The Case For a Comprehensive Four Year University

in

Corpus Christi, Texas

Prepared By 4U Corpus Christi Foundation

Jim Moloney, Editor

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INTRODUCTION

4U-Corpus Christi Foundation is a citizens advocacy group, formed in November, 1986, to promote higher education in the Coastal Bend area of South Texas. The Foundation has three main goals:

First, to promote the establishment of and support for a four-year/graduate level university offering graduate level degrees in a wide variety of academic and professional disciplines, by converting Corpus Christi State University from its present status to a comprehensive four-year university.

Second, to work with Texas A & I University of Kingsville, Texas, to encourage the viability of that institution and to establish a cooperative working relationship between a four-year university in Corpus Christi, Texas and Texas A & I University.

Third, to support the separate but equally important role that Del Mar College plays in the community by assisting the College in attaining its goals.

Since its founding, 4U-CC has been promoting the improvement of higher education in South Texas. We support the conversion of Corpus Christi State University to four-year status. We encourage the addition of masters and doctoral programs at both CCSU and Texas A & I University. We favor the merger of the University of South Texas System with the Texas A & M University System. Finally, we encourage safeguards for Del Mar College and Texas A & I University for a period of years to protect state funding during the conversion of CCSU to four-year status.

Higher education in South Texas (defined as a twenty-four county area as shown in Figure 1) has long been neglected. Within this region five state supported institutions—Corpus Christi State University, Laredo State University, Pan American University (Edinburg). Pan American University at Brownsville, and Texas A & I University (Kingsville)—provide the only opportunities for baccalaureate or higher level education. Three of these universities are upper level institutions, offering only junior, senior and graduate level courses. When compared to other regions of Texas, South Texas trails in educational facilities, degree programs, post graduate and doctoral programs, and state funding.

FIGURE 1

South Texas is neglected in the area of doctoral programs. There is only one doctoral program offered in the South Texas region. That program is Bilingual Education at Texas A&I in Kingsville. Compare that to other state universities and their doctoral programs as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Doctoral Programs at Texas State Supported Universities

East Texas State University	31
University of North Texas	126
Texas A & M University	93
Texas Tech University	61
Texas Women's University	57
University of Texas-Arlington	23
University of Texas-Dallas	26
University of Texas-Austin	92
University of Houston-University Park	50
Texas A & I University	1

Table 2 presents a summary of the distribution of advanced degree programs in the nine regions of Texas. Listed in order of descending number of advanced degrees (as of 1984), the table shows a ratio of advanced degrees available per person. South Texas ranks last of all the regions in this ratio. The region is over two and one-half times worse than the statewide average, with one advanced degree program for every 13,689 people.

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS
BY REGION WITH REGIONAL POPULATION AND AREA

REGION	ADVANCED DEGREE PROGRAMS	1984 POPULATION	RATIO CO	OUNTIES	AREA SQ MI
North Texas	950(719)	3,269,782	1: 3,442	8	6,393
Southeast	608(438)	4,117,908	1: 6,673	15	13,602
Central Texas	585(507)	1,830,383	1: 3,129	39	32,768
West Texas	322(306)	1,539,512	1: 4,781	54	77,635
East Texas	259(259)	1,353,004	1: 5,224	38	28,399
South Central	175(64)	1,569,984	1: 8,971	22	23,711
North Central	104(32)	606,611	1: 5,833	28	25,486
South Texas	102(102)	1,396,298	1:13,689	24	28,313
Panhandle	45(45)	399,241	1: 8,872	26	25,712
Texas	3150(2472)	16,082,723	1: 5,106	254	262,019

Ratio is based on the advanced degree programs in the area.

Advanced degree programs: the first number is total programs available, the number in parenthesis is advanced degree programs available at public senior institutions.

South Texas has been short changed on per capita state funding for higher education, receiving almost one-half of the next lowest state region and less than one-quarter of the highest state region. State Senator Judith Zaffirini of Laredo has compiled per capita funding statistics for the various regions of Texas as follows:

	TABLE 3
State Region	Per Capita Funding
State-wide average	\$155.95
Central Texas	290.52
Southeast Texas	206.00
West Texas	159.51
North Texas	119.29
South Texas	69.58

In the state fiscal year of 1986 the three schools making up the USST received \$31,107,924 in state funds for 9,824 students. During the same time the Texas Tech Health Science Center in Lubbock received \$48,342,068 for 747 students and the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Worth received \$25,048,525 for 376 students.

