

Academic Planning and Policy E-News

Academic Quality and Workforce | College Readiness and Success
Innovation and Policy Development | Strategic Planning and Funding



Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board

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

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2016 Star Award Winner Announced

At the Star Awards Ceremony on Oct. 26, Texas A&M University-Commerce received the Star Award for its [Texas Affordable Baccalaureate](#) Program. Launched in 2014, the Texas Affordable Baccalaureate program is the state's first entirely competency-based, bachelor-level degree from a public institution. The program

was created in response to a challenge issued by former Gov. Rick Perry in 2011 to develop a low-cost alternative for completing a college degree. The entire program is offered online and allows students to earn a bachelor of applied science degree, with an emphasis in organizational leadership at their own pace. The program has garnered both state and national praise.

Earlier this month, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) announced the names of six finalists for the [2016 Star Awards](#) for exceptional contributions toward meeting one or more of the goals of the new Texas higher education plan, 60x30TX. The THECB received 39 nominations and 35 applications for this year's Star Award program. This year's finalists were:

- El Paso Community College and Texas Tech University (Partnership): [Architecture](#)
- Tarleton State University: [Intern 2 Learn](#)
- Texas A&M University-Commerce: [Texas Affordable Baccalaureate](#) Program
- University of Houston-Clear Lake: [Success Through Education Programs](#) (STEP)
- The University of Texas at Austin: [University Leadership Network](#)
- The University of Texas at Tyler: [Insight Motivated Marketing \(IMM 360\) Curriculum](#)

The State of Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony are held annually in conjunction with the [Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference](#).

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

Calendar

Next Board Meeting

January 26, 2017

[EMS and Paramedics Programs of Study Subcommittee](#)

Nov. 1, 10 a.m.

[Nursing Field of Study Advisory Committee](#)

Nov. 3, 10 a.m.

[Certification Advisory Council \(CAC\)](#)

Nov. 4, 10 a.m.

[Community, State, & Technical College Liaison Meeting](#)

Nov. 7-8

[Learning Technology Advisory Committee](#)

Nov. 9, 10 a.m.

[Financial Aid Advisory Committee](#)

Nov. 16, 9:30 a.m.

60x30TX Regional Meeting -
Dallas (tentative)

Webinar Focuses on Measures for New 60x30TX Accountability System

As part of the newly redesigned Texas Higher Education Accountability System that will be launched in 2017, the division of Strategic Planning and Funding (SPF) held webinars on Tues., Oct. 11, to update public institutions of higher education on proposed accountability measures. The measures will be introduced in the accountability system in January 2017, approved by the THECB's board in spring or summer 2017, and displayed in a redesigned interface.

The accountability system was first developed in response to an executive order from former Governor Perry. The 2004 order charged the agency with creating a comprehensive system of accountability to "provide the citizens of Texas, the Governor, and the Legislature with the information necessary to determine the effectiveness and quality of the education students receive at individual institutions" of higher education. The accountability system is also designed to enable stakeholders to evaluate and to compare institutional outcomes for the purposes of continuous improvement.

The measures included in the accountability system send an important signal to the field about state higher education priorities. For the last 15 years, the measures have been aligned to the goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. The current effort to revise the system is motivated, in part, by the need to align to the new 60x30TX goals and targets, which include attainment, completion, marketable skills, and student debt. The redesigned system interface also aims to streamline the data and measures that are available on the site to provide fewer, clearer points of information to the field and to be more user-friendly.

The process of reviewing and updating the accountability system measures began in spring 2016, when representatives from public universities, public health-related institutions, and public community, technical, and state colleges attended input meetings at the THECB. There, THECB staff presented a revised, shorter list of measures, largely related to 60x30TX and other key state priorities. Participants at the spring meetings provided feedback and suggestions about measures to add or exclude, as well as suggestions about how to calculate measures. Several existing measures were also included in the proposed list.

