

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Master's Universities Success Accountability Measures

Introduction

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has organized the Master's Level Universities Peer Group on the following perceived commonalities. They

- offer an array of undergraduate and master's degrees
- have no history of offering doctoral programs
- include all of Texas universities that do not offer lower level undergraduate education

Master's Universities are expected to

- provide excellent broad-based undergraduate education
- establish seamless transfer and facilitate success for Associate of Arts and Associate of Science graduates
- offer smaller undergraduate class sizes
- provide excellent developmental education and retention programs
- provide excellent preparation for the workforce as well as for professional schools and graduate education
- play a critical role in the preparation of certified teachers and other professionals
- provide specialized programs recognized for their excellence

Peer Group Membership

Members of the Master's Universities Peer Group are

Angelo State University
Midwestern State University
Sul Ross State University
Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College
Texas A&M University-Galveston
Texas A&M University-Texarkana
The University of Texas at Brownsville
The University of Texas at Tyler
The University of Texas of the Permian Basin
University of Houston–Clear Lake
University of Houston-Downtown
University of Houston-Victoria

Success Measure Focus

When asked to select success measures on which we would concentrate, we decided to emphasize those that best represent the features that identify us. Accordingly, we chose the following accountability standards.

- Standard 9: Number of degrees awarded by level, race/ethnicity and gender
- Standard 10: Graduation and persistence rate
- Standard 13: Initial pass rate of a cohort of teacher education program completers

Mindful of the fact that four of the Master's Universities do not offer lower level undergraduate courses, we then chose two additional standards one of which would apply to four-year universities exclusively and the other to upper-level universities exclusively:

For Four-year Universities

Standard 18: Developmental Education

For Upper-level Universities

Standard 21: Percent of baccalaureate graduates completing at least 30 SCH at a Texas two-year college

Below, each standard is cited along with relevant statewide statistics and Master's Universities statistic, followed by a list of strategies universities found helpful in improving their performance.

MEASURES

Standards 9 & 10

Standard 9: Number of Degrees Awarded By Level, Race/Ethnicity and Gender

Definition: Number of degrees awarded by level, race/ethnicity and gender. Certificates are not included.

Statistics:

Degrees Awarded	Master's Universities			Statewide		
	FY 2000	FY 2006	Change	FY 2000	FY 2006	Change
Total	8,173	10,927	33.7%	78,970	100,054	26.7%
White	5,074	6,232	22.8%	50,176	57,426	14.4%
African American	660	1,045	58.3%	5,669	8,544	50.7%
Hispanic	1,700	2,592	52.5%	13,004	18,856	45.0%
Asian	344	562	63.4%	4,603	6,451	40.1%
Other	395	496	25.6%	5,518	8,777	59.1%
Male	3,031	3,855	27.2%	34,537	41,893	21.3%
Female	5,142	7,072	37.5%	44,433	58,161	30.9%
Undergraduate	6,340	8,347	31.7%	57,584	71,742	24.6%
White	3,897	4,644	19.2%	37,434	42,668	14.0%
African American	550	780	41.8%	4,231	6,115	44.5%
Hispanic	1,414	2,216	56.7%	10,672	15,196	42.4%
Asian	263	371	41.1%	3,528	4,797	36.0%
Other	216	336	55.6%	1,719	2,966	72.5%
Male	2,298	2,932	27.6%	24,769	29,867	20.6%
Female	4,042	5,415	34.0%	32,815	41,875	27.6%
Master's	1,833	2,580	40.8%	17,813	24,053	35.0%
White	1,177	1,588	34.9%	10,556	12,603	19.4%
African American	110	265	140.9%	1,182	2,156	82.4%
Hispanic	286	376	31.5%	2,058	3,264	58.6%
Asian	81	191	135.8%	836	1,315	57.3%
Other	179	160	-10.6%	3,181	4,715	48.2%
Male	733	923	25.9%	7,842	9,889	26.1%
Female	1,100	1,657	50.6%	9,971	14,164	42.1%

Standard 10: Graduation and Persistence Rates

Graduation and Persistence rate: Percent of first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates who have graduated or are still enrolled in public higher education after six academic years (by total and race ethnicity).

