UT System Academic Institution
Reports on Timely Graduation Required by House Bill 1172

Background
House Bill 1172 passed by the 79th Texas Legislature requires that general academic teaching institutions report to their governing boards on efforts implemented to:

- ensure that undergraduate students graduate in a timely manner,

- 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,

- provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation,

- 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, and

- implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation.

In addition, the bill requires that the report provide data on how long undergraduates take to complete degree programs. The bill requires that the report "state, for each undergraduate degree program, the average number of semester credit hours attempted and the average number of fall and spring semesters attended by a student completing the program."

The legislation requires that institutions report to their governing boards by November 1 of each year. However, instructions concerning what to include in the reports were not provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) until October 2006 and the instructions provided a deadline of November 30 to submit reports. The nine UT System academic institutions have submitted their reports to the Office of Academic Affairs and to THECB. The following is a summary of the reports on efforts to foster timely graduation. The bill also requires institutions to report data on time-to-degree (as measured by the mean number of semesters taken by graduates). These data are provided in a table following the summary.

**Summary of UT System Academic Institution Reports
on Efforts to Encourage Timely Graduation**

Report on efforts to:

- *Ensure that undergraduate students graduate in a timely manner.*

- *Ensure that undergraduate students do not attempt excessive number of semester credit hours beyond the minimum number required to complete the students' degree programs.*

- *Provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation.*

Raising graduation rates is a key goal for the University of Texas System academic institutions. The system's annual accountability report provides data on graduation rates and trends for each UT institution. Improving graduation rates and reducing time-to-degree are essential elements of each UT institutional compact—written agreements between the Chancellor and each institution president that summarize the institution's major goals and priorities, strategic directions, and critical issues. Each presidential work plan also must address efforts to improve graduation rates.

UT academic institutions cite a number of different strategies for addressing timely graduation. Every UT academic institution cites the critical role of academic advising to ensure that students have the specific information needed to help them graduate in a timely manner and avoid taking excessive credit hours. Additional approaches cited by UT academic institutions include, but are not limited to:

- hiring additional faculty to ensure that the faculty/student ratio is appropriate,
- hiring additional advisors to work one-on-one with students to plan their courses and degree programs,
- requiring periodic audits with advisors of student progress,
- offering summer bridge programs to address the transition to college life,
- accelerating developmental education,
- providing tutors, and
- providing more courses in the afternoons, evenings and weekends to accommodate nontraditional and part-time students.

UT institutions each employ some of these strategies, tailoring their approaches to the characteristics of the students that attend that institution. For example, enhanced developmental education and tutoring programs are strategies cited by several UT institutions that have less stringent admission standards, but they generally are not the focus of efforts at UT academic institutions with more rigorous admission requirements.

During the past year, graduation rate initiatives at UT System academic institutions reported many activities and accomplishments. These include:

UT Arlington amended its policy related to dropping classes. Students entering in Fall 2006 are limited to 15 hours of dropped courses over the course of their academic career. Before dropping a class, a student is required to meet with an academic advisor to learn about the consequences of dropping, such as the impact of progress toward the degree, financial aid, and the ability to enter subsequent courses which use the dropped course as a prerequisite. An additional policy implemented this fall requires full-time freshmen who earn below a 2.0 grade point average to take an academic skills course during the subsequent semester as a condition of remaining enrolled at the university.

UT Austin is working to improve its student-faculty ratio and is midway 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 the goal of maintaining 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. UT Austin also 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.

UT Brownsville (UTB/TSC) began the University Scorpion Scholars (USS) program in Fall 2006 to address the retention rate and time-to-graduation. The program is designed to attract college-prepared students and fully assist them financially to move efficiently through their undergraduate career. The scholarship is awarded on a yearly basis for up to 115 high school graduates in the top 10 percentile of their class.   There are 102 students participating in the USS. This scholarship covers the cost of tuition and fees, textbooks, and on-campus housing for four or eight consecutive fall and spring semesters, allowing scholarship recipients to obtain their degrees without having to fund the cost of college out-of-pocket. This scholarship is awarded for as long as recipients maintain certain eligibility requirements, such as completing 100 percent of credit hours attempted.

