

TX Tech business cleared

LUBBOCK (AP) — Texas Tech's business school has not misused state funds provided for teaching assistants this semester, according to a university-sponsored audit, despite lingering questions about whether money was misused on the graduate assistants.

Provost John Burns began a personnel audit just after the start of the fall semester when the school's newspaper reported that some class discussion sessions listed in the university's schedule were not taking place.

In conducting his audit, Burns interviewed every teaching assistant and a number of faculty members and administrators in the College of Business Administration.

"I could find no incidence in which a teaching assistant did not have (a) specific, acceptable assignment," Burns wrote in his final report. "I found no example in which a teaching assistant was being used as a research assistant or to assist faculty with consulting contracts."

His findings were submitted to Tech president David Schmidly on Monday.

Graduate students are typically paid to work as teaching assistants at universities throughout the state. But after the student newspaper article, questions arose at Tech as to whether the teaching assistants were actually assisting in the classroom or spending their time conducting research.

Schmidly said the university is expected to use the tax dollars it receives for graduate assistants for teaching — not research.

UT releases enrollment

AUSTIN (AP) — Enrollment at the University of Texas-Austin is 50,010 this fall, a preliminary number the university says should allow the campus to retain its ranking as the nation's largest.

Enrollment is broken down by three categories: 38,184 undergraduates, 10,420 graduates and 1,406 law students, the university announced Monday. The total is 2 percent more than last fall's 49,009.

The increase is primarily the result of a larger-than-expected fall freshman enrollment of 6,664 and a near doubling of summer provisional students, UT said.

The number of minority freshman attending UT also increased this fall.

There were 296 black students, up 10 from 286 in 1999; 1,324 Asian students, up 103 from 1,221

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University of Texas president

in 1999; and 1,011 Hispanic stu-

dents, up 35 from 976 in 1999.

According to the university, 62.7 percent of UT's total student body is white, 0.5 percent is American Indian, 3.2 percent is African American, 12.5 percent is Asian and 11.8 percent is Hispanic.

"It is clear the university attracts the best and the brightest students in increasing numbers and we are working hard to retain these students at increasing rates," said university president Larry Faulkner.

Faulkner said the university needs to manage enrollment numbers while enhancing faculty and resources.

The university's Office of Institutional Studies calculates enrollment figures every 12th class day of the month, but there is usually little variation from the preliminary figures.

Committee on education investigates rising tuition

AUSTIN (AP) — Tuition and fees at Texas public universities have nearly doubled since 1992, and the state's higher education commissioner says that works against a goal of increasing the number of poor and minority students.

Don Brown told the House Higher Education Committee on Tuesday that the rising costs and the greater burden on students and their families is "a danger to our ability to close gaps" in low-income and minority enrollment by 2015.

Annual tuition and fees have increased from \$1,621 in 1992 to \$2,935 in 1998, Brown testified.

Twenty-two percent of that cost is being paid by students and their families, compared with 16 percent in 1992.

The total estimated cost — tuition, fees, transportation, room and board and books — to attend a four-year public university in Texas this year is \$11,894. That is compared with a national average of \$10,909.

Brown emphasized that higher education remains a good investment for students and the state, but expressed concern about the rising price.

"We all like to think of Texas as a low-tuition-and-fees state and for a long

time we were," Brown said. "In recent years, though, Texas has moved higher in the rankings."

According to one list distributed by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, Texas had the 29th-highest tuition and fees in the nation. Brown said the state had traditionally been ranked in the 40s.

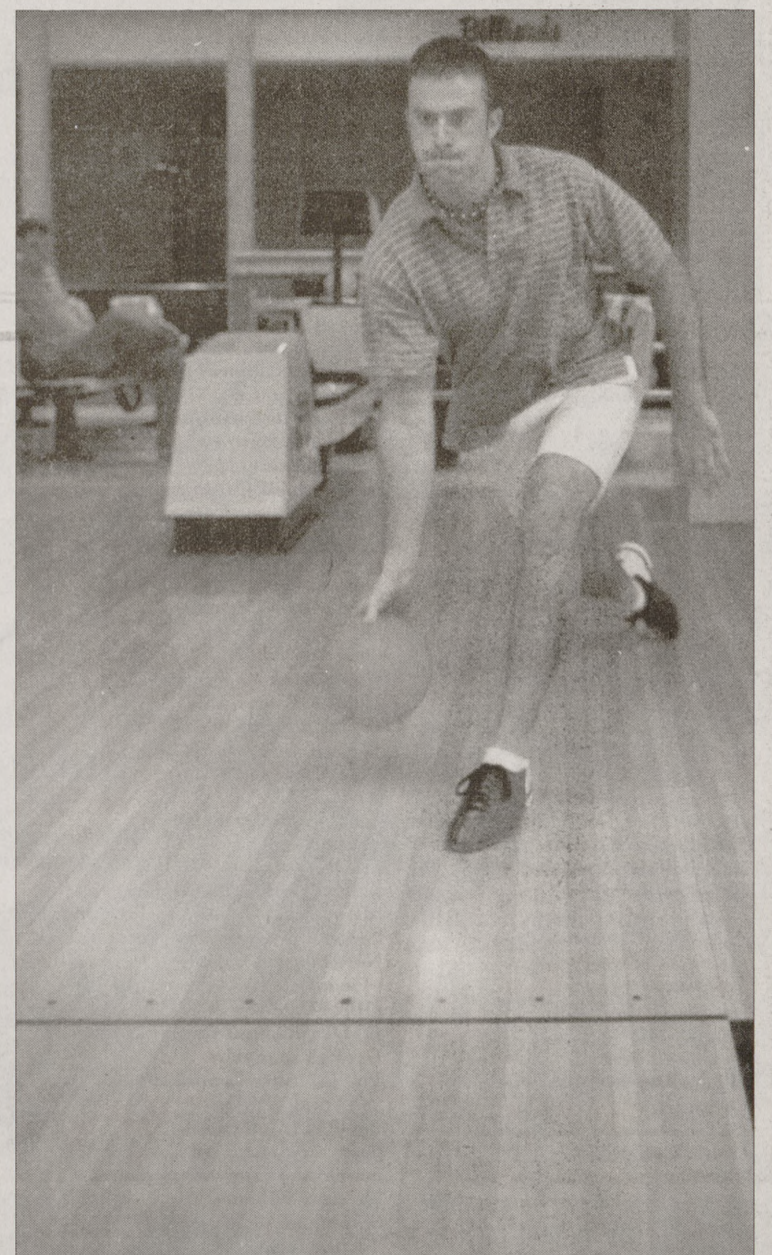
Also on Tuesday, the committee heard testimony from the chancellors of state universities, colleges and technical schools on a proposal to designate more institutions as "flagships," giving them more money from the \$7.5 billion Permanent University Fund

and a greater variety of doctorate, graduate and undergraduate programs.

Supporters of the 30-year plan suggest naming UT-Dallas, UT-San Antonio and the University of Houston as flagships. Proponents said the changes are necessary because of lagging enrollment in a growing economy and to keep up with public universities in other states such as California.

Texas' higher education system will earn its "rightful place" among the nation's premier universities if legislators adopt the plan, said Arthur Smith, chancellor at the University of Houston.

Strike!



KEVIN BURNS/THE BATTALION

Jay Fenlaw, a senior accounting major, bowls a few frames at the Memorial Student Center bowling alley on Tuesday. Fenlaw and his friends have weekly bowling competitions.

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