This lack of educational opportunities is most pronounced in the case of Corpus Christi. Corpus Christi is the 59th largest city in the United States, with a city population of 232,134 (1980) and a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) population of 363,300 (1986). It is the only city in the 160 most populated metropolitan statistical areas of the U.S. without a four year university. The 161st MSA without a four year university is Visalia-Tulare-Porterville, California with a population of 245,738. The following MSA without a four year university, after Visalia, is the Brownsville-Harlingen MSA, ranked 173rd in the United States.

Of all the major cities in Texas and the United States, only in Corpus Christi are students forced to leave home to pursue a four year education at a college or university. The only alternatives are to go to Del Mar College for two years and then transfer to Corpus Christi State University for the last two years of undergraduate education, or to commute nearly 100 miles a day for a period of four years to Texas A & I in Kingsville. If they decide to go to Delmar and CCSU, students will forfeit many of the activities and benefits which a four year university furnishes. By choosing the "two plus two" option, the advantages of student activities, athletics, fraternal organizations, continuity of advisors and long term friendships are sacraficed.

The four year option is available in Kingsville, nearly fifty miles from Corpus Christi. There are great costs to this option in terms of time and dollars spent in commuting. Ruben Garza, a Texas A & I graduate, who commuted daily from Corpus Christi to Kingsville, has made the following calculations:

ASSUMPTIONS:

Distance: 50 mile one way

Period: 150 weeks

Cost: 15 cents per mile by auto

COSTS:

Miles: 75,000 Hours: 1,500 Dollars: \$11,250

Based on these calculations, the cost of commuting in terms of hours and dollars is very substantial. A Corpus Christi student cannot save money by living at home and commuting to Kingsville.

In Texas, Corpus Christi is the seventh largest city. There are 24 public four year universities and 37 private colleges and universities in the state. Many cities in the state much smaller than Corpus Christi have state supported four year universities. Some of these cities even have a student enrollment which outnumbers the local population. Table 4 (below) shows the cities in Texas with four year universities, their population, and student enrollment.

Table 4

Texas cities with four year public universities

CITY	1980 POPULATION	1986-87 ENROLLMENT
Alpine	5,465	2,313
Arlington	160,113	23,245
Austin	345,890	47,000
Beaumont	118,102	11,592
Canyon	10,724	6,028
College Station	37,272	36,570
Commerce	8,136	7,135
Denton	48,063	29,237
Edinburg	24,075	9,984
El Paso	425,259	15,322
Houston	1,595,136	52,311
Huntsville	23,936	10,486
Kingsville	28,808	5,012
Lubbock	173,873	23,479
Nacogdoches	27,149	12,138
Prairie View	3,993	4,499
San Angelo	73,240	5,806
San Antonio	785,940	12,413
San Marcos	23,420	19,775
Stephenville	11,861	4,626
Wichita Falls	94,201	4,482

SOURCES: TEXAS ALMANAC, U.S. BUREAU OF CENSUS

Smaller cities with private four year universities of over 3,000 students include Abilene (98,315), Waco (101,261), Marshall (24,921), Wichita Falls (94,201), and Edinburg (24,075).

In an effort to alleviate the inequities in higher education, on December 2, 1987, a group of thirty-three plaintiffs filed suit against the State of Texas in the 107th District Court in Brownsville. The suit, commonly known as the MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund) suit, alleges discrimination in higher education against Hispanics and South Texas. A listing of the plaintiffs and defendants is included in Appendix I and Appendix II. The suit alleges that:

Minority students in Texas have long been denied participation in quality higher educational programs and access to equal higher education resources in violation of Texas Constitutional and statutory law. The direct and unavoidable consequences of the Defendants' acts and omissions result in the infringement of educational, social, economic and civic opportunities for Mexican Americans in Texas. This is an action for declaratory and injunctive relief to declare the Texas system of higher education in violation of the Constitution and laws of Texas, because of its discrimination against Mexican Americans in its programs of admission, retention, financial assistance and allocation of resources in its undergraduate, graduate and professional programs.

The action further alleges that:

The combined actions of the Governor, Coordinating Board, Boards of Regents, University Presidents and Chancellors and the Legislature have led to the discrimination complained of in this petition.

