism at the Austin campus on the Board of Regents in the late sixties. As a result of that activism, the Regents were wary of student organizations in general (as evidenced by their decision to transfer Templeton to El Paso to deal with activists there). Flawn's repute with the Regents helped quiet their concerns and they approved the constitution creating the Student Representative Assembly in October, 1976.

UTSA's students had to approve the draft and elect the first President and representatives in the late fall. Tidwell led the campaign for approval, and then accepted election as the SRA's founding president. He immediately launched a variety of programs that used the campus' limited space very effectively for a number of activities, including, among other things, a film series and dances in the Sombrilla. At the time, the University held a license to serve beer and wine, which proved useful in attracting students to SRA sponsored events.

Other ideas for improving student life on campus would take time to implement. During the spring, 1977, for example, the SRA conducted a poll asking students whether they wanted a Student Union Building. Although ninety-nine percent of the 600 students who voted said yes, there was not yet any Administrative support for this idea, nor was there any way to pay for it.



Planning ahead, the University set aside land for intramural athletics shortly after admitting its first undergraduates in the fall, 1975. Express-News Photograph Collection, University Archives.

In June 1977 Celeste Scalise, a sophomore, became chair of a commission that the SRA created to investigate the possibility of establishing a student newspaper. In discussions with Dean Grossenbacher and others, Ms. Scalise quickly discovered that the University would not provide funding support this idea so she decided to seek private corporate support instead. As with the student center, that idea would also take some time to come to fruition.

In the meantime, sporting events became an early opportunity to help develop campus life. President Flawn had hired Rudy Davalos, who had been an Assistant Coach and Director of Player Personnel, as UTSA's first Athletic Director in September, 1976. Davalos quickly became a major advocate



Freshman Maria Paredes, wearing one of UTSA's first T-Shirts, seeks directions from a tour guide, June, 1976. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Mark Kifer, Debbie Birmingham, Patricia Hartman, Joann Munoz, Pam Each, and Nina Kruse study for final exams in the Humanities and Social Sciences Building, December, 1975. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



The Center for Archeological Research introduced an annual archeological field school in 1974. Here Professor Thomas Hester (at far right) leads a group of students including (l. to r.) Mary Chadderdon, Feris Bass, Margarita Vazquez, Mary Wagner, E.S. Harris, and Jill Gates. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

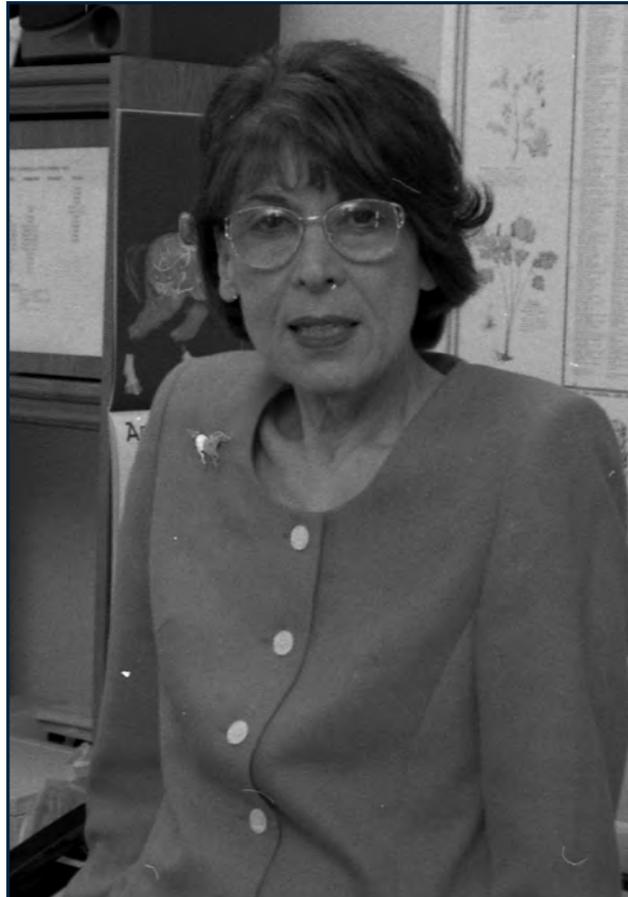


Michael Tidwell and Susan Hasfdorff, who served on the student committee to draft a constitution for the Student Representative Assembly, examine a draft of their proposal. Tidwell would serve as the first President of the SRA. October 1976. Courtesy of Michael Tidwell.

for an intercollegiate basketball program, but Flawn initially wanted him to concentrate on recreational and intramural athletic programs. By November Davalos had organized intramural competitions in volleyball, basketball, badminton, and table tennis. Those activities gave student access to the Convocation Center athletic facilities and to some rudimentary outdoor facilities near the Center (which soon earned the sobriquet "Rattlesnake Hill" in honor of its presumed former residents).

