



# 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 5

September – October 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.

## **Four Exemplary Programs Win Higher Education Star Awards**

Four exemplary higher education programs received the Texas Higher Education Star Award from the Coordinating Board on Thursday, October 4 at the annual State of Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony. The Star Award was established in 2001 to recognize exceptional contributions toward one or more of the goals of the Texas higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. Representatives of institutions, organizations, and groups from all over the State of Texas have been recognized for their efforts to develop and implement the state's most successful programs, projects, and activities. The 2012 Star Award winners are:

1. Alamo Colleges – Alamo Area Academies
2. South Texas College – Dual Enrollment Medical Science Academy
3. The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing/Academic Partnerships – UT Arlington-Academic Partnerships BSN Completion Program
4. West Texas A&M University – Gateway Project

Information about these programs is available online at <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/starawards>.

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

## **Coordinating Board Seeks Deputy Assistant Commissioner for CTCs**

The Coordinating Board is currently advertising for a newly created position in the Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research division. The position is the Deputy Assistant Commissioner – Community and Technical Colleges. This position will be responsible for a variety of topic areas primarily related to the community, state, and technical colleges as well as transfer-related issues. The position will oversee the Perkins programs, dual credit/early college high schools, common course numbering system, and the workforce education course manual, among others. The Deputy Assistant Commissioner will also work to support the Board Task Force on Community and Technical Colleges, the Community College Advisory Group, and the Two-Year College Liaisons.

Individuals interested in obtaining more information on the position may go to: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/apps/jobs.cfm>.

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

## **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](#)

**FOCUS Program Targets Remedial Mathematics Courses**

In fall 2011, Texas received a \$1 million, 18-month grant from Complete College America to pilot mathematics remediation as a one semester, co-requisite to existing College Algebra (MATH 1314 or 1414) or Elementary Statistical Methods (MATH 1342 or 1442) courses. The proposed model known as the FOCUS Program (Fundamentals of Conceptual Understanding & Success) was originally developed by Dr. Selina Mireles, Professor of Mathematics at Texas State University, as part of a THECB bridge program at Texas State University-San Marcos. In addition to their course work, students in the program are required to participate in multiple support components, including mandatory tutoring and other best practices such as coordinated recruitment strategies; self-evaluation protocols; and embedded linkages to campus advising, career counseling, and learning skills.

Dr. Mireles and the Center for Mathematics Readiness at Texas State contracted with the THECB to provide professional development, technical assistance, and project management for the program. In the first 12 months, a total of 55 faculty members from nine two-year institutions and three universities were trained and 499 students were served. Sixty percent of FOCUS students completed College Algebra with a “C” or better, compared with 52 percent of a control group of regularly admitted, non-remedial College Algebra students during the same period, achieving a major program benchmark.

Participating Institutions: Central Texas College, El Paso Community College, McLennan Community College, San Jacinto College District, South Texas College, Tarrant County College District, Tyler Junior College, Texas Southmost College.

**Terri Daniels, Assistant Director, Developmental Education, P-16 Initiatives**

**2012 Community College Transfer Student Report**

The 2012 Community College Transfer Student Report was approved by the Coordinating Board at the Board’s October Meeting. This annual report presents an assessment of the current performance of public universities with regard to transfer students in Texas and shows how that performance relates to state goals, including *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. The current report compares native and transfer students over three successive years and shows that some patterns are emerging. The table below presents average completion rates, time to degree, and attempted semester credit hours for the students included in the report.

Statewide Average	Average Completion Rate		Average Time to Degree (in Years)		Average Attempted Semester Credit Hours	
	University Native Students	Community College Transfer Students	University Native Students	Community College Transfer Students	University Native Students	Community College Transfer Students
<b>AY 2005 cohort</b>	83%	67%	5.37	7.26	144	146
<b>AY 2006 cohort</b>	83%	67%	5.37	7.45	143	146
<b>AY 2007 cohort</b>	84%	68%	5.37	7.42	142	144

Community college transfer students took longer than students native to universities to earn a bachelor’s degree. These students took more than two years longer to complete their degrees than their university native peers, when measured from their first enrollment at an institution of higher education after graduating from high school. However, community college transfer students enrolled in the same number of semester credit hours as their university native peers. There was substantial variation in the achievement gap between native and transfer students among the universities. Institution specific information is included in the report. Click [here](#) to download a copy of the report.

