

The University of Texas at Austin
Section 1 H.B. 1172 Timely Graduation Report
November 2008

I. Undergraduate Degree Program Completion Data

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, via data provided by UT Austin as part of the CBM009 report, has compiled information on Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters Toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas. For UT Austin students graduating in FY07, the average number of credits attempted was 130.2 and the mean number of semesters to graduation was 8.9. These numbers are consistent with those reported in FY06.

University of Texas at Austin
Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas

Program	# Grads	Credits Attempted	Mean Semesters
Science and Math	952	136.77	9.29
Arts and Architecture	2,250	128.41	8.88
Business	851	123.17	8.44
Engineering	814	135.75	9.2
Health	208	134.78	9.21
Social Sciences and Service	1,948	129.48	8.91
Total Graduates	7,023		
Institutional Average		130.24	8.94

In addition to the data provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, UT Austin has conducted a number of studies on time to graduation. In a study conducted by the Research Division of the Admissions Office for FY02 UT Austin graduates, first-time freshmen earned an average of 128.27 hours in residence plus UT extension and correspondence courses. That study can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/student/admissions/research/HoursDegrees2001-02.pdf>.

II. Efforts to Help Students Graduate More Quickly

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

In 2008, The University of Texas at Austin established a new School of Undergraduate Studies as a college-level academic unit reporting to the executive vice president and provost. The School of Undergraduate Studies will be the initial home for

students who choose not to select a college or school before the beginning of the first year and for those who are admitted to the university but not into the majors they have chosen. The school will offer special advising resources to help new students explore potential majors before making a selection and to support continuing students who are considering a change of major. The School of Undergraduate Studies will accept its first cohort of students in fall 2009.

UT Austin is committed to providing quality education to its students and, therefore, to improving the student-faculty ratio. UT Austin is over half-way through a program to add 300 additional new faculty members over a 10-year period. Since 2000, UT Austin has created 182 new tenured and tenure-track faculty positions. In addition, the UT Austin Task Force on Enrollment Strategy has reaffirmed our goal to maintain an enrollment of less than 50,000.

To encourage undergraduate students to increase their course loads, and thus reduce their time to graduation, UT Austin adopted flat rate tuition for all undergraduate colleges/schools. With flat rate tuition, a full-time student may take additional courses at no additional cost. (Address on State of the University, October 10, 2004, <http://www.utexas.edu/president/speeches/utexas121.html>).

In a further effort to help students complete their degrees in fewer years, the Provost established a Summer Enrollment Committee in Fall 2008 to investigate summer semester credit hour and enrollment capacity and ways to encourage undergraduate students to make summer semesters an integral part of their degree plans. The committee's work is ongoing and recommendations are pending.

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

The University of Texas at Austin provides extensive academic advising at the department and college levels to insure that students have the specific information needed to help them graduate in a timely manner. Degree requirements are published in the Undergraduate (<http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/ug08-10/index.html>) and graduate (<http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/grad07-09/index.html> and <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/law08-10/index.html>) catalogues.

UT Austin participates in three State initiatives with specific focus on time to degree. The first is the tuition rebate (\$1,000) program where students can request a tuition rebate if they graduate within four calendar years (five for architecture and engineering) and have attempted no more than three hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree. The second initiative is the B-On-Time Loan Program where students can receive loans each semester enrolled, then have those loans forgiven if they graduate with a B average, receive a baccalaureate degree within four calendar years (five for architecture and engineering), and graduate with no more than six credit hours over the number required to complete the

baccalaureate degree. The third initiative limits formula funding and allows an institution to charge out of state tuition to an in-state student who exceeds more than 30 hours (for students enrolling after fall 2006) of the number of hours required for completion of the student's degree program.

The university continues to examine a number of ways to develop a more pervasive culture of timely graduation among undergraduate students. For example, the current Task Force on Enrollment Strategy is considering recommendations that would limit the number of long semesters that an undergraduate student may be enrolled at the university without earning a degree and also the number of times that a student may be allowed to change their major. These and other recommendations are still under deliberation by the Task Force; with final recommendations anticipated in early 2009.

C. To provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation.

At the University of Texas at Austin, departmental and college advisers assist students in understanding the requirements necessary to complete their chosen major, inform them about appropriate course sequences and course content, and provide information about graduate school and career opportunities. Links to individual college/school advising centers are: <http://www.mcombs.utexas.edu/udean/advising/>, <http://communication.utexas.edu/current/AcademicAdvising/index.html>, <http://www.edb.utexas.edu/education/students/current/undergrad/advising/>, <http://www.engr.utexas.edu/current/advising/>, http://www.finearts.utexas.edu/students/academic_advising.cfm, <http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/advising/index.php>, <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/advisors/>, <http://cns.utexas.edu/students/advising/>, http://www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/academics_advising.html, <http://www.utexas.edu/pharmacy/students/advising/index.html>, <http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/students/advising.html>, <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/courses/advising.php>.