Athletics naturally stimulated interest in choosing a school mascot. The SRA initiated what would become a very complicated political campaign by inviting student suggestions for a mascot in the early fall 1977.

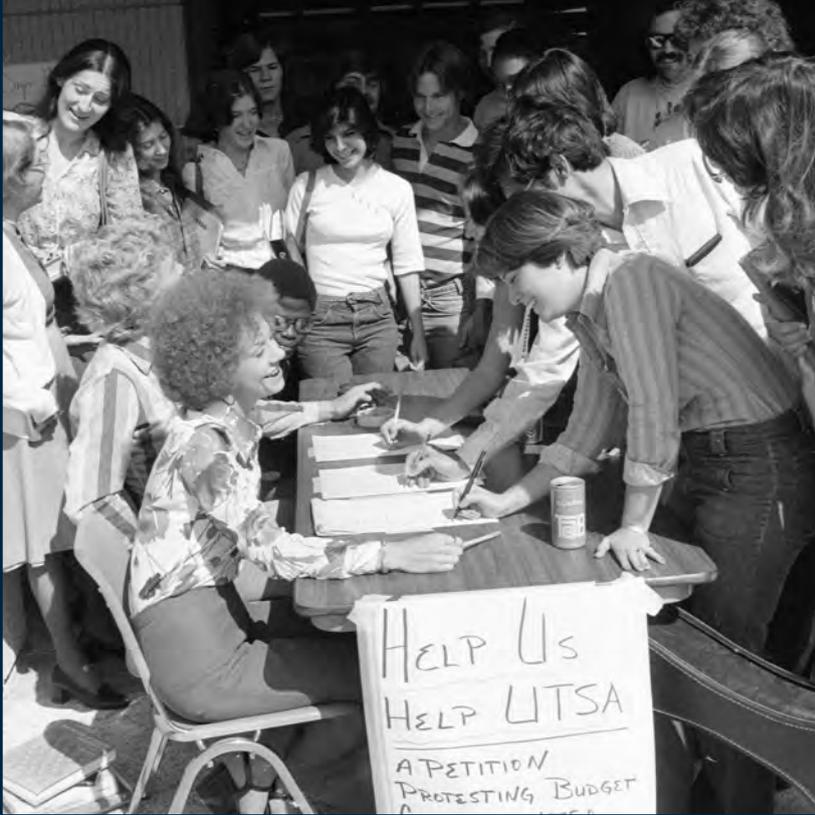
UTSA's Growing Faculty



UTSA's Growing Faculty
Top row left to right: Henry Cisneros, Assistant Professor of Urban Planning, Division of Environmental Studies;
Charles Field, Associate Professor of Art, Director of the Division of Art;
Thomas R. Hester, Assistant Professor of Archeology, Division of Social Sciences;
Bottom row left to right:
Carolyn Kessler, Associate Professor, Division of Bilingual-Bicultural Studies;
Marian Martinello, Assistant Professor, Division of Education;
Marjorie Smelstor, Assistant Professor of English, Division of English, Classics, and Philosophy.

Building a Campus Culture included a Variety of Student Activities

Top to bottom:
Students signing Petition Against Legislative Funding Cuts for UTSA, March, 1977;
Student Concert Choir, November, 1977;
Mary Ellen Gomez at first Fiesta (OOTSA), April 14, 1978.
Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



Students submitted a long list of candidates that the SRA's Elections Committee, chaired by Gerald Flores, condensed to the nine most popular suggestions (Armadillos, Conquistadores, Eagles, Jaguars, Pumas, Roadrunners, Toros, Vaqueros, and Stars) in late October, and the SRA scheduled an election for November 2 and 3 to select a mascot, with a runoff between the top two choices on November 7 and 10.



Several student groups emerged to campaign for their choice among the nine possibilities in the week prior to the election. Ron Hare, Charlotte and Claudette Calhoun, James Mickey, Ann Padel, Patti Dieder, Gary Buse, William Kulesza, and Becky Brewster, for instance, organized to support the Roadrunner. Students clearly favored the Armadillos (853 votes) over the Stars (531) in the election, making them the two choices for the runoff (the Roadrunner received 156 votes) The Roadrunner advocates, upset by the short campaign, asked SRA President Steven Linehan to void the election results on procedural grounds and appealed to Athletic Director Rudy Davalos for help. Davalos met with Gerald Flores and other members of the SRA's Election Committee to lobby for the Roadrunners, arguing that choosing the Armadillo as the school mascot would subject UTSA to public ridicule. He also asked Flores to find a way to overturn the election.



