



Academic Planning and Policy

APP E-NEWS

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

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

[THECB Welcomes New Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research](#)

The THECB is pleased to announce that Dr. Rex Peebles will begin his new role as Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research on December 2. Dr. Peebles has 30 years of experience in higher education, including positions as professor, department head, dean, chief academic officer, and vice president of instruction. He has been serving as the Vice President of Instruction for Midland College since 2005.

Prior to moving to Midland, Dr. Peebles spent 20 years at Austin Community College as Professor of Government, Department Head of Government, and Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences. As Dean for a period of eight years, Dr. Peebles was responsible for five departments—Government, History, Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences, and Education. He has experience in facility planning, development, and construction; curriculum evaluation and assessment; budget planning and maintenance; course scheduling; faculty evaluation; grant management; and new program creation. He has co-authored a Texas state and local government textbook, *Texas Politics and Government: Ideas, Institutions, and Policies*. Retaining an interest in political philosophy, he also has authored *The Theoria and Praxis of Obligations to Future Generations*.

Dr. Peebles has served as chair or vice-chair for a number of advisory committees, some of which directly relate to the THECB. Dr. Peebles served as a member of the Academic Course Guide Manual Advisory Committee for a period of nine years, four years of which he also served as the committee's co-chair. He also served on the Coordinating Board's committee that created the Associate of Arts in Teaching, chairing the Sub-Committee on Special Education. Most recently, Dr. Peebles served for a period of six years as a member of the Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee, serving from 2010 to 2012 as the committee's co-chair. In 2010, he was the recipient of the Ray Williams Outstanding Leadership Award from the Texas Community College Instructional Administrators (TCCIA). Dr. Peebles is a past President of TCCIA and currently serves on the Executive Board of the National Alliance of Community and Technical Colleges (NACTC).

Dr. Peebles earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from The University of Texas at Dallas, his Master's degree in Political Science from The University of Texas at Arlington, and his Ph.D. in Government from The University of Texas at Austin.

Upcoming Meetings

Next Quarterly Board Meeting:
Thursday, October 24, 2013
8:30am

See all upcoming meetings:
[THECB Events](#)

Links to Useful Sites

[2013 Higher Education Almanac](#)

[Compare College TX](#)

[Higher Education
Accountability System](#)

[Higher Education Data](#)

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2013 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists Announced

The Texas Higher Education Star Award, established by the THECB in 2001, recognizes programs, projects, and activities at Texas institutions of higher education; groups and organizations in Texas (such as those that help promote a college-going culture); and partnerships among higher education institutions, public/private schools/districts, businesses, or the community for their exceptional contributions toward one or more of the goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. The 2013 Star Award winners will be announced on November 22.

The eight finalists for the 2013 Star Award are:

- Brookhaven College–Brookhaven College Counseling Center Skills Shops
- Lamar University–Students Advancing Through Involvement in Research Student Talent Expansion Program (STAIRSTEP)
- Richland College–Improving Accounting Student Success through Caring Behaviors
- Sam Houston State University–Establishing Leadership In and Through Education (ELITE)
- St. Philip’s College–Student Engagement Grant Program
- Tarrant County College, Northwest Campus–Academic Recovery Program
- Temple College–Texas Bioscience Institute
- Texas Woman’s University Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)/Barnes & Noble–Texas Woman’s University ATPE/Barnes & Noble Reading Program

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

Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference and Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon/Annual Texas Higher Education Star Awards Ceremony

The Coordinating Board’s 2013 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference will be held on November 21-22 at the DoubleTree Austin Hotel (6505 IH-35 N in Austin). The conference is designed to bring together regents, trustees, chancellors, presidents, and other public and higher education leaders to share information on topics of interest and discuss critical higher education issues. The focus of this year’s conference is on *Closing the Gaps by 2015 and Beyond*.