Following the meetings, SPF staff made revisions based on institutional feedback and sent out the measures again for open comment. SPF staff also compared the proposed measures to those required by Legislative Budget Board and measures used among nationally recognized initiatives or organizations, such as Achieve the Dream, Complete College America, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and the National Student Clearinghouse.

The webinars provided an overview of the proposed final measures, discussion items for each sector, and next steps in the review and approval process. The effort to streamline measures to focus on 60x30TX priorities and enhance stakeholder understanding decreased public university measures from 67 to 34. Measures for health-related institutions decreased from 36 to 24, while measures for community, technical, and state colleges decreased from 36 to 24. Measure modifications for non-public career/for profit and out-of-state institutions with a Texas presence are still under development.

For a full list of the proposed measures, visit the webinar event pages on the THECB website for [Universities and HRIs](#) and [Community, Technical, and State Colleges](#). Many of the items that will no longer be included in the

Dec. 7, 10 a.m.

[Committee on Affordability, Accountability and Planning \(CAAP\)](#)

Dec. 14, 9 a.m.

[Committee on Academic and Workforce Success \(CAWS\)](#)

Dec. 14, 10 a.m. (or upon adjournment of CAAP meeting)

60x30TX in the News

[El Paso Times](#)

[KLBJ News Radio](#)

[KVUE](#)

[Office of the Governor](#)

[The Shorthorn \(UT-Arlington\)](#)

[Star-Telegram](#)

[Texarkana Gazette](#)

[Texas Tribune](#)

[TribTalk \(Texas Tribune\)](#)

[The Quorum Report](#)

[Time Warner Cable](#)

APP Links

[Academic Quality and Workforce](#)

[College Readiness and Success](#)

[Compare College TX](#)

accountability system will still be available in the site's Interactive Data Portal.

For questions or more information, contact Jenna Cullinane Hege at Jenna.CullinaneHege@thehb.state.tx.us or 512-427-6148.

Jenna Cullinane Hege | Deputy Assistant Commissioner
| Strategic Planning and Funding

Survey of Programs Identifies Prerequisite Courses for Nursing

House Bill (HB) 3078, 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, directed the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to appoint an advisory committee to complete the following charges: 1) identify the prerequisite courses that a student must complete to qualify for consideration for admission to each undergraduate nursing program offered by a Texas public institution of higher education, and 2) identify the content of the prerequisite courses.

To complete its charge, the advisory committee, whose membership was comprised of representatives from community and technical colleges, general academic teaching institutions, and health science centers, as well as professional nursing associations and the Texas Board of Nursing, sent all state-supported nursing programs in Texas a survey by email on Jan. 15, 2016. The goal of the survey was to determine which prerequisite courses are required to apply to the nursing program, prerequisite courses required before starting the nursing program (taken between application and first nursing course), and whether the course is part of the institution's core curriculum.

A total of 54 associate degree (ADN) and 26 baccalaureate (BSN) professional nursing programs at public institutions were surveyed, with a 100 percent response rate. Specific to the charges of this committee, the analysis of the survey identified commonalities among the nursing programs' prerequisite course requirements for consideration of admission.

As a result of the data analysis, the advisory committee recommended two prerequisite courses for ADN programs and seven prerequisite courses for BSN programs for consideration for admission to associate and bachelor's degree nursing programs. Differences in the number of prerequisite courses represent the difference in the level of education for ADN and BSN degrees.

The BSN program prerequisite course recommendations are:

- Anatomy and Physiology I with lab or course equivalent
- Anatomy and Physiology II with lab or course equivalent
- Microbiology with lab (see next paragraph)
- Chemistry with lab (see next paragraph)
- General Psychology
- Human Growth and Development
- Math Statistics (Math 1342)

Labs are required for the majority of BSN programs for both microbiology and chemistry. Only two (7.7 percent) of BSN programs do not require a lab for microbiology, and only four (15.4 percent) do not require a lab for chemistry. These courses are offered by science departments rather than nursing departments. Since some science departments do not offer microbiology and chemistry with associated labs, and nursing students without these labs have

[Higher Education Strategic Plan](#)

[Higher Education Almanac](#)

[Innovation and Policy Development](#)

[Texas Higher Education Accountability System](#)

[Texas Higher Education Data](#)

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

successfully graduated and become licensed registered nurses, the advisory committee decided that a cross-disciplinary study between science and nursing is needed to determine how essential these labs are as prerequisites for nursing majors. Until this assessment is complete, the advisory committee recommended that nursing programs be allowed to waive the lab requirement when considering applicants with microbiology and/or chemistry taken at an institution that does not offer these labs.

