

UT Faculty Productivity Gets High Marks in New Report

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Despite the arguments of critics in recent months, Marc Musick, the University of Texas at Austin's College of Liberal Arts associate dean of student affairs, makes the case in a new faculty productivity report that his institution provides "an incredible return on investment for the state."

Using data from the 2009-10 academic year [made public](#) by the [University of Texas System](#) this summer, Musick found that UT professors generated revenue of more than twice their compensation of \$257 million in state funds for salary and benefits. By combining the amount of money paid by the state via a student enrollment-based formula and external funding for academic research, Musick concluded that the UT faculty generated about \$558 million in total revenue for the university.

Musick's report is the latest in a [series](#) of [similar](#) productivity studies that have been released over the course of a year marked by questions about the effectiveness of the state's higher education system. The studies have come from a variety of sources using differing methodologies and reaching a wide range of conclusions, some of them strikingly negative. The latest release comes at a time when many of the key players in the state's ongoing debate over higher education are poised to take the discussion on how to measure faculty productivity to a national level.

The topic became a hot-button issue in the spring, due in large part to a set of seven controversial proposals for higher education written by Austin businessman Jeff Sandefer in 2008 and promoted by Gov. [Rick Perry](#) and the [Texas Public Policy Foundation](#), a conservative think tank of which Sandefer is a board member.

On Friday, Sandefer and others tied to the TPPF are participating in a higher education conference in Washington, D.C., put on by the Cato Institute, a prominent national conservative organization. According to information the institute [posted online](#) about the event, "One key question the conference will take on is how to assess the productivity of faculty members, including examining the groundbreaking — and highly controversial — efforts recently undertaken in the state of Texas."