In order to improve student retention and graduation rates for students struggling academically, UTB/TSC instituted an Early Alert Program in 2005. The program is a collaborative effort between faculty and the counseling center. This retention initiative aims to identify first and second year students who are academically at risk during the first weeks of the fall and spring semesters. Faculty is asked to identify and refer students who have demonstrated poor academic progress. The counselor and student collaborate on an "action plan" specifically addressing identified concerns in the referral. A follow-up session is scheduled to discuss student progress or difficulties that may have arisen in carrying out the "action plan." Through the students' interaction with faculty and counseling staff, they learn what actions need to be taken to achieve academic success and are provided an early opportunity to take full advantage of campus resources.

In consideration of the constraints faced by working students, for two years UTB/TSC has used a Student Employment Initiative (SEI), which provides student employment opportunities on campus. In order to be eligible to apply for employment through the SEI, students must be enrolled for at least 15 semester credit hours and maintain a minimum 2.75 GPA. Participants will work a maximum of 20 hours a week in a job related to his or her major field of study. As an added incentive, the hourly wage is $7.00, which is above the minimum wage rate and is more than what a majority of students would be paid working elsewhere. Available positions include peer mentors, peer facilitators, lab coordinators, supplemental instruction leaders, instructor assistants, and research assistants. SEI participants gain critical campus connections, and the university taps into support services for other students by utilizing their own students as mentors and facilitators.

To meet the academic challenges faced by students enrolled in developmental courses, UTB/TSC has incorporated a new STING (Students Together, Involving, Networking and Guiding) Success Series Peer Mentor Program. The program offers entering freshmen a retention support program that helps students navigate the college environment, take advantage of campus resources and opportunities, and increase student confidence in their ability to succeed academically. Students who are not in compliance with the Texas Success Initiative policy and are not considered college ready must enroll in the STING program and meet with a peer mentor, staff instructor, and tutor in a lab on a weekly basis. Outside of the lab, peer mentors and tutors are available to work with students on an individual basis during office hours. 417 students actively participated in STING in the Fall 2006 term and successfully completed 88.2 percent of semester hours attempted.

UTB/TSC also has created the Leadership and Mentorship Program (LAMP). This program creates strong relationships between students and faculty. LAMP provides structured mentoring of new students by pairing them with a well qualified mentor that acts not only as a role model, but also as a resource for the student. Professional leadership workshops are presented by LAMP mentors, university staff and faculty, and outside community leaders.

As a community university on the border, UTB/TSC serves a number of migrant students. To serve this student population, a College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) grant was received, which allowed UTB/TSC to implement the program. The goal of CAMP is to facilitate academic success of first-time migrant freshmen students at UTB/TSC and to assist students in making a smooth transition to university life and its expectations. Services provided by CAMP include peer tutoring and mentoring, outreach, recruitment, academic advisement, and financial assistance. Students eligible to participate must be migrants, seasonal farm workers, or dependents of a migrant or a seasonal farm worker.

In order to better serve its growing student population, the Academic Advising Center hired ten new advisors in Fall 2006, increasing the number of academic advisors on campus to 27. Hiring these ten new advisors has reduced the student/advisor ratio

considerably. The Academic Advising Center has recently moved to a new location on campus, which has provided more room and more offices to house all the advisors, and, most importantly, has provided the privacy that the students need when they talk to an advisor. To assist students who are having academic difficulties, an Academic Recovery Plan is required for students on suspension/academic probation in order to encourage remediation and retention.

Technological advances have allowed UTB/TSC to increase efficiency and ease of communication as well. TALISMA, a nationally acclaimed tool for electronic mass and target group communications, has been implemented, enabling university staff to provide systematic and helpful information to current and prospective students via email, chat, and ground mail. In addition, an instant messaging "CHAT" is now in place to connect current and prospective students with all enrollment planning functions. SMART registration and E-Advisor are new colleague modules that will benefit students by improving retention and time-to-graduation in the very near future.

