

THE TEXAS AFFORDABLE BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM

LEVERAGING PRIOR LEARNING AND YEAR-ROUND LEARNING TO SHORTEN THE PATHWAY TO DEGREE

“We’ve always known that students learn better one on one, when you’re able to meet their specific needs. Now, with technology, we have the ability to do that very effectively.”

VAN DAVIS, TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

AT A GLANCE:

Targeted Degree Program: Bachelor of Applied Science with emphasis in Organizational Leadership

Organizations: Coalition of public, nonprofit higher education institutions

Opening Date: Spring 2014

First-Year Enrollment: 215

Anticipated Students Served in First Five Years: 6,600

Tuition Model: 7-week, flat-rate fee

Geographies Served: Texas

Targeted Students: Those with little or no college credits or work experience; with some college credit and work experience; and those with an earned associate degree

Project Partners: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, South Texas College, Texas A&M University-Commerce, and the College for All Texans Foundation

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) will launch the “Texas Affordable Baccalaureate Program” in spring 2014. This new Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree uses a competency-based model and year-round flat-rate tuition to shorten the path to college completion. The project is a joint venture by THECB, South Texas College, Texas A&M University-Commerce, and the College for All Texans Foundation.

The program was designed with two critical challenges in mind: (1) the rising cost of tuition for students and (2) a growing adult population, particularly Hispanic, that often lacks the right credentials and academic training to thrive in today’s economy.

In the program, students pay a flat, seven-week rate to enroll and can work through as many courses within that time period as their sched-

ules allow. Advancement is based on showing competency in the subject area rather than spending hours in class.

The model is centered on three main principles:

- Students learn better when content is personalized and delivered at their level.
- Students need targeted supports most in the first years and direct faculty instruction in their final years.
- Students need a degree and an experience that will have value in the workforce.

To deliver a model that is both efficient and grounded in 21st-century skills, THECB has revamped the faculty role, engaging full-time faculty and industry experts in the develop-

HALLMARKS:

Year-round enrollment

Flat-rate tuition

Competency-based model

Core coursework, electives delivered online in self-paced modules

Upper-level coursework and problem-based learning sessions delivered face-to-face and online

Course competencies defined by faculty and industry leaders through Texas Tuning process

Capstone e-portfolio projects

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

General Core Curriculum

42

(SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)

Students can work through traditional introductory courses, divided into competencies, using online, self-paced modules. They can complete as many competencies as possible in the year-round program.

Lower-Division Electives

48

(SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)

Students can demonstrate competency in a variety of related fields, including a foreign language, using online modules or applying for credit for work or military experience. Students may also receive academic credit where appropriate for industry certifications using ACE Credit recommendations.

Upper-Division Applied

30

(SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)

Upper-division courses will be offered both online and face-to-face and will culminate with an applied, digital capstone experience evaluated by faculty and business leaders.

STUDENT SUPPORT MODEL

| LOWER-DIVISION AND CORE COURSEWORK | | | UPPER-DIVISION COURSEWORK |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>CONTENT EXPERTS</p>  <p>Full-time faculty help develop core competencies, assessments, and curriculum materials that students will access on-demand in self-paced modules.</p> | <p>COACHES</p>  <p>Full-time, master's-level staff work with individual students throughout the student's career to provide feedback and support. A single coach works with the same student from enrollment to graduation.</p> | <p>TUTORS</p>  <p>Full-time, master's-level staff with content expertise provide real-time feedback and support whenever needed. Tutors are assigned to specific content domains or courses.</p> | <p>FACULTY</p>  <p>Full-time faculty deliver both face-to-face and online courses.</p> |

TEXAS TUNING OVERSIGHT TEAM



Full-time faculty and business leaders will work together to develop competencies for both the degree program and upper-division courses, assessments, and curriculum materials. A second team of full-time faculty will work together to develop competencies, assessments, and curriculum materials for the lower-division general education curriculum and lower-division prescribed electives that students will access on-demand in self-paced modules.

ment of course competencies, assessments, and curriculum materials that students can access anytime, anywhere in an on-demand online system. Students are supported in lower-division courses by individual coaches who provide feedback and support across disciplines and tutors who provide on-demand, discipline-specific support. Faculty offer upper-division courses both online and face-to-face: these include a series of real-world management problems to solve and culminate with a digital capstone experience evaluated by faculty and business leaders. Student work is captured in an e-portfolio that is portable beyond the institution, providing graduates with a way to document those skills that often fail to appear on a transcript.

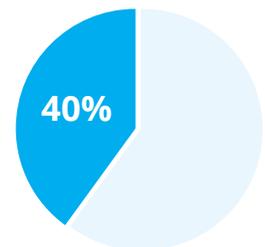
From the outset, ensuring that graduates have a meaningful degree and not just a credential has been central to curriculum development. THECB has used the Texas Tuning

process, aided by both faculty and industry experts, to outline course outcomes that include 21st-century skills such as leadership, team building, conflict resolution, communication, and applied learning alongside clear competencies with relevance to the workplace. The goal is to graduate students with both the right credentials and the right skills for the workplace.

Intended Outcomes:

- Reducing the time to degree below the average of 5.3 years for full-time students
- Realizing an 80 percent degree completion rate for the program
- Maintaining an annual retention rate of at least 80 percent
- Achieving sustainability by year five

PELL ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:



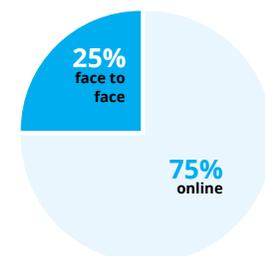
PRICE TO STUDENTS:

\$4,500/year

COST PER FTE:

\$4,000

DELIVERY:



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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