**Catherine Parsonault, Senior Program Director, Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research**

### **ACGM Advisory Committee approves Course Descriptions and Student Learning Outcomes**

The Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) Advisory Committee met October 19, 2012 to consider revised course descriptions and student learning outcomes. The ACGM is the official list of lower-division courses approved for general academic transfer that may be offered by public community and technical colleges in Texas. There were 90 courses revised in the disciplines of Philosophy, Psychology, Spanish, Speech, Sociology, Engineering, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and Physics, as well as Developmental Education. Coordinating Board staff are now in the process of updating the manual. The changes are expected to be incorporated into the ACGM by early spring and be part of the newly developed and released online searchable ACGM database with report generating capability. Institutions should have the revised courses available in time for implementation of the learning outcomes for the school year starting fall 2013. All approved deletions of courses should be implemented by fall 2014.

The Revised Spring 2012 ACGM is now available in the searchable format at:  
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/AAR/UndergraduateEd/WorkforceEd/acgm.htm>.

**Rebecca Leslie, Program Director, Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research**

### **Cost Efficiencies in Higher Education: Improvements to Date**

At the request of Governor Rick Perry and members of the Coordinating Board, the staff of the THECB designed an online survey to gather information on cost efficiency efforts that are underway at many higher education institutions in Texas. Evident from the survey responses, institutions and systems are implementing a wide variety of efficiency improvement activities. Further, many of the ideas presented in the 2010 Report of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on Higher Education Cost Efficiencies to the Governor have been (or are being) implemented somewhere in the state's public higher education system. The 2012 Report of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to the Governor on the Survey on Institutional Implementation of Cost Efficiencies summarizes the institutional responses to this survey and is intended to showcase successful efforts for possible replication at other institutions and systems. The report has been submitted to the Office of the Governor and will be distributed electronically to all public higher education regents, trustees, chancellors, and presidents. The report is available online at:  
[http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/Report\\_InstitutionalImplementationofCostEfficiencies](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/Report_InstitutionalImplementationofCostEfficiencies).

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

### **Council for Continuous Improvement Discusses Possible Metrics for Higher Education after 2015**

Members of the Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education held their fifth meeting in Austin on October 24. The Council is striving to establish the next long-range plan for higher education in the State of Texas beyond *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. To this end, the Council is considering key metrics to measure the state's progress toward making Texas an international leader in student success and excellence by 2030.

During the October 24 meeting, the Council considered two measures of cost efficiencies (average out-of-pocket student cost per degree granted, and total cost per degree granted) and two measures of productivity (a composite measure of transfer alignment between high school and college and between two-year and four-year institutions; and number of citations, number of patents, and/or licensing income). As part of the development of the next long-term strategic plan for higher education, three members of the Council – Dr. Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor of the San Jacinto College District; Mr. Gerald Griffin, founding member of the Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education and former member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; and Dr. Charles Matthews, former chancellor of the Texas State University System – provided the Coordinating Board information on these and other possible metrics at the Board's October meeting. The discussion included possible measures of international competitiveness, student success, workforce success, cost efficiencies, and productivity for use as a starting point for discussion with a broader group of stakeholders. Information about the Council and its meetings is available online at  
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/continuousimprovement>.

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

**Additional Norman Hackerman Advanced Research Program (NHARP) Grants Authorized**

The Norman Hackerman Advanced Research Program (NHARP) provides grant funding to support basic research efforts through a peer-reviewed, highly competitive process. Funding for the program was reduced to \$1 million for the 2012-2013 biennium, and the program focused its support to early career investigators. In April, the Board authorized 12 selected research projects to receive up grants up to \$80,000.