UT Dallas (UTD) is coordinating efforts with local area community colleges to reduce the graduation rate disparities between native freshmen and transfers. The university has significantly reorganized the admissions process for transfer students and initiated the Comet Connection – whereby community college students are more tightly coupled to UTD. The Comet Connection enables transfer students to begin their higher education at a community college while at the same time enjoying many of the benefits and experiences of campus life at UTD. By becoming a member of the Comet Connection, students may enroll in UTD's Guaranteed Tuition Program and establish the current year's tuition at UTD for four years. In addition to invitations to exclusive Comet Connection events, participants also receive other special privileges that include one-on-one access to academic advisors on UTD campus.

UT El Paso (UTEP) has a robust program to assist undergraduate students' efficient progress towards graduation. The following efforts illustrate the comprehensive and holistic student success efforts that are in place at UTEP:

- **College Readiness Initiative.** The CRI is a collaborative effort among UTEP, El Paso Community College (EPCC), and Region 19 Independent School Districts with the goal of helping high school students become better prepared academically for college-level course work once they have completed their high school requirements. The components of CRI include an orientation to the ACCUPLACER placement exam, early testing during a student's junior and/or senior year(s), high school intervention for students who place into developmental math, reading, or writing, and retesting in their subject areas of intervention.

- **New Student Orientation/Enhanced New Student Orientation.** Entering students are encouraged to attend a new student orientation prior to the start of their first semester of study. During the Fall 2006 orientation cycle, the orientation program was expanded to include a mandatory math review workshop for students who placed into developmental math courses. This Enhanced New Student Orientation consisted of a three-day, six-hour math review conducted by math tutors from UTEP's Tutoring

and Learning Center. After the conclusion of the math review, students were able to retake the ACCUPLACER placement exam with the hope of higher placement in mathematics. Forty-eight percent of the 1,603 students participating in this program retested at least one course higher and 31 percent retested from developmental math to college-level math.

- **Course Redesign.** UTEP redesigned math, reading, and writing courses so that first-year students would not be delayed in long holding patterns of developmental coursework. The course redesign accelerates students' movement through developmental courses, enrolling them as quickly as possible into college-level courses, some with academic support. This compact format also accelerates their time-to-graduation.

- **Advising and Financial Aid.**   Both the Academic Advising Center and the Office of Student Financial Aid advise students to take 15 credit hours each semester. UTEP has added a number of advisors over the past year who advise students at all levels—pre-majors, majors, and general studies. These additional advisors allow UTEP to manage increases in enrollment while maintaining individualized service. Advising sessions stress how continuous enrollment, supported by financial aid packages, accelerates students' time-to-graduation.

- **Entering Student Program.** UTEP's Entering Student Program comprises a number of programs including seminars, learning communities, and a student leadership institute to assist first-year students with the transition to the university environment and to increase their opportunities for academic success. Many of these programs have received state and national recognition, including the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Star Award.

- **Welcome Back Miner.** The Welcome Back Miner program is a university-wide effort that crosses all academic colleges. The program encourages students who have stopped-out for one or more semesters to return to UTEP and finish their degrees. Stop-out students are contacted each long semester by representatives of their academic dean's office to offer them information, incentives, and referrals that may encourage them to complete their studies at UTEP. Students are also offered the option of completing the Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies degree.

- **Bachelor of Multidisciplinary Studies (BMS).** UTEP's BMS degree was designed especially for students who have completed a significant number of credit hours in different areas of interest, transfer students who have a significant number of semester credit hours, and entering students who want an individualized plan of study not available through traditional degree plans. The degree is especially appealing to students who have accumulated more than 90 semester credit hours in a variety of subject areas, are returning to school after an absence, and are seeking the professional advancement that only a bachelor's degree can provide.