In addition to these departmental advising centers, the university sponsors a number of academic support programs to promote student success and enhance graduation rates:

The Undergraduate Writing Center conducts more than 11,000 consultations with undergraduate writers each year in addition to offering writing workshops for classes, student groups, and professors. Consultations are meant to foster independence in the students with whom the writing center works.

The UT Learning Center (UTLC) provides academic support to over 13,000 students per year. Services include non-credit classes and workshops focusing on topics from study strategies to refreshers for calculus. Tutoring is offered to students by appointment or drop-in. UTLC offers non-credit developmental courses in math, reading, and writing to

undergraduate students. The Learning Center also offers academic counseling and peer academic coaching. Students who believe they may have ADHD or another learning disability can request screening to help decide whether or not to pursue diagnostic testing. Through its teaching programs, the Learning Center also provides supplemental instruction in over 25 courses a semester and the teaching teams program provides peer-led study groups and collaboration faculty and graduate students supporting the study groups.

Academic Support for Specific Student Populations

The Cockrell School of Engineering has identified several specific populations of students to whom it targets academic support services. The Equal Opportunity in Engineering Program seeks to increase the diversity of its student body by supporting students who come from historically underrepresented population groups in Texas or students who have backgrounds or experiences that will contribute to the overall diversity of the Cockrell School of Engineering.

The Engineering Students with Disabilities (ESD) Program assists students with disabilities in successfully pursuing their academic programs. Students may be eligible for a variety of accommodations and services of which they or the faculty may not be aware. The Coordinator is committed to working with students, faculty and the administration to remove barriers that limit qualified individuals from pursuing and succeeding in their academic goals.

The Women in Engineering Program (WEP) was established in 1992 to recruit and retain female engineering students increase the percentage of female engineering graduates and provide a supportive structure that encourages the success of women in the Cockrell School of Engineering.

Services for Students with Disabilities serves all students on campus who register with the office. SSD determines eligibility and helps implement reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. In addition to working with faculty members, administrators meet with students one-on-one to determine their needs. SSD provides an assistive technology lab and works with students with AD/HD, learning disabilities, psychological disabilities, traumatic brain injury, visual, mobility and hearing impairments, and other health and chronic medical disabilities.

Women in Natural Sciences (WINS) is a program of the College of Natural Sciences designed to promote recruitment, retention, and success of women at all levels throughout the college and in academic disciplines within the college including astronomy, chemistry, computer sciences, geological sciences, human ecology, mathematics, physics, and all fields of biological sciences.

Academic Enrichment Services offers four programs that are designed to break down the large environment of the university and enhance academic achievement of students:

The Preview Program provides traditionally under-represented students with a smooth transition from high school to college. This is accomplished through a yearlong program that includes a summer "bridge" component and highly structured academic and social enrichment programming. During the academic year, students attend academic enrichment and socio-cultural events, peer advising meetings and individual meetings with the coordinator.

The Gateway Program offers services and programs that maximize the academic and social engagement of new students for the first two years of their enrollment. The program seeks to introduce Gateway students to resources and encourage each student to take full advantage of the full range of educational opportunities.

First-generation, low-income and disabled students are served through the Longhorn Link Program, Student Support Services, a federally funded TRiO program. The program provides opportunities for academic development, assists students with basic college requirements, and serves to motivate students towards the successful completion of their post secondary education. The goal of the Longhorn Link Program is to increase the college retention and graduation rates of its participants and facilitate the process of transition from one level of higher education to the next.

The Achieving College Excellence Program is an academic support program for students requiring additional assistance to meet their educational goals. ACE provides academic support through tutorial services, academic workshops, peer advising and graduate school preparation.

D. 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.

The University of Texas at Austin created and maintains a degree audit system for students pursuing degrees at UT Austin. This system is used by administrators, advisers, students, and guests. The web-based version (Interactive Degree Audit or IDA) is easily accessible by students and provides a computer-generated report of a student's progress towards completion of specific program requirements at UT Austin. All undergraduate programs and a limited number of graduate programs are available. (See <http://registrar.utexas.edu/students/degrees/ida/>).

Using IDA a student may view and request degree audits online, determine how completed coursework fulfills degree requirements, project how future courses might apply toward their degree, and locate advising resources. Prospective students may use the IDA Planner to estimate how courses from other institutions might apply to UT Austin degrees.

E. To implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation.

In the fall of 2003 the University of Texas at Austin implemented a pilot flat rate tuition program for the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences. The success of the pilot project, as measured by an increase in the average course load for Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences students, led UT Austin to adopt flat rate tuition for all undergraduate students beginning in fall 2005. With flat rate tuition, a student may take additional courses at no additional cost. This provides a clear financial incentive to reduce the time to graduation. UT Austin has experienced an increase in undergraduate course loads. Course loads have increased from 12.09 in 2002-03 (the year before flat rate for Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences), to 12.49 for 2006-07 (the year after flat rate for all undergraduates). For fall 2008, the undergraduate course load was 13.33.

