

Major Policy Discussion: Star Awards: From Classroom to Career – A Future Ready Texas

Award Category: Student Success

THECB Texas Higher Education
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Star Awards 2025: Overview

Aligned with our Higher EDge Leadership Conference theme - From Classroom to Career: A Future-Ready Texas

Highlighting Institutions of Higher Education in 3 strategic categories:

- Workforce Education
- Student Success
- Career Transitions



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Student Success

Celebrating institutions that demonstrate measurable improvements in student progress and credential completion.

Criteria:

- Demonstrated increases in credential attainment and program completion
- High-impact advising, coaching, or early alert systems supporting student persistence
- Scalable models that support transfer, adult, or returning students navigating postsecondary pathways
- Use of data-informed strategies to monitor student outcomes that led to institutional change—particularly those focused on affordability and demonstrated student success
- Innovative student success programs that embed career connection

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Star Awards 2025: Student Success



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Star Awards 2025: Student Success



Lone Star College has transformed the student experience through data-informed advising, guided pathways, and holistic supports such as case management, AutoGrad and Reverse Transfer, and basic needs assistance. These reforms have driven a nearly 12% increase in credential attainment since 2017, improved persistence and credit completion, narrowed achievement gaps, and embedded transfer and career readiness into advising.

Dr. Gerald Fernandez Napoles
Vice Chancellor of Student Success



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Transforming Pathways, Empowering Futures

Our Journey to Success



Presented By: Gerald Fernandez Napoles, Ph.D., Vice Chancellor, Student Success



ABOUT Lone Star College

OUR Vision

The System will lead higher education in offering high-quality, affordable education while consistently evolving to meet the community's needs in academic and workforce education.

OUR Mission

The System provides transformational educational opportunities that help individuals get from where they are to where they want to be.

Measurable Improvement In Student Outcomes

Lone Star College is proud to highlight its commitment to student success, achieving measurable progress in credential completion from 2019 to 2024.

Through innovative, data-driven strategies in high-impact advising, and scalable early alert and student support systems, our college has increased credential attainment, improved persistence, and created career-connected and transfer pathways that empower students to reach their educational goals.







Helping Students

REACH THEIR DREAMS



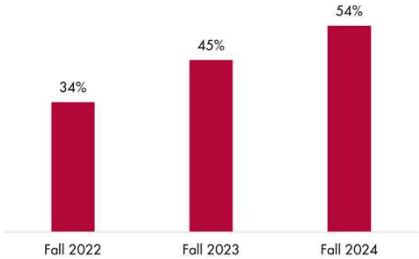
12% increase in
credential
attainment since
2017



4-point increase with
FTIC Fall-to-Fall
persistence rates

Measurable Improvement In Student Outcomes

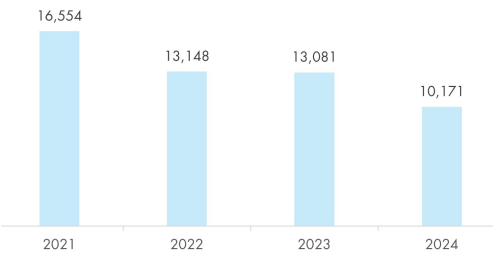
Percent of Undeclared That Declared
Major After Enrolling In EDUC 1300



Term	Percent
Fall 2022	34%
Fall 2023	45%
Fall 2024	54%

20-point increase in declared
majors through EDUC 1300
from 2022-2024

Courses Outside The Academic Plan
Enrollments In Unused Courses



Year	Enrollments
2021	16,554
2022	13,148
2023	13,081
2024	10,171

34% decrease in students taking off-plan
courses through Stay on Course Campaign

22% decrease in course enrollment outside
of Academic Program Plans from 2021-2024



LONE STAR
COLLEGE

Our Journey to Success



Overview: The increases in retention and credential attainment were the result of a sustained effort that combined technology, data, communications, and a strategic approach to enhance how students are introduced to their pathway, supported through their program requirements, and awarded their credentials efficiently upon completion of their degree plan.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies



Measurable Outcome

2,400+ additional graduates in one year due to AutoGrad & Reverse Transfer programs.

Purpose: To make every student's journey to credential completion clear, efficient, and affordable, reducing excess credits and time/cost to degree attainment.