The ADN, Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN) to ADN, and Allied Health/Paramedic to ADN programs prerequisite course recommendations are:

- Anatomy and Physiology I with lab or course equivalent
- English Composition I (English 1301)

Course content for all required course descriptions will be drawn from the *Academic Course Guide Manual* (ACGM). The Uniform Pre-Nursing Curriculum Report is available on the [THECB website](#).

Donna Carlin | Assistant Director | Academic Quality and Workforce

Regional 60x30TX Meeting Held at Texas Tech



At left: Dr. Mary E. Smith and Mary Mitchell assist attendees at the North Texas 60x30TX Workshop

In partnership with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Texas Tech University (TTU) co-hosted the seventh 60x30TX regional workshop on Oct. 5 in Lubbock with more than 100 High Plains, Northwest, and West Texas higher education leaders in attendance.

Participants gathered to discuss the new plan and share suggested strategies for achieving the state's 60x30TX educational goals and targets within their region. The workshop included leaders from public school systems, community colleges and four-year universities, business and industry, and government and nonprofit education organizations.

John Opperman, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for the TTU-System, opened the Oct. 5 workshop, and Higher Education Commissioner Raymund Paredes and Deputy Commissioner David Gardner followed Dr. Opperman and provided information and an overview on 60x30TX. The workshop also included a panel discussion of local leaders who shared their advice and ideas related to the 60x30TX goals before all participants engaged in discussion regarding how stakeholders can best work together to achieve the goals of the new higher education plan.

The THECB is making plans to hold one additional 2016 regional workshop, tentatively on Dec. 7 in Dallas.

With support from Lumina Foundation and the College for All Texans Foundation, the THECB is sponsoring the regional workshops. Participation is free of charge. For additional information, visit <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/60x30TX.regional.workshops>.

**Mary Smith | Assistant Deputy Commissioner/ADR Coordinator
| Academic Planning and Policy**

Leadership Conference Held Oct. 25-26 in Austin

The 2016 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference, hosted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, was held on Oct. 25-26 at the Crowne Plaza Austin Hotel (6121 IH-35 North). The conference's focus was "Connecting Higher Education and Workplace Success."

The annual leadership conference brings together regents and trustees (including students), chancellors, presidents, and other higher education leaders to discuss critical higher education issues. The conference agenda included:

- Orientation for new governing board members
- Leadership Conference sessions (day one)
- Leadership reception
- Conference sessions (day two)
- Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon/Annual Star Awards Ceremony

Keynote speakers and panelists, including leading experts from higher education and the workforce, considered ways to help highlight students' marketable skills that can be articulated for the workforce, to encourage them to be more civic-minded, help them interact in diverse communities, and give them a passion for lifelong learning. They focused in particular on best practices in explicating broad study with skillsets that will help students market themselves to employers in any economy.

During the "Resources to Address Student Debt" session, panelists considered some best practices on how to make higher education more affordable, along with some better ways to advise students and parents on financial aid options and their impacts on students' finances before, during, and after their college careers.

The orientation/conference sessions on day one satisfy the training requirement for newly appointed regents and elected trustees (Texas Education Code, Section 61.084). For more information, visit the [2016 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference website](#), or contact Assistant Deputy Commissioner [Mary E. Smith](#) at 512-427-6213.