Statistics:

6-Year Graduation and Persistence Rate	Master's Universities			Statewide		
	1993 Cohort	2000 Cohort	Change	1993 Cohort	2000 Cohort	Change
Total	53.4%	55.9%	2.5	63.5%	70.5%	7.0
Same	33.1%	34.5%	1.4	47.6%	56.2%	8.6
Other	20.3%	21.4%	1.1	15.9%	14.3%	-1.6
White	56.5%	61.1%	4.7	68.6%	75.3%	6.7
Same	36.6%	37.3%	0.7	51.9%	60.5%	8.6
Other	19.8%	23.8%	3.9	16.8%	14.8%	-2.0
African American	47.4%	39.8%	-7.6	44.8%	53.7%	8.9
Same	24.9%	22.1%	-2.8	33.2%	39.9%	6.7
Other	22.5%	17.7%	-4.9	11.5%	13.8%	2.3
Hispanic	46.5%	51.0%	4.5	57.6%	64.2%	6.6
Same	28.2%	34.1%	5.9	41.1%	48.9%	7.8
Other	18.2%	16.9%	-1.3	16.5%	15.3%	-1.2
Asian	61.7%	58.4%	-3.3	76.1%	83.2%	7.1
Same	28.6%	30.4%	1.8	59.3%	71.4%	12.1
Other	33.1%	28.0%	-5.1	16.7%	11.8%	-4.9
Other	51.6%	48.1%	-3.5	45.2%	61.8%	16.6
Same	32.3%	30.4%	-1.9	37.7%	55.0%	17.3
Other	19.4%	17.7%	-1.6	7.5%	6.8%	-0.7

The number of degrees awarded by universities within the Master's group continues to grow. The rate of change is especially positive for this group and outpaces the statewide rate of change by 6%. Both the number of degrees and rate of change are consistently higher for all race and ethnic groups. Although the six-year graduation and persistence rates are slightly improved, the rate of change is not as high as the statewide average. Significant retention efforts are underway at every campus. At the same time, Master's group universities are specifically targeting underrepresented student groups.

- Practices that the Master's group found particularly helpful
- Created "One stop shop" for enrollment services including extensive cross-training for customer service
- Established personal contact with every student who does not complete pre-registration for the next term
- Established personal contact with all students who do not clear for graduation
- Conducted varied surveys (both online and paper) to assess satisfaction and services
- Conducted comprehensive recruitment and outreach programs including TRIO, Go Centers, Go mobiles, NSF talent expansion, etc.
- Targeted advising and support programs for students on academic probation.

- Enhanced advising services including: faculty involvement, intrusive advising, time to degree tracking, peer advising, web services, portals, electronic discussion boards, etc.
- Conducted academic program review to reduce credit hour requirements to 120 SCH (or as close as possible) for all programs
- Established learning communities
- Analyzed and used National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data
- Developed and offered College Success and/or freshman transition courses and programs
- Conducted extensive orientation programs for new students
- Targeted summer programs and institutes for specialized programs like engineering and science

Standard 13: Initial Pass Rate of Cohort of Teacher Education Program Completers

Definition: The initial pass rate is the percent of tests passed by a completer cohort through December 31 following the academic year of completion. The pass rate is based only on the tests required to obtain certification in the field(s) in which the person completed a program during the academic year. The rate reflects a candidate’s success on the last attempt made on the test by December 31 following the year of completion. Formula: the number of successful (i.e. passing) last attempts made by the cohort divided by the total number of last attempts made by the cohort. A program completer is an individual who has completed all educator preparation program requirements including: course work, field work, program assessments, and degree requirements. A completer cohort is a group of candidates who complete an educator preparation program during an academic year (September 1 to August 31).

Statistics:

Initial Pass Rate for Teacher Education	FY2004	FY2005	Change
Master’s Universities	96.3%	97.1%	0.8
Statewide	95.3%	95.7%	0.4

Master’s Universities’ rates are slightly higher than statewide rates. What is noteworthy is that the rate of increase for the years in question is double the statewide average.

