
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the project?






In September 2015 Texas A&M University announced intentions to enter into a unique collaboration with the City of McAllen and community partners to develop a new higher education center where students can take courses and graduate with degrees in select high-impact majors from Texas A&M University without leaving the Rio Grande Valley. The new center will complement existing offerings in the areas public health and nursing, and will enable us to expand those programs as well.

Why is Texas A&M doing this?

Texas A&M is proposing to open a higher education center in McAllen because of the University's commitment to support educational needs of the Texas Rio Grande Valley with top-tier educational programs that enhance the continued economic development of the region and to help provide the necessary skilled workforce. Texas A&M has over 1,600 students from Hidalgo, Cameron, Starr and Willacy Counties currently enrolled. There are over 3,600 former students in the region as well.

What are the guiding principles of this effort?

The principles guiding this effort, and that will be at the forefront of all discussions for activities in the Valley:

-  Support the mission and integrity of Texas A&M University;
-  Maintain quality programs with the students' best interests at heart;
-  Provide quality programs that are of relevance to the needs of the region;
-  Comply with all necessary and required approvals for offering programs at and opening off-campus teaching locations; and
-  Be fiscally responsible and good caretakers of the University's resources.

How is the project being funded?

At the Board of Regents meeting in February 2016, the Capital Plan was amended to allow Texas A&M University to initiate conceptual design of the planned 60,000 sq ft facility that will ultimately include classrooms, laboratories, and faculty and administrative support offices, as well as student services and gathering spaces, befitting the academic degree programs and courses to be delivered.

Texas A&M University is utilizing multiple sources to complete the initial building at cost of \$40M and is preparing a multi-year start up budget. Ultimately, student tuition and fees, state appropriations for enrolled weighted semester credit hours, special initiative funding and targeted philanthropy will fulfill funding needs.

The University is in negotiations with the City of McAllen, which will support Texas A&M University plans for the higher education site by issuing bonds to commit up to

\$10M towards construction, in addition to the current commitment of utilities and infrastructure connections at a 100-acre tract in the new Tres Lagos Development in north McAllen. Plans are to negotiate a multi-year ground lease that will allow the City of McAllen and Texas A&M to partner on construction of the project.

Where will the higher education be located?

The proposed higher education center will be located on a 100-acre site in the Tres Lagos development at 6200 Tres Lagos Boulevard. Immediately adjacent to the site is a 90-acre research and technology park that is proposed by the developer. This gechnology park will provide significant opportunity for applied research collaboration between the university and regional industry when it comes to fruition, which will help support the economic development of the region.



Who is leading the effort?

Our Provost Dr. Karan Watson and Dr. James Nelson, the University Project Coordinator, will lead the multi-college taskforce in a community and industry assessment of need over the next few months in preparation of Texas A&M's formal request to establish the higher education center and approval to deliver courses leading to Texas A&M University degrees at the site. They will also be leading the effort to establish the necessary infrastructure and student support services. The degree programs offered, once they are identified, will be implemented by the respective departments.

What degree programs will be offered and when will they start?

Over the next few months, Texas A&M University will engage in the process of determining feasible academic program offerings that support continued development of the Rio Grande Valley, and preparing formal request for approval of

the proposed higher education center from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools–Commission on Colleges, and other required discipline-specific accreditation agencies. Texas A&M anticipates making the requests for approval in the second quarter of 2016, with the intention to offer classes beginning in fall 2017.

How are the degree programs being determined?

Texas A&M is evaluating regional economic and workforce data, measuring student interest and holding discussions with civic and business leaders to determine potential academic program needs. Additionally, we are working across disciplines at Texas A&M to identify unique opportunities for existing programs to be extended to the higher education center in McAllen. To help us in this effort, we are forming an External Advisory Council composed of regional business, educational, and civic leaders from whom we can learn about anticipated future regional workforce needs and deficiencies in current higher education opportunities, and with whom we can build advocacy for our intended academic offerings.

How will Texas A&M University attract potential students?

Texas A&M has a rich history of students from the Rio Grande Valley applying to, attending, and graduating from degree programs in College Station, TX and the health related college sites across Texas. Texas A&M anticipates a great deal of interest from qualified students across the Rio Grande Valley as well as Texas for the select degree programs to be offered. Further, we will engage in an active marketing program so that students and their families in the Rio Grande Valley are aware of the degree program the University proposes to offer in the Valley.

Will students be considered Texas A&M University Students?

Students applying, attending and graduating from the proposed higher education center in McAllen, TX are expected to satisfy the same admission requirements as all students admitted to Texas A&M University, and to achieve the same graduation requirements. The only difference is that the students will be studying in McAllen rather than College Station, although they could study in College Station if they choose. Students who graduate with coursework offered through the Center are graduates of Texas A&M University and will be eligible to receive the Aggie Ring, and a transcript and diploma of Texas A&M University.

How do students apply for study at the Center?

Students who want to study at the proposed higher education center in McAllen will apply to Texas A&M through ApplyTexas just like all other students seeking admission to Texas A&M. On their application they will note that they wish to study in McAllen at the Center.

Will the cost to study in the Valley be different?

No, the cost to attend class and study at the higher education center will be the same as studying in College Station. The cost of housing and meals may be less, though, because you might be able to live at home, and because apartment rent is less than in College Station.

Who will administer the Higher Education Center?

The higher education center will be administered by campus leadership in College Station. However, there will be local leadership in McAllen to support student needs and to provide necessary student services such as academic advising, financial aid, and enrollment. Texas A&M will do everything possible to ensure that the quality of the educational programs and the support provided to the students in McAllen is the same as that provided to students in College Station.

Texas A&M University, the flagship campus of The Texas A&M University System, is one of the largest and most diversified institutions of higher learning in the nation. With a record enrollment of over 64,000 students, Texas A&M remains committed to the values of its land-grant heritage, ensuring accessible education for the people of Texas and the world. With externally funded expenditures exceeding \$854 million, Texas A&M's faculty-led research is changing lives globally while stimulating economic growth in Texas. Always leading by example, Texas A&M produces leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good.