



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.

Committee Continues Deliberations on Next Higher Ed Plan for Texas

The Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee is the advisory committee charged with providing advice and recommendations to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB or Coordinating Board) regarding the development of the next long-term strategic plan for Texas higher education. Since holding its inaugural meeting on March 3, this committee has held meetings on April 15, May 22, and June 18. The next meeting is scheduled for August 19, 10 a.m., at the THECB offices in Austin. The presentations and minutes for the meetings are available on the [committee's website](#).

Throughout the remainder of 2014 and during early 2015, the committee will continue to meet monthly, as required by workload and tasks. Committee members will deliberate on higher education-related topics before making a focused recommendation to the Coordinating Board on the next strategic plan for higher education in Texas. During the deliberations' process, the Coordinating Board will solicit public input via stakeholder meetings and online tools, such as [College Town Hall-Texas](#). Special meetings may be called, when deemed appropriate, by the committee's presiding officer.

Barring technical difficulties, meetings will be open to the public and broadcast live on the [THECB's website](#). Institutions can provide input through subcommittees and during comment periods. Some highlights from the April, May, and June meetings appear in the chart below.

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

April	May	June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed a vision for Texas in 2030 and how higher education can best contribute to the future success of Texas Received information from THECB staff regarding data resources and methods for soliciting public input via online tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed the future workforce needs of the Texas and the potential of international benchmarking, with input from (1) Andreas Schleicher, Acting Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the Secretary-General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and (2) Jeff Strohl, Director of Research at the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered ways to increase the educational success of economically disadvantaged students, with input from (1) David Laude, Senior Vice Provost, The University of Texas at Austin, and (2) William Serrata, President, El Paso Community College Discussed a possible overarching state goal and several potential goals related to the overarching one

Upcoming Meetings

Next Quarterly Board Meeting:
Thursday, October 23, 2014
8:30 a.m.

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

Links to Useful Sites

- [2014 Higher Education Almanac](#)
- [Compare College TX](#)
- [2013 State of Higher Ed Address](#)
- [Accountability System](#)
- [Higher Education Data](#)
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Study Considers Baccalaureate Programs in Nursing and Applied Sciences at Community Colleges

The Community College Baccalaureate Study analyzed the need for community colleges to offer baccalaureate programs in Nursing and Applied Science fields. The study also developed criteria to assess community colleges' abilities to offer quality programs in these fields and their capacities to implement programs, if needed.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) was directed by the Texas Legislature to conduct the study mandated by Senate Bill (SB) 414. A required report

is due to the Legislature by August 1, 2014. At the Board meeting on July 24th, THECB staff engaged Board members in a discussion about the study's findings. The draft report prepared by the RAND Corporation and THECB staff was approved by the Board at the meeting.

In addition to providing the study's results to the Legislature, the Board adopted (and will submit to the Legislature) recommendations for legislative actions relating to the RAND and THECB study by August 1, 2014.

Gary Johnstone | Deputy Assistant Commissioner | Planning and Accountability

Symposium Examines Higher Education Instruction and Learning in the 21st Century

The Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI), under the leadership of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), hosted the symposium "Higher Education Instruction and Learning in the 21st Century" on July 11 at the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center in Austin. Sponsored by Houston Endowment, the event was the second of two symposia planned by HEPI in the series "Framing the Future of Higher Education."

This second symposium drew 115 attendees, including administrators, faculty, and students from universities, community colleges, and technical colleges; legislative and government relations staff; policy makers; board members; and other higher education stakeholders. Attendees represented regions from all across Texas and also came from Virginia, Georgia, California, Arizona, and Utah to lend statewide and national perspective to discussions.

The opening panel featured presentations by Teaching and Learning Technologies Director Jim Bloom from the University of Mary Washington, and Dr. Sally Johnstone, Vice President for Academic Advancement at Western Governors University. Katie Mangan, Senior Reporter for the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, moderated the discussion.

Dr. Chris Bustamante, President, Rio Salado College, gave the first keynote address and discussed innovations in higher education instruction from the perspective of a community college. Dr. Norma Ming, Co-Founder & Director of Learning Design at Socos, offered the second keynote address and focused on balancing standardization and

personalization in higher education. An audience Q&A followed each presentation.

During the afternoon session, attendees broke into eight groups. They were asked to consider the best practices in instruction and learning to support the four primary purposes of higher education discussed at the first symposium in February: deliver workforce training and/or increase income potential; provide broad, liberal arts education; promote democracy, leadership, and global awareness; and generate disruptive ideas.

