

Draft Legislative
Recommendations to the
86th Texas Legislature



Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board

Categorizing Recommendations

- **Category 1: Board/Commissioner**
 - Approval of New Off-Campus Sites
 - Texas WORKS Internship Program
 - *60x30TX* Graduation Bonus
 - Improving Student Transfer
- **Category 2: Commissioner/Key Staff**
- **Category 3: Programmatic Staff**

Category 1

Major Policy Recommendations to Achieve *60x30TX*

Approval of New Off-Campus Sites

Legislative Recommendation

- Require institutions obtain Coordinating Board review and approval prior to acquiring property to create a new or expand an existing **off-campus** academic, technical or research site. **Limit the review and approval to sites that are not on or near the main campus.** Provide for confidential and expedited review of proposed acquisitions.
- Ensure more efficient use of state resources and promotes objectivity in pursuit of *60x30TX* goals.
- Prevent unnecessary duplication.

Texas WORKS Internship Program

Legislative Recommendations

- Modify the Texas College Work-Study program to institute Texas WORKS.
 - Texas WORKS will create a centralized off-campus work-study program to provide students with limited financial means an opportunity to pursue paid internships.
- Build on Tri-Agency findings and recommendations.
- Contribute to *60x30TX* goals for marketable skills and student debt.

60x30TX Graduation Bonus

Legislative Recommendations

- Revise the Operations Support formula for universities to include an allocation methodology for graduates, in addition to enrollments.
- Award universities \$500 per non at-risk graduate and \$1,000 per at-risk graduate.
- Incorporate into introduced General Appropriations Act.
- Directly contribute to *60x30TX* goal for increased degree completion.

Improving Student Transfer

Legislative Recommendations

- Refocus the Texas Core Curriculum on fulfilling general education requirements to facilitate transfer.
- Courses in the Core should be general enough to apply to many majors rather than be very discipline specific in subject matter content.
- Makes lower division course work more likely to transfer and apply to majors.
- By creating more efficient transfer, will contribute to *60x30TX* goals for completion and student debt

Category 2

Programmatic
Enhancements to
Effectiveness, Efficiency
and Transparency

Compliance Monitoring

Legislative Recommendations

- Require institutions of higher education to report the receipt and determination of credible allegations of fraud, waste and abuse to the Coordinating Board.
- Government Code currently requires such reporting to the State Auditor's Office but does not require SAO to share this information with the Coordinating Board.
- This would better inform the agency's risk assessment process.

Incorporating Undergraduate Success into Doctoral Proposals

Legislative Recommendations

- Eliminate statute that forbids consideration of undergraduate graduation rates in reviewing doctoral program proposals.
- Was added as an amendment to the agency's 2013 Sunset legislation.
- This would incentivize institutions with low undergraduate graduation rates to improve their undergraduate success before proposing new doctoral programs.

Demonstrate College Readiness for Dual Credit

Legislative Recommendation

- Require that high school students demonstrate college readiness via the SAT, ACT or Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) in the disciplines they propose to take academic dual credit courses.
- Identify a means for public high school students to have the opportunity to take the TSIA, SAT, or ACT free of charge at an appropriate point in their high school pathway.
- Any funding should be a “last dollar” effort intended to complement other free or subsidized testing opportunities.

Current Law

Currently, a high school student who has not demonstrated college readiness via the TSIA can nevertheless take dual credit if they meet certain requirements, such as a Level 2 score on the Algebra I EOC PLUS a passing grade in Algebra II, or certain scores on the PSAT/NMSQT, PLAN or ASPIRE.

Increasing Bonding Authority

Legislative Recommendations

- Modify statute to ensure the Coordinating Board retains adequate bonding authority to meet future student loan demands in an efficient manner.
- Increased demand for tax-exempt bonds creates risk of not obtaining adequate funding under current provisions.
- Increase the THECB statutory limit of \$75 million per project to \$200 million.

Modifications to TEXAS Grant and TEOG

Legislative Recommendation

- Limit the total semester credit hours for which a student may receive a TEXAS Grant to 135 or 15 hours beyond degree requirements (current limit is 150 SCH).
- Expand TEOG eligibility for students enrolled in community college baccalaureate degree programs.

Nursing Shortage Reduction Program

Legislative Recommendations

- Consider how to more effectively allocate Nursing Shortage Reduction Program funding.
- Currently, institutions receive funds in advance to help pay for faculty and other costs, but must repay funds if they do not meet targets. But some institutions do not spend their money until they meet targets.
- Funding is also very variable from year to year, inhibiting long-term planning.
- Formula should be modified based on factors such as success in graduation and licensure.

Category 3

Statute Cleanup and Minor Revisions

Update Loan Program Statute

Legislative Recommendations

- Align statute relating to the student loan program with previous Constitutional amendments and current practices. Eliminate two programs that are not active (loan cancellation and college savings bonds).
- Mirrors proposal from 85th Texas Legislature.

Unnecessary Data Requests

Legislative Recommendations

- Remove current statutorily required data requests that are unnecessary or redundant.
- Recommendations developed by the data review negotiated rulemaking committee, which included a Coordinating Board staff member and institutional representatives.

Including Dual Credit in Degree Plan Requirements

Legislative Recommendations

- Require students to file a degree plan at 30 semester credit hours – including semester credit hours (SCH) earned through academic dual credit
- Currently, students with 30 SCH must file no later than the end of the second semester they arrive on campus. Consequently, students can accumulate significant dual credit hours before filing a degree plan.
- Require institutions document compliance

Current Law

The 85th Texas Legislature passed HB 655 by Rep. Clardy which requires a student enrolled in an associate's or bachelor's degree program at a public junior college to file a degree plan no later than the second semester or term after the student has earned 30 semester credit hours. If the student earned 30 semester credit hours prior to enrolling, they are required to file a degree plan no later than the end of their second semester or term at the college. This applies to students first enrolling in fall 2018 or later.

Improvements to ApplyTexas

Legislative Recommendations

- Improve the TReX system to enable high schools to use the system established by the 79th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, 2006 (House Bill 1) so electronic data is transferred to institutions in a standardized format

60x30TX



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