LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FOR THE 83RD TEXAS LEGISLATURE

A Shared Responsibility Model for Higher Education

OCTOBER 2012

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The 83rd Texas Legislative Session is a critical session for implementing new initiatives in higher education to help the state achieve the goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015* and lay the foundation for Texas to become a national and global economic competitor. According to Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, 65% of all U.S. jobs will require postsecondary education or training by 2020. These projections are a key reason why the THECB is proposing legislative recommendations, with input from key stakeholders, designed to significantly increase student success, expand access, and increase cost efficiencies for the benefit of students, institutions, and taxpayers.

A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY MODEL

The THECB's shared responsibility model has three components: institutions, students, and the state. First, the THECB wants to create incentives and mechanisms so that institutions of higher education focus more heavily on student success. Second, the THECB wants to communicate to students that the state expects them to work hard to be well-prepared when they enroll in college, and to complete their credentials in a timely fashion. Finally, the THECB wants the state to provide adequate funding for higher education to support the tremendous growth that has occurred in the last several years. Below is a summary of the THECB's legislative priorities:

Implement Outcomes-Based Funding

Base 10% of state funding on student outcomes

- ✓ For **universities**, allocate funds on seven defined metrics that measure the most critical outcomes necessary for Texas to compete nationally and internationally, with a higher weight for outcomes that are aligned with critical workforce needs.
- ✓ For **community colleges**, allocate funds based on institutions' performance on "Student Success Points" – specific measures of student success and persistence, providing an equal weight for certificates, degrees, and transfers.

Restructure State Financial Aid

Restructure the TEXAS Grant program to expand to more new students

- ✓ Target award amount to cover tuition, fees, and books.
- ✓ Limit award to 8 regular semesters and require full-time enrollment (12 hours)
- ✓ Expand eligibility to all transfer students.

Decrease Time-to-Degree

Reduce the total number of hours students take to earn their degrees

- ✓ Cap the total number of hours for an associate's degree to 60 semester credit hours.
  Fact: Currently, the statewide average for total number of hours taken for an associate's degree is 98 hours.
- ✓ Charge out-of-state tuition, and cap funding to institutions, for hours taken by students in excess of 135 semester credit hours for a 120 hour bachelor's degree program.
  Fact: Currently, the statewide average for total number of hours taken for a bachelor's degree is 147 hours.