Despite studies presented to Defendant Coordinating Board that show that the immediate geographic proximity of a campus results in positive enrollments in higher education, particularly for minority and economically disadvantaged students, Defendants continue to favor predominantly Anglo areas of Texas in making decisions on locations of new senior university campuses and advanced and graduate programs.

Defendants have engaged and continue to engage in discriminatory practices which result in an overconcentration of Mexican Americans and Blacks at certain campuses and a segregatory pattern of program enrollment, with severe underrepresentation of Blacks and Mexican Americans in senior colleges, medical and dental schools, health science centers and graduate programs...

Defendants, individually and in concert, have and have had a policy and practice of placing and continuing graduate and professional academic programs and physical facilities for graduate and professional programs in locations where they are inaccessible or inconvenient to Mexican American population centers and in general funding graduate programs in institutions of higher education in areas of high Mexican American concentration at lower levels than graduate programs at other institutions of higher education.

The lawsuit suggests a court ordered solution to the alleged discrimination as follows:

That a Declaratory Judgement be issued finding that the Texas higher education system is in violation of Texas Constitutional and statutory law; That the Court enjoin these unconstitutional and illegal activities until defendants submit a plan meeting the standards of the Texas Constitution and non-discrimination statutes:

A quality university in Corpus Christi will draw students from throughout the state and even the nation. At the same time, cooperative programs with Del Mar College and Texas A&I University in Kingsville will allow these institutions to grow and prosper. An example of this type of competitive excellence is indicated by the example of Worchester, Massachusetts.

The city of Worchester is a smaller city with an abundance of educational facilities. Worchester had a 1980 population of 161,040 and a MSA population (Worchester County) of 372,940. It is located forty miles from Boston Mass. (about the same distance as Corpus Christi is from Kingsville.)

Boston has a reputation for educational excellence. Included in its twenty colleges and universities are Boston College, Boston University, Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Tufts, Wellesley, Northeastern and a branch of the University of Massachusetts. Also included in higher education institutions are three medical schools and five junior colleges.

One would expect that close proximity to Boston would preclude the existence of higher education in neighboring Worchester. Yet, the reverse is true. This city, ranked 100th in population in the U.S., has six colleges and universities—the College of Holy Cross, Assumption College, Clark University, Worchester Polytechnic University, Worchester State College, and the University of Massachusetts Medical School—and a junior college!

The Corpus Christi MSA--Nueces and San Patricio Counties--had an estimated 1986 population of 363,300. This population is nearly the same as that of the Worchester County MSA population. Clearly, the Coastal Bend area can support comprehensive four year universities in Corpus Christi and Kingsville.

Currently, students working toward a four year education in Corpus Christi follow a two plus two year program at Del Mar and CCSU. The idea for two year upper level universities originated in Florida in the 1960's. Students were expected to attend community college for two years and then transfer to an upper level institution for the final two years of study. Florida officials discovered that this concept worked well for some disciplines, but in most academic areas had serious flaws. Experience At CCSU has shown that a significant number of students transfer from community colleges in the disciplines of Business Administration and

Education. These programs are upper division programs. The courses in the discipline are ordinarily offered in the third and fourth years of college. Degrees in the Humanities, Liberal Arts, Sciences, Mathematics and the Arts call for a three or four year curriculum. Students want to be involved with their faculty and studies throughout the entire collegiate career. Consequently, few students transfer to CCSU after two years at a community college to pursue academic degrees in these fields of study.

CCSU, an upper division and graduate level university, faces major limitations on the areas of three and four year courses of study. Providing a good education requires a critical mass of students, faculty and educational resources. This is only possible when the general education requirements of freshmen are combined with the faculty, laboratories, and other resources of the upper level students. CCSU, with its lack of freshmen and sophomores, has difficulty obtaining the critical mass of students for these Humanities, Liberal Arts, Sciences, Mathematics and Arts courses.

Dr. Miriam Wagenschein, former Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at Corpus Christi State University, testified to the Legislative Joint Committee on Higher Education in South Texas:

After working with upper-level programs for fifteen years as an administrator and teacher, I know the concept doesn't work for quality education for the majority of our students. This year CCSU has students transferring work from 121 different colleges and universities. We have two-plus-two plans with our two main feeder colleges, but some two-thirds of our students come from other institutions. You can't write two-plus-twos or prerequisite course work for over a hundred other colleges and universities.