AutoGrad identifies students eligible for stackable credentials or who have completed all declared program requirements but have not applied to graduate so that the college may graduate them.

Reverse Transfer awards degrees to students completing their program requirements after transferring to university partners.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies



Measurable Outcome

An established, clear, cohesive structure with Pathways integrated into the student portal where students plan and register for the exact courses needed, thereby reshaping how students navigate their educational journey.

Purpose: A comprehensive reform to transform the student experience.

Guided Pathways aligned degree and certificate programs to a streamlined 60-credit hour framework, minimizing excess coursework and ensuring efficiency.

Areas of Study are intentionally designed with clear, semester-by-semester plans for every program, providing students with a well-defined pathway to completion.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies



Measurable Outcome

Data revealed that students enrolling in courses outside their degree plans were incurring unnecessary costs and delaying graduation.

Purpose: To highlight achievement gaps, course success patterns, and barriers to completion.

Student Completion Trends Report contains disaggregated Power Business Intelligence dashboards data, updated annually since 2018, allowing college leadership to see what is working or where progress stalls.

SCAN TO LEARN MORE



A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies



Measurable Outcome

3,400+ CARE requests completed in the 2024-25 academic year.

Purpose: To ensure every student has access to food, housing, clothing, employment, mental health, and academic support resources.

CARE for Completion launched in 2020, LSC created a CARE for Completion hub where students can access information for each service category: food, clothing, employment, mental health, substance abuse, academic support, housing, finances, legal, childcare, and off-campus resources.

In 2023, LSC scaled the CARE for Completion program system-wide and created a ticketing and triage system for students to submit need requests that are then responded to by college staff.

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A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies

Purpose: To increase student persistence and completion.

NACADA Excellence in Academic Advising Project

LSC optimized a clear advising case management approach that leveraged all advising staff, balanced advising case loads, and aligned to an advising syllabus with clear outcomes expected of advisors throughout the student experience.

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Measurable Outcome

Advisors proactively utilizing student data to monitor progress and provide targeted interventions as needed to ensure students have a clear path to complete their credential.



A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies

Purpose: To support student persistence.

Course Alerts & "Stay on Course" Campaign

- LSC implemented an enhanced system-wide early alert process, integrated with our student information system, for faculty and staff to identify students who need more support, providing targeted interventions.
- Launched system-wide "Stay on Course" awareness campaign that included flyers, student portal alerts, and student email campaigns to keep students on track.
- Polled students to uncover "why" students were taking classes that did not count toward their program and continue to drive change through awareness efforts.



Measurable Outcome



Reduced the number of students taking courses off-plan by 34% and reduced off-plan course enrollments by 38% (2021–2024).

\$2M saved for students in three years through the Stay on Course campaign



A Clear Pathway to Completion

Key Initiatives and Methodologies

Purpose: To monitor early momentum, course success, persistence, transfer, and completion metrics in real time.

Student Success Dashboard

LSC designed a comprehensive student success dashboard that pulled critical reports into a single, live hub. Among completion, transfer and retention data, this dashboard also includes an advising case management dashboard in alignment with the advising model to help advising leadership manage their team caseloads while helping advisors deliver targeted, data-informed interventions with their students.



Measurable Outcome

Reduction in the First Time in College student population achieving zero credits in their first semester by six percentage points from 2022-2024.





Looking Ahead: LSC has turned its focus to the future with the recent launch of our new strategic plan. With clearly defined key performance indicators guiding our progress, we are aligning strategies and initiatives to meet these goals.

Together, we are building on our achievements to create a brighter, more impactful future for Lone Star College students and the communities we serve.

Thank You!

Questions?

Star Awards 2025: Student Success



UT Arlington's Mavs RISE program supports conditionally admitted and TSI-incomplete students through holistic, data-informed advising, case management, and financial and career readiness services, serving nearly 1,000 students annually—70% of whom are first-generation. Since launching in 2023, the program has driven a 16% increase in students in good academic standing, higher GPAs above 3.0, and nearly a 7% year-over-year gain in second-year retention.

Dr. Candice Calhoun-Butts
Assistant Vice Provost, Retention and Completion



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Mavs RISE: Elevating Access and Success through Holistic Support for Conditionally Admitted Students

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Vice Provost for Student Success

Candice Calhoun-Butts, Ph.D.

