Assessment of Expanding Community College Baccalaureates in Texas

Summary of Draft Findings
April 2014
Today, we focus on the CC baccalaureate study

Texas Community College Baccalaureate Study
Mandated by SB414
Due August 1, 2014

Texas Workforce Planning Study
Mandated by HB1296
Due February 1, 2015
CC baccalaureate study objectives

- Develop a process to
  - Analyze statewide and regional workforce needs for bachelor’s degrees in nursing and applied science fields
  - Determine appropriate providers in needed fields
  - If community colleges (CCs) are appropriate, inform which should be authorized
Agenda for today’s briefing

• Methodology
• Identifying unmet workforce needs
• Potential benefits and concerns
• Policy options and support activities
• Conclusion
Agenda for today’s briefing

• Methodology
  • Identifying unmet workforce needs
  • Potential benefits and concerns
  • Policy options and support activities
  • Conclusion
We are using multiple methods

**Tasks**

*Develop a process to...*

- determine whether baccalaureate degrees are appropriate
- assess unmet workforce needs
- determine whether CCs are appropriate providers
- review specific institutions for approval

**Methods**

- Quantitative analysis
- Interviews with employers, professional leaders, accreditors, and postsecondary institutions
- Review of the literature and existing state policies
To understand regional variations, we interviewed stakeholders in four geographically distinct regions:

- West Central
- Lower Rio Grande Valley/Cameron County
- Gulf Coast
- Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex
We interviewed more than 300 stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder group</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two-year colleges</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public universities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private universities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other labor market and professional experts</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other states</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
<td><strong>332</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data provide important insights but may not necessarily represent the views of all stakeholders on the issues.
Agenda for today’s briefing

• Methodology
• Identifying unmet workforce needs
• Potential benefits and concerns
• Policy options and support activities
• Conclusion
Legislation specifies two areas of study

Nursing

Applied sciences
Because applied sciences cover a wide range, we selected four specific fields to study in depth:

- **Nursing**
- **Computer and information technology**
- **Technical supervisors**
- **Fire sciences**
- **Health information technology**
Nursing has strong demand, especially in urban areas, but supply is rapidly expanding.
Computer and information technology has strong demand, especially in urban areas, but supply is limited.
Technical supervisors have small, industry-specific demands that could be met with general programs or new, industry-specific ones.
Fire sciences have small demands that could be met with general programs or a few new fire-specific ones.
Health information technology does not appear to require specific bachelor’s programs
Agenda for today’s briefing

• Methodology
• Identifying unmet workforce needs
• Potential benefits and concerns
• Policy options and support activities
• Conclusion
CCs offer several potential benefits

- May help meet workforce needs
- May attract students who might not otherwise pursue or attain bachelor’s degrees
- Have greater experience with applied education
- Offer a small, supportive environment for students, particularly in specialized programs
But also raise some concerns

• Faculty can be challenging to recruit
• Clinical spaces are limited
• Mission creep at CCs is a concern
• Unproductive university–community college competition could arise
• Some fear a decline in the overall quality of the Texas baccalaureate
Agenda for today’s briefing

• Methodology
• Identifying unmet workforce needs
• Potential benefits and concerns
• Policy options and support activities
• Conclusion
Stakeholders agree on six guiding principles

- Meeting workforce needs should be top priority
- The state and students should realize benefits
- Any limiting policies should balance between addressing concerns and limiting benefits
- Policies should accommodate other investments
- Policy decisions should consider costs
- Policies should be fair and transparent
The state can select from three broad policy options:

1. Continue the status quo; continue encouraging partnerships
2. Place no specific limitations on CCs offering baccalaureates
   (SACS requirements and program approval might limit colleges)
3. Allow CCs to offer baccalaureates under specified limitations
The state can select from three broad policy options:

- Continue the status quo; continue encouraging partnerships.
- Place no specific limitations on CCs offering baccalaureates (SACS requirements and program approval might limit colleges).
- Allow CCs to offer baccalaureates under specified limitations.
Allow CCs to offer baccalaureates under specified limitations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allow CCs to offer baccalaureates under specified limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Limit the scope of provision statewide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limit to certain fields or degree types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish a maximum number of baccalaureate programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Limit the scope of provision regionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Give universities the opportunity to develop programs first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In case of duplication, require additional evidence of unmet need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Require additional planning or monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Require CC programs to provide specific evidence of quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limit the number of CCs that will be authorized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Require self-studies for all proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conduct follow-up studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Change financial arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limit the reimbursement rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Change the source of upper-division funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each of these options involves one or more sets of trade-offs

- Competition for funding
  - Resources
  - Quality
  - Mission creep
  - Duplication

- Time and expense
  - Additional evidence
    - Applied experience
    - Small environment
    - Access
    - Meeting workforce needs

- Time and expense
- Additional evidence
Our analysis identified useful supporting activities

• Clarify different applied degree types
  – Institutions, students, and employers could benefit from clearer meaning for BAAS, BAS, and BAT

• If more CCs are authorized to offer baccalaureates
  – Clearly define fields of study
  – Continue to use THECB criteria
  – Coordinate proposals when demand is limited or resources are constrained
  – Consider ways to connect experienced and new CCs (mentorship, conferences, manual)

• Conduct more empirical analyses
  – E.g., cost studies to set state reimbursement rates
Agenda for today’s briefing

- Methodology
- Identifying unmet workforce needs
- Potential benefits and concerns
- Policy options and support activities
- Conclusion
Conclusion

• Community college baccalaureates are increasing nationwide
  – Texas now has some experience in offering them
• They offer benefits in preparing the workforce and expanding access
• They also raise concerns about quality and mission creep
• Texas has a wide range of options to try to maximize benefits and limit concerns
  – But these options necessarily involve difficult tradeoffs
  – Improving the evidence base will help understand and resolve these tradeoffs better in the future
Next steps

• Release draft report for public comment
• Revise report in response to technical reviews and public comment
• Convene panels at June committee meeting
• Report to legislature following July board meeting
UPCOMING EVENTS

Release draft report for public comment
THECB Board Committee Meeting, June 25, 2014
THECB Board Meeting, July 24, 2014
Submit report to the legislature, on or before August 1, 2014

CONTACT INFORMATION

Charles Goldman, RAND Corporation
charlesg@rand.org

Gary Johnstone, THECB
gary.johnstone@THECB.state.tx.us