So what do you do with this diverse group of students? In a junior level course some will have prerequisite courses and some will not. They simply will not take work at a third institution—they would rather drop the course. So you use up several weeks of the course, repeating work for some and frustrating others trying to summarize for them, to get all the students to the same level. This is an impediment and a waste of valuable educational time. Quality undergraduate degree programs need a continuous four—year experience.

The Coordinating Board of the Texas College and University System, in a study of community and junior college transfers, has found:

Almost 3% of the first-time enrollment among both fulltime and part-time students transfer in the spring semester after their initial fall enrollment. These are probably students whose initial intent was to intend the university, but for some reason began their education in the community college. Many students who fail to meet the entrance requirements of the university of choice accumulate the minimum required number of hours at a community college in order to transfer to the university.

Students transfer at all points of their educational career. It is a fallacy to assume that students attend community college for two years and transfer, although the largest number of students do transfer at that point. Part-time student transfers occur at a slow but steady pace throughout the study period. Transfer patterns reflect a tendency toward Fall transfer, with slightly larger pulses of students transferring each Fall.

For many of these same reasons, the State of Floridaoriginator of the upper level education concept--converted
all of its upper level universities to full four year
institutions in the 1970's. Subsequent studies by the
Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission have
shown: Careful analysis of all available data indicates
that the effect of the new lower divisions on the
neighboring postsecondary education institutions
generally has been minimal and within the established
enrollment limitations and admission standards.
Although some institutions have suffered declines in

enrollment or quality, as measured by standardized test scores for entering students, these effects are

most often attributed to factors other than the

establishment of the new lower divisions.

There are fears that the conversion of CCSU to four year status will cripple Del Mar College and Texas A & I. These colleges have been vital parts of the community for many years. They offer excellent academic programs for many who could not otherwise afford a college education. Evidence from Florida, as well as San Antonio and El Paso, shows that safeguards of enrollment limitations, program cooperation, and high enrollment standards can be used to protect Del Mar during the transition period.

The examples provided by Blinn College in College Station and Austin Community College in Austin show that junior colleges and four year universities can coexist to the benefit of both institutions. Additional evidence is provided by the situation in San Antonio and El Paso. San Antonio had a strong community college, Alamo College District when the University of Texas-San Antonio was established in 1973. By 1975 UT-San Antonio had 4,437 students while Alamo had 22,900. By 1987, both colleges had prospered. UTSA grown to 12,879 students while Alamo had grown about the same amount to 30,858. Figure 2 illustrates

the changes in enrollment for San Antonio Schools from 1975 to 1987.

FIGURE 2

El Paso provides an example where a four year college, University of Texas-El Paso was already established when a junior College, El Paso Community College was established in 1969. In 1972, UT-El Paso had 10,178 students and El Paso CC had 3,015. By 1987, fifteen years later, UTEP had grown to 14,055 while EPCC had grown much more to 13,804 students. Figure 3 shows the changes in enrollment levels for the colleges in El Paso from 1972 to 1987.

FIGURE 3

These examples show that community colleges and four year institutions can complement each other and both will prosper.

Both Del Mar College and Texas A & I University can be protected during a phase-in period as CCSU converts from an upper level university to a four year college. During this expansion of educational opportunities in South Texas, neighboring colleges and universities should be protected from any negative aspects of increased competition for students from South Texas.

4U-Corpus Christi Foundation supports protective measures to assure continued excellence and enrollment levels as CCSU adds freshmen and sophomores. Both Del Mar College and Texas A & I University can be protected by several measures. We support these safeguards for Del Mar and Texas A & I:

- 1. A transition period prior to implementation of freshman classes at CCSU. Implementation of the levels at CCSU should be planned for 1991. This will allow proper time for planning such courses at CCSU, while still providing the levels needed for personnel to be stationed at the Homeport, Naval Station Ingleside.
- 2. Limitation of freshman enrollment for a period of four years after initial implementation. Such limitation will assure CCSU does not deplete Texas A & I and Del Mar of potential students until these institution have developed addition programs to replace students who choose to enroll at the expanded CCSU. We support an initial limit of 400 freshman students, increased by 50 per year for a period of five years.
- 3. Admission standards at the freshman and sophomore level comparable to universities in the Southwest Conference—minimum combined SAT scores of or ACT scores of . These standards will assure that CCSU maintains its reputation for educational excellence. Del Mar College, with its open admissions policy will continue to have a large pool of potential students upon which to draw.
- 4. Continued and expanded cooperative program planning with Del Mar, such as two plus two programs. These programs assure that Del Mar students who complete the two year program are able to continue at CCSU. It is imperative that these opportunities continue.
- 5. The expansion of the Del Mar College District.
 Because Del Mar College will lose some students to

