



Academic Planning and Policy E-NEWS

Planning & Accountability • P-16 Initiatives • Workforce, Academic Affairs & Research
Office of Academic Planning and Policy David W. Gardner, Deputy Commissioner

Volume 4 Number 3

May – June 2012

The Coordinating Board is guided by the Texas higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, to close the educational gaps in student participation, student success, institutional excellence, and research.

Reverse Transfer (HB 3025)

In the 82nd Texas Legislative Regular Session, Chairman Dan Branch passed HB 3025, which provided a number of measures intended to aid in the effective and efficient transfer of students from one institution of higher education to another. As one of the mechanisms to encourage students to transfer while recognizing the critical role that community colleges play, the statute requires that a public university take certain steps in order to facilitate the transfer of credit obtained by a student who has earned a total of 90 semester credit hours (SCH) after earning at least 30 SCH at a community college. Once a university identifies that a student has obtained a total of 90 SCH, the institution must contact the student and request their permission to send a current transcript of their total credits earned back to the community college from which they transferred. Once the permission is received from the student, the institution must send the transcript back to the community college of origin so that the community college may evaluate the transcript and award an associate's degree to the student. This is a value to the student by showing recognition of the work that they have already completed, and provides acknowledgement of the positive role that community colleges play in improving student outcomes at four-year institutions. The Coordinating Board strongly encourages community colleges and universities to work on implementing this statutory requirement as soon as possible.

MacGregor Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

The Development of Voluntary Statewide Transfer Compacts and the Tuning Texas Project Continue Moving Forward

To date, the chancellors or presidents of 17 universities and 62 community and technical colleges have agreed to participate in one or more of the Voluntary Engineering Transfer Compacts for Civil, Electrical, Industrial, and Civil Engineering, eliminating the need for potentially hundreds of institution-to-institution articulation agreements among these signatory institutions. These voluntary statewide transfer agreements were developed in 2009 and 2010 by the Coordinating Board with grant support from Lumina Foundation for Education and the work of voluntary advisory committees made up of engineering faculty from across Texas. The 2011 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering and Science (2011 TOCES) has now completed final Tuning packages for Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Biology, and Chemistry. On Tuesday, March 20, nearly 3,000 faculty members teaching courses in these disciplines received a personal email invitation to evaluate the final drafts of the work of the discipline-specific tuning committees via online surveys in SurveyMonkey. The overall response rate to these surveys was 25.9 percent, with 758 professors providing valuable feedback to committee members prior to their finalizing their tuning work. During this summer, a subcommittee of the 2011 TOCES will complete the "Fine-Tuning" (course alignment) work for the lower-division courses to be included in the transfer compacts for these disciplines. Final course descriptions and course learning outcomes for these courses will be considered the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) Committee in fall 2012, after a statewide 30-day comment period. For more information, please visit: http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/Tuning_Engineering_in_Texas.

Mary E. Smith, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Coordinating Board
Quarterly Meetings
[Information](#)

Board Committee Meetings
[Information](#)

USEFUL LINKS

Workforce, Academic Affairs
and Research
[WAAR Website](#)

Finance and Resource
Planning
[Finance/Resource Website](#)

Texas Higher Education
Accountability System
[Accountability Website](#)

P-16 Initiatives
[P-16 Website](#)

College for All Texans
[CFAT Website](#)

Employment Opportunities
at the Coordinating Board
[CB Jobs](#)

Comprehensive Student Success Program Teams “Dig into the Data”

On June 7 and 8, more than 40 community college and university faculty, staff, and administrators from eight institutions participated in a technical assistance workshop hosted at the University of Houston. The Comprehensive Student Success Program (CSSP) Workshop was the second in an ongoing series that leveraged national expertise in data and research design and analysis to provide project-specific technical assistance to grantees. Dr. Donald Wood, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness at Odessa College, presented institutional and course-level research and that focused on a data-driven process to identify high-withdrawal courses and applicable strategies to increase faculty engagement and student persistence. Dr. Vasti Torres, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Indiana University Bloomington, facilitated discussion and data exercises that compelled participants to work with both fictitious and actual data to sharpen their investigative and decision-making processes in designing appropriate course-based and student-support interventions for at-risk students.

