

Tarleton State University

Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas*

<u>Degree Program</u>	<u># of Grads</u>	<u>Credits Attempted</u>	<u>Mean Semesters</u>
Science and Math	51	152	10
Agriculture	139	156	10
Arts and Architecture	176	157	11
Business	218	148	10
Engineering	4	140	11
Health	29	153	11
Social Sciences and Service	243	155	10
Technology	39	148	10
Total Graduates	899		
Institutional Average		151	10

*Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

The legislation requires information on efforts implemented to help students graduate more quickly:

1. To ensure that undergraduate students graduate in a timely manner.

All entering fall, first-time freshmen are required to attend a convocation ceremony which resembles a typical university commencement. At this event, students are asked to sign a pledge which encourages the completion of a university degree within a four-year time period. It is hoped this ceremony and pledge will motivate students to complete their baccalaureate degree in a timely fashion.

The need to graduate in a timely fashion is also emphasized in a variety of subsequent First-Year Experience programs and activities such as early alert and Learning Communities. The early alert program solicits faculty to forward names of students whose course progress is below expectations to the Division of General Studies early in the semester.

Information regarding the State of Texas' Tuition Rebate Program is published in the student class schedule and university catalog. In FY 2006, 63 students received the rebate. In FY 2007, 71 received the tuition rebate.

Effective Fall 2007, Enrollment Management proposed and received approval to charge a \$100 per semester credit hour fee for non-exempt courses attempted three or more times.

An additional \$100 per semester credit hour fee is being charged for attempted semester credit hours over the maximum number of degree hours required of the

students' degrees. These funding limits vary depending on when the student entered a Texas institution. This is in accordance with Texas Education Code §54.014.

A timeline has been created to review all baccalaureate degree programs to move toward reducing programs to 120 hours over the next academic year. Each program will be reviewed carefully by a variety of academic curriculum committees and councils in an effort to reduce the overall degree program hours without compromising quality.

A proposal has been submitted to the President that will create two transfer scholarships, the "Phi Theta Kappa/TAP (Top Academic Partners) Scholarships and the "Community College BRIDGE Scholarships," to target more transfer students for the Fall 2008. These scholarships will reach over 108 new and continuing transfer students; thus, leading to an increased graduation among transfer students.

Numerous articulation agreements have been approved and implemented to aid in the graduation of transfer students from a four year university. Various programs are being offered at the community college to facilitate this transition to the university.

Financial Aid Consortium agreements have been implemented for area community colleges to aid in the transfer students' ability to complete their Baccalaureate program at a university.

Prior to the passage of SB 1231, Tarleton State University implemented a policy restricting all drops while at Tarleton to six courses. Unlike SB 1231, Tarleton State University included withdrawn courses in the limit. Students were required to meet with their Dean to discuss their excessive drops prior to being allowed to drop any subsequent courses.

2. To ensure that undergraduate students do not attempt an excessive number of semester credit hours beyond the minimum number required to complete the students' degree programs.

An Educational campaign was implemented in the fall of 2006 that informed students as to the benefits of timely graduation as well as the additional costs of repeating courses and attempting excess hours over one's degree program.

New students are notified via direct mail, orientation sessions, and other media outlets to the advantages of graduating in a timely manner.

Students who are approaching the undergraduate limits are notified via direct mail as to their current status. Helpful tips to meet these challenges are included in the correspondence.

3. To provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation.

Students are currently being notified and registration holds applied to all students who have completed 90 earned hours. A plan is currently being proposed to reduce the deadlines to file a degree plan (from 90 semester credit hours to 60).

A process was put into place in fall 2006 that required students to apply for graduation earlier (from last semester to semester previous to last). This process is meant to reduce unnecessary terms in college due to more timely reviews of academic progress and graduation eligibility.

The University has named a planning team with the charge to bring forward specific recommendations for a new academic advising center. The planned implementation of academic advising center for Fall08 will center on the intrusive advising philosophy that supports timely graduation.

The Office of Career Services works in cooperation with the Division of General Studies to counsel undeclared freshmen concerning the importance of early major selection.

4. To develop an online student degree progress report which compares the courses taken and credit received by a student to the courses completed and needed for degree and graduation requirements for each academic term.

Tarleton has an automated degree plan system (Curriculum, Advising, and Program Planning degree audit system – CAPP) which allows students to view their degree progress online via a web interface. This system allows access to students to monitor their own progress toward their degree program through a web interface. Each degree program is updated annually to reflect the most current changes.

Various advising tools are available through Texan Facts which is a repository of reports provided by the Office of Planning, Evaluation and Institutional Research. These reports have been created to aid advisors in helping students plan their academic careers and provide for more timely graduation.

5. To implement tuition policies that encourages timely graduation.

As of fall 2007, Tarleton State University implemented an additional charge of a \$100 per semester credit hour fee for non-exempt courses attempted three or more times.

An additional \$100 per semester credit hour fee is being charged for attempted semester credit hours over the maximum number of degree hours required of the students' degrees. These funding limits vary depending on when the student entered a Texas institution. This is in accordance with Texas Education Code §54.014.

Tarleton State University

Responses to H.B. 1172 Timely Graduation Report Requirements November 2006

Efforts to Help Students Graduate More Quickly

1. To ensure that undergraduate students graduate in a timely manner.
 - All entering fall, first-time freshmen are required to attend a convocation ceremony which resembles a typical university commencement. At this event, students are asked to sign a pledge which encourages the completion of a university degree within a four-year time period. It is hoped this ceremony and pledge will motivate students to complete their baccalaureate degree in a timely fashion. The need to graduate in a timely fashion is emphasized in a variety of subsequent First-Year Experience programs and activities.
 - Information regarding the State of Texas' Tuition Rebate Program is published in the student class schedule and university catalog. In FY 2006, 63 students received the rebate.
 - The Dean of Enrollment Management has proposed to senior administration that effective spring 2007 the university adopt a differential tuition structure, charging a higher rate** for courses taken a third or subsequent time and for courses taken in excess of 30 hours beyond a particular undergraduate degree program. (** Amount TBD)
2. To ensure that undergraduate students do not attempt an excessive number of semester credit hours beyond the minimum number required to complete the students' degree programs.
 - Currently, consideration is being given to lowering the maximum semester credit hours attempted for financial aid eligibility. Second, final testing is underway for an augmentation to the electronic student registration system whereby students receive a warning when attempting to register for a course in which they have already received credit.
 - Please see response to #1 regarding the differential tuition proposal.
3. To provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation.
 - The recent acceleration of deadlines to file a degree plan (from 90 semester credit hours to 60) and to apply for graduation (from last semester to semester previous to last) are meant to reduce unnecessary terms in college due to more timely reviews of academic progress and graduation eligibility.
 - The University has named a planning team with the charge to bring forward specific recommendations for a new academic advising center with one goal being the promotion of timely graduation.
 - The Office of Career Services works in cooperation with the Division of General Studies to counsel freshmen concerning the importance of early major selection.

4. To develop an online student degree progress report which compares the courses taken and credit received by a student to the courses completed and needed for degree and graduation requirements for each academic term.
 - Tarleton has an automated degree plan system (Curriculum, Advising, and Program Planning degree audit system – CAPP) which allows students to view their degree progress online via a web interface.
5. To implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation.
 - The Dean of Enrollment Management has proposed a fee schedule to charge Tarleton students for enrollment in courses for the third and subsequent time. The same fee would be assessed to students who are enrolled in course which total 30 semester credit hours about their degree requirements. The proposal is undergoing a final review by senior-level Tarleton administrators.
 - The Dean of Enrollment Management has also proposed the creation of a committee to review tuition policies to determine if a different tuition structure might more effectively encourage timely graduation. The proposal is under review by the Provost.