an expanded CCSU, this proposal will provide more students to the community college. Del Mar has provided educational opportunities to the surrounding communities since it inception. This measure will assure lower costs for students from these areas and more financial support from using communities.

- 6. Continuation of the level of state funding of Del Mar College and Texas A & I, prior to the CCSU expansion, for a period of five years. Because state funding depends upon enrollment levels of students, Both Del Mar and Texas A & I need assurances that any temporary reduction in enrollment caused by potential students opting to attend CCSU will be adjusted to assure continued state funding based upon enrollment. This protection should continue for a period of five years after the conversion.
- 7. The expansion of programs and degree offerings at Texas A & I University. In order to continue to attract quality students while competing with CCSU for freshmen, Texas A & I will need to add new courses of study. 4U-CC will support and help Texas A & I to increase its educational offerings.
- 8. The merger of the University System of South Texas with the Texas A & M System. This will assure that South Texas will become part of one of the finest educational systems in the entire country. CCSU and Texas A & I will have the advantage of Texas A & M's legislative and administrative expertise to become even greater institutions.

The implementation of these types of safeguards will allow Del Mar College and Texas A & I several years to adjust to increased competition for students, while adding programs and opportunities to increase their enrollment. With the examples of El Paso and San Antonio to follow, the downward expansion of CCSU can be accomplished with little adverse problems to Del Mar and Texas A & I.

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Statement to the Legislative Joint Committee on Higher Education in South Texas. Dr. Miriam Wagenschein, Corpus Christi State University, June 29, 1987.

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Testimony Before the Legislative Joint Committee on Higher Education in South Texas. B. Alan Sugg, June 29, 1988.

APPENDIX I

PLAINTIFFS IN THE MALDEF LAWSUIT

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

American GI Forum

Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education

Hispanic Law Student Association of the Reynaldo G. Garza School of Law

The Hispanic Student Bar Association of the University of Texas School of Law

The Hispanic Law Student Association of the University of Houston

The Chicano Law Student Association of the Texas Southern School of Law

The Minority Law Student Association of the Texas Tech University School of Law

Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan of the University of Texas at San Antonio

Aurelio L. Lara Diana Rivera Luis Escareno Orlando De Hoyos Josefa Rosa Martinez Connie Sauceda Minerva Villarreal Enrique Castillo Mario Gonzales Gilberto Villarreal Margarita R. Johnson Laura Jo Acuna Maria Linda Gonzalez Oscar R. Garza Guadalupe Garza John Cuellar Cecilio Bustamente Andy Ramirez Jesse Flores Ernestina Vidaurri Luis Garza Cynthia Alvardo Mary Gonzales Catherine Lazaro

Anna De Leon

APPENDIX II

DEFENDANTS IN THE MALDEF LAWSUIT

- William P. Clements, Governor of the State of Texas
- Dr. Kenneth H. Ashworth, Commissioner of Higher Education for the State of Texas
- H. M. Daugarty, Chairman, and each individual member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Hans Mark, Chancellor, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System
- Perry L. Adkisson, Chancellor, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Texas A & M University System
- Lamar G. Urbanovsky, Executive Director, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Texas State University System
- Charles J. Austin, President, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of East Texas State University
- William R. Johnson, President, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Stephen F. Austin State Univ.
- Ed D. Roach, President, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of West Texas State University
- Louis J. Rodriguez, President and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Midwestern State University
- B. Alan Sugg, Chancellor, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of the University of South Texas
- Alfred F. Hurley, Chancellor, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of North Texas State University
- Robert J. Terry, President, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Texas Southern University
- Shirley Chater, President, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Texas Woman's University
- George McLaughlin, Chancellor, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Lamar State University
- Lauro F. Cavazos, President, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Texas Tech University
- Dr. Wilbur L. Meier, Chancellor, and each individual member of the Board of Regents of Pan American University