At its October 2012 meeting, the Coordinating Board authorized five additional awards using \$306,580 in unspent funds from closed grants, which have carryover authority into Fiscal Year 2013. These funds were reallocated to the next five ranked projects:

<i>Project Investigator</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Project Title</i>	<i>Award Amount</i>
Bessie Kebaara	Baylor University	Copper Homeostasis and the Nonsense-mediated mRNA Decay Pathway in <i>Saccharomyces Cerevisiae</i>	\$73,860
Steven Whitten	Texas State University-San Marcos	Structural Characterization of the Protein Ensemble by Equilibrium Unfolding Methods	\$45,000
Halil Berberoglu	UT Austin	Electromagnetic Biostimulation of Microbial Cells	\$73,860
Jennifer Maynard	UT Austin	Stable, Self-crowded Protein Nanoclusters for Delivery of High Concentration Therapeutic Antibodies	\$40,000
Christopher Ellison	UT Austin	Exploiting Melanin-based Polymers for Advanced Multifunctional Materials	\$73,860
<b>Total Additional Funds:</b>			<b>\$306,580</b>

**Stacey Silverman, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research**

**Reinventing Instruction and Learning Conference Draws Participants from Campuses Across Texas**

On October 3-4 in Austin, faculty, administrators, and staff of Texas public institutions of higher education participated in the Coordinating Board’s 2012 Reinventing Instruction and Learning Conference, which was designed as an opportunity for higher education faculty and staff from campuses across Texas to share one another’s research, experiences, and successes in helping students learn. Participants were part of presentations and workshops that provided insights and research on teaching and learning, including innovative pedagogies and best practices that are helping faculty advance undergraduate student learning, persistence, and success. Keynote speakers included Dr. Andrew Ng, Associate Professor of Computer Science and Director of the Artificial Intelligence Lab at Stanford University; John Boyer, Senior Instructor of Geography at Virginia Tech; and Dr. Kathy Wetzel, Chair of the Department of Mathematics, Sciences, and Engineering at Amarillo College. Dr. Ng’s remarks focused on the ways in which new uses of technology, especially the development of MOOCs (massive open online courses), can change higher education. Mr. Boyer’s remarks focused on the successful strategies that faculty can use with their students to foster interaction in large classes through technological tools. Dr. Wetzel discussed her experience as a community college teacher and what she believes teaching excellence currently involves at the undergraduate level.

For Reinventing Instruction and Learning Conference resources and materials, please visit <http://www.txcollegeteaching.org>.

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

### **2012 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference Provides Insights and Information for New Governing Board Members and Other Higher Education Leaders**

The Coordinating Board's 2012 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference for regents, trustees, chancellors, presidents, and other education leaders was held on October 4-5 at the DoubleTree Austin Hotel. The focus of this year's conference was on Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Higher Education. Keynote speakers included Dr. Arthur Levine, President of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. Dr. Levine's remarks focused on his perspectives from his recent research and forthcoming book, *Generation on a tightrope: A portrait of today's college student*, regarding how understanding today's undergraduate college students is vital to the effectiveness of our colleges and universities.

The conference began on Thursday afternoon, October 4, with the Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony, which was held in conjunction with the Coordinating Board's 2012 Reinventing Instruction and Learning Conference. The luncheon featured our 2012 Star Award finalists and a keynote address by Dr. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education. Conference sessions began immediately following the luncheon with a special legislative panel discussion featuring The Honorable Dan Branch and The Honorable Judith Zaffirini who provided overviews of the work of the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence and Transparency and the preparations that are being made for the 83rd Legislative Session. Conference sessions included discussions of some innovative practices and activities at universities and colleges across the United States and in Texas that are helping to promote, sustain, and scale continuous improvements on campuses. Friday afternoon, October 5 included orientation sessions for new governing board members and other interested education leaders. A 2012 Leadership Conference Summary with audio presentations and handouts will be forthcoming online at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/GovBoardConf2012>.

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

### **Texas Tuning Project and the Development of Voluntary Statewide Transfer Compacts Moving Forward**

The 2011 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering and Science (2011 TOCES) has completed final Tuning packages for Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Biology, and Chemistry. They also have completed their "Fine-Tuning" (course alignment) work for lower-division courses needed for success in upper-division courses in these disciplines. Final course descriptions and course learning outcomes for those additional lower-division courses to be included in the Voluntary Transfer Agreement Pertaining to Bachelor of Science Degrees in Biomedical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Biology, and Chemistry were adopted by the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) Committee on October 19, 2012, after a statewide 30-day comment period which was held August 17 through September 17. Information on the new voluntary statewide transfer agreements will be forthcoming to all presidents and chancellors in anticipation of wide participation. These materials also will be available online at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/TuningTexas>.