**Mary E. Smith | Assistant Deputy Commissioner/ADR Coordinator
| Academic Planning and Policy**

Texas High Schools and Students Prepare for GenTX Month

Now that students are able to submit the 2017-18 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as October 1, Generation TX (GenTX) has combined its statewide college application and financial aid campaigns, efforts, and resources into one powerful month. [GenTX Month](#) in November 2016 aims to support all students in getting to and through college across the state of Texas. During November, students at participating high schools will be assisted as they complete college and financial aid applications, including applications for ApplyTexas and FAFSA.



Any school or organization in Texas can participate in GenTX Month. To get started, [sign-up to take the challenge](#). High schools that join the challenge will receive free #IApplied stickers for all seniors and a free data tool to set campus goals as the states works together for GenTX.

The goals of GenTX Month are to have:

- At least 1,000 Texas high schools accept the challenge and support GenTX Month with college application and financial aid activities, events, and outreach
- Every participating high school in Texas increase ApplyTexas and FAFSA completions by 4 percentage points above 2016-2017
- Every eligible student (senior) in Texas complete and submit the FAFSA or TASFA and an application ([Apply Texas](#)) to at least one institution of higher education

In 2015, 10,398 seniors participated at 181 high schools in Texas to submit more than 52,000 admissions applications through ApplyTexas. Participants held 331 FAFSA events during the last GenTX financial aid campaign and reached more than 23,000 students. This year's combined GenTX Month efforts have already surpassed these marks and will continue to grow through November.

Generation Texas (GenTX) promotes a college-going culture and helps high school students, especially first-generation students, navigate their way to and through higher education. This initiative is also connected to regional efforts and goals of the [60x30TX Texas Challenge to Reach Higher](#), an initiative to increase college applications, FAFSA completions, and college readiness across Texas.

Matt Lashlee | Program Director | College Readiness and Success

Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on Tuition Equalization Grant Proposes Rules

Through the negotiated rulemaking process, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) worked with representatives of private, independent, and nonprofit institutions in Texas to revise THECB rules for allocating funds for the Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG). Revised rules were

needed because in order to reduce the reporting burden on institutions through the elimination of duplicative reporting, the THECB is proposing to phase out the annual TEG Need Survey in its current form and, instead, build the annual TEG Need Survey using certified data from the Financial Aid Database.

In proposing negotiated rulemaking for the TEG, several factors were considered. First, there is a need to base TEG allocations on certified data, in line with other state financial aid allocation processes. (The current TEG Need Survey does not go through a certification process.) Second, the current TEG Need Survey reflects a moment in time during the fall semester, and thus cannot be reconciled against other student details received by the agency. This prevents the agency from performing data verification activities. Third, the agency is seeking to reduce the reporting burden on institutions through the elimination of duplicative reporting activities. Given the overlap of data between the TEG Need Survey and the Financial Aid Database (FADS), there is an opportunity to reduce reporting requirements. Furthermore, additional data elements are being added to the Fiscal Year 2018 FADS, which will be available for use in allocation processes. (While the FADS revision activities are occurring independent of the TEG negotiated rulemaking activities, there is an opportunity to incorporate data needed for TEG allocations into the FADS revisions.) Finally, as with all allocation activities, the THECB seeks to promote a balanced effort between the complexity of any allocation process and the equitable outcome of the methodology.

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee (NRMC) on Tuition Equalization Grant came to consensus on the proposed new rules during their initial meeting on Oct. 14. The proposed rules have been posted to the *Texas Register* for a 30-day comment period. If comments are received, THECB staff will draft recommendations for the comments, and these will be emailed to the NRMC on TEG for consensus decision-making. Modifications to the TEG allocation process will require rule adoption. The board of the THECB will consider adopting the proposed rules, as modified by the NRMC, at the board's Jan. 26 meeting.

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

60x30TX Garners Impressive Media Coverage

Over the past year, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has garnered more than 64 media stories that focused exclusively on the 60x30TX plan and more than 100 other media stories that mentioned the plan. These media stories were covered by 52 unique media outlets across Texas and the U.S.

