



Chairwoman Nelson, Vice Chair Hinojosa, and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Dr. Carine Feyten and I am the Chancellor and President of Texas Woman's University. It is my honor to appear before you today on behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of Texas Woman's University.

From our founding in 1901, Texas Woman's University has had a long and rich tradition of educating Texans who have little other access to higher education. Our original mission, to educate the women of Texas, is still very much a part of our DNA. That mission has expanded in recent years to include men, first generation students, minorities, and other underserved populations that demographers tell us we must reach if we want the next generation of Texans to continue to prosper.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has laid out an excellent but daunting vision for Higher Education in Texas. To succeed, every institution in Texas is going to need to educate a more diverse and challenging population. I am proud to tell you that at TWU we already look a lot like Texas. Over half of our student body is Pell Grant eligible, over half of our students are minority, and over half of our students are transfer students. We are a designated Hispanic Serving Institution and have been nationally recognized as a **“military friendly”** institution.

Texas Woman's University has also been successful at educating Texans to fill the critical workforce needs for our state, including teachers, nurses, physical therapists, librarians and occupational therapists. **85% of our graduates are employed** or enrolled in graduate school within one year of graduation and TWU produced **24% of the critically needed PhDs in nursing in Texas** over the last few years.

We have done our best to increase efficiency and keep costs for students as low as possible. TWU has **reduced operating costs per student by 22%** since 2001 and the THECB has rated us the **seventh most affordable** institution in Texas. TWU graduates have 5% less debt than the statewide average. Our hard work has paid off as the ***Dallas Business Journal* recently ranked TWU Best Value in the Metroplex**, and just last year ***The Economist* ranked us #2 in Texas and #45 in the nation for value added for our graduates.**

Texas Woman's University recognizes and appreciates the financial commitment the Texas legislature has made to higher education and to TWU. We strive to be good caretakers of taxpayer dollars and we are proud of what we have accomplished with the funding provided by the taxpayers of Texas. Our funding priorities are outlined in greater detail below and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Dr. Carine Feyten



TEXAS WOMAN’S UNIVERSITY - AS DIVERSE AS TEXAS:

- TWU is the largest public or private university in the country primarily for women.
- The make-up of our student body ranks us in the top 10 in the nation for diversity.
- Over half of our student body is Pell Grant eligible, over half of our students are minority, and over half of our students are transfer students.
- We are a designated Hispanic Serving Institution and have been nationally recognized as a “military friendly” institution for 8 years.

EFFICIENT

- 38% of our budget comes directly from the taxpayer through state appropriations and that means we have to use every dollar wisely.
- **Total costs at TWU are 12% below the state average** and we are ranked the top 10 for affordability (total cost) in Texas.
- In the past year, the amount of debt of a TWU graduate has decreased by over \$1000, and **TWU students graduate with 5% less debt than the state average.**
- We have reduced operating costs per student by 22% since 2001.

EFFECTIVE

- Just last month the *Dallas Business Journal* ranked us as the **best value in the DFW Metroplex** for cost of education vs earnings after graduation.
- Last year, *The Economist* magazine ranked us **2nd highest in the state of Texas** and 45th in the nation for the “added value” of a TWU education.
- 85% of graduates are employed or enrolled in graduate school within 1 year of graduation and our graduates have 5% less debt than the state average.

DATA DRIVEN AND STUDENT FOCUSED

- Using sophisticated data analysis, we are identifying students when they begin to show signs of problems, rather than interviewing them about their reasons for dropping out as they exit.
- We have maintained our high rate of access yet **increased first year persistence by 11.3%** over the past 5 years and we can project that that number is getting better and better.
- We have developed tools and programming to address the needs of the “Whole Student” including:
 - Developing a Health and Well Being Initiative.
 - Addressing lack of financial literacy through programming and education.
 - Creating a CARE office to serve veterans, commuters, and other non-traditional students.
 - The Frontiers Program elevates our graduation rate for kids aged out foster care to over 50% at TWU as compared to 3% nationally and in Texas



COLLABORATION WITH OUR PEERS - ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS:

- **230 community college articulation agreements with 28 community colleges.**
- **Partnerships** with UNT, the University of Dallas, and Texas A&M – Commerce;
- **K-12 collaborations**, such as TWU’s mobile GO Centers, collaborative science & mathematics programming, reading programs, and multiple levels of engagement with local school districts and TWU’s College of Professional Education;

TEXAS WOMANS UNIVERSITY - LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES:

