



# Academic Planning and Policy E-NEWS

Planning & Accountability • P-16 Initiatives • Workforce, Academic Affairs & Research  
Office of Academic Planning and Policy David W. Gardner, Deputy Commissioner

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The Coordinating Board is guided by the Texas higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, to close the educational gaps in student participation, student success, institutional excellence, and research.

## **2012 Texas Higher Education Star Award Finalists Announced**

The Texas Higher Education Star Award, established by the Coordinating Board in 2001, recognizes programs, projects, and activities at Texas institutions of higher education; groups and organizations in Texas (such as those that help promote a college-going culture); and partnerships among higher education institutions, public/private schools/districts, businesses, or the community for their exceptional contributions toward one or more of the goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. The eight finalists for the 2012 Star Award are:

- Alamo Colleges – Alamo Area Academies
- Genesys Works Houston – Career and College Connection for Economically Disadvantaged High School Students
- Lee College – Developmental Education Reconstruction
- South Texas College – Dual Enrollment Medical Science Academy
- The University of Texas at Arlington and Academic Partnerships – BSN Completion Program
- The University of Texas at San Antonio – Academic Development Program
- University of Houston-Clear Lake – Success through Education Programs
- West Texas A&M University – Gateway Project

The 2012 Star Award winners will be announced on October 4.

**Mary E. Smith, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy**

## **2012 Reinventing Instruction and Learning Conference Registration Open**

On October 3-4, the Coordinating Board will host the second annual *Reinventing Instruction and Learning Conference (2012 RILC)* at the DoubleTree Austin Hotel (6505 IH-35 North in Austin). The conference is an opportunity for higher education faculty and staff from campuses across Texas to share one another's research, experiences, and successes in helping students learn. Participants will have an opportunity to be a part of presentations and workshops that will provide insights and research on teaching and learning, including innovative pedagogies and best practices that are helping faculty advance undergraduate student learning, persistence, and success. Keynote speakers will include Dr. Andrew Y. Ng, Associate Professor of Computer Science and Director of the Artificial Intelligence Lab at Stanford University; Mr. John Boyer, Senior Instructor of Geography at Virginia Tech; and Dr. Kathy Wetzel, Chair of the Department of Mathematics, Sciences, and Engineering at Amarillo College and 2011 Outstanding Community Colleges Professor of the Year (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching). To register for the 2012 RILC, please visit: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/2012RILC>.

**Sarah Rondinelli, Administrative Assistant for Academic Planning and Policy**

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Coordinating Board  
Quarterly Meetings  
[Information](#)

Board Committee Meetings  
[Information](#)

## **USEFUL LINKS**

Workforce, Academic Affairs  
and Research  
[WAAR Website](#)

Finance and Resource  
Planning  
[Finance/Resource Website](#)

Texas Higher Education  
Accountability System  
[Accountability Website](#)

P-16 Initiatives  
[P-16 Website](#)

College for All Texans  
[CFAT Website](#)

Employment Opportunities  
at the Coordinating Board  
[CB Jobs](#)

### Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference and Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon/Annual Texas Higher Education Star Awards Ceremony

The Coordinating Board's 2012 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference will be held on October 4-5 at the DoubleTree Austin Hotel (6505 IH-35 N in Austin). The conference is designed to bring together regents, trustees, chancellors, presidents, and other public and higher education leaders to share information on topics of interest. The focus of this year's conference is on Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Higher Education.

The conference will begin on Thursday, October 4, with the Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony which will feature our 2012 Star Award finalists and a keynote address by Dr. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education. Conference sessions will begin immediately following the luncheon. The conference will continue Friday, October 5, with an orientation for new governing board members and other interested education leaders. To meet the recently mandated training for community college trustees, as specified in HB 1206 (82nd Texas Legislature), special orientation sessions from 2:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. will include best practices in campus financial management, financial ratio analysis, and case studies using financial indicators. These sessions will satisfy the training requirement for newly appointed regents and elected trustees (Texas Education Code, Section 61.084).

Additional information and online registration can be found at: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/GovBoardConf2012>.

**Mary E. Smith, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy**

### Statewide Vertical Alignment Training Held in Ft. Worth

On August 13, 108 educators and education stakeholders attended the Academic Vertical Alignment Training and Renewal (AVATAR) training-of-trainers meeting at the Education Service Center Region 11 in Fort Worth. Thirteen regional teams comprised of school district, higher education, P-16 Council, and Education Service Center representatives learned about the processes, benefits, and challenges of vertical alignment. Teams signed on to engage in secondary and postsecondary vertical alignment, recognizing it as an important means to ensuring the college and career readiness and success of Texas students. AVATAR is funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and is implemented under the leadership of the North Texas Regional P-16 Council and the University of North Texas.

