Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Academic Planning and Policy E-NEWS

ACADEMIC PLANNING AND POLICY: Academic Affairs & Research – Planning & Accountability – P-16 Initiatives

VOLUME 3 NUMBER 1 JANUARY–FEBRUARY 2011

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.

Coordinating Board adopts new rules on low-producing programs

In April 2010, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approved Chapter 4, Subchapter R, Sections 4.285-4.293 establishing procedures for the annual review of low-producing programs. The rules require programs to be classified as low-producing if, over the most recent five years, applied associate programs and baccalaureate programs have fewer than 25 graduates, master's programs have fewer than 15 graduates, and doctoral programs have fewer than 10 graduates. The rules also provide exemptions and response options.

The initial review of Fiscal Year 2010 data identified 750 programs as low-producing. The Coordinating Board noted anomalies in the report and requested the institutions review and respond to the data before actual implementation of the rules. The institutions, as a result of their review, will close 110 programs and consolidate 152 programs.

Institutions are required to submit a request for a phase-out, consolidation, or temporary exemption for low-producing programs identified in the FY2011 report. The request must be received by June 2011. Low-producing programs that are not phased out, consolidated, or awarded a temporary exemption will be closed.

Lucy Heston, Program Director, Division of Academic Affairs and Research

New formula methodology for Tech Prep Consortia

At its January 2011 meeting, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board adopted a new formula methodology to support the state's Tech Prep Consortia. The new formula will provide funding based on outcome measures, including the number of students enrolled in Tech Prep programs in secondary schools, who continue their enrollment in postsecondary institutions, beginning in FY2012. The previous formula was based primarily on the number of high school students located in a consortium. Staff of the Coordinating Board worked with Tech Prep Consortia leaders in the development of the new funding strategy. The Board's Strategic Planning and Policy Committee held a public hearing in December 2010 and heard from community college and Tech Prep Consortia leaders to gather input in revising the formula.

Stacey Silverman, Senior Director, Academic Research and Grant Programs, Division of Academic Affairs and Research

Request for Applications for Tri-Agency Adult Basic Education Innovation Grants coming in February

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) are collaborating to issue a career pathways innovation grant for adult basic education (ABE) students. The grant specifically addresses the Texas Workforce Investment Council's Five-year Strategic Plan, *Advancing Texas*, which requires TWC, TEA, and THECB to pilot and assess the effectiveness and scalability of programs that focus on preparing educationally disadvantaged, unemployed, and underemployed adults – 60 percent of whom are non-native English speakers – in target geographical regions in the state for career-path employment and post-secondary education in high-demand, targeted occupations, or employer-driven regional needs in Texas. Grants awarded under this competition will focus on entry-level job skills training and Level 1 certificate training at community colleges and public technical institutions. The Request for Applications (RFA) is expected to be issued in February 2011.

Linda Muñoz, Senior Program Director, Developmental & Adult Education, Division of P-16 Initiatives

Upcoming Events

Coordinating Board Quarterly Meetings
Information

Board Committee Meetings
Information

Useful Links

Academic Affairs and Research
AAR 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

Engineering Recruitment Summer Program

In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature directed the Coordinating Board to establish the Engineering Summer Program (ESP) to provide middle and high school students with opportunities to participate in one-week summer engineering programs. Eligible Texas higher education institutions that offer engineering degree programs are invited to apply for ESP funds. For FY2011, there is $500,000 available to support the 26 public and 8 independent institutions eligible to participate in the program. Funding is divided equally among the institutions that submit a completed application.

The Request for Applications for the 2011 Engineering Recruitment Program, Summer Engineering Program was released following Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval in January. Applications are due to the Coordinating Board on or before the close of business March 21, 2011, with a notice of intent required by February 21. Funding is estimated to be approximately $15,000 per program and will support an estimated 660 middle and high school students.

Reinold Cornelius, Program Director of Research, Division of Academic Affairs and Research

San Antonio launches Generation TX event on January 29

More than 3,000 ninth-grade students from across the San Antonio area, as well as parents and community leaders, joined San Antonio Mayor Julian Castro to celebrate the San Antonio launch of Generation TX at the "Rock Your Future GenTX Fest!" at the Alamo Convocation Center on Saturday, January 29, 2011.

Students from 15 San Antonio area school districts participated in the inspiring afternoon event to learn how to be college and career ready when they graduate from high school. Mayor Castro, joined by local celebrities and heroes, encouraged these high school freshmen to participate in Generation TX, a grassroots movement that will lead to the most successful generation ever by creating a culture of college and career education.

Students entered the Alamo Convocation Center through a red-carpeted corridor lined with a backdrop of Generation TX banners and a paparazzi-style group of photographers. As the local motivational band *Unlock the Rhythm* played live, pictures of the entering students appeared on a ceiling-mounted, dual-monitor screen. Using their cell phones, students joined a panel of three local judges in voting to determine the winners of the drumline and cheer squad competitions, who vied for $2,000 in prize money for their schools.

The event was hosted by the newly formed Generation TX San Antonio, a 501c3 organization that is committed to making San Antonio a college-going and career-ready community in a single generation. The organization is supported by Generation TX.