After each group reported their discussions, several presenters discussed issues raised during the symposium with an emphasis on Texas higher education. Dr. Marshall Schott, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Lone Star College System, moderated the discussion. The participants were Dr. Steven Mintz, Executive Director, Institute for Transformational Learning, UT System;

Dr. Mark Milliron, Co-Founder & Chief Learning Officer, Civitas Learning; Ceilidh Charleson-Jennings, Professor of Communication Studies, Collin College; and Dr. Christina Girmsley, Recent Alumna, Texas Woman's University.

A white paper on the symposium's proceedings is forthcoming, and a video of the presentations, presentation materials, articles, and reports will be available at <http://framingthefutureofhighered.org>. This website also contains information about the first symposium, "The Purposes of Higher Education in the 21st Century," including video of the sessions and a white paper that discusses the four purposes of higher education and other topics.



Dr. Ceilidh Charleson-Jennings, Dr. Steven Mintz, and Dr. Christina Girmsley

Judith A. Sebesta | Project Manager | Higher Education Policy Institute

Texting Enrollment Blitz Planned in August

The P-16 staff of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB or Coordinating Board) is leading an effort this summer to send text messages to students who fit into the category of “summer melt.” These students have completed key college-going steps, such as applying to college, being accepted to college, and applying for financial aid (if their families qualify).

Studies have shown that students intending to go to college “melt” because of the tasks they must complete during the summer after high school graduation, such as attending orientation; completing financial aid and other paperwork; paying for tuition, room and board, and student fees (including health insurance); taking placement exams; and selecting classes. Coordinating Board staff are attempting to strategically target these students with two text messages designed to elicit a sense of urgency and immediate action.



The target audience for the text messages includes both community college and university students. The Planning and Accountability staff at the THECB reviewed ApplyTexas data to identify institutions of higher education (IHEs) that would benefit from this intervention based on having a melt percentage greater than that of the state. The goal of the texting enrollment blitz is to enroll an additional 50,000 students before the end of 2014. The target audience is expected to include 500,000 students.

A text message enrollment campaign is a fairly easy and cost-effective way to notify and encourage more students to enroll in college. Text messages have open rates greater than 95 percent, and see response rates up to 10 times greater than email or traditional mail. This initiative is part of the P-16 Division’s continuing efforts to enhance its focus on increasing participation in higher education.

Natalie Coffey | Director of Recruitment and Retention | P-16 Initiatives

ELA Alignment Project Published in Community College Journal of Research and Practice

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has supported alignment projects at the state, regional, and local levels for several years. The [article “Strategies for Improving Vertical Alignment: Implementation of a College-Readiness Collaborative of Secondary and Post-Secondary Educators”](#) published in the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* discusses one such project funded by the THECB through the [Regional College Readiness Special Advisors](#).

Led by Wendy Lym, Associate Professor of English at Austin Community College’s Eastview Campus, a team of Central Texas secondary and postsecondary English Language Arts (ELA) educators and professionals met and worked over a two-year period to address alignment issues between high school and college curriculum and to produce actionable strategies to increase college readiness for high school

students. The project yielded practical applications that several teams eventually implemented by delivering college-level lessons and assignments to high school students to expose them to college-level work, observe their perceptions, and raise their awareness. Lym’s project is one of the many ongoing college readiness efforts in Central Texas driven by Austin Community College’s Regional College Readiness Special Advisor Gary Madsen.

Educators also became more aware of the differences between secondary and postsecondary environments. “Treating all of the participants professionally paid off tremendously,” says Lym. In the end, the entire process helped to “peel back the cover” for educators, exposing many of the assumptions and challenges faced by secondary and postsecondary educators.

Matt Lashlee | Program Director | Division of P-16 Initiatives

Summer 2014 Core Curriculum Update

The staff of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) reviewed and approved Texas public community colleges' and universities' submissions that adhere to the new 42-semester-credit-hour (SCH) Core Curriculum. The new curriculum will be in place for students beginning in fall 2014. The Texas General Education Core Curriculum Web Center will list the Core Curriculum courses for each institution by the end of the summer.

Institutions may make revisions to their new Core Curriculum on an annual basis, at a time that is convenient for the institution. Such changes may include adding and deleting courses; changing courses' semester credit hours, numbers, and/or titles; moving courses from one Foundational

Component Area (FCA) to another; and other relevant changes. After an institution's annual request for changes to their Core Curriculum is reviewed and approved by Coordinating Board staff, the revision will be effective in the fall of the next academic year.