- **Scheduling.** UTEP continues to increase course offerings in the afternoons, evenings, and on weekends to accommodate non-traditional and part-time students. Many courses in the university core curriculum are offered in a hybrid format (combining online learning with reduced and concentrated face-to-face sessions on campus), making these courses more accessible to students who must work off campus to help pay for their education and provide for their family responsibilities. UTEP has also expanded its minimesters and parts-of-terms, providing even greater scheduling opportunities for students.

- **Success in the Middle Years.** Unlike traditional students, UTEP students' middle years extend beyond two years to as long as ten years or more. The "Success in the Middle Years" plan – building upon successful first-year programming and high marks in student satisfaction once students enter into their major area of study – provides a university-wide course of action for focused improvements in learning and learning outcome assessment in students' "middle years." The two components of the plan are: (a) curriculum review and renewal in each degree program and the core curriculum, providing students an efficient and purposeful pathway to demonstrate mastery of general education proficiencies and major field knowledge, skills, and dispositions; and (b) academic and career advising redesign to provide students with personal and career guidance. As a part of this plan, all degree granting programs are currently reviewing their degree requirements in order to minimize the time-to-degree and to ensure compliance with the new 120 hour degree requirements.

UT Pan American has established a university-wide advisement center, the Academic Advisement and Mentoring (AAM) Center. The goal of the center is to advise and track every individual freshman and sophomore student to assist them in making informed decisions about a major as early in their academic career as possible and ensure that they register for the appropriate courses every semester. Freshman and sophomore students are being advised at a centralized location by academic career advisors. Juniors and seniors are being advised by professional guidance counselors and faculty in each of six colleges. In Fall 2006, an additional six professional guidance counselors were hired to advise students in each of six colleges and three additional academic career advisors were hired to advise students at the centralized AAM Center. This brings the total of advisors from 12 to 21—12 professional guidance counselors and nine academic career advisors.

UT Pan American offers students Supplemental Instruction (SI), an academic enrichment program that is offered in traditionally difficult courses. SI discussion and review sessions are facilitated by trained student SI Leaders who have successfully completed the course. Designed to supplement – not replace – class lectures and recitations, SI sessions are interactive and collaborative. SI targets historically difficult courses that are characterized by a 30 percent or greater failure rate.

In Spring 2006 UT Pan American piloted SI for the following courses:

- Biology 2403: Anatomy and Physiology
- English 2300: Intro to Literature

- Philosophy 1310: Intro to Philosophy
- Math 2306: Foundations of Math I

The program has been expanded for Fall 2007.

At **UT Permian Basin** (UTPB), every new freshman is required to enroll and attend the freshman seminar. Degree planning is covered extensively in this seminar. The students are required to have a degree plan developed as a requirement for the seminar, and registration for the spring semester is done in the seminar. All of the activities in the freshman seminar include an emphasis on both the incentives for timely graduation and the regulations on excessive credits.

Approximately 40 percent of the incoming undergraduates to UT Permian Basin enter as transfer students, most from area community colleges. To help these students move to timely graduation, UTPB has developed its Direct Connect program with area community colleges. A student at an area community college who declares their intent to transfer to UTPB is provided academic advising, financial aid advising, and other assistance while the student is at the community college.

UTPB's advisors, working with community college staff, help transfer students prepare a degree plan through which they will earn an associate degree from the community college and a UTPB bachelor's degree in the most efficient manner possible. Because of earlier articulation agreements, the THECB transfer fields of study, and other less formal efforts to align the UTPB and community college curriculum, students in the Direct Connect program typically do not have to take any extra hours to earn both the associate and the bachelor's degree. The development of the degree plans includes discussion of the incentives and the regulations related to timely graduation.

Other activities undertaken by UT Permian Basin in the past year include providing supplemental instruction, opening a literacy center that provides study skills training for students, creating freshman interest groups, and expanding the mentoring program for students identified as at risk.

During the Spring 2006 semester, **UT San Antonio** held a university-wide "Raising Graduation Rates Summit" that was attended by approximately 300 faculty and staff. The program included presentations by President Ricardo Romo, recognized experts in the area of student success, and Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education.

