

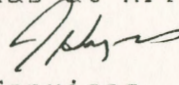


The
University of Texas
at
Arlington

Handicapped Student Services
UTA Box 19348
Arlington, Texas 76019-0348
(817) 273-3364

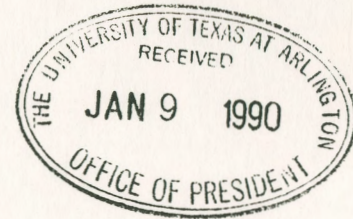
MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Wendell Nedderman, President
The University of Texas at Arlington

FROM: Jim Hayes, Director 
Handicapped Student Services

DATE: January 5, 1990

SUBJECT: Student Congress Resolution 89-42



Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to respond to Student Congress Resolution 89-42 which calls for an abolition of steps throughout the University. I am pleased that our student leaders have taken the time and effort to become aware of the physical structure of the University and its relation to the mobility needs of our student group.

While accessibility and accommodation for our mobility impaired students is a priority function of UTA's Physical Plant for existing and planned facilities, the abolition of stairs is counter-indicated for basically two reasons. First, there are groups of mobility impaired individuals who ambulate with crutches, walkers and other supportive apparatus who require non-sloped surfaces to traverse walkways. The blind individual typically is trained by their sighted guide to utilize steps because they are easily identified landmarks and are countable.

Secondly, the orderly dispersement of 24,000 individuals and the aesthetic appearance of our campus is as important to our population as it is to any other individual associated with UTA. Much has been accomplished by Architectural Design allowing for the co-existence of flat terrain, steps, and adjacent ramps. It is important for our office to orient users as to the location of accessibility features which we do routinely.

Each semester I field several complaints concerning the need for able-bodied students to "use the stairs" in lieu of accessibility features so that the mobility impaired individual could reach his destination. In this regard, the orderly dispersement of both groups depend on stairs. While I believe the resolution is well intentioned, I think its full implementation would be counter-productive.

If I may provide you with additional information, or if I may ever be of service, please do not hesitate to contact me.