Day 1 (Thursday, November 21) will begin with an orientation for new governing board members and other interested education leaders. Conference sessions and additional orientation sessions will begin at 1:00 p.m. The orientation/conference sessions on Day 1 will satisfy the training requirement for newly appointed regents and elected trustees (Texas Education Code, Section 61.084). A special reception and dinner on Thursday evening will feature the leaders of the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence and Transparency. Also featured at this dinner will be a special recognition of “Texas Tuners”—those faculty members from across the state who contributed their time and expertise as members of the 2010, 2011, or 2012 Tuning Oversight Councils as part of the Texas Tuning Initiative.

Conference sessions will continue on Friday, November 22, with keynote addresses by Paul Tough, author of *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character*, and Dr. Jeff Strohl, Director of Research at the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Following these keynote addresses, an overview of preparations being made for the next long-range plan for higher education in Texas will be presented. Interactive workshops led by representatives of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges will be held to secure feedback on the four potential goals that are being considered for the next higher education plan and the key metrics to measure the state’s progress toward making Texas an international leader in student success and excellence by 2030. The conference will conclude with the Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony which will feature our 2013 Star Award finalists and a keynote address by Dr. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education.

Additional information and online registration can be found at: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/2013LeadershipConference>.

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

New Grant Programs Established to Support Expansion of Graduate Medical Education

Medical schools in the state have taken steps to increase their enrollments by more than 30 percent over the past decade. But, at the same time, the number of entry-level graduate medical education (GME) training positions has not kept pace, causing some medical school graduates to leave the state for their first year of residency training. To train the physicians needed to keep pace with the state's vigorous population growth, the 83rd Texas Legislature established several new GME grant programs for the THECB to administer. An informational forum was held on August 28 at the Texas Hospital Association headquarters in Austin to expand awareness of the recent legislative action to increase training opportunities for physicians in Texas. THECB, the Texas Medical Association, and the Texas Hospital Association jointly hosted the forum for Texas hospitals that did not already offer physician training. The forum was an opportunity for these hospitals to learn about new state grant opportunities with particular emphasis on planning grants for new GME programs.

Planning grants, through a competitive process, will provide one-time awards of \$150,000 to assist in investigating the feasibility of development and establishment of new first-year GME programs. The THECB may award up to 12 grants for the 2014-2015 biennium. Eligibility is limited to hospitals and other healthcare entities that do not currently operate a GME program and do not have a cap on the number of residents applicable to Medicare GME funding. A Request for Applications will be released in early October. Applications for planning grants must be submitted to the THECB by November 15, 2013, and awards will be announced by December 15, 2013.

Suzanne Pickens | Senior Program Director | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

First College-Level Course Guidelines Stakeholder Advisory Group

On August 7, the First College-Level Course Guidelines Stakeholder Advisory Group met at the THECB to provide input on the development of guidelines for institutions to use in reporting successful completion of a first college-level course in reading, writing, and math. First college-level course completion is one of the developmental education accountability measures for institutions; for community colleges, first college-level course completion is also included in the calculation of success points. To improve the quality of this accountability measure and to support equity across institutions, the THECB solicited institutions for nominations for the advisory group. At least one participant was selected from each institution that sent nominations, with 74 representatives from 39 institutions participating. The advisory group includes faculty and administrators from public universities, community colleges, and state and technical colleges. At the all-day meeting on August 7, participants worked in small groups to consider guidelines for the areas of reading, writing, and math and then met in larger groups to compare notes and discuss suggestions. Following the meeting, THECB staff worked to synthesize the input of the advisory group and created a draft set of guidelines. A second meeting, which will be set up in a webinar format, will take place in mid-October. The THECB hopes to publish the final set of guidelines by the end of the year.

Jana Cossairt | Program Director, Planning | Planning and Accountability

Texas College and Career Readiness Network Launched

On January 1, 2013, with grant funding provided by the THECB, the University of Houston launched the Texas College and Career Readiness Network (TXCCRN). In partnership with the Division for P-16 Initiatives, the University of Houston hosts and maintains the TXCCRN as part of Texas' ongoing dedication to creating a better understanding and implementation of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (TXCCRS). The TXCCRN is a growing one-stop website for current college and career readiness (CCR) information and resources with a purpose of uniting K-12 and higher education administrators, educators, and practitioners across the state. TXCCRN provides an accurate look at content and application of the TXCCRS by featuring CCR success stories of educators in the K-12 and higher education arenas. TXCCRN also publicizes regional and statewide CCR events and professional development opportunities and includes standard-aligned resources that can be easily utilized in the classroom. The site also features interviews with key CCR experts and practitioners with field experience related to implementation of CCR-based resources. Visit <http://www.txccrn.uh.edu> for more information and to become part of the network today.

