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Texas State University System Board of Regents discusses SHSU enrollment

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The **Texas State University System Board of Regents** discussed SHSU's enrollment during its meeting Friday on campus.

Jamie Hebert, provost and vice president of academic affairs, informed the board of enrollment numbers and changing demographics at SHSU.

Since 2007 student enrollment has risen from 16,400 to 17,618 students.

This increase has SHSU facing a changing population in demographics. There are more underclassmen than upperclassmen and more minority students than before.

The national average of freshman-sophomore retention rates is 73 percent. SHSU falls into that average, but Hebert said it is looking to be at 78 to 80 percent in the future.

"Our freshman-sophomore retention rate has been steadily increasing despite the fact that we're growing our student population," Hebert said.

Other than student classification demographics, SHSU has also seen an increase in minority students who are graduating from the institution.

"The percentage of American college students who are Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Black has been increasing" according to a report by the National Center for Educational Statistics.

SHSU is among the top 100 universities in the United States with minorities graduating.

The university is ranked 64 for graduating Hispanics, 80 for African Americans, 96 for American Indians and 96 overall for total minority students.

As well as minorities graduating, SHSU has also seen an increase in the number of doctorate students graduating each year.

"Since 2006, we have graduated over 30 doctorate students each year," Hebert said. "It's a tremendous accomplishment for the type of institution we were 20 to 30 years ago."

SHSU has a new doctoral program, the Doctor of Education in Developmental Education Administration. Officials think the new program will push doctoral numbers completely over the top in terms of enrollment, Hebert said. The program is entirely online.



Jessica Gomez | The Houstonian

QUARTERLY UPDATE. Vice Chair Donna Williams of Arlington, Chairman Charlie Amato of San Antonio and Regent Jaime R. Garza, Ph.D., of San Antonio, three of the nine members of the Texas State University System Board of Regents, met Thursday and Friday at SHSU.

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Enrollment has also grown due to online classes.

In 2008, SHSU had just over 5,000 semester credit hours being taken by students online. For the 2011-2012 year this number has rocketed to 22,000.

More than 90 percent of students who are in online courses at SHSU the census day actually complete these courses, Hebert told the board.

"While distance education can use a variety of technologies, it has grown most rapidly online with the use of the Internet," according to a report by the US Government Accountability Office. "Online distance education is currently being offered in various ways to students living on campus, away from a campus, and across state lines. School offerings in online learning range from individual classes to complete degree programs. Courses and degree programs may be a mix of face-to-face and online instruction—'hybrid' or 'blended' instruction."

Outside of Texas, 39 states have contracts with SHSU's online program. The university is looking to expand on this aspect of student population growth.

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