The university's provost appointed a Task Force for Student Success and Graduation, which made recommendations on improving graduation rates in Summer 2006. In Fall 2006, the provost named an associate dean for retention and graduation, who is tasked with implementation of Task Force recommendations, oversight of policies affecting graduation rates, and reporting. An assistant vice provost for assessment was hired to facilitate the development of student learning outcome assessment and assist in research regarding retention and graduation.

UT San Antonio has instituted a three-year course schedule so students can determine what they need to take and when they can take it, and adjust their work and family schedules accordingly in advance. In addition, college compacts include projections for anticipated enrollment for all courses taught so that adequate sections will be available for students who follow their degree plans.

UT San Antonio's Institutional Research staff will research and provide a detailed analysis of student course-taking patterns and courses that are presenting a roadblock to students progressing toward degree. In addition, the academic programs consisting of more than 120 semester hours will begin review of the curriculum to determine if requirements need revision.

The university's academic advisors are working to implement the new policy that states that all students must complete a semester-by-semester degree plan with expected graduation date with their advisors by Fall 2007. All students on probation and returning after dismissal, as well as students in three colleges, are required to be advised each semester. The university is exploring whether resources are available to require all students to be advised each semester.

UT Tyler reports the following policies and activities designed to improve the graduation rate:

- All freshmen are required to meet with a professional academic advisor to plan their first-year coursework.

- Students must declare a major no later than the completion of 60 semester credit hours. Most majors require that students declare their major and have degree plans completed by their second semester. These degree plans are updated regularly.

- UT Tyler is working collaboratively with community colleges to ensure students are aware of the first two years of curriculum needed for baccalaureate degree completion. A full-time academic advising position was filled in Fall 2006 to advise all transfer students who are not core-complete upon admission.

- Student Learning Communities (SLC) are offered to freshmen to facilitate a successful first semester experience. All SLC participants enroll in a Freshman Year Experience class that provides information and activities that help students attain academic goals. Three SLC groups will participate in a second semester learning community experience in Spring 2007.

- The Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program was expanded from three sections in Fall 2005 to nine sections in Fall 2006. A full-time administrative position was filled to oversee the Academic Support Center, including the SI program and to develop an expanded tutoring program.

- Fall 2006 was the second year of the university's Freshman Book program. The author of the book spoke at a freshman convocation and the book is incorporated into the Freshman Seminar and Freshman Experience classes during the year.

- The first residence hall was opened in Fall 2006, three sororities colonized in Spring 2006, and two fraternities will be on campus in Spring 2007. A full-time Greek advising position is posted for Spring 2007.

Report on efforts 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.

Over the past 18 months, **UT Arlington** has completed the implementation of a new student information system (MyMav) that permits it to provide students with more timely information and to more intentionally provide them with notices and information. For example, the new system provides a feature called UMAP that allows a student, at a moment's notice, to determine the status of their degree plan, to view the hours earned, and the hours remaining. Students also have the ability to select other majors to determine the consequences of switching from one field of study to another. Finally, this system allows UT Arlington to push advising-related reminders and notices to students via their student portal.

UT Austin created and maintains a degree audit system for students pursuing degrees at the university. 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 toward 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.

UT Brownsville plans to continue development of a Degree Audit Report System (DARS) and E-Advisor electronic-advising files system in the current year and expects to make its online degree check available to students by August 31, 2007.

UT Dallas has an online degree audit (On Course) which an advisor can use to audit a student's remaining degree requirements. A student can also run this audit at any time, as well as engage in 'what if' scenarios to determine the impact of changing majors. For community college students, the university provides comprehensive articulation guides for transfer students so they can plan their community college careers to maximize their transfer credits.

UT El Paso has implemented an online degree audit program: Course Audit and Program Planning (CAPP), a module in the "Banner" student information system. The CAPP program provides students and advisors with "real-time" degree audit information. In addition, it can be used to calculate the effects of change of major on time-to-degree completion.