The instructions for changes to the Core Curriculum for the upcoming 2015-16 academic year are under development and should be available by the end of the summer. A list of frequently asked questions will also be made available. The list will contain the common issues THECB staff encountered with 2014 submissions in an effort to provide institutions with additional guidance on their annual comprehensive request.

Rex Peebles | Assistant Commissioner | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Texas Teacher Residency Program Leading to Master's Degree Moves Forward

In February 2014, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board awarded a grant to Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMU-Commerce) to implement a one-year teacher residency program leading to a master's degree and teacher certification in a STEM field. TAMU-Commerce is partnering with The University of Texas at Tyler (UT-Tyler) and the Mesquite Independent School District (ISD). UT-Tyler is, in turn, partnering with the Tyler ISD.

This summer, TAMU-Commerce enrolled 12 teacher residents, and their coursework is underway. Some of the residents are mid-career and transitioning to teaching, while others are recent college graduates. Residents in the UT-Tyler program will begin their work this fall and are being recruited from the pool of long-term substitute teachers that staff math and science classrooms in local school districts.

Teacher residents are supported with a livable stipend so that they can immerse themselves fully in their preparation to become teachers. Their training includes evidence-based early classroom induction and a robust mentoring component that is closely aligned with the nationally recognized Urban Teacher Residency United model. Residents are supported in their practice by a novice teacher mentor, a veteran teacher mentor, as well as by an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) – mentor, resident, university liaison. The ILT collaboratively determines the resident's readiness to phase into fulltime teaching through formative assessment processes.

This fall and into next year, residents will continue in the program and will complete their master's level course

work, and mentors will continue the training leading to mentor-certification. Professional learning communities (PLCs) also will begin meeting this fall. In PLCs, mentors and residents gather to work on integrating course-work into practice and conducting projects that will help residents understand how to use inquiry-based instruction effectively with their students. Part of the work of the PLCs includes using iPad minis to share classroom videos and teaching artifacts so that teachers and mentors can reflect on classroom practice. At grant closing in late summer, 2015 residents will have received support with job placement and are expected to be successful based on the strong partnerships between the ISDs and the partnering institutions of higher education.

Districts have provided matching funds in the form of tuition – approximately 25 percent of the award amount. The Texas Teacher Residency Program is funded from the General Appropriations Act for the 2014-15 biennium in the amount of \$1.29 million.



Josephine Hamilton | Assistant Director, Educator Quality | P-16 Initiatives

Dual Credit Rule Changes Approved

Several dual credit eligibility rule changes were considered by the Board members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) during the July meeting. These rule changes better align dual credit eligibility criteria with the changes to state End-of-Course (EOC) assessments resulting from House Bill 5 (HB 5) and with the laws and rules of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI).

Under current rules, the English II Reading and Writing score and the Algebra II EOC score from the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) exam determine an eleventh-grade student's eligibility to enroll in academic dual credit courses. Under HB 5, however, the English II EOC must be combined into one assessment that measures achievement in both reading and writing and is reported as one combined score. The bill also states that school districts will elect whether or not to administer the Algebra II EOC, beginning with the 2015-16 school year. The Texas Education Agency has stated they will not make the Algebra II EOC available for administration to Texas high school students until the spring of 2016. These changes, resulting from HB 5, required revisions to the current dual credit eligibility rules.

The dual credit eligibility rules, therefore, have been revised to include the new reading and writing combined English II EOC. The revised dual credit eligibility rules also establish that students must achieve the final Level 2 TEA recommend score (4000) to become eligible for academic dual credit courses in the eleventh grade.

Given the current hiatus in administration of the Algebra II EOC, the rules also have been amended to allow students to qualify for enrollment in mathematics intensive academic dual credit courses if they achieve both the final Level 2 TEA recommended score (4000) on the Algebra I EOC and a passing grade (70 or higher) in the Algebra II course. These revisions will allow students who were administered the current, required STAAR EOC assessments in the spring of 2014 to qualify for enrollment in dual credit courses in eleventh grade.

House Bill 5 and TSI rules also influenced proposed revisions to workforce education dual credit course eligibility rules. Under previous rules, students may qualify for enrollment in workforce education dual credit courses in the eleventh or twelfth grade if they achieve a designated minimum final phase-in score on the Algebra I EOC. As



a result of the passage of HB 5 and the reduction in the number of mathematics EOC assessments from three to one (Algebra I), the need for a minimum final phase-in score was eliminated.

