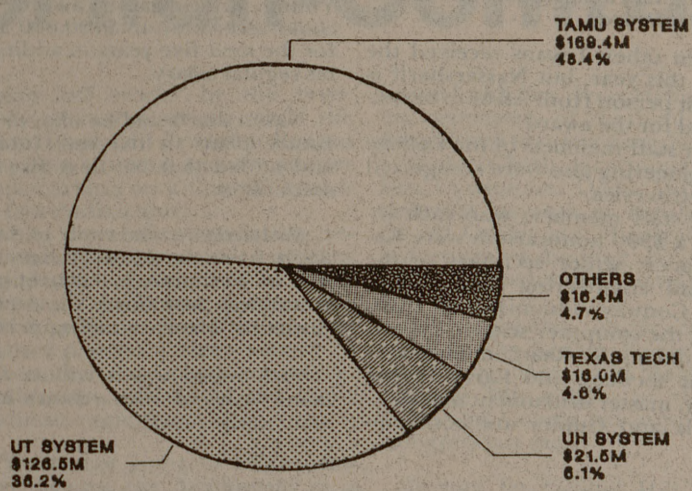


A&M receives \$169 million in 1986 research funding

Rank rising among top research universities

By Carolyn Garcia
Staff Writer

TEXAS PUBLIC SENIOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
COMPARISON OF 1986 RESEARCH FUNDS*



In its bid to become a world university, the Texas A&M University system snared \$169 million in research money during 1986, netting 8.4 percent of all research money available to public universities in the state.

Following A&M was the University of Texas System, with \$126.5 million, or 36.2 percent, said Duane Anderson, associate provost for research.

In 1985, the National Science Foundation ranked A&M 11th in the nation on its list of top research universities, coming in ahead of both Harvard and Columbia. The University of Texas also made the top 20 list at the 19th position.

Anderson said the 1985 ranking was done when A&M had \$146.4 million in research funds and that the research money A&M received in 1986 should raise A&M's rank.

He said reputation also is important for a university.

"The reputation of a university for quality is estimated over a period of many years and it's based on many factors — research is only one of them," he said.

"Many older universities that have had very good reputations have slipped in quality, but their reputations are still high," he said.

Anderson said A&M is now in the building process.

"Perception lags reality," Anderson said. "Texas A&M is just now beginning to be recognized for its high quality educational programs. The reality is that A&M is much better than the general perception."

"It's great however, that our trend is upward and we want to continue that trend."

Anderson said it is a surprise to many that one of A&M's fastest growing research programs is within the College of Liberal Arts.

A&M's rise in the national ranks is no accident, he said, and there were primarily four steps in the process:

- There was a conscious effort by the University president, the Board of Regents and the researchers to obtain recognition.
- The necessary facilities were built and future ones planned for.
- A&M began recruiting top researchers.
- A policy was adopted to reward research in addition to teaching.

"In order to be a university of the

first rank, you must have strong graduate and undergraduate programs," Anderson said. "We cannot have a strong graduate program without a strong research program."

"We are proud of our outstanding undergraduate programs at A&M and we're determined that they will not be allowed to suffer as we continue to build our graduate programs."

Anderson said for fiscal year 1985-86, A&M has 803 active researchers and 1,831 active research projects. He said the average value of each research project is \$90,000.

State appeals court orders retrial in 1965 slaying of 2 UT students

AUSTIN (AP) — The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals ordered a new trial Wednesday for James C. Cross Jr., who was imprisoned for 21 years after confessing to the 1965 slaying of two female University of Texas students.

Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle said the state would continue pressing the murder charge against Cross.

Cross initially did not appeal the murder conviction. But in 1986, citing changes in the law since his 1966 trial, he asked the appeals court to let him be improperly convicted because the same jurors ruled on his mental competency and guilt.

The law in effect at the time allowed that procedure, but the U.S. Supreme Court later ruled it unconstitutional. The Court of Criminal Appeals, in a 7-2 decision, said there was no choice but to order a new trial.

Under current law, separate juries must hear the competency and guilt phases of a trial. Jurors at the competency phase do not hear testimony concerning the crime.

The appeals court noted that prosecutors have said a retrial would be difficult because the court reporter's notes have been destroyed, some evidence is missing and several witnesses have died or cannot be found.

Cross, a UT student from Fort Worth, was sentenced to life in prison for the July 18, 1965, strangulation of Susan Rigsby. In his confession, Cross said he killed Rigsby and her friend, Shirley Stark. Cross was charged in the Stark death, but the charge was dismissed.

The two women, acquaintances of Cross, had gone to his Austin apartment to shower. Cross told police he killed the women and dumped their bodies in a North Austin field.

The Court of Criminal Appeals said prosecutors' contention that it would be hard to retry the case is not pertinent. Travis County Assistant District Attorney Philip Nelson, who is handling the prosecution's case, could not be reached for comment Wednesday at his office.

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