Institutions also worked under the direction of Dr. Selina Vasquez-Mireles, Principal Investigator for CSSP Evaluation and Professor of Mathematics at Texas State University, to craft an ongoing data collection and evaluation plan for the second year of program activities. To conclude the two-day workshop, Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein, Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at The University of Texas at Austin, worked with institutional teams to address models of strategic learning and their validity and usefulness for faculty in developing effective programmatic interventions to increase student persistence and success. Institutions worked together to develop uses for the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) to improve applicable student-support interventions. The CSSP is a part of the THECB College Access Challenge Grant (CACG), funded by the United States Department of Education, which supports institutions in identifying entry-level courses with high rates of non-completion and using data to design and implement systems for early alert and successful intervention. Comprehensive Student Success Program (CSSP) grantee institutions include:

Austin Community College
Houston Community College
North Central Texas College
Texas A&M University-Commerce

Texas Woman’s University
The University of Texas-Pan American
University of Houston
University of Houston-Downtown

Matt Lashlee, Education Specialist, Division of P-16 Initiatives

Introducing Three New Program Directors in the Division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Rebecca Leslie comes to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) with a diverse background in public and community service. After graduation from Texas A&M University-Commerce with an MBA, she worked as a budget analyst for the state of Oklahoma. Upon returning to Texas, she worked as an accountant for two non-profit organizations while simultaneously serving on the board of directors and as a volunteer in an Adult Literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. This experience led her to public education as an ESL teacher. In higher education she worked in enrollment management and transfer articulation. For six years she served as the Database Site Manager for the Texas Common Course Numbering System and an ex-officio member of the THECB Academic Course Guide Manual Advisory Committee.

Andrew Lofters has been an Austin resident since 1987 and was recently hired by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) as a Program Director in the division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research (WAAR). Prior to working with the THECB, Dr. Lofters served Huston-Tillotson University as the Director of the Center for STEM Success, Director of the Huston-Tillotson University Saturday STEM Academy, Director of the Austin Pre-Freshman Engineering Program (AusPrEP), and Assistant Director of the W.E.B. DuBois Honors Program. Previous to his employment with Huston-Tillotson University, Dr. Lofters served 20 years as a science teacher and administrator with the Austin Independent School District. Dr. Lofters received his B.S. in Chemistry-Teaching degree from The University Of Maryland-Eastern Shore and his Masters in Educational Administration-Principalship and Doctorate of Educational Administration in the Community College Leadership from The University of Texas at Austin.

Cathie A. Maeyaert, J.D., is a Program Director in the Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research division of the Coordinating Board. Prior to joining the Coordinating Board in March 2012, Ms. Maeyaert was the Accreditation and Licensing Manager for a private for-profit higher education organization with schools in Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, Utah, and Idaho. She also practiced intellectual property and employment law as a member of the Minnesota and Federal Bar and developed continuing legal education seminars. Ms. Maeyaert holds a law degree from William Mitchell College of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education Will Consider Workforce Success Metrics on July 25

The Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education (CCII) will hold its fourth quarterly meeting on July 25, 2012, from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Coordinating Board's offices in Austin. The focus of this meeting will concern the workforce and possible metrics for measuring workforce success. Distinguished presenters and discussion leaders at this meeting will include Anthony P. Carnevale, Research Professor and Director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, who will participate via video conference, and Douglas Ridge, Director of Employer Initiatives, Texas Workforce Commission. Also presenting at this meeting will be Lee Holcombe, Director, Higher Education Policy Institute. For more information, please visit the CCII website at: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/ContinuousImprovement>.

Mary E. Smith, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy

Statewide P-16 Institute hosted by the Coordinating Board

The Division of P-16 Initiatives hosted a P-16 Institute on June 13 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin. This was the second P-16 Institute of the 2011-12 year designed to bring P-16 regional teams of local secondary, post-secondary, and community and business partners together to assist in *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. During the institute, the THECB offered a series of sessions on educational initiatives, college readiness programs in school districts, partnerships, sustainability, and collaborative professional development. Twenty-nine P-16 Councils sent representatives, which totaled 96 public and higher education administrators, workforce, community, and business leaders.