Recent coverage included an [op ed piece](#) by Higher Education Commissioner Raymund Paredes that was featured in the *El Paso Times*, and the member highlights webpage for the national State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) Association.

Kelly Carper Polden | Assistant Director of Communications | External Relations

THECB Staff Volunteers Gear Up to Help Students Complete FAFSAs

The divisions of College Readiness and Success and Student Financial Aid Programs teamed up to host the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) second annual financial aid workshop in early October. Texas Guaranteed (TG) again offered training to prepare THECB staff and other Central Texas community volunteers to assist high school students and parents to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at Financial Aid Saturday events this fall. Richard Sapp of TG provided financial aid training on how to assist FAFSA filers.

This year, the FAFSA underwent significant changes. Starting with the 2017-18 FAFSA, students are now able to submit a FAFSA as early as October 1 and are required to report earlier income information. To prepare students and families for this change and the earlier application cycle, the Austin Chamber of Commerce coordinated Financial Aid Saturdays in fall 2016.

Twenty-six THECB staff members completed the training during their lunch breaks at the THECB offices. Eleven staff members have already volunteered or are scheduled to assist at upcoming events. The volunteer support for FAFSA events in February 2016 helped 800 more students than in the previous year.

Matt Lashlee | Program Director | College Readiness and Success

Focus on 60x30TX

Each APP newsletter includes a Q&A about *60x30TX* with a staff member at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This month's Q&A is with Kristen Kramer, Deputy Assistant Commissioner in College Readiness and Success.

In this issue, we are focusing on the following [text](#) (p. 16):

Institutions of higher education will also need to target female STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) students, veterans, adults who have completed courses and left without completing degrees (stop-outs), and students in adult basic education programs, among others. Reaching this goal will require greater numbers of college-ready high school graduates and will require directing more adults who do not attend college immediately after high school toward certification and degree programs. Reaching, enrolling, and graduating students who are at risk of forgoing or failing to obtain a degree because of economic factors also will be important, and institutional innovation can address some of these issues. Although overlap exists among the targets (e.g., a student may be both Hispanic and economically disadvantaged), reaching each target will make a difference in the state's future and will move Texas toward higher levels of education and greater prosperity.

The paragraph above appears under the completion goal and mentions some targets in addition to the ones called out in the plan (i.e., economically disadvantaged, Hispanic, African American, and male students; students entering postsecondary directly from high school). The paragraph mentions several adult populations: students in adult basic education programs, adults not attending college immediately after high school, and stop outs. How do you

think these adult students will help Texas reach its completion goal, which includes certificates and degrees? Why are these populations important to the goal?

KK: The sheer numbers will help us. We cannot meet the state's completion goal with a focus only on students enrolling in college directly from high school. In fall 2015, a little over half of the 2015 graduates from high school enrolled directly in higher education. While we would like to see many more students go directly into higher education, the total number of 2015 public high school graduates was only 313,393. So, from the perspective of enrollment numbers alone, the direct-from-high-school population is not sufficient to reach the goal.

In the same year, public, independent, and for-profit institutions of higher education in Texas graduated 258,795 undergraduate students. In the three previous years, 135,313 students left Texas community colleges without a degree but with 45 or more semester credit hours attempted, and an additional 31,167 left universities with 90 or more semester credit hours attempted. This means that 166,480 students – more than the most recent high school to college cohort – have left college without a credential but with significant credit accumulation. Recapturing that population, or better yet, stopping the attrition rates of students Texas institutions do have enrolled, would go a very long way to meeting our goals. Imagine if all 166,480 leavers were to return or had remained to complete their postsecondary credential, the state would be close to meeting its 2025 target – but during the plan's inaugural year.

The paragraph also states that "institutional innovation can address some" issues related to students at-risk of forgoing or failing to obtain a degree because of economic factors. In this context, what is meant by institutional innovation and how will it help students choose to enter or persist in postsecondary programs?