Generation TX first launched in Fort Worth at Tarrant County College in the fall of 2010 with an event that introduced GenTX.org. The social media website is designed to make it easy for all students to gather inspiration and information about becoming college and career ready during high school. Governor Rick Perry, Texas Higher Education Commissioner Raymund Paredes, and state Senator Wendy Davis addressed an audience of students, parents, educators, and community leaders.

Generation TX will expand statewide this year, including the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, Houston, the Rio Grande Valley, and El Paso.

To learn more about Generation TX and join this inspiring movement, visit GenTX.org.

Andy Kesling, Director of Communications, Division of External Relations

College Connection 2+2+2 Program grant funds improve transfer student success

The University of North Texas (UNT) has been putting a $270,000 grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) College Connection 2+2+2 Program to good use, expanding and strengthening its outreach to potential and current transfer students. The ultimate goal is to provide results for the state where transfer student success is critical in reaching the goals of *Closing the Gaps*.

The College Connection 2+2+2 grant has allowed UNT to ramp up existing successful efforts and test innovative programming that results in real differences for transfer students in Texas. With the grant, UNT formed a specially targeted team of transfer experts within the Enrollment Management and Admissions departments. As part of UNT's transfer team, the group works collaboratively with financial aid and student affairs to provide critical and timely support services to students. Some of the top lessons learned include the importance of personalized services to students who have varying academic and personal backgrounds, using tracking mechanisms to monitor steps along the way to transfer, and strengthening cross-campus teams that focus on transfer student success.

One special project tested was a transfer student event that included course transfer (articulation) planning, an overnight in the residence hall, and forging personal connections with university staff and students. Students met with advisors for an evaluation of their transcripts, attended presentations on admissions and financial aid, spoke with current transfer students, and attended several campus engagement activities. The grant also focuses on sharing financial aid information with students and presenting transfer-specific details, including workshops about the FAFSA. Since the grant began, the transfer team has interacted with more than 2,700 community college students and a number of parents helping their children through the process.

Judy Loredo, Assistant Commissioner, Division of P-16 Initiatives

Coordinating Board hosted a winter Developmental Education/Adult Basic Education Innovation Grants meeting

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board hosted a professional development meeting for directors, coordinators, and lead faculty of the five Developmental Education Demonstration Projects (DEDP) and eight Adult Basic Education (ABE) Innovation grants on January 12-14, 2011. The goal of the DEDP Winter meeting was to equip institutions with resources to strengthen developmental and adult education in the state by sharing new delivery and instructional models to improve student outcomes. During the three-day meeting, program facilitators and grantees shared a variety of frameworks for ABE alignment and transition to college and careers. Program directors attended meetings on key strategies to create high impact internal evaluations; lead reading/writing faculty developed course descriptions and student learning outcomes for an integrated reading/writing course at the exit level of developmental education. Lead mathematics faculty developed a framework for mathematics faculty to establish professional development plans at their institutions.

Linda Muñoz, Senior Program Director, Developmental & Adult Education, Division of P-16 Initiatives

Tuning Oversight 2011 Council for Engineering and Science will apply the "Tuning" and course-level alignment processes to additional engineering and science disciplines

On February 25, with grant support from Lumina Foundation for Education, the Coordinating Board (CB) will host the first meeting of the 2011 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering and Science, the voluntary faculty advisory council that will assist the CB in continuing to integrate the "Tuning" process (as described below) into the course-level alignment work that was piloted in 2009 through the efforts of the Voluntary Mechanical Engineering Transfer Compact Committee, and which continued in 2010 with the efforts of the 2010 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering. The 2011 Tuning Oversight Council will consist of four voluntary faculty advisory committees: (1) Biomedical Engineering, (2) Chemical Engineering, (3) Biology, and (4) Chemistry.

Nominations for faculty members to serve on the 2011 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering and Science have been requested from universities and community colleges across the state; to date, invitations for specific nominees to participate on the council have been sent to 36 faculty members representing 31 institutions. The final makeup of the council and respective committees will be determined by February 18.

The 2010 Tuning Oversight Council for Engineering, which is made up of higher education faculty representing 30 higher education institutions from across the state, is expected to complete Tuning and lower-division course-level alignment work for the disciplines of Civil, Electrical, Industrial, and Mechanical Engineering in May. Additional information is available below and online at: www.thecb.state.tx.us/tuningtexas.

"Tuning" is a faculty-led pilot project designed to provide an indication of the knowledge, skills, and abilities students should achieve prior to graduation at different degree levels.

Tuning involves:

- Faculty from different sectors and institutions agreeing on what students in a field must know, understand, and be able to do;
- Surveying faculty to prioritize subject-area competencies;
- Soliciting views of students, graduates, and employers on the most valued general competencies in the field;
- Faculty defining degrees using active learning outcomes that can be assessed through coursework and other means; and
- Mapping the employability of degree holders.

"Fine-Tuning" or alignment of lower division courses involves:

- Identifying common and atypical lower-division courses in a discipline where learning outcomes align with the Tuned discipline;
- Reviewing syllabi for all lower-division courses; and
- Selecting the most comprehensive course description, pre-/co-requisites, and learning outcomes for each lower-division course.

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

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