Davalos' unusual request, reinforced by Linehan's interest in helping his friends, placed Flores in a difficult position. A review of the election procedures did, however, reveal a genuine flaw: balloting had ended in the late afternoon of the election, which meant that graduate students had not had the opportunity to vote. That invalidated the election and the SRA cancelled the runoff, instead scheduling a new election for the first week of December.

Roadrunner supporters, though, still faced a tough uphill battle. The Armadillo remained very popular and emerged once again as the top choice in the



President Flawn talking with Administrative Assistants Nelda Walls and Janet Hines at a reception celebrating the opening of the Humanities and Social Sciences Building, which was the first building completed on the 1604 campus. May 6, 1975. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

new election. In a portent of eventual victory, the campaigning skills of Roadrunner supporters enabled them to outpoll the Stars for second place. Then in the runoff they eliminated the Armadillos by a vote of 894 to 747. Although the election had been contentious, it also demonstrated how passionate students had already become about developing a distinctive sense of community on campus.

While students struggled with issues of campus life, President Fawn found himself dealing with a major challenge to his plans for UTSA's development. Prior to 1975 the state's General Fund had funded the budgets of UTSA and other branch campuses. The legislature, however, decided to move UTSA and the other branch campuses to formula funding as the principal source for their budgets in the spring, 1977, after the Legislative session of that year.

That decision was a staggering blow to the new universities. Older campuses, like UT-Austin, had enough students to produce reasonable budgets to meet

their needs. A new institution like UTSA, though, had many fewer students. Since universities received their formula funding money only every two years, the size of their budgets was based on the number of students they had enrolled when the Legislature met. That was generally fine for a mature university that was not expected to grow, but for the branch campuses that were growing rapidly, formula funding did not provide money to cover the costs of the growth in student enrollment after the Legislature approved a budget.

Flawn therefore faced the prospect of dealing with limited, and disagreeable, options. He could, for instance, stop accepting new students. After all, he would not have enough money to hire new faculty and staff or to create new programs that would be needed to serve the needs of a larger number of students, to say nothing of community expectations



Reinette Cottenghan, student assistant cashier for the bookstore, holds a selection of textbooks for the first graduate classes, June 8, 1973. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.



The Registrar's staff prepares a mailing of the first UTSA Undergraduate Catalogue, December, 1974. Gil Barrera Photograph Collection, UTSA Archives.

UTSA. Or he could limit faculty and staff hiring and curtail the development of new programs while continuing to admit more students. That would increase his employees' workloads and severely limit UTSA's usefulness to San Antonio and South Texas.

Disliking those options, Flawn sought a creative solution to his problems. He needed to convince the Legislature to supplement formula funding until

enrollment was large enough to support his plans for an orderly expansion of student and community services, which he estimated would occur by the fall 1979. Recognizing political realities, he proposed that the Legislature create a separate contingency fund for all the new universities that they could draw upon if their enrollments grew. Flawn's proposal would avoid serious disruptions in the development of the new campuses. Unfortunately, the Legislature refused to adopt his idea despite a concerted lobbying effort by San Antonio's representatives.

Flawn therefore began the fall semester of 1977 with a budget that had very little money for further development. That was a situation that ill-suited his leadership style. He had successfully redefined UTSA's mission to match the expectations of many community leaders (although there were still some important unmet goals, such as an engineering program); he had assembled a talented and well-trained faculty and staff; he had added new undergraduate degree programs to meet student needs; and he had authorized planning for the University's first doctoral programs. The first of those was a proposal for a Ph.D. program in Bilingual-Bicultural Studies; the second was a Ph.D. program in clinical psychology that was supposed to be UTSA's first cooperative venture with the Health Science Center. In addition, Flawn's energetic and effective leadership won him the respect of his faculty and staff, and he was equally respected in San Antonio's business and political communities.

Now, though, Flawn's budget no longer matched his ambitions for UTSA. The adoption of formula funding was ill-timed for a new university like UTSA because it was ill-suited for promoting the sort of future development that San Antonio needed from its new university. After careful consideration of the situation, Flawn submitted his resignation as President effective January 1, 1978.