TSI rules state that students enrolling in a certificate program of one year or less (Level-One certificates or less) are exempt from the TSI Assessment requirements. Being cognizant of these two factors relating to workforce education courses, THECB staff proposed rules' revisions that will allow students in the eleventh or twelfth grade to qualify for an exemption to TSI requirements and enroll in workforce education dual credit courses without having to demonstrate college readiness on an approved TSI Assessment.

Additionally, language was inserted to dual credit eligibility rules specifying that students enrolling in workforce education dual credit courses contained in a Level-Two certificate or higher must meet the same dual credit eligibility criteria as students enrolling in academic dual credit courses. These proposed revisions take into account the change in the Algebra I EOC scoring requirements and align with the TSI rules relating to workforce education courses.

Andrew Lofters | Program Director, Community and Technical Colleges | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Jose Rios | Assistant Director, Community and Technical Colleges | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

[UH Receives \\$1.5 Million to Expand THECB Pilot in STEM Gateway Courses](#)

The University of Houston (UH) College of Natural Science and Mathematics was recently awarded \$1.5 million from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to expand its Comprehensive Student Success Program (CSSP) pilot, originally funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) under the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant Program. The newly funded expansion will enable UH's College of Natural Science and Mathematics to expand critical student success efforts, such as mentoring programs, into additional introductory chemistry, biology, physics, and math courses.

Since the THECB-funded pilot began in fall 2012, UH faculty, advisors, and support staff have implemented targeted advising, increased supplemental recitation sessions, and incorporated high engagement and interactive classroom strategies to improve success rates in gateway biology courses for both STEM and non-STEM majors. At the heart of the pilot are active-learning and inquiry-based classroom activities;

faculty-led assessment of intervention strategies and student learning; and ongoing collaboration between faculty, peer course assistants, and STEM advisors.

Eight institutions will soon conclude grant-funded efforts under the CSSP, which is comprised of six semesters, plus summers. The participating institutions are Austin Community College, Houston Community College, North Central Texas College, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Texas Woman's University, University of Houston, University of Houston-Downtown, and The University of Texas-Pan American. For the first three semesters of the Comprehensive Student Success Program, data show that students participating in CSSP courses at these institutions were statistically slightly more likely to succeed in their courses with a grade of A, B, or C than students not enrolled in CSSP courses at these institutions during the same period.

Matt Lashlee | Program Director | Division of P-16 Initiatives

[The TSI Assessment and the Lesser Known Second Chance](#)

The Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) is well known, at least in Texas, and is becoming better known in the United States. The TSIA sets a uniform standard for college readiness and helps ensure students have acquired the skills they need in mathematics, reading, and writing to succeed in college. The TSIA uses computer adaptive testing, or CAT for short. All of the information about the tests, exemptions, and cut scores is readily available at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/tsi>.

Unless students are exempt, they take the TSIA for each subject area and are classified into one of three groups: College-Ready, Developmental Education (DE), or Adult Basic Education (ABE) within that subject area. Both DE and ABE designees take diagnostic tests in the area that needs improvement to provide more information about a student's strengths and weaknesses to students, advisors, and faculty in order to design an academic path for a student's success in higher education.

A lesser known aspect of the TSIA is called Second

Chance. This method allows a student to realize a higher level of classification even if they do not achieve the requisite level on the placement test. Second Chance uses the results from the diagnostic test(s) to assess whether a student should be classified at a higher level.

In general, this method uses the results of the student's score on the ABE Diagnostic Test. If a student is found to have a diagnostic score within the range of NRS Level 5 (grade level 9-10.9) or NRS Level 6 (grade level 11-12), the student is classified at the DE level. This reassessment is based on the assumption that the student's score on the diagnostic test is a better reflection of their achievement level; hence, the student's "second chance."

This procedure is now undergoing validation, along with the entire TSIA. A complete year of test administration data results are needed for the validation study. As such, the study on the effectiveness of this unique initiative will not begin until September 2014, at the earliest.

Alan C. Bugbee | Director of Assessment/Senior Project Manager, TSI Assessment | P-16 Initiatives

The *APP E-NEWS* is published quarterly by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). It is written, edited, and compiled by the THECB staff. For newsletter questions or comments, contact Ramona Reeves, Writer/Editor, Academic Planning and Policy, at ramona.reeves@thecb.state.tx.us or (512) 427-6434.