UT Pan American provides a degree audit program available to students on the web that gives the student a progress report, on a semester by semester basis, of the courses completed, credit earned, and the courses still needed to complete the degree. This report allows the student to plan his/her own progress toward degree completion and advisors are available to assist students in making decisions about their degree plans. On-line prerequisite checking, to ensure students are fully prepared for the courses, tested successfully in the College of Business Administration and the College of Science and Engineering in Spring 2006. The program will be fully implemented at all colleges in Spring 2008.

UT Permian Basin has created a website to report on student time-to-graduation that links to descriptions of the Graduate-on-Time program and other services and programs. The system enables students to quickly find which earned degree credits meet degree requirements for various degrees plans.

UT San Antonio has offered an online degree plan to students for some time. The Executive Director for Advising hired a consultant to upgrade online degree audits to make them more user friendly for students and advisors in Fall 2006. This online degree audit will be used by all advisors to assist students in developing course schedules and in finalizing their degree audits for graduation.

UT Tyler offers an online student degree progress report which compares the courses taken and credit received to the courses needed for core completion requirements. The report is available to all students via *Campus Connect*.

Report on efforts to implement tuition policies that encourage timely graduation.

Tuition deregulation has given Texas public universities the flexibility to develop and adopt tuition policies that encourage timely graduation. Since the passage of deregulation in 2003, UT academic institutions have been exploring how to use tuition policy at their respective institutions to provide incentives that are tailored to each university's unique student population. For the 2006-2007 academic year, many UT institutions offered new timely graduation initiatives.

At **UT Arlington**, the tuition rate per credit hour is graduated, with students who take more hours paying a lower rate per hour. Hours in excess of 14 are at no additional charge. The program is designed to encourage students who were previously part-time students to carry a full load of courses and, thereby, graduate more quickly. The university also offers a tuition credit toward the next academic year for students who are enrolled for two consecutive long semesters and take at least 14 hours each semester.

UT Austin implemented a pilot flat-rate tuition program for the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Natural Sciences in Fall 2003. 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, providing a clear financial incentive to reduce time-to-graduation.

UT Brownsville implemented a flat-rate tuition and mandatory fees initiative for students taking more than 15 credits. This was expected to encourage students to enroll in additional hours while lessening the effect of rising tuition costs on the average student credit load. In effect, 591 students took more than 15 credit hours, availing themselves of the flat-rate tuition policy and demonstrating the effectiveness of this new tuition policy in raising the average number of credits taken by students per semester.

UT Dallas will offer a tuition guarantee to entering students beginning in Fall 2007. Under this guarantee program, tuition and fees will remain fixed for the four years that it takes to earn a baccalaureate degree. At the end of the guarantee period, a student who continued at the university would have to pay the new higher tuition rates in effect at that time. This program will provide undergraduate students, as well as their parents, with a powerful incentive to complete a degree program on time.

UT Dallas has signed matriculation agreements locking in a flat four-year tuition rate for community college students that should significantly aid in the reduction of time-to-degree for transfer students. The new tuition plan provides incentives for full-time status which should reduce the number of students who, in their junior and senior years, chose to go to school part-time thereby prolonging their time-to-degree.

UT El Paso was the first university in the state to offer a four-year tuition guarantee. The program locks in the cost of tuition and mandatory fees for qualified freshmen (who must be Texas residents) entering UT El Paso during Fall 2006 semester. Students pay $194 per credit hour for four consecutive years as long as they complete 30 semester credit hours each year and maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA. While the rate is higher than regular tuition during the first two years of a student's college career, it will be lower than regular tuition during the last two years after anticipated tuition increases go into effect. Each fall, the Guaranteed Tuition Program rate will be adjusted based on the current regular rate of tuition.

At **UT Pan American**, additional semester credit hours over 14 hours are not charged designated tuition. The university also has implemented a "three-peat" policy to discourage students from taking courses more than once. The policy requires payment of an additional $100 per credit hour for courses taken more than twice.

UT Permian Basin has created the "Graduate on Time" program. Under this program, any student who completes 30 semester credit hours in a calendar year (fall through summer) earns a $400 tuition credit that can be used in their senior year. The 30 credits

must fulfill degree requirements. Credits that repeat courses already taken do not count for the program.

