



The  
University of Texas  
at  
Arlington

Office of the President  
P.O. Box 19125  
Arlington, Texas 76019

October 31, 1980

Mr. Bob Hardesty  
Vice Chancellor for Administration  
The University of Texas System  
601 Colorado Street  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Bob:

I am pleased to respond to the points raised by Representative Mary Jane Bode.

First, a little about accommodations for the handicapped.

In latter 1972, before Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act came into being, UT-Arlington launched into a major program to remove architectural barriers for the handicapped. This included an extensive system of curb cuts and ramps. At the same time programs for the handicapped were initiated. In 1974, UT-Arlington won Governor's Briscoe's award as the outstanding state agency in dealing with the handicapped.

Since 1974, the following new buildings have been completed, all of which meet or exceed the requirements of Section 504:

- |                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Fine Arts Building       | 1974        |
| 2. Activities Building      | 1976        |
| 3. Business Building        | 1977        |
| 4. Engineering Lab Building | 1977        |
| 5. University Bookstore     | 1978        |
| 6. Athletic Stadium         | 1980        |
| 7. Nursing Building         | 1982 (est.) |

A major program of renovation of existing buildings has also been underway:

- |                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| 1. Preston Hall          | 1975 |
| 2. Ransom Hall           | 1975 |
| 3. Geoscience Building   | 1977 |
| 4. Life Science Building | 1978 |
| 5. Student Center        | 1978 |
| 6. Old College Hall      | 1979 |

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Elevators were added in these renovations and all requirements of Section 504 have been met or exceeded. In addition, Brazos Dormitory was renovated to accommodate wheelchair students. A Handicapped Student Office was established.

In my opinion, UT-Arlington can match any University in the state relative to a barrier free campus.

Cooper Street through the middle of the campus is a problem. We did buy traffic lights, and a control-computer, to aid pedestrians. Cooper Street is also Farm Market Road 157. Hence, the Texas Highway Department, the City of Arlington, and The University of Texas at Arlington are involved. We have completed preliminary plans for depressing Cooper Street. This would separate vehicular and pedestrian traffic - leaving pedestrian traffic the capability of moving across the street at-grade. The estimated cost of construction is 9 to 10 million dollars. The City of Arlington will participate only to the extent of the cost of moving utilities. The Highway Department was at one time willing to provide some matching funds but is no longer able to do so. The City is not willing to close the street.

Why is Cooper Street not depressed to separate vehicular and pedestrian traffic? Answer: funding! I would be delighted if the Texas State Legislature would appropriate the necessary funds to the Texas Highway Department or to The University of Texas at Arlington for this project. Of course if we are brought under PUF, this will be one of our requested projects.

Now as to the question "Why wouldn't the UT-Arlington President let employees testify when my Select Committee on State Employees Productivity was there?"

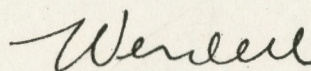
This is news to me. I did not prohibit anyone from testifying. I pride myself on having, or trying to have, an open campus where people are free to express themselves without apprehension. "Muzzling" people is totally contrary to my nature. If anyone on campus discouraged or banned any employee from speaking, I would like to not only know about it but also be provided specific details.

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Our immediate-past Director of Personnel, Dean Moore, helped arrange the hearing. The announcement, see Exhibit A, was posted in many prominent places about campus. Later, Representative Bode sent a letter of appreciation to Dean Moore (See Exhibit B).

Any help in the clarification of this matter would be appreciated.

Very truly yours,



W. H. Nedderman  
President

WHN:bb

Enclosures