KK: There are significant numbers of students leaving higher education without a credential. We see the high rates of attrition in our fall-to-fall persistence rates as well. Full-time students are more likely to finish a credential, and to do so in a timely fashion. Yet, even among full-time students, 35.5 percent of those entering community colleges in the fall of 2013 were no longer enrolled in higher education by the subsequent fall. Within two years of entering, half of full-time community college students had left higher education without a degree. These are the students who began their postsecondary career enrolled in 12 semester credit hours or more – a cohort that is more likely to succeed than others.

Many students start off strong, ready to commit to full-time enrollment, but financial constraints, family obligations, employment schedules can all conspire to draw students away from their postsecondary commitments. To better accommodate working students, community colleges are experimenting with block scheduling, evening programming, and weekend classes. In block scheduling, the college offers a program with required classes bunched in a block of time, rather than scattered throughout the day and week, allowing for larger chunks of time that can be dedicated to an outside job. Online or hybrid courses can similarly be offered as working-adult friendly. A further institutional innovation that accommodates working adults brings together block scheduling with shortened terms, wherein students take two courses on an accelerated eight-week schedule, thus allowing students to maintain full-time status, accrue credits quickly (students are able to see their progress more quickly), and still have large segments of the day they can dedicate to work or caregiving.

Some students may feel able to forgo full-time work, but only for a short time, and may be better accommodated by intensive programs – compressed and accelerated certificate programs that can get students through to a credential quickly. There are other ways of offering acceleration. Some universities offer winter-break sessions for high-enrollment, required courses to help with improved credit accumulation or credit recovery (if a student failed a course the previous fall semester, for instance). Similarly, developmental education that a student might need can be offered through accelerated summer boot camps, self-paced modules, or co-requisite course- or Non-course Competency-Based Option-pairings with the first college-level course – anything that moves the student at a faster pace into credit accumulation. For many student populations, accelerated options are especially attractive, because it means they accumulate credits more quickly and, in some cases, complete a credential in a shorter period of time.

This variety of methods helps students move faster, accumulate credits faster, or accumulate credits in a way that still allows for a reasonable work and family schedule. Most colleges and universities will need to innovate – to do something new – in how and when they deliver instruction to the new typical student – a student who works and has financial and family obligations. It is possible to improve completion rates, but it will mean better meeting students’ needs and focusing more on becoming student-ready colleges.

New Employees in Academic Planning and Policy

Jennifer Gonzales (Senior Program Director, Strategic Planning and Funding) – Jennifer previously served as a THECB Program Director for Finance and Resource Planning, where her duties included work on board-approved facilities projects, the space projection model, space usage efficiency, campus condition index, construction cost, and peer review team facilities audits. For the past two years, she has served as the Controller for Concordia University Texas, overseeing the functions of payroll, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and cash management. She is working toward completing a Master’s in Business Administration in spring 2017.

Marissa Mahoney (Technical Writer, Office of Development) – Marissa graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor’s in Speech Communication and from the University of Southern California with a Master’s of Communication Management. Prior to joining the staff of the THECB, she worked in field sales for Scholastic Book Fairs and at the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy, where she administered a program in their enforcement division.

Chelsea Moore (Program Director, Strategic Planning and Funding) – Prior to joining the staff of the THECB, Chelsea was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her research centered on disparities in K-12, higher education, and the transition into the workforce, with a focus on mathematics and science fields. She earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from The University of Texas at Austin.

Reymundo Ramos (Program Specialist, College Readiness and Success) – Rey joins the staff of the THECB after 16 years with The University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin). After earning his B.A. from UT-Austin, he started his career in the undergraduate admissions office. Over the years, he served in a variety of different student services roles including Director of Admissions Programs and Dean of Students at UT Law School and, most recently, as the Director of Academic Advising and Career Services for the Longhorn Center

for Academic Excellence within the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. Rey holds an M.A. in Higher Education Administration from Sam Houston State University and is currently completing his Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration through Texas Tech University.