Historically, many UT Permian Basin students "stop out" from college; that is, they stop taking courses in order to earn funds to pay for college. This has led to many instances where students reach their senior year, but then may take several additional years to complete the degree. The Graduate on Time program will provide extra funding for that senior year so that students will not need to stop out.

Beginning in Fall 2007, **UT San Antonio** will implement an incentive program for students who take more hours and/or graduate within four to five years. A university-wide committee composed primarily of students is considering options for the program such as implementing a flat-rate tuition rate, offering rebates prior to graduation, free tuition during semester of graduation, and "locking-in" tuition rates for four years.

UT Tyler offers a "Free Senior Semester Tuition Rebate" program to reward those students who enroll in 15 or more credit hours and maintain consecutive semester enrollment. Students can receive up to 15 credits tuition (designated)-free in their senior year by participating in the program.

In summary, UT academic institutions are taking advantage of the flexibility provided by tuition deregulation to develop and implement tuition policies that give students opportunities and incentives to complete their degrees in a timely manner.

Table 1

UT System Academic Institutions
Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas
Fiscal Year 2005 Graduates

Institution Name	Program	# Grads	Credits Attempted at Any Texas Univ.	Mean Semesters (not including Summer) at Any Texas Univ.
UT Arlington				
	Science and Math	169	149	10
	Arts and Architecture	565	153	11
	Business	511	148	10
	Engineering*	152	156	10
	Health	118	151	10
	Social Sciences and Service	306	154	11
Total Graduates		1,821		
Institutional Average			152	10
UT Austin				
	Science and Math	1,017	138	9
	Arts and Architecture	2,259	128	9
	Business	964	123	8
	Engineering*	701	138	9
	Health	178	140	9
	Social Sciences and Service	1,964	129	9
Total Graduates		7,083		
Institutional Average			133	9
UT Brownsville				
	Science and Math	55	168	12
	Arts and Architecture	9	164	12
	Business	8	164	12
	Health		169	12
	Social Sciences and Service	11	158	11
	Technology		163	12
Total Graduates		34		
Institutional Average			164	11
UT Dallas				
	Science and Math	234	144	10
	Arts and Architecture	266	145	11
	Business	413	144	10
	Engineering*	95	149	10
	Health	29	125	9
	Social Sciences and Service	224	140	10
Total Graduates		1,261		
Institutional Average			141	10

* Engineering programs typically require more semester credit hours than most other undergraduate degree programs.

Institution Name	Program	# Grads	**Credits Attempted at Any Texas Univ.**	**Mean Semesters at Any Texas Univ.**
UT El Paso				
	Science and Math	141	157	12
	Arts and Architecture	275	163	13
	Business	232	157	12
	Engineering*	88	164	12
	Health	96	163	13
	Social Sciences and Service	203	156	12
Total Graduates		1,035		
Institutional Average			160	11
UT Pan American				
	Science and Math	142	170	11
	Arts and Architecture	471	164	11
	Business	230	167	11
	Engineering*	59	183	11
	Health	117	169	12
	Social Sciences and Service	253	167	11
Total Graduates		1,272		
Institutional Average			170	11
UT Permian Basin				
	Science and Math	34	151	12
	Arts and Architecture	52	151	11
	Business	40	160	12
	Social Sciences and Service	95	150	11
Total Graduates		221		
Institutional Average			153	11
UT San Antonio				
	Science and Math	232	163	11
	Arts and Architecture	504	157	11
	Business	575	153	11
	Engineering*	86	175	12
	Health	11	180	13
	Social Sciences and Service	415	147	11
Total Graduates		1,823		
Institutional Average			163	11
UT Tyler				
	Science and Math	35	147	10
	Arts and Architecture	113	162	11
	Business	111	152	11
	Engineering*	12	161	11
	Health	57	144	10
	Social Sciences and Service	81	155	11
	Technology	9	132	9
Total Graduates		418		
Institutional Average			150	10