

# FACULTY RANKING

## A&M faculty ranking the best?

Billie Guy

reviewed by National Research Council six years ago, and the only department that ranked high was chemistry, he says. But if another ranking was done now, Fackler thinks substantial progress would have been made in all departments.

"We're right up there among best," Fackler says. "Our plant molecular biology has already surpassed the University of Texas in that area."

A distinguished professor of chemistry, Fackler came to A&M because he saw the potential of the institution and the opportunity to help lead the College of Science and make it better than it was.

"We have faculty who are willing to take risks now with offers elsewhere simply because in the long run this institution will be better than the institution they received the offer from," Fackler says.

Dan MacGilvray, associate dean for planning and research in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design, says they have some very qualified faculty members and the college is among the best schools in the country. Most faculty have either masters of architecture or masters of landscape architecture degrees. Only 25 percent of the faculty have doctorates, a figure lower than most colleges at A&M but higher than most other schools of architecture. Only 14 out of the 108 architecture schools, including A&M, offer doctorates.

"A&M is one of the leading research colleges of architecture, specifically in the areas of energy, daylighting, historic resource preservation and hazard mitigation (protection from natural and man-made disasters)," MacGilvray says. "But you can't have anything without the faculty."

Among the faculty members in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design are the president of the National Architecture Research Center Consortium and presidents of three state architecture societies. The faculty are well known statewide and nationally, he says.

Many architecture faculty members have been at A&M for 20 years, and they expect to have two or three positions vacant this year.

Benton Cocanougher, dean of the

search for the best faculty in the country. The national presidents of two business associations are among the A&M faculty.

"Every ranking we see indicates we are doing very well and are ranked among the best business colleges in the country," Cocanougher says. "We have many prominent faculty members and I have a feeling that the future is very bright for the University and the college."

A majority of the 125 full time faculty members are doctorally qualified, and Cocanougher says the turnover is fairly low. The recent salary increases prevented disastrous faculty turnovers this year and next year.

"Most of our faculty could have another job by the end of the week if they wanted it," Cocanougher says. "We have a number of faculty that are contacted all the time and we are very fortunate to be able to keep them here."

Janis Stout, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, says the liberal arts college is very active and stacks up well with any other state, land grant institution in the country.

"I was at a meeting the other day when the head of one department came in with an armload of books published by members of that department," Stout says. "Almost all of tenured and tenure track faculty have their PhDs. This is something you would expect at any fine university. By all criteria our faculty looks good when compared with other institutions in its class."

Stout says potential faculty members come to A&M because it is a "place where things are happening." Other factors such as the increase in enrollment add to the attraction of A&M, she says.

"The other day someone told me when she came to A&M she was impressed that the department was harmonious and people got along well together," Stout says. "Some schools are known for back biting, and we don't have that in our departments. We have a collegial atmosphere here."

Associate dean of the College of Engineering, Dr. Carl Erdman, says over the past few years they have hired the best faculty available.

"We recruit faculty from other schools and they do the same with us," Erdman says. "It is a very competitive environment. Turnover is higher in engineering than other colleges because there are more opportunities in industry and at other universities. It's hard to recruit and it's getting harder to keep the faculty."

Most faculty members come here to participate in an ongoing research project that's well known in the engineering community. Almost all have a doctorate in engineering or a related field, he says.

"People often think that while we are constantly working to improve the college, we forget that we have a good faculty here," Erdman says. "People think we don't like what we have and we are hiring to replace members. But that's not it at all. We have a good, strong faculty — we are just changing our emphasis."

Phillips believes A&M has a good reputation, but it frequently has an image problem.

"We have potential people look at the campus and say they didn't realize we had trees," Phillips says. "I guess a lot of people have a windblown,

National Rank	Field at A&M	Score (out of 5.0)
9	Agricultural Economics	4.69
2	Agriculture	4.93
2	Agronomy	4.91
3	Animal Science	4.90
2	Horticulture	4.91
22	Architecture	3.56
2	Landscape Architecture	4.88
27	Accounting	4.42
27	Management	4.42
27	Marketing	4.47
27	Business Analysis	4.47
27	Finance	4.47
15	Aerospace Engineering	4.43
2	Agriculture Engineering	4.91
9	Bioengineering	4.59
48	Chemical Engineering	4.05
20	Civil Engineering	4.53
60	Electrical Engineering	4.01
10	Industrial Engineering	4.41
19	Nuclear Engineering	4.12
4	Ocean Engineering	4.62
1	Petroleum Engineering	4.93
28	Forestry	4.07
NA	Mechanical Engineering	3.98
NA	Mining Engineering	4.09
16	Entomology	3.78
37	Geology	4.30
18	Geophysics	4.17
35	Economics	4.36

Data taken from the Gourman Report

Texas tumbleweed image of this area. But once we get them on the campus, we can really make an impression.

This is a friendly campus, and people like it when the students say 'hi' and 'howdy.' The students sell this institution — faculty are impressed."

Officials within the various colleges believe some faculty members are attracted to A&M because of the location of the school and the small town atmosphere. Phillips says in College Station, there are "operas to see, art to look at and good music to listen to."

Research is a fundamental part of the faculty's duties primarily for the development and advancement of knowledge at A&M. It is being promoted even more because of new legislation to distribute substantial sums of money for the work, Phillips says.

"I fundamentally believe that one cannot be a fresh, up-to-date teacher without being involved in research," Phillips says. "Their excitement about what they are doing is important to their students."

Fackler says research is essential for the development of the College of Science, as well as other colleges, if they expect to compete effectively with other schools.

"We are really looking for the best and when you're looking for the best, those people can do teaching and research effectively," Fackler says. "As segments of the University get better, we all get a lot better."

Stout says research is stressed at any institution, but in the College of Liberal Arts, it is not stressed more than teaching.

The success of an institution can be attributed to both the faculty and the students. Without one of these, a quality school could not exist.

Cocanougher believes the faculty is the prime reason for the College of Business Administration's success, but attracting quality students is the second component.

"When you match the two together it makes for good education," Cocanougher says. "We are proud of

faculty we have here. Research goes along with a good faculty."

Neal Lane, provost of Rice University, says research is essential to that institution and when faculty members are up for promotion, three factors are considered. Research is rated "critical," teaching ability is "very important" and service is "expected," Lane says.

"At Rice, everybody understands how important a quality undergraduate teaching program is and they work to ensure a fine teaching environment," Lane says. "The faculty are the heart of the institution, and whether it rises or falls depends on the quality of the faculty."

Marjorie Heffren associate director of the Harvard University news office, says they attract the top professionals in their fields because of the reputation of Harvard.

"We conduct a long search — a world search — for each position, and try to get the best there is," Heffren says. "By and large, we are a stopping place rather than a transit place."

Herbert Woodson, acting dean of engineering at the University of Texas at Austin, says they like to think the university provides the faculty with a professional climate in which they can develop satisfactorily. He also says they stress research, but it is not "all important."

"In order for a professor to continue to be a good professor, he must practice his profession," Woodson says. "Through research, the faculty can stay alive. If they don't do research, it won't be long before they become obsolete."

Dianne Bystrom, assistant to the provost at the University of Oklahoma, says 80 percent of the faculty hold doctoral degrees.

"Our faculty has a strong dedication to the university," Bystrom says. "People come here from the east or west coasts and are surprised that they like it. We have congeniality among the faculty."

Research has been stressed more recently because it is so tied to economic development, she says.