

This email message is being sent on behalf of MacGregor M. Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Academic Affairs and Research, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chief Academic Officers of Universities and Graduate Deans

FROM: MacGregor M. Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner, Academic Affairs and Research Division

RE: New Guidelines to Support Institutions Preparing Doctoral Degree Program Requests

Background Information:

At the January 27, 2011 meeting, the Coordinating Board adopted Section 5.46(15) of Board rules. This section adds a new criterion for the submission of a proposal for a new doctoral program. The criterion requires that the institution's six-year graduation rate be at or above the statewide average, calculated without Texas A&M University (TAMU) and The University of Texas at Austin (UT-Austin). Board Chair Fred Heldenfels appointed a Task Force to identify other undergraduate success measures that should be considered if an institution does not meet this standard and still wishes to propose a new doctoral program.

The Board Task Force reviewed numerous measures of undergraduate success and narrowed the recommendations to three:

1. The rate of change in the ratio of baccalaureate degrees awarded to the total undergraduate enrollment is at or above statewide rate of change during the most recent three years, and the institution has had an increase in productivity during the same three-year period.
2. The rate of change in the total number of baccalaureate degrees awarded is at or above the statewide rate of change during the most recent three years, and the institution has had an increase in productivity during the same three-year period.
3. The rate of change in the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded to "at risk" students is at or above the statewide rate of change during the most recent three years, and the institution has had an increase in productivity during the same three-year period.

Implementation Procedures:

An institution whose six-year graduation rate is below the statewide average (without TAMU and UT-Austin) must adhere to the following:

- A. An institution whose performance on all of the undergraduate success measures (1-3 above) demonstrates both a positive percentage change during the three-year period and is at or above the statewide percentage change for each measure:

1. An Action Plan must be submitted to improve the six-year graduation rate.
 2. If the Action Plan is accepted, the criterion related to undergraduate success will be approved at the staff level, and staff will continue the review of all other non-undergraduate criteria for the doctoral proposal.
- B. An institution whose performance on two out of the three undergraduate success measures demonstrates both a positive percentage change during the three-year period and is at or above the statewide average percentage change for each measure:
1. An Action Plan must be submitted (i) to improve the six-year graduation rate and (ii) to improve the other undergraduate success measure where the institution's performance is not improving and/or is not at or above the statewide level.
 2. If the Action Plan is accepted, the criterion related to undergraduate success will be approved, and staff will continue the review of all other non-undergraduate criteria for the doctoral proposal.
- C. An institution whose performance does not meet the conditions stated above will have its doctoral proposal denied.

At the April 27, 2011 meeting, the Board accepted the recommendations from the Task Force establishing the additional undergraduate success measures that will be considered during the new doctoral program review process. These new criteria are effective immediately and apply to any doctoral proposal received on or after April 28, 2011.

In accordance with these newly-approved criteria, CB staff have updated the forms associated with the submission of new doctoral programs. Institutions may use the new forms immediately, and use of the new forms is mandatory for all program proposals submitted to the Board on or after October 1, 2011.

For more information regarding doctoral proposal criteria and forms, please check the Board's website at www.thecb.state.tx.us/newdoctoralprograms.

If you have any questions regarding these policy changes, please contact Dr. Allen Michie at Allen.Michie@thecb.state.tx.us or at 512-427-6518.