Priscilla Martinez, Program Director, Success Unit, Division of P-16 Initiatives

Second Annual GenTX Day Celebrated Across Texas

On May 4, communities across Texas celebrated the second annual GenTX Day. Texans wore their favorite college t-shirts and congratulated the students of Generation TX—especially this year's graduating seniors. The nine funded P-16 Councils, along with partners in five non-funded markets, made GenTX Day 2012 a success:

- Texas more than doubled the number of participating communities
- GenTX Day business partners increased by 471%
- Individual student profiles on GenTX.org increased by 728%
- GenTX Facebook reached 15,000 people
- GenTX email list grew by 817%

A full report on all community activities and results can be found at: http://gentx.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/GenTXDay_2012_StatewideActivity.pdf.

To see how communities came together to celebrate GenTX Day 2012, view the video recap at: <http://vimeo.com/43490842>.

Priscilla Martinez, Program Director, Success Unit, Division of P-16 Initiatives

GenTX Training Provides P-16 Councils with Toolkits for *Rock Your Future* Events

On June 12, 31 representatives from 14 P-16 Councils attended a GenTX Training at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin. P-16 Councils received training on the *Rock Your Future* seasonal promotion and were provided a kit focused on assisting P-16 Councils and campaign partners in planning *Rock Your Future* events and promotions during the back-to-school months of August through November. The kit provides ideas, content, templates, and direction to P-16 Councils, campaign partners, counselors, and advisers who might be coordinating *Rock Your Future* celebrations for their community or school. It also provides ideas of ways that other groups—such as local higher education partners, businesses, and chambers of commerce—can plug into *Rock Your Future* events. The nine currently funded P-16 Councils also presented their GenTX sustainability plans. *Rock Your Future* materials and kit are available to the public at: <http://downloads.gentx.org/index.php?content=rockyourfuture>.

Priscilla Martinez, Program Director, Success Unit, Division of P-16 Initiatives

Texas Receives \$1 Million Next Generation Learning Challenges Grant

Texas received a \$1 million grant to help design, pilot, and scale the *Affordable Baccalaureate Degree Program*—a low-cost alternative to a postsecondary degree, with special focus on students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The grant has been awarded to a partnership between the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Texas A&M University-Commerce, and South Texas College who are working collaboratively to develop a low-cost, high-quality Bachelor's of Applied Sciences (BAS) in Organizational Leadership. This degree will focus on real world business skills such as information literacy, written and oral communication, critical thinking, and teamwork. These skills will be embedded throughout the program and emphasized through application and real world problem solving exercises. The program will leverage online education, competency-based learning, alternative academic staffing models, and other innovations to help control costs.

Students may enroll in as many as six (seven-week) terms per year at an estimated flat-rate tuition and fee cost of \$683 per seven-week term. Flat-rate tuition will be inclusive of all testing fees, support service fees, tutoring, advising, electronic learning materials (including textbooks), and as many competencies as students are able to complete per term. Students may enroll year-round, with the first students enrolling in fall 2013. It is estimated that first-time students can earn the BAS in Organizational Leadership in as little as three years at a total student cost of approximately \$13,650.

The Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) grant is a collaborative, multi-year initiative created to address the barriers to educational innovation and tap the potential of technology to dramatically improve college readiness and completion in the United States, especially among low-income and minority students. NGLC is guided by the belief that providing investment capital to expand the use of proven and emerging learning technologies, collecting and sharing evidence of best practices, and fostering a community of innovators and adopters will result in a robust pool of solutions and greater institutional adoption which, in turn, will dramatically improve the quality of learning experiences in the United States. NGLC is led by EDUCAUSE in partnership with the League for Innovation in the Community College, the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Van Davis, Special Projects Director, Academic Programs; Division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Newsletter Contact: Sarah Rondinelli, Administrative Assistant, Office of Academic Planning and Policy
Email: sarah.rondinelli@thechb.state.tx.us Phone: (512) 427-6566