Assistant Vice Provost for Retention and Completion

Luisa Havens Gerardo, Ph.D.

Vice President for Enrollment Management



“Our Maverick promise is to support students to **remain enrolled, graduate in a timely fashion, and enter the workforce prepared** to meet today’s challenges.”



The foundation for Mavs RISE

What responsibility do institutions of higher education have in **actively coupling** student success supports with access-oriented programs or policies?



Mavs RISE: Promising Practices to Keep Our Promises

Mavs RISE is an invitation-only program for the conditionally admitted and developmental education first-time in college populations.

- Serves around 1,100 students per year (approximately 20% of the freshmen class)
- Historical retention rates 15-30% lower than the overall cohort
- Includes high numbers of students in Developmental Math and/or Developmental English, late enrollees, first-generation college students, and students eligible for Pell grants



***Star Award
Recipient 2025***



Mavs RISE: Program Structure

To support this population, the institution has created a coordinated approach across units and redistributed existing funding to achieve manageable case loads of 150 students/advisor.

- Student-Ready Advisors serve as the student's academic advisor, success coach, career coach, and campus connector and will address financial literacy
- Multiple touch points per semester including appointments, early alerts/nudges, Canvas modules, etc.
- "Required" interactions with the Student Money Management Center and the Career Development Center
- Dedicated first-year seminar sections as well as peer mentors and tutors
- Partnership with Blaze Forward peer mentors, UTA's financial promise program



Mavs RISE: Early Results

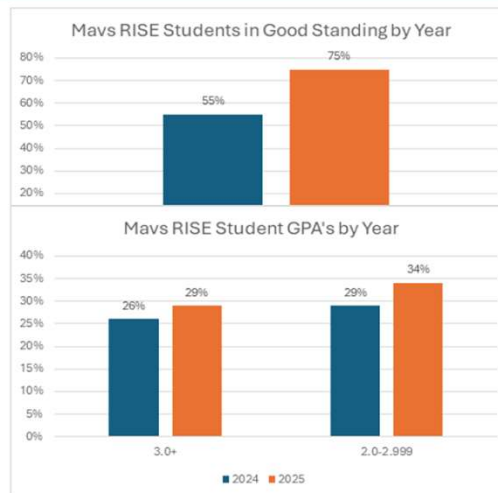
Mavs RISE Addresses the Need for Increased Retention of High Support Populations

Fall-to-Fall Retention 10 Days to Fall Census			
FTIC Cohort	Student Count	Next Fall Retained Count	Fall-to-Fall Retention Rate
Fall 2023 FTIC Conditional	539	288	53.43%
Fall 2024 Mavs RISE	422	254	60.19%

Average Term GPA for First Fall Term		
FTIC Cohort	Student Count	Average Term GPA for First Fall Term
Fall 2023 FTIC Conditional	539	1.97
Fall 2024 Mavs RISE	422	2.21

The UTA Strategic Plan, UTA 2030, empowers all students to succeed. The Mavs RISE program aligns with the Student Success strategies in the plan, underscoring UTA's commitment to student success:

1. Enhance access and affordability for students
2. Elevate the educational journey to ensure a transformative student experience and timely graduation
3. Equip students with the skills, knowledge, and persistence to confidently and successfully achieve educational and professional goals
4. Foster a student-centered approach to well-being



Mavs RISE: Early Lessons

EARLY LESSONS

- **Proactive intervention is working. Spring persistence is up year over year as of December 5th:**
- 18% for Developmental Education students, 19% for conditionally admitted students, 12% for students who have dropped a course, 6% among first-gen students (70% of Mavs RISE students are first gen compared to 54% of the freshmen cohort overall)
- **Multiple Measures Assessment for use of Math and English placement resulted in a 19% positive difference in one-year retention among TSI not complete students**
- **These populations are not homogenous and further evaluation of the data is needed to continue to achieve more granular layers of tailored services accordingly**

Thank You

Find us on LinkedIn or contact us at DSS@uta.edu

- Dr. Candice-Calhoun Butts



- Dr. Ashley Purgason



- Dr. Luisa Havens-Gerardo



[Watch Mavs RISE in action!](#) Mavs RISE Student-Ready Advisor, Jennifer, highlights the program's function and success. Freshman student, Jacob, demonstrates the impact of Mavs RISE in his experience at UTA.



Questions?