Practices that the Master’s group found particularly helpful

- Aligned curriculum with principal certification standards
- Mediated induction preparation program
- Supervised field experiences
- Mentored opportunities with principals/assistant principals
- Discussed and practiced campus scenarios
- Review sessions using the online practice exam /study guides (e.g., http://www.texas.ets.org/assets/pdf/testprep_manuals/068_principal_55017_web.pdf, <http://sbec.state.tx.us>) and analyzed results
- Conducted online, interactive-TV reviews, and face-to-face instruction covering Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR)
- Administered practice tests using confidential exams provided by SBEC/TEA and analyzed results
- Provided individual tutoring as needed

Standard 18: Developmental Education

Developmental Education: percent of underprepared and prepared students who successfully complete a related college-level course within 3 years if they tested above deviation or 4 years if they tested under deviation by subject areas.

Statistics:

Percent of students in developmental education who successfully complete a related college-level course within two years (2003 cohort)	Master's Universities Statistics	Statewide Statistics
College level course completion (grade A, B,C) (percent of those attempting college level)		
Mathematics	49.5%	60.50%
Reading	62.2%	68.80%
Writing	71.9%	70.90%
College level course completion (grade A, B,C) (percent of total)		
Mathematics	18.9%	22.30%
Reading	47.1%	42.90%
Writing	45.7%	43.50%

Master's University students who participate in developmental education are more successful in reading and writing college-level courses than in college-level mathematics courses. These findings are consistent state-wide. It is interesting that Master's University students who enroll in college-level reading and writing courses tend to pass at a higher rate than the statewide sample of students.

Practices that the Master's group found particularly helpful

- Established clearly specified goals and objectives
- Used mastery learning techniques
- Utilized a high degree of structure
- Used a variety of pedagogical approaches and methods
- Applied sound cognitive theory in course design and delivery
- Coordinated and centralized program elements
- Utilized formative evaluation to guide program development and improvement
- Established learning outcomes to guide program goals, objectives and services
- Provided a counseling component
- Ensured that tutoring is performed by well-trained tutors
- Integrated classroom and laboratory activities
- Assured consistency between exit standards for developmental courses and entry standards for the regular curriculum
- Trained effective developmental education instructors
- Integrated critical thinking into the developmental curriculum

Standard 21: Percent of baccalaureate graduates completing at least 30 SCH at a Texas two-year college

Definition: Percentage of undergraduate baccalaureate graduates who completed at least 30 semester credit hours at a Texas two-year college before transferring to a public university.

	FY2000	FY2006	Change	FY2000	FY2006	Change
Upper-Level Universities	67.8%	69.7%	1.9%			
Four-Year Universities	36.5%	42.2%	5.7%			
Upper and Four-Year Combined	41.9%	48.8%	6.9%	30.3%	36.2%	5.9%

Upper-level universities represent a small subset of the public universities in Texas, but they show a higher success rate in graduating students who have earned at least 30 hours at community and two-year colleges. While expected, because all students enrolled in upper-level universities will be transfer students, those students who began their academic careers in community colleges graduate at rate 20 percentage points greater than the rate of graduation at four year universities. These percentages remained remarkably constant over the most recent comparison between 2000 and 2006, with about 69% of the upper-level graduates having completed at least 30 hours at a community college.

Several qualities define the typical upper-level university student. In reviewing upper-level university students' performance, it is important to recognize that these students tend to create a new sort of "typical student" who blends some of the characteristics of the community college population with other qualities of the four-year university students. Upper-level university students are goal-oriented, but they are also under fewer time-sensitive pressures. The upper-level university students tend to be already employed, and generally they must balance the demands of home and family with school. They are more prone to taking reduced loads and "stopping out" than are four year university students. The average student load at an upper-level is between 7.5 and 9 hours compared to the normal load at a four year university of 12-16 hours.

Upper-level university students usually have completed the core curriculum and required courses, they are cannot balance semester credit loads with general lower level courses and more rigorous junior and senior level courses. This situation makes it difficult to use full-time student numbers for upper-level universities in assessing performance measures since so few upper-level university students are full-time students.

Practices that the Master's group found particularly helpful

- developed articulation plans with the primary community colleges that transfer students to their universities
- applied as many transfer courses as possible for each baccalaureate degree program (in other words, employed broad application of credits for degree plans)
- used academic advisors who also serve as transfer advisors for community college students, and prepared early admission degree plans for students who indicate intentions to transfer to the university
- established relationships with potential transfer students and provided ongoing, attentive "progress toward degree" from orientation to graduation