

Thursday, September 01, 2011

Traffic Weather Customer Care Edition Register Sign In

Shop Coupons Jobs Autos Homes Classifieds Index Local Education Environment Energy Mexico Military Politics Religion Columnists Data Central Traffic Weather

Texas gets \$1 million for student success

Money is to help transform remedial math.

By Melissa Ludwig
mludwig@express-news.net

Updated 12:22 a.m., Thursday, September 1, 2011

Comments (0)

0

Larger | Smaller

Printable Version

Share

Email This



More Information

- Complete College America proposal
- UT Graduation Rate Analysis

Recent Headlines

- Driver killed when vehicle crashes into bus stop
- Canyon Lake woman dies in wreck after striking deer
- Oil spill shuts Mobile, Ala. shipping channel
- DPS troopers out in force over Labor Day weekend
- Texas deputy constable charged with

After decades of inattention, the problem of college dropouts is starting to gather steam, from the community college level up to national research universities like the [University of Texas at Austin](#).

Today, an associate dean at UT-Austin was set to release his analysis showing the university is among the most efficient in the nation when it comes to producing degrees, but its four-year graduation rate lags behind similar universities.

On Wednesday, [Complete College America](#), a national nonprofit, said it would give \$1 million to Texas to help transform remedial math, a proven barrier to graduation, at 15 community colleges across the state, including the Alamo Colleges.

Intended to help ill-prepared students brush up on skills before entering college-level courses, remedial math is weeding students out of higher education at alarming rates. In Texas, only 2 percent of students who enroll in remedial courses complete a college-credit mathematics course within two years, according to state figures.

"It's long past time for bold innovation," said [Stan Jones](#), president of Complete College America. "Gov. Perry gets it. Doing more of the same will not boost student success or get Texas the additional college graduates it must have to be competitive."

Texas is one of 10 states to win the challenge grant, offered by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Most Read | Most Commented

News



Texas rushes to preserve past

Entertainment

Kidnapping

The grant will expand a program piloted at Texas State University that allows students to complete a remedial and college-level math course within a single semester, rather than usual two or more years. The pilot has doubled success rates from 37 percent to about 74 percent, and state officials are hoping it will do the same at community colleges.

“We must do all that we can to help (students) earn the degree,” said [Brian McCall](#), chancellor of the [Texas State University System](#). “To do otherwise simply wastes the state's money, the student's money and time, and causes us to be complicit in destroying their dreams.”

In general, incoming students' academic ability is the single biggest predictor of graduation.

Community colleges, which take all comers, sometimes have graduation rates below 10 percent, while elite private universities are nearly 100 percent.

Most institutions, however, can look to peers and find room for improvement. That's why [Marc Musick](#), a sociologist and associate dean for student affairs at UT, wrote an analysis.

Using data from the [U.S. Education Department](#), Musick found that UT graduates 53 percent of students in four years and 81 percent in six years.

The [University of California at Berkeley](#) and the [University of Michigan](#), by comparison, graduate about 70 percent of their students in four years and about 90 percent in six years.

UT-Austin President [William Powers](#) has set a goal to raise UT's four-year graduation rate to 70 percent.

Musick found that when money is taken into account, UT is one of the most efficient degree producers in the nation, second only to the [University of Florida](#).

It ranks 10th among 120 public research universities in the percentage of students graduated for every public dollar received, and ranks second for the lowest cost paid by students and the state for each professor employed.

Musick also found that after students' academic ability, the number and quality of faculty has the biggest influence on graduation rates.

“Look, we are good, I don't think there is any question about that. But we can be better,” he said.



Former KSAT reporter Lozano dies at age 42

Sports



ACC's season could be shaped by new QBs

[Printable Version](#)
[Email This](#)
[Share](#)
0

mySA Home News Blogs Business Sports Columnists Editorials Education Entertainment Forums	Life Events Calendar Multimedia National/International Obituaries Politics Travel Traffic Weather Food Spurs	Topics Community Health Living Green SA Military Outdoors Visitors' Guide SA Paws SA Cultura	Marketplace Autos Classifieds Find San Antonio Jobs Real Estate Shopping Business Directory Fan Shop	Community Calendar Photos Other