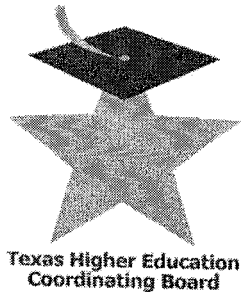


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As Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Kevin Lemoine serves as chief operations officer for the Division of Academic Affairs and Research. His primary responsibilities include coordination of workforce and academic program review, oversight of various grant programs, and coordination of legislative inquiries. He also provides leadership on statewide policy initiatives related to undergraduate education, graduate education, and distance education. He received his Ph.D. and M.A. in French and Spanish Linguistics from The University of Texas at Austin and his B.A. in French from the University of Southern Mississippi.



Written Testimony for the Senate Committee on Higher Education
Interim Hearing – July 22, 2010
Charge #4: Accountability

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Panel 2. Study and make recommendations regarding the current accountability system and ways to measure student progress, and to improve time-to-degree.

I. Adult Degree Completion Initiative

- i. The Coordinating Board is seeking funding from the Lumina Foundation for Education.
- ii. The project targets adults with some college credit but no degree.
- iii. The initiative is focused on targeted recruitment of these adults, getting more students through the educational pipeline, monitoring their progress with the use of an online degree audit system, and helping them complete a baccalaureate degree.

II. Background Statistics

- i. Currently, Texas ranks 40th in the nation in the percentage of adults between the ages of 25 and 64 who hold an associate's degree or higher.
- ii. The U.S. Census Bureau has reported that as of 2008 there were almost 3.5 million adults in Texas with some college credit but no degree, and only 951,090 with an associate's degree.
- iii. Working-age individuals with college degrees are 32 percent more likely to participate in the workforce than those with less than a high school diploma, and their lifetime earnings are twice as high.
- iv. In 2008, the median annual income difference in Texas between those who completed associate's degrees and those who completed baccalaureate degrees was \$10,203.
- v. The number of adults with baccalaureate degrees is often used as an indicator of global competitiveness. According to Texas' *Report of the Select Commission on Higher Education and Global Competitiveness* (2009), "Texas must more than double the annual degree production to reach the level of the best performing country of 55 percent of the population ages 24-64 with an associate degree or higher by 2025."

- vi. The report further states, “Texas must realize an additional 2,509,881 degrees between 2005 and 2025, an average annual increase of 125,494 or 102.6 percent beyond the 2005 level of 122,269 for every year through 2025.”

III. Proposed Project

- i. The proposed project is aimed at recruiting the 178,248 students who have at least 55 semester credit hours (SCHs) and the 44,595 students with at least 100 SCHs from Texas public universities and colleges but have not received an associate or baccalaureate degree and are no longer enrolled in college.
- ii. A central element of the initiative is the establishment of a consortium of six to eight public universities committed to working with adult degree completion students.
- iii. Our goal is to directly contact at least 100,000 of these 222,843 students and recruit them for placement into an adult degree completion program at one of the consortium schools.
- iv. These programs will typically consist of either a Bachelor of General Studies or a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences.
- v. Prospective students will be able to choose between online programs and face-to-face programs so that they can enroll in a program that best meets their needs and learning styles.
- vi. Additionally, students who enroll in one of the programs and who are eligible for receiving an associate’s degree via reverse transfer will be informed and asked to provide their university and community college with the appropriate permissions to enable a reverse transfer for the award of an associate’s degree.

IV. Degree Audit System

- i. The most important element of this project is the development of a comprehensive web portal. The portal will include information on financial aid, transfer policies, core curriculum requirements, reasons for degree completion, strategies for adult student success, and, most importantly, a degree audit system.
- ii. This degree audit system will allow prospective adult students to enter the coursework they have already taken and determine see how that coursework aligns with baccalaureate programs designated as adult degree completion programs at consortium schools.
- iii. The system will help students make informed decisions about the courses they need to take to complete a degree.
- iv. It will offer a roadmap, bridging the gap between what the student has already earned, course offerings at a consortium school, and the core curriculum and program requirements.
- v. Prospective students will also have the opportunity to use the site to link directly to a consortium school and make contact with advisors and recruiters who can help

them navigate the admissions process and answer questions about credit transfer and applicability.

- vi. Once enrolled, the students will have ongoing communication with advisors to ensure they remain on track, not take unnecessary courses, and complete their degrees in a timely fashion.