Amy Williams | Senior Communications Officer | University of Houston
Matt Lashlee | Program Director | P-16 Initiatives

Council for Continuous Improvement Considers Best Practices and Plans for Higher Education Through 2030

At its July meeting, the Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Texas Higher Education (CCII) continued the process of identifying, reviewing, and recommending best practices for the continuous improvement of educational outcomes and the components necessary for Texas to be internationally competitive. Kevin P. Hegarty, MPA, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, The University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin), provided the Council an overview of key recommendations included in the UT-Austin report *Smarter Systems for a Greater UT: Final Report of the Committee on Business Productivity* which was released on January 29. Mr. Hegarty emphasized that, if combined, the recommendations included in this report could yield as much as \$490 million over a decade. In addition to discussing the recommendations in this report, Council members reviewed a potential timeline and a proposed schedule to develop consensus and secure institutional feedback on the potential goals and the prospective measurable targets that are being considered for moving forward with the next long-range plan for higher education in Texas beyond *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. The CCII will hold its next quarterly meeting on October 23, 2013, from 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. at the THECB offices in Austin. The meeting will be webcast. For more information, please visit <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/ContinuousImprovement>.

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

Public Comment Period Open Through October 18 for ACGM Course Descriptions and Student Learning Outcomes

The Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual (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 for state funding. As part of an effort to improve the ACGM and statewide course transfer, THECB staff is engaged in a faculty-led project to develop student learning outcomes for some of the most frequently used courses in the manual. The courses for which student learning outcomes are currently being developed are part of the following six disciplines: Anthropology, Art, Criminal Justice, Drama, Geology, and Humanities. THECB staff has also been engaged in faculty-led projects to develop course descriptions and student learning outcomes for the lower-division courses that will be included in the Voluntary Statewide Transfer Compacts as part of the Texas Tuning Initiative. The work of the Subcommittee for Fine Tuning of the Tuning Oversight Council for Mathematics, Business, and Information Systems has resulted in new course descriptions and student learning outcomes for some lower-division courses in the disciplines of Accounting, Business, Business Computer Information Systems, Computer Science, and Mathematics. Faculty groups from these disciplines have reviewed course syllabi from two- and four-year public institutions and developed new course descriptions and learning outcomes for eventual inclusion in the ACGM. The public comment period regarding these draft descriptions and outcomes will end on October 18, 2013. The link to the web page which has the course materials for comment is: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/ACGMLearningOutcomesProject>. The faculty work groups will make any final adjustments that they deem necessary, after which THECB staff will convey the course materials to the ACGM Advisory Committee for consideration for addition to the ACGM during their meeting in November.

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

Advise TX Program Now Serving 125 Texas Public High Schools

One-hundred twenty-five (125) recent college graduates from five Texas universities—Texas A&M University, Texas Christian University, Texas State University-San Marcos, Trinity University, and The University of Texas at Austin—have completed 160 hours of intensive summer training to prepare for a year of service as near-peer college advisers in high-need high schools across the state. College Advisers work in high schools full-time to assist students one-on-one and in group settings to search for colleges, complete admissions and financial aid applications, and enroll at schools that will serve them well. College Advisers are trained to help low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students' access college pathways and enroll in the post-secondary option that is the best fit, be it a four-year university, two-year college, or technical school. Advise TX College Advising Corps, is part of a consortium of 18 colleges and universities across 14 states that implement the National College Advising Corps program model. By placing recent graduates of partner institutions—many of whom are themselves first-generation college students—as college advisers in under-served high schools, the Advising Corps program works in communities across the country to provide the advising and encouragement that many students need to navigate the college admissions process and secure financial aid. Learn more at <http://advisetx.org/>.

Jennifer Pandya | Statewide Coordinator, Advise TX | P-16 Initiatives