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

### **Coordinating Board Hosts Last State P-16 Meeting Before Transition to Texas Education Agency**

The Coordinating Board hosted a State P-16 Council Meeting in Austin on October 10, 2012. This was the last State P-16 Council Meeting of this year chaired by Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes. In January 2013, the State P-16 Council will transition to the Texas Education Agency and will be chaired by Commissioner of Public Education Michael Williams. Dr. Victor B. Saenz, Assistant Professor of Educational Administration at The University of Texas at Austin, presented on Ensuring the Success of Latino Males in Higher Education: A Response to a New Statewide Imperative. Other presentations included the P-16 College Readiness and Success Strategic Action Plan 2012 Progress Report and discussion on legislative recommendations related to workforce, higher education, and public education collaboration.

**Priscilla Martinez, Program Director, Success Initiatives**



### **Generation TX Training and Statewide P-16 Institute hosted by the Coordinating Board**

On October 1, 2012, 46 representatives from 15 P-16 Councils attended a GenTX Training at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin. P-16 Councils received updates on the statewide GenTX campaign. Experienced P-16 Councils offered less experienced P-16 Councils training to help ensure the best possible outcomes in implementing the GenTX campaign. South Plains Closing the Gaps P-20 Council's GenTXperts, college mentors from Texas Tech University, trained P-16 Councils on the GenTX Reality Kit. Mari Aguirre-Rodriguez, Executive Director of GenTX San Antonio, provided training on GenTX community outreach events and promotional kits. Patricia Bubb, Executive Director of the Lower Rio Grande P-16 Council, provided training on professional development for counselors. The next GenTX Training is scheduled to be held on February 11, 2013, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin.

The Division of P-16 Initiatives hosted a P-16 Institute on October 2, 2012 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin. This was the first P-16 Institute of the 2012-13 academic 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 Closing the Gaps progress, college and career readiness profile planning guide, career ready workforce certification program for high school students, expediting student success through effective transition counseling, and financial literacy. Twenty P-16 Councils sent representatives, which totaled 107 public and higher education administrators, workforce, community, and business leaders. The next P-16 Institute is scheduled to be held on February 12, 2013, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin.

**Priscilla Martinez, Program Director, Success Initiatives**

### **A New Resource for Secondary Education: The Texas College and Career Readiness Profile Planning Guide**

"Are your students college and career ready?" This is a familiar question being asked of many principals and our colleagues in secondary education today. While most schools share agreement about the importance of college and career readiness, most do not share an accurate understanding of what makes a student successful in postsecondary education. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has partnered with Austin Community College and the Region XIII Education Service Center to provide The College and Career Readiness Profile Planning Guide to support educators and school districts as they explore this question.

Initially funded by the THECB and developed by a 19-member statewide task-force, the CCR Profile Planning Guide is designed to establish locally-driven priorities that can be used to augment school improvement plans. Following the suggested process can empower a campus or district to take action on college and career readiness goals specific to the needs of their students. By prompting group reflection on how students demonstrate essential knowledge and skills, the CCR Profile Planning Guide will help clarify, deepen, and operationalize a district's understanding of college and career readiness. The six-step process electronically creates the Campus Improvement Plan and identifies specific action steps that help ensure a college and career readiness school culture. The guide was designed to provide assistance in five key areas:

- Prepare Teachers and Students for STAAR and EOC
- Bring Focus and Build Upon Current College and Career Readiness Efforts
- Engage All Staff for All Students
- Provide the Tools and Resources to Develop a College and Career Readiness Culture
- Create the State required Campus Improvement Plan

The CCR Profile Planning Guide is managed through the Texas College and Career Readiness Support Center, housed at the Region XIII Education Service Center. Currently, 17 of the 20 Education Service Centers have been trained to offer the CCR Profile Planning Guide to their clients through a training of trainers program. Post-secondary institutions that may want to incorporate the CCR Planning Guide into vertical alignment initiatives or P-16 collaborative efforts can visit <http://txccrsc.org/> to find the specialist serving their area.

**Matt Lashlee, Education Specialist, Success Initiatives**