

UHCN Article
Oct 6, 2006
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Sustainable growth is a watchword in economics, and in public policy. But, it can also be applied to institutional growth, and I believe we need to think clearly about sustainability here at UH. If you talk to almost anyone on campus who has been here for a while, they will tell you that at some point in the past, their unit was better than it is now, whether that unit is an academic department, a sports team, or even many administrative units. No unit that I know of claims to be as good as it has ever been. This unusual situation creates a bit of frustration, but is also very instructive about how we at UH need to proceed to the next Tier.

Specifically, growth here at UH has never occurred on a sustainable path. The problem with pockets of excellence that are surrounded by parts that are not comparable, is that the whole purpose of a university is defeated. A university is a set of separate units, each striving to do its best in the overall environment, but it is easy to forget that each unit is much stronger by being linked to all the other departments. This is because students want a well rounded education. Their demand for breadth is a product of two desires, one is their desire to know at least a little about many subjects, second is because it is difficult for students leaving high school to have a sense for which specialization (or major) will best serve them. A comprehensive university gives students this sense, by exposing them to a wide variety of subjects. By doing so, a comprehensive university gives students every chance of specializing in the area that best suits their abilities, temperament, and tastes.

For an institution to be attractive to a broad spectrum of students, it needs to show balance by having many parts that all fit together. This is what I mean by sustainability. Thus, if students are attracted by UH's reputation in a particular field, but find that a different field better suits them, they can nonetheless be assured of having a strong department from which to obtain their education.

Thus for UH to achieve the next tier, we will be best served by growing everything a little bit, and keeping balance across campus in all of the facilities that make excellent campus life. Such a statement, however, does not mean that the individual experiments in excellence are not rewarded. Many departments, and other units on campus, have shown that it is possible to achieve excellence, and that students respond very positively when that happens. I believe that these experiments have been vitally important in crystallizing the desire by faculty to significantly improve UH, and these experiments have created a demand among alumni and others to create excellence here.

But now, to truly build a top tier institution, we need to follow a sustainable growth path. We like to think of institutional growth as bricking up a round building. Each layer of bricks needs to be completed before you start on the next, or the entire structure will collapse. I have argued in this space in the past that first, growth starts in the academic departments, that need to be reasonably strong across the board. This goal will be attained if we can hire about 400 new faculty (less the 30 we are trying to grow by this year) even if there are no new students. Second, the Facilities Master Plan calls for a considerable increase in residential housing on campus. This will create a cadre of full time, dedicated students that I believe is essential to creating an academic environment that

appreciates learning in a creative environment consistent with the benefits of a research university. With a large number of new residential students, our campus services will need to commensurately increase, including even sports and campus entertainment. It also means we need to have comparable quality in our administrative services, such as advising, so the initially attracted students can find their way to their true calling. A sustainable growth path can also include pockets of exceptional excellence, as such centers serve as beacons to students. But if these centers succeed at being magnets to UH, then the institution needs to be able to deliver to those that are attracted irrespective of the field in which they eventually specialize. Thus all of the University needs to be close in quality to the best known parts, so that the whole can effectively work together. By pursuing a balanced growth path, we can increase the academic reputation of the university, and do so in a way that is lasting.