University of Texas, Austin

The University of Texas, Austin has been a member of UCAR since 1964. UCAR related activities take place within several departments and research centers including The Jackson School of Geosciences, the Department of Geological Sciences, the Institute for Geophysics, the Bureau of Economic Geology, the Center for Sustainable Water Resources, the Center for Energy and Environmental Resources, the Center for Space Research and the Department of Physics, the Marine Sciences Institute and the Section of Integrative Biology with the School of Biological Sciences. The Department of Environmental Sciences is the primary UCAR related unit within the University, although there is not a traditional atmospheric sciences department. The largest group of faculty in the Climate System Science education and research group has 8 faculty members with 38 graduate students and 10 MS and PhD students graduating in the last five years, with 5 of the faculty members hired in the last 3 years. The Institute for Marine Sciences has 15 faculty members and 44 degrees granted (it was not stated if these were undergraduate or graduate students) in the past 5 years with focuses on marine biological processes. The Texas Advanced Computer Center is located at the University of Texas at Austin, although it was unclear whether there are dedicated resources available for University of Texas researchers.

The faculty and researchers at the University of Texas at Austin have an appropriate publication record in UCAR related fields with noteworthy contributions to atmospheric sciences, climate dynamics with both regional and global modeling, land-atmosphere interactions, remote-sensing applications to the atmospheric water cycle, paleoclimate observations, cryosphere studies, hydrology. The contributions from the Marine Sciences were not highlighted in the available CVs. Several faculty members have been involved in UCAR activities including the UCAR Board of Trustees, membership in several different CCSM working groups, the NCAR Advanced Study Program, and participation in NCAR workshops.

While the activities of the University of Texas in UCAR related activities appear to be well established, more specific information would be helpful in evaluating their membership. The following information would be useful for evaluation: the number of degrees granted in UCAR related sciences including a distribution among B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees; the length of UCAR membership; what portion of the Texas Advanced Computer Center is devoted to activities at University of Texas UCAR related science; and whether the Institute for Marine Sciences is part of the University of Texas UCAR related activities (no CVs were given for the Marine Sciences Faculty).

The UCAR Membership Committee concludes that membership criteria are fulfilled, and recommends to the Members’ Representatives that the membership of the University of Texas at Austin be continued as provided by the bylaws.