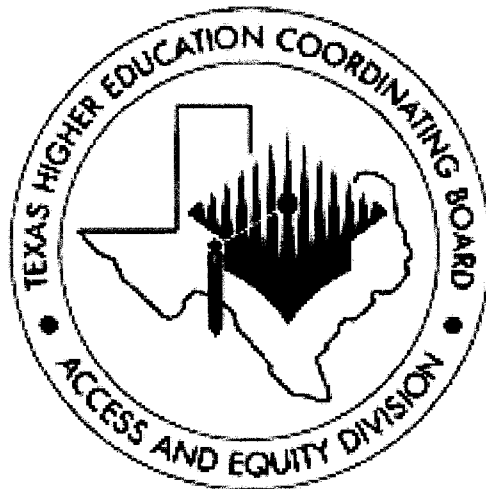


A UNIFORM RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY

**A plan to identify, attract, enroll and retain students
who reflect the population of Texas**



**As approved by the
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on
April 20, 2000**

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Mr. Terdema L. Ussery II, Dallas, Texas

Coordinating Board staff

Dr. Don W. Brown, Commissioner of Higher Education
Lynn Rodriguez, General Counsel and Director of Access and Equity
Dr. Paul Grubb, Assistant Director
Patricia Parker, Program Director

Office of Access and Equity
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
P.O. Box 12788
Austin, Texas 78711
www.thecb.state.tx.us/divisions/ane
(512)483-6140/fax(512)483-6149

Mission Statement

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is to provide the Legislature advice and comprehensive planning capability for higher education, to coordinate the effective delivery of higher education, to efficiently administer assigned statewide programs, and to advance higher education for the people of Texas.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
A UNIFORM RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY
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A UNIFORM RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY

April 2000

• BACKGROUND

During the 76th session in 1999, the Texas Legislature enacted House Bill 1678, now codified at Texas Education Code §61.086, directing the Coordinating Board to "develop and annually update a uniform strategy to identify, attract, enroll and retain students that reflect the population of this state." The bill further directs higher education institutions to "implement the uniform strategy and report annually to the Coordinating Board the manner in which the institution has implemented the uniform strategy." To implement the legislation, the Coordinating Board appointed an advisory committee from the institutions and charged the committee with developing the uniform strategy. A list of advisory committee members is attached as Appendix 5.

Each university's enrollment and graduation goal should be to reflect the Texas population, or, when the university's region contains larger proportions of the state's historically underrepresented groups, the regional population. Each community and technical college's enrollment and graduation goal should be to reflect the population of its service area. The uniform recruitment and retention strategy is designed to bring universities and colleges to those goals so that higher education enrollment and graduation mirrors the population of Texas.

• STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

The Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategy Advisory Committee considered the wide range of circumstances under which all public institutions of higher education in Texas could operate, from community colleges to universities and from institutions whose students are predominately from the local area to institutions that draw from the entire state. The committee recognized that this diversity of conditions means that specific recruitment or retention programs that work well at one institution may not work at another. This recognition led the committee to focus on the types of activities that all institutions engage in, or should engage in, to ensure that their recruitment and retention activities are appropriate to their mission, are given the appropriate priority, and are successful.

To this end, the committee found strategic enrollment management principles to be useful. Strategic enrollment management recognizes that many internal and external factors affect current and potential students, and that to effectively recruit and retain students, institutions must develop a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan which incorporate all areas of the institution.

• DEVELOPMENT OF A UNIFORM RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGY

The Advisory Committee recommends that institutions implement a uniform recruitment and retention strategy based on strategic enrollment management principles. The Committee has considered what infrastructure and processes are needed at each institution to ensure successful strategic enrollment management, regardless of local conditions. Four key activities have been identified, and the Committee recommends that each institution implement the following:

- G 1. Appoint a steering committee to develop a data-driven strategic enrollment management plan that incorporate initiatives and actions to improve campus diversity and improve services to underrepresented populations.
- G 2. Provide appropriate resources for implementation of the plan.
- G 3. Regularly assess, evaluate and modify the plan.
- G 4. Report annually to the Coordinating Board.

The committee recognizes that institutions differ with respect to the resources available to implement a strategic enrollment management plan. Some institutions have a department of institutional researchers who routinely gather and analyze data to support their student programs while others may use a more limited approach. The recommendations are thus framed to accommodate the differences in resources across institutions, particularly with regard to the collection and analysis of data. Also, the committee has attached in Appendix 1 instructions for developing the strategy and in Appendix 3 a number of examples for implementing each recommendation to demonstrate the various ways in which institutions can comply with these recommendations without undue burden.