Piloted by Education Service Centers 10 and 11 during the 2011-12 academic year, AVATAR provides a model for creating sustained networks of vertical and horizontal alignment. These alignment networks are designed to connect secondary and postsecondary regional institutions, to support seamless transition and completion for students preparing for higher education and careers, and to decrease the need for postsecondary developmental coursework. AVATAR is designed to engage faculty and administrators in on-going dialogue through work groups, alignment of curriculum, instructional practices, and student expectations and preparation for college and career success.

In 2012-2013, AVATAR will build 13 local and regional vertical alignment networks across the State of Texas with the support of Education Service Centers, P-16 Councils, two- and four-year institutions of higher education, and secondary education systems. The AVATAR vertical alignment network includes partnerships in the following regions:

Edinburg, ESC Region 1	Waco, ESC Region 12
Corpus Christi, ESC Region 2	Austin, ESC Region 13
Huntsville, ESC Region 6	Abilene, ESC Region 14
Kilgore, ESC Region 7	San Angelo, ESC Region 15
Wichita Falls, ESC Region 9	Amarillo, ESC Region 16
Richardson, ESC Region 10	San Antonio, ESC Region 20
Fort Worth, ESC Region 11	

**Priscilla Martinez, Program Director, Success Unit, P-16 Initiatives**

### **Coordinating Board Seeks to Hire Program Director for Community Colleges**

The Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research Division is seeking to hire a program director with a master's degree, at least four years of experience working in a community college, and experience teaching or administering online/distance education programs. This position will require a strong understanding of Texas public higher education and the ability to effectively communicate in oral and written formats. The position will provide a wide range of opportunities to gain new skills and to expand an individual's knowledge of higher education issues and policy formulation.

You may view the position description and job posting here: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/apps/jobs.cfm>.

**MacGregor Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research**

### **Perkins Basic Grants**

As the state's sub-recipient of the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act (Perkins IV) funding, the Coordinating Board administers Basic formula grants (Title I). Basic formula grants support the goals outlined in Perkins IV. The Coordinating Board publishes the Request for Applications (RFA) for eligible Texas colleges to apply to receive Perkins Basic grants.

As part of the responsibility delegated to the Coordinating Board by the State Board of Education, the Coordinating Board annually allocates Perkins funds to the state's public two-year colleges. Basic funds are allocated to the state and divided between secondary and postsecondary education according to a formula developed by the Texas Education Agency. The allocation of the total Basic Grant remains at a 70/30 split between secondary and postsecondary institutions. Funds must be expended according to the federal and state rules and regulations governing Perkins activities.

Perkins Basic grants provide support for career and technical programs at Texas public community and technical colleges. These grants are awarded annually and are based upon the formula prescribed by the federal Perkins Act. Each eligible institution is entitled to an allotment that is determined by the total number of students reported by the institution that are enrolled in technical programs and are receiving Pell grants. Eligible institutions in Texas include all 50 community college districts, three Lamar State Colleges, and the Texas State Technical College System.

The funding must:

- 1) strengthen the academic, career, and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs;
- 2) link career and technical education at the secondary and postsecondary levels;
- 3) provide students with strong experience in and understanding of all aspects of an industry, which may include work-based learning experiences;
- 4) develop, improve, or expand the use of technology in career and technical education;
- 5) provide professional development programs to secondary and postsecondary teachers, faculty, administrators, and career guidance and academic counselors who are involved in integrated career and technical education programs;
- 6) develop and implement evaluations of the career and technical education programs carried out with funds, including an assessment of how the needs of special populations are being met;
- 7) initiate, improve, expand, and modernize quality career and technical education programs, including relevant technology;
- 8) provide services and activities that are of sufficient size, scope, and quality to be effective; and
- 9) provide activities to prepare special populations, including single parents and displaced homemakers who are enrolled in career and technical education programs, for high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations that will lead to self-sufficiency.

Additionally, the Basic grants funding must address the goals included in the Texas State Plan for 2008-2013, under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, the Board's goals of *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, and the requirements of Public Law 109-270, Title I, Career and Technical Education Assistance to the States. Funding for the Basic Grants is an estimated \$24 million for FY 2013.

**Donna Carlin, Assistant Director, Workforce, Research and Grants Programs**

### **Public Comment Period through September 17 for ACGM Course Descriptions and Student Learning Outcomes**

The Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) is the official list of lower-division courses approved for general academic transfer that may be offered by public community and technical colleges in Texas for state funding. As part of an effort to improve the ACGM and statewide course transfer, Coordinating Board (CB) staff are engaged in a faculty-led project to develop student learning outcomes for some of the most frequently used courses in the manual. The courses for which student learning outcomes are currently being developed are part of the following five disciplines: Philosophy, Psychology, Spanish, Speech, and Sociology. CB staff have also been engaged in faculty-led projects to develop (1) curricula and courses for Developmental Education, and (2) course descriptions and student learning outcomes for the lower-division courses that will be included in the Voluntary Statewide Transfer Compacts as part of the Texas Tuning Initiative. The work of the most recent Tuning committees has resulted in new course descriptions and student learning outcomes for lower-division courses in the disciplines of Engineering, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, and Physics.

