1.1 University History

The University of Texas at El Paso, known as UTEP, is the second oldest academic component of The University of Texas System. It was founded by the Texas Legislature in 1913 as the State School of Mines and Metallurgy, a name that gives testament to the scope of education offered at the early West Texas school. The first campus, located on land that is now part of the Fort Bliss Army Post, was destroyed by fire a few years after the college’s inception in 1914, and the school moved in 1917 to the present campus in the western foothills of the Franklin Mountains, just a stone’s throw from the Rio Grande River.

In the move to the present 414-acre site, UTEP acquired what has become one of its most distinctive non-academic trademarks - the Bhutanese-style architecture that makes the campus' buildings look more like exotic Oriental castles than stacks of classrooms, research labs and offices. The motif, characterized by thick, sloped outer walls topped with elaborate brickwork, was inspired by Kathleen Worrell, the wife of the college's first dean, and designed by noted El Paso architect Henry Trost. Mrs. Worrell, an avid armchair traveler, had seen National Geographic photographs of Bhutanese buildings in the Himalayan Mountains and decided that similar architecture would complement the rugged desert terrain at the college's new site. Architects have continued the theme through nearly 100 years of campus expansion.

After the move to the new campus, the school grew steadily. In 1919, the institution became a branch of The University of Texas and was renamed the Texas College of Mines and Metallurgy. In 1927, liberal arts courses were added to the curriculum, and the first graduate degree, a Master of Arts, was established in 1940. By 1949, enrollment approached 2,400, and the institution was renamed Texas Western College. Texas Western College became The University of Texas at El Paso in 1967 and boasted a student population of more than 9,000.

Since then, the size of the student body has more than doubled, reaching an all-time high of 23,079 in 2014. UTEP has continued to grow both physically and academically to meet the needs of the increasingly industrialized West Texas region. The UTEP campus now consists of 97 buildings, including the 51,000-seat Sun Bowl stadium; the 11,767-seat Don Haskins Center; a modern fine arts complex with galleries and recital halls, and a museum of natural and cultural history.
As UTEP marked its Centennial celebration, its innovative curriculum and sensitivity to the needs of El Paso's predominantly Hispanic community is earning UTEP a reputation as a national research university with a 21st century student demographic.

1.2 Mission Statement

UTEP is a comprehensive public research university that is increasing access to excellent higher education. We advance discovery of public value and positively impact the health, culture, education, and economy of the community we serve.