

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

January 4, 2011

To: Chief Academic Officers, Public Universities and Public Health-Related Institutions  
and Chief Instructional Officers, Public Community, Technical, and State Colleges

From: MacGregor M. Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner

Subject: Implementation of the Program Performance Review Process

I am writing for the purpose of informing you of the implementation of a program performance review process at the following levels:

- Career and Technical Certificates
- Applied and Academic Associate Degrees
- Baccalaureate Degrees

At its July 30, 2009 meeting, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) adopted rules that significantly streamline the approval process for most new bachelor's and master's degree programs (Chapter 5, Subchapter C, Section 5.44). In October 2009, the THECB adopted similar rules streamlining the approval process for career technical certificates and applied associate degree programs (Chapter 9, Subchapter E, Section 9.93). The rules adopted by the Board also included a directive to staff to develop a process for the periodic review of the performance of existing degree programs. This program performance review will align with the Coordinating Board's task of conducting outcomes-based assessment. The review process will yield consistent and comparable program-level data to assist with strategic planning and program development.

The Coordinating Board Staff, in collaboration with the Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee, developed a review process that includes quantitative measures of a program's performance. Most of the quantitative measures are taken directly from the institution-wide Accountability System measures with modifications to the definitions as appropriate for applicability at the program level. More detailed information about the program performance review process, including draft definitions of the quantitative measures, is available on the Coordinating Board website at:  
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/existingprogramreview>

Implementation of the review process will be preceded by pilot program performance reviews at each of the three levels identified above to help ensure that the process functions as intended. The Board staff is seeking institutions willing to voluntarily participate in the pilot phase. Review outcomes during the pilot phase will be non-binding.

Staff will make every effort to keep you up-to-date on project status and significant changes. The latest timeline for *estimated* project completion can be found on the website linked above. Many factors may contribute to the alteration of this timeline.

The Coordinating Board staff welcomes recommendations and queries regarding the program performance review components during this developmental stage. Please contact Lucy Heston ([lucy.heston@theqb.state.tx.us](mailto:lucy.heston@theqb.state.tx.us)) or David Couch ([david.couch@theqb.state.tx.us](mailto:david.couch@theqb.state.tx.us)) with any comments or questions.