Faculty groups from these disciplines have reviewed course syllabi from two-year and four-year public institutions and developed new course descriptions and learning outcomes for eventual inclusion in the ACGM. The public comment period regarding these draft descriptions and outcomes began August 17, 2012, and will end on September 17, 2012. The link to the web page which has the course materials for comment is: <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/ACGMLearningOutcomesProject> (please scroll down to Course Description Materials for the 2012 ACGM Learning Outcomes Project).

In order to facilitate the efforts of CB staff to incorporate public comments into the final product, we would appreciate receiving one collective comment from each department, rather than separate comments from each faculty member. Departments should email their comments to Ms. Rebecca Leslie at [Rebecca.Leslie@thecb.state.tx.us](mailto:Rebecca.Leslie@thecb.state.tx.us) and she will collect the comments and prepare them for a final review by the faculty work groups. The faculty work groups will make any final adjustments that they deem necessary, after which CB staff will convey the course materials to the ACGM Advisory Committee for consideration for addition to the ACGM during their meeting in October.

**MacGregor Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research**

### **Pathways Project Annual Meeting Recap**

The Pathways Project is a state, regional, and local initiative in which public secondary and postsecondary institutions partner to collaborate and share data on students they serve. Pathways coordinators gathered in Austin at the end of June for their annual summer meeting. This meeting was an opportunity for coordinators to confer with one another and with Coordinating Board (CB) staff about ideas and concerns that impact the work of their vertical teams.

CB staff from P-16 Initiatives; Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research; and Planning and Accountability provided information on faculty-oriented initiatives, student-centered initiatives, forthcoming online data modules, changes to the Texas Success Initiative, changes to CB data collection, and an update on dual credit course enrollment and reporting. External presenters also were invited. Pamela Kerouac, Senior Assessment Manager, College Board, discussed the importance of periodic institutional reviews of credit by exam policies, including Advanced Placement (AP) exams; Greta Olivas, Owner, Flourish Social Media, presented best practices for a governmental Facebook site and other social media strategies; Dr. Jeff Wayman, Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Administration, The University of Texas at Austin, worked with coordinators to identify current and potential practices that encourage a data-informed approach to guiding improvement of educational policies and interventions.

**Ginger Gossman, Senior Research Specialist, Planning and Accountability**

### Coordinating Board Awarded \$11.8 M Federal College Access Challenge Grant

Since 2008, the Coordinating Board has been designated by the Governor's Office to apply for and administer the College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) for the State of Texas. Once again, the agency's application has been approved for funding, and the agency received its federal Notice of Grant Award in the amount of \$11,870,780. As in prior years, the goal of the CACG program in Texas will be to build statewide support for a college-going culture, and—ultimately—to increase the number of degrees and credentials earned by underrepresented students in postsecondary education. The Generation Texas (GenTX) public awareness campaign/movement is the foundation of the CACG plan in Texas. All other aspects of CACG build upon GenTX and will continue to align and support one another. Underrepresented students and their families will be the primary targets of the GenTX messaging. These students will benefit from direct interventions from some CACG efforts while other CACG programs will focus on easing the burden on returning students. Ultimately, the CACG program goals in Texas are in direct alignment with *Closing the Gaps by 2015* goals: increasing student access and success.

- **GenTX:** This year the GenTX public awareness campaign will focus on local grassroots implementation by engaging Regional P-16 Councils/Partnerships to carry out specific activities to facilitate the development of a college-going and completion culture in their local communities.
- **Advise TX College Advising Corps:** The state's replication of the National College Advising Corps (NCAC) model will begin its third year. The model, based on near-peer advising, places recent college graduates in high-need high schools and provides a whole school approach to advising. The Coordinating Board will continue to oversee implementation in 120 high-need high schools and will partner with universities (Texas A&M University, Texas Christian University, Texas State University, The University of Texas at Austin, and Trinity University) to ensure appropriate training, guidance, and supervision is provided to all of the advisers.
- **Grad TX:** The Grad TX program is designed to help adults return to college and finish their bachelor's degrees. This year, Grad TX will continue to provide support for the eight pilot institutions, ongoing maintenance of the online degree audit system, and continued evaluation of the program. Up to five additional institutions will be added to the effort.
- **AVID:** AVID for Higher Education is a four-year pilot project that provides a full range of services for first-time, underprepared college students with the purpose of improving student success in college. These services focus on the freshman year and seek to ensure that at-risk students receive the support services (such as counseling, tutoring, and academic advising) that will put them on the best footing to complete their degrees.
- **Comprehensive Student Success Program (CSSP):** Institutions currently participating in the CSSP gathered and analyzed data to identify entry-level courses with exceptionally high rates of non-completion among students. Rigorously-crafted student support interventions, enhanced faculty and staff training focusing on student persistence and success, and continued refinement of early alert systems will continue to be key components of the CSSP.

**Chris Alvarado, Program Director, P-16 Initiatives**

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