

Academic Planning and Policy E-News

Academic Quality and Workforce | College Readiness
and Success | Strategic Planning and Funding



Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board

Office of Academic Planning and Policy, David W. Gardner, Deputy Commissioner

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2015 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference Set for Nov. 19-20

The 2015 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference, hosted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, will be held on Nov. 19-20 at the Crowne Plaza Austin Hotel (6121 IH-35 North). The conference's focus will be *60x30TX: The Next Long-Range Strategic Plan for Texas Higher Education*.

Keynote speakers and panelists, including leading experts from higher education and the workforce, will discuss the goals, targets, and strategies adopted by the Coordinating Board in July 2015 for the next long-range plan for Texas higher education. Small-group facilitators will lead roundtable discussions about strategies that will help Texas achieve the goals and measurable targets for the new plan.

The annual leadership conference brings together regents, trustees, chancellors, presidents, and other higher education leaders to discuss critical higher education issues. Interaction among higher education stakeholders will be a key part of the conference.

The conference agenda will include:

1. Orientation for New Governing Board Members (Nov. 19, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.)
2. Leadership Conference Sessions Day 1 (Nov. 19, 1-5 p.m.)
3. Leadership Reception (Nov. 19, 6-7 p.m.)
4. Leadership Dinner (Nov. 19, 7-8:30 p.m.)
5. Conference Sessions Day 2 (Nov. 20, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.)
6. Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon/Annual Star Awards Ceremony (Nov. 20, 12:30-2 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). For more information, please visit the 2015 [Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference website](#) or contact Assistant Deputy Commissioner Mary E. Smith at 512-427-6213 or mary.smith@theccb.state.tx.us.

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

Texas Legislature Increases Support for Graduate Medical Expansion Efforts

Texas medical schools have increased their enrollments by more than 30 percent over the past decade. The available entry-level graduate medical

Next Board Meeting

*October 22, 2015
8:30 a.m.*

60x30TX in the News

[Austin Business Journal](#)
[Community College Week](#)
[Education News](#)
[Inside Higher Ed](#)
[The Texas Tribune](#)
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education (GME) training positions, however, have not kept pace, forcing some Texas medical school graduates to leave the state for their residency training. These physicians may choose not to return to Texas to practice.

In 2013, the 83rd Texas Legislature created several GME grant programs intended to encourage expansion of graduate medical education across the state and also appropriated \$14.25 million to initiate five targeted grant programs. The 84th Texas Legislature consolidated the five programs and increased the appropriation for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 to \$53 million. This funding will allow for the continuation of positions already created and for the development of additional residency positions. Three GME grant programs (New and Expanded Program, Unfilled Position, and Planning and Partnerships) will address the need for more residency programs and more first-year residency positions.

New and Expanded Program Grants provide awards to existing GME programs to expand approved first-year residency positions, or to sponsoring institutions to establish new residency programs offering first-year positions. The grants provide funding to support direct resident costs, including resident stipends and benefits. The amount of the award increased from \$65,000 to \$75,000 per resident for grants awarded in FY 2016 and FY 2017. New and Expanded Program Grants funded 55 new residency positions in 11 GME programs, and these positions will continue in FY 2016 and FY 2017.

Unfilled Position Grants provide support for GME programs to fill residency positions that were unfilled because programs could not financially support them. In FY 2014 and FY 2015, nine GME programs received Unfilled Position Grants and funded 75 positions. This program will continue to support these residency positions in FY 2016 and FY 2017.

The Planning and Partnership Grants were continued and expanded by the 84th Texas Legislature through the passage of Senate Bill 18. The addition of Partnership Grants allows more entities to participate in the planning and development of new residency programs. The new Planning and Partnership Grants may be awarded to Texas hospitals, medical schools, federally qualified health centers, and community-based health centers interested in a new residency program. For FY2016 and FY2017, \$3.5 million is available for one-time grants of \$250,000 each, to be awarded on a competitive basis.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board staff is planning to release a Request for Applications (RFA) for Unfilled Position Grants and New and Expanded Program Grants in late October or early November 2015. The RFA for the Planning and Partnership Program will be released in February 2016.

Suzanne Pickens | Senior Program Director | Academic Quality and Workforce

Coordinating Board Announces Star Award Finalists

The Coordinating Board has announced the names of seven finalists for the 2015 Star Awards for exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals of the Texas higher education plan, [Closing the Gaps by 2015](#). The Coordinating Board received 48 nominations and 42 applications for this year's Star Award program. This year's finalists are:

- Alamo Colleges – Alamo Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (Alamo I-BEST)
- Amarillo College – No Excuses Poverty Initiative: Creating a Systemic Approach to Overcoming Poverty Barriers in Higher Education
- Houston Community College – V.A.S.T. Academy (Vocational Advancement/Skills Training)

College Readiness and Success

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The APP E-NEWS is written and produced by Academic Planning and Policy staff at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. For newsletter questions or comments, contact Ramona Reeves, Editor, at ramona.reeves@thehb.state.tx.us or 512-427-6434.