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University of Texas at Austin
Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas

Program	# Grads	Credits Attempted	Mean Semesters
Science and Math	993	138	9
Arts and Architecture	2,306	128	9
Business	934	122	8
Engineering	828	136	9
Health	227	141	10
Social Sciences and Service	2,033	129	9
Total Graduates	7,321		
Institutional Average		130.2	8.9

In addition to the data provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, UT Austin has conducted a number of studies on time to graduation. In a study conducted by the Research Division of the Admissions Office for FY02 UT Austin graduates, first-time freshmen earned an average of 128.27 hours in residence plus UT extension and correspondence courses. That study can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/student/admissions/research/HoursDegrees2001-02.pdf>.

II. Efforts to Help Students Graduate More Quickly

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

The University of Texas at Austin is committed to providing quality education to its students. To improve the student-faculty ratio, UT Austin is over half-way through a

program to add 300 additional new faculty members over a 10-year period. In addition, the UT Austin Task Force on Enrollment Strategy has reaffirmed our goal to maintain an enrollment of less than 50,000. To encourage undergraduate students to increase their course loads, and thus reduce their time to graduation, UT Austin has adopted flat rate tuition for all undergraduate colleges/schools. With flat rate tuition, a full-time student may take additional courses at no additional cost. (Address on State of the University, October 10, 2004, <http://www.utexas.edu/president/speeches/utexas121.html>).

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In addition to on campus efforts, UT Austin participates in three State initiatives. The first is the tuition rebate (\$1,000) program where students can request a tuition rebate if they graduate within four calendar years (five for architecture and engineering) and have attempted no more than three hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree. The second initiative is the B-On-Time Loan Program where students can receive loans each semester enrolled, then have those loans forgiven if they graduate with a B average, receive a baccalaureate degree within four calendar years (five for architecture and engineering), and graduate with no more than six credit hours over the number required to complete the baccalaureate degree. The third initiative limits formula funding and allows an institution to charge out of state tuition to an in-state student who exceeds more than 30 hours (for students enrolling after fall 2006) of the number of hours required for completion of the student's degree program.

C. To provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation.

At the University of Texas at Austin, departmental and college advisers assist students in understanding the requirements necessary to complete their chosen major, inform them about appropriate course sequences and course content, and provide information about graduate school and career opportunities. Links to individual college/school advising centers are: <http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/udean/advising/>, <http://communication.utexas.edu/current/AcademicAdvising/index.html>, <http://www.edb.utexas.edu/education/advising.php>,

<http://www.engr.utexas.edu/current/advising/>,
http://www.finearts.utexas.edu/students/academic_advising.cfm,
<http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/advising/index.php>, <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/advisors/>,
<http://cns.utexas.edu/students/advising/>,
http://www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/academics_advising.html,
<http://www.utexas.edu/pharmacy/students/advising/index.html>,
<http://www.utexas.edu/ssw/students/advising.html>,
<http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/courses/advising.php>.

D. 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.

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University of Texas at Austin
Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters toward Baccalaureate Degree
in Program Areas

Program	# Grads	Credits Attempted	Mean Semesters
Science and Math	1017	138	9
Arts and Architecture	2259	128	9
Business	964	123	8
Engineering	701	138	9
Health	178	140	9
Social Sciences and Service	1964	129	9
Total Graduates	7083		
Institutional Average		132.7	8.8

In addition to the data provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, UT Austin has conducted a number of studies on time to graduation. In a study conducted by the Research Division of the Admissions Office for FY02 UT Austin graduates, first-time freshmen earned an average of 128.27 hours in residence plus UT extension and correspondence courses. That study can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/student/admissions/research/HoursDegrees2001-02.pdf>.

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the UT Austin Task Force on Enrollment Strategy has reaffirmed our goal to maintain an enrollment of less than 50,000. To encourage undergraduate students to increase their course loads, and thus reduce their time to graduation, UT Austin has adopted flat rate tuition for all undergraduate colleges/schools. With flat rate tuition, a full-time student may take additional courses at no additional cost. (Address on State of the University, October 10, 2004, <http://www.utexas.edu/president/speeches/utexas121.html>).

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D. 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.

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students pursuing degrees at UT Austin. This system is used by administrators, advisers, students, and guests. The web-based version (Interactive Degree Audit or IDA) is easily accessible by students and provides a computer-generated report of a student's progress towards completion of specific program requirements at UT Austin. All undergraduate programs and a limited number of graduate programs are available.

Using IDA a student may view and request degree audits online, determine how completed coursework fulfills degree requirements, project how future courses might apply toward their degree, and locate advising resources. Prospective students may use the IDA Planner to estimate how courses from other institutions might apply to UT Austin degrees.

E. To implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation.

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Program	# Grads	Credits Attempted	Mean Semesters
Science and Math	1,026	138	9
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Business	1,044	124	9
Engineering	754	139	9
Health	172	140	9
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Total Graduates	7,229		
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