The committee is convinced that these recommendations derived from the strategic enrollment management approach will ensure institutions engage in the key activities needed to have successful recruitment and retention programs while allowing them the flexibility to create programs and activities that are sensitive to the resources available and specific to their local conditions. Further, the committee feels that adoption of these recommendations should pose minimal difficulty for institutions, most of whom are already engaging in many of the activities, and that the organizing power of strategic enrollment management will simply make these activities more efficient and more effective for the institution. However, the success or failure of the recommendations will ultimately depend on the commitment by the institution's leadership, the entire management team, and all employees to the process and to the plan and on how well the process results in quality services for current, potential and future students.

• **REPORTING INFORMATION**

House Bill 1678 requires each institution to implement the uniform strategy and report annually to the Coordinating Board on how the strategy has been implemented. The first report is due to the Coordinating Board in fall 2001. Directions for preparing the report are outlined in Appendix 2. In addition to the requirements of House Bill 1678, institutions may be subject to other state planning requirements. To the extent possible, institutions should coordinate the development of their strategic plans with other planning requirements, and as appropriate, cross-reference these plans and efforts.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	INSTRUCTIONS
APPENDIX 2	REPORTING INFORMATION
APPENDIX 3	EXAMPLES OF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PROGRAM INITIATIVES
APPENDIX 4	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
APPENDIX 5	ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

APPENDIX 1
Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategy
INSTRUCTIONS

I. STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

An institution's ability to recruit or retain students is not the result of one factor, but instead a combination of factors related to the quality and availability of the programs and services offered by the institution. Students choose an institution based on a number of factors, including the reputation and the quality of the programs and services. Major factors affecting student success at an institution are the quality of teaching, the campus climate, and the quality and availability of appropriate support programs and services. Because these factors span the entire campus, strategic enrollment management requires participation from a variety of offices from across the institution.

When the appropriate infrastructure and technology is in place, institutions can improve their student recruitment and retention success by utilizing the principles of strategic enrollment management. To do so, institutions must first identify the problems and issues surrounding why students choose to attend or not attend their institution, and why their students succeed or fail. An institution can analyze its student population or student database for some of these answers. Other answers can be found by surveying the institution's constituents: prospective, current, and former students; parents and high school counselors; community and business leaders; and faculty and staff. Once the institution identifies and addresses these problem areas, best practices in recruitment and retention can be implemented based on the needs of the individual institution.

A strategic enrollment management plan requires strong collaboration between academic, student service and other campus offices. It also requires the use of current technology to establish a data management/student tracking system that can be used to assist with program assessment, evaluation and implementation. Most importantly, a successful plan will require a strong commitment by the institution's leadership, the entire management team, and all employees to the implementation and ongoing evaluation of the plan.

II. ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

These elements are discussed in detail in the sections below. Various examples are provided although institutions are encouraged to decide what will work best at their campuses.

- G A. Appoint a steering committee.
- G B. Conduct an internal and external assessment and analysis to develop measurable goals and objectives.
- G C. Based on the results of the analysis, develop a marketing plan to attract and recruit a diverse student population.
- G D. Develop recruitment and retention strategies that incorporate a data management/student tracking system to monitor and communicate with students throughout the process.
- G E. Incorporate initiatives and actions to improve campus diversity and improve services to underrepresented populations into the plan.
- G F. Provide adequate funding and resources for the plan.

- G G. After the plan is implemented, monitor and adjust its ability to meet its goals.

III. STEERING COMMITTEE

- G A. The process begins by appointing a strategic enrollment management Steering Committee. Possible committee members include:
- G 1. senior administrators, such as vice presidents of student affairs and academic affairs;
 - G 2. fiscal staff;
 - G 3. directors of admission and financial aid;
 - G 4. deans of retention programs;
 - G 5. faculty leaders;
 - G 6. key staff from institutional research, housing, student life, and other related student services staff;
 - G 7. alumni affairs staff;
 - G 8. marketing and public relations staff, and
 - G 9. prospective, current, and former students.
- G B. The charge to the committee should communicate a commitment for successful development and implementation of the plan and should be issued by the chief executive officer.
- G C. The steering committee is responsible for
- G 1. policy oversight, evaluation, assessment;
 - G 2. planning; and
 - G 3. advising on strategies, goals and objectives.
- G D. The committee's work should focus on
- G 1. research;
 - G 2. analysis;
 - G 3. marketing;
 - G 4. recruitment, and
 - G 5. retention.