1. Restoration of Special Item Funding (in no particular order of importance):

- **Institutional Enhancement:**
 - Institutional Enhancement is essential to the core educational mission of the university and directly funds teaching faculty positions.
 - TWU faculty salaries are below the state average and TWU faculty are required to teach the equivalent of four classes per term.
 - Including Institutional Enhancement, TWU receives well below the state average in funding per student.
 - Cuts to Institutional Enhancement would directly impact the academic classroom offerings available to TWU students.
- **Center for Women in Business:**
 - Provides academic scholarship opportunities for students interested in starting a business as well as academic, practical, and scholarly support for the Governor’s initiative to make Texas the #1 state for women owned business.
 - The Center is less than two years old and initial startup funding was requested for 5 years.
 - Substantial funding cuts in the startup phase would likely make continuing the Center impossible.
- **Texas Medical Center Library Assessment:**
 - Direct academic benefit to the 1350 students in health-related fields at TWU’s Houston Campus by providing access to the Texas Medical Center Library.
 - Without funding students will likely see increased fees or will no longer have access to this vital academic resource.
- **On Line Nursing Education:**
 - Funding for on-line masters program in Nursing Education supports the production of teaching faculty statewide for community college RN programs.
 - TWU produced more Masters of Nursing graduates from 2006 to 2015 than any other institution (27% of total MSN degrees in Texas).
 - The shortage of nursing faculty with post-baccalaureate degrees is a major factor limiting Texas institutions ability to produce badly needed nurses.



- **Women’s Health Research Center:**
 - The Center enhances the health and well-being of women across their lifespan through research, education, and advocacy.
 - **Human Nutrition Research Development Program**
 - This item funds important research in TWU’s highly ranked Nutrition and Food Sciences Department.
2. **Formula Funding for Enrollment Growth:** TWU has grown by over 90% since 2001 and reduced operating costs by 22% per student. Our low tuition and fees make TWU one of the most affordable institutions in Texas. Over 38% of TWU’s operating budget comes directly from the taxpayers of Texas through appropriations. Cuts to formula funding will directly and significantly impact our ability to keep costs low for students and continue to provide a high quality education.
3. **Funding for Hazelwood Exemptions:** From Fall 2012 to Fall 2015, the amount of tuition and fees exempted for this program grew by 52%, In fiscal year 2014-2015, 418 students received Hazelwood exemptions totaling \$2,157,279. Of this amount, **\$1,403,747 was for Hazelwood Legacy** students, who are the dependents to whom the veterans have transferred their benefits. TWU is grateful for the \$300,224 (14% of total cost of exemptions) from the State of Texas in FY 2014-2015 to help offset the costs of the Hazelwood program but the growth in the cost of the program continues to outpace state support.
4. **Support for Financial Aid.** With over 50% of our undergraduate students eligible for Pell Grants the need for financial aid is greater than ever. TWU recommitted every dollar of revenue previously set aside for the “Be On Time” program back into financial aid for our students. Over half of our students are first generation college students and continued state support for financial aid is essential for TWU students.
5. **Support for increased funding to recruit and retain qualified nursing faculty.** The biggest obstacle TWU faces in expanding our capacity to educate nurses is hiring and retaining quality nursing faculty. Any effort **to increase funding for the hiring of qualified nursing faculty** would help TWU and other nursing colleges increase our capacity to meet Texas’ nursing workforce needs.
- Two Important Factors to consider:**
- TWU recommends dedicating a portion of the funds currently utilized for both the Physician Loan Repayment Program and the Nursing Faculty Loan Repayment Program specifically to nursing.
 - Currently nursing loan repayment funds are only available if the Physician Loan Repayment funds are not fully utilized. **This creates uncertainty for nurses eligible for the program and that uncertainty prevents us from more actively promoting the program.**
 - To be clear **TWU is NOT asking for any funds to come from the existing PLRP or that the PLRP be reduced.** However, separating the NFLRP with its own dedicated funding stream would help immensely.
 - TWU supports continued full funding for the Nursing Shortage Reduction Program.



6. Support for Exceptional Item Requests:

- **Center for Women's Leadership, Politics and Public Policy (\$2.9 million).**

Texas Woman's University has been blessed to be the designated home of the Texas Women's Hall of Fame, The Texas First Ladies Dress Collection and very importantly as the national repository and research center for the Women's Air Service Pilots (WASP) archives. The Center would leverage those existing collections and would also serve as the repository and archive for Texas Women who have served in elected office and wish to donate their archives. The Center would support scholarship and research and enable more effective leadership by Texas Women serving in public office and to encourage and develop the next generation of Texas women leaders. As a reminder, in Texas, women account for only 21% of the Legislature.

- **Center for Effective Parenting (\$1.9 million)** TWU already collaborates with CPS on best practices and training to prevent CPS intervention and this Center would both expand on that partnership and also enable scholarship and research that would benefit the entire state. Reducing CPS caseloads is a systemic issue and this investment would have a positive long-term effect on this major societal challenge here in Texas.

- **Center for Mental Health and Vocational Literacy (\$2.2 million).** This initiative would leverage important work being done at TWU in collaboration with CPS, the Workforce Commission, Mental Health and Criminal Justice around the issues of enhancing job effectiveness for people with mental health issues. The goal is to deepen research and scholarship for practitioners around the state so that individuals with mental health challenges can become productive Texas citizens.

Texas Woman's University is most appreciative for today's opportunity to share information about our wonderful institution. We also extend thanks to the members of the Senate Finance Committee for their work and interest. We look forward to continuing to serve the great state of Texas as we educate the future leaders of Texas.