- Lone Star College-Montgomery – THE (Teaching Highlighting Engagement) Initiatives
- Lone Star College-University Park – The Education and Career Positioning System - Linking Student Pathways to Careers
- North Central Texas College – Project Xtreme Academic Makeover
- The University of Texas at Arlington – Pathways to College Access and Career Readiness

The [Star Award](#) was established in 2001. Representatives of institutions, organizations, and groups from all over Texas have been recognized for their efforts to develop and implement the state's most successful programs, projects, activities, and partnerships. These efforts are helping Texas higher education close the gaps in student participation and success, excellence in programs and services, and in research development and expansion.

Star Award winners will be announced on Nov. 20 during the annual State of Higher Education Luncheon. The luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony will be held in conjunction with the [2015 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference](#) focusing on *60x30TX*, the next long-range strategic plan for Texas higher education.

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

Texas Institutions Work to Master Competency-Based Education

Competency-based education (CBE) is an alternative to awarding credentials based on semester credit hours. In Texas, about 22 institutions, both public and independent, are exploring or offering competency-based education (CBE) programs. The three key components of CBE include:

- Competencies – Students demonstrate their mastery of competencies (i.e., specific skills, knowledge, or abilities that are both observable and measurable) to show their progress.
- Instruction – Regular and substantive interaction between faculty and students supports student learning.
- Assessments – The institution measures students' mastery by assessing learning through instruction, as well as assessing prior learning.

A key difference between CBE and "traditional" education is that in "traditional" education, time is fixed and learning is variable; in CBE, time is variable and learning is fixed.

In response to the growing interest in CBE, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) created an informal network of institutions across the state in May 2015 to exchange activities, ideas, and resources. The workgroup, with more than 30 participants from interested institutions, holds monthly conference calls and communicates between calls via a Yammer social site. The workgroup also helps facilitate the building and maintenance of an unofficial inventory of CBE programs across the state – also on the Yammer site. Activities include:

- Sharing information (e.g., technology vendor reviews, conference debriefings, and articles and reports) on CBE;
- Hosting guest speakers (e.g., Dr. Sally Johnstone, VP for Academic Advancement, Western Governors University; Dr. George Siemens, Executive Director, LINK Research Lab, The University of Texas at Arlington; and Dr. Rex Peebles, Assistant Commissioner, Academic Quality and Workforce, THECB);

- Networking with one another and also serving as liaisons to national organizations (e.g., the Competency-Based Education Network, the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, and other groups focused on CBE);
- Collaborating on CBE efforts (e.g., developing a workshop to assist Texas institutions in creating CBE programs).

A CBE program can be an effective pathway for adult students working toward degree completion because it offers location flexibility, an accelerated time-to-degree, workforce alignment, and affordability. These benefits led to CBE's inclusion as a strategy in the [60x30TX long-range plan for higher education in Texas](#). Under the 60x30 goal in the plan, the strategy for CBE states "Develop and implement education and curriculum delivery systems (e.g., competency-based programs) to make higher education available to a broader and changing population."

The workgroup is open to anyone from Texas public and independent colleges and universities. For more information, contact Judith Sebesta at judith.sebesta@theccb.state.tx.us or 512-427-6544.

Judith A. Sebesta | Director of Innovation | Innovation and Policy Development

Generation Texas Generates Events to Get Students to College

One of the goals of Generation Texas (GenTX) is to promote a college-going culture and help high school students, especially first-generation students, navigate their way to and through higher education. As GenTX students graduate from higher education, they will contribute to the 60x30 and completion goals in the *60x30TX* plan for higher education in Texas.

The [Generation Texas](#) initiative will continue through the years of the new plan, 2015-2030, and will remain a portal for college-going information, advice, and resources. GenTX has several key initiatives planned for 2015 and 2016: GenTX College Application Week, Nov. 16-21, 2015; GenTX FAFSA Workshops, Feb. 1-28, 2016; and GenTX Decision Day, May 6, 2016.

Natalie Coffey | Director of Recruitment and Retention | College Readiness and Success

Negotiated Rulemaking Committee for Block Schedule Legislation Set to Convene

Block schedule programs allow students to manage their classes more easily around work and family commitments. For many students, this advantage increases the likelihood of finishing their programs. House Bill 1583 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature supports this effort and requires public community colleges to establish associate degree or certificate block schedule programs from the fields of allied health, nursing, or career and technology for at least five programs not previously offered as block schedule programs. Specifically, the legislation is "designed to provide scheduling predictability from semester to semester to students." Every public community college in Texas must meet these requirements.

The legislation requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), in consultation with public community colleges, to adopt rules for the administration of the block schedule programs. The legislation also charges the THECB with helping set up a process for public community colleges to petition for an exception, based on hardship, to the number of

new block schedule programs they need to establish.

The THECB and nominees from Texas public community colleges will develop the rules through the negotiated rulemaking process, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 2008 (Negotiated Rulemaking Act). In August and early September, the THECB requested nominations for the negotiated rulemaking committee to address new block schedule programs. The nomination process ended Sept. 14.

The committee will meet on Oct. 13, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., at the THECB offices in Austin. The meeting is open to the public. For more information, contact Garry Tomerlin, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, at garry.tomerlin@thecb.state.tx.us or 512-427-6226.

Ramona Reeves | Writer/Editor | Academic Planning and Policy



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