IV. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

- G A. The strategic enrollment management plan begins with:
- G 1. An analysis of the institution's mission statement and
 - G 2. An assessment and analysis of:
 - G a. customer satisfaction;
 - G b. institutional strengths and weaknesses;
 - G c. campus climate, and
 - G d. diversity of students, faculty, and programs.
 - G 3. The assessment also includes:
 - G a. teaching, and
 - G b. student services.
 - G 4. After the analysis and assessment, the institution should develop measurable goals, objectives, and strategies that support the mission of the institution.
- G B. Marketing and Institutional Studies. As part of the assessment process, institutions

should solicit comments from individuals and groups that have an interest in or are affected by institutional policies, programs and services.

- G C. Input should be solicited from:
 - G 1. prospective, current and former students;
 - G 2. parents;
 - G 3. faculty;
 - G 4. staff;
 - G 5. community, business and industry representatives; and
 - G 6. high school and community college counselors and teachers.
- G D. To help determine how well they are serving their students, institutions should develop student profiles and track and analyze data, such as:
 - G 1. which students enroll, and why;
 - G 2. which ones do not enroll, and why;
 - G 3. which students leave and which ones graduate and why;
 - G 4. gender;
 - G 5. ethnicity;
 - G 6. age;
 - G 7. geographic location and region;
 - G 8. socioeconomic status;
 - G 9. financial need;
 - G 10. grade point average;
 - G 11. major and career interest;
 - G 12. educational objectives (i.e., degree, certificate, professional enrichment);
 - G 13. information about potential students, including data on:
 - G a. high school students (top 10, 25, 50 percent);
 - G b. curriculum and enrollment trends at competing institutions;
 - G c. U.S. Census Bureau data, and
 - G d. job market trends.
- G E. Other data institutions need to review:
 - G 1. baseline statistics;
 - G 2. enrollment trends;
 - G 3. retention data:
 - G a. why students leave;
 - G b. attributes of dropouts and graduates;
 - G c. academic data;
 - G d. course failure and
 - G e. passage rate;
 - G 4. course utilization and availability;
 - G 5. ethnic and gender breakdowns;
 - G 6. data to determine:
 - G a. the institution's image;
 - G b. market potential, campus climate, and
 - G c. student satisfaction.
- G F. Institutions should use a variety of methods in their educational research, including:
 - G 1. cohort tracking;
 - G 2. surveys and questionnaires;
 - G 3. focus groups, interviews (personal and telephone), and
 - G 4. current and historical student and institutional data.
- G G. Internal assessment. An internal assessment should be conducted that addresses the

following:

- G 1. How successful are institutional policies, programs, and services in meeting the needs of underrepresented populations and other customers?
 - G 2. What percentage of underrepresented populations are being served by programs and services?
 - G 3. Have best practices for internal use been analyzed and adopted? What are the accomplishments?
 - G 4. What has the institution failed to accomplish internally and why?
 - G 5. What is the public's perception of the quality of programs and services? How does that correspond with program accreditation or other professional recognition?
 - G 6. How do academic programs and services and internal processes compare to standards for program accreditation or evaluation criteria?
 - G 7. Do programs and activities support one another, or is there conflict or duplication?
 - G 8. What are employees' attitudes about the institution?
 - G 9. What are the significant issues identified by employees as internal weaknesses?
- G H. External Assessment. The external assessment should address the following:
- G 1. Does the institution interact with its customers to identify demands and needs?
 - G 2. What strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, or obstacles characterize external relationships?
 - G 3. What opportunities are available that have not been explored?
 - G 4. What factors or conditions significantly affect the institution's diverse populations?
 - G 5. Are the diverse populations satisfied with the policies, programs and services provided?

V. MARKETING PLAN

- G A. Institutions should develop marketing strategies to target their prospective and current students. A test market provides a way to identify students who fit the profile who may have been previously overlooked.
- G B. A marketing plan should include a review of the institution's publications and promotional activities to make sure they reflect the image of the institution and what it has to offer. Publications should have a uniform message and should be tailored to potential markets.
- G C. Contacting prospective students is of critical importance. Institutions should plan a schedule of contacts for promotional materials and activities that compliment the decision-making process for college-going students. Care should be taken to insure that information and deadlines from the various campus offices such as admissions, financial aid, housing, orientation and academic offices do not conflict.
- G D. In developing a marketing strategy, it is also important for the institution to focus on increasing the prospective student pipeline. The institution should create outreach programs and develop partnerships between the public and private sector, public schools, technical and community colleges, and colleges and universities. Programs to increase the pipeline include:
- G 1. master teacher series;
 - G 2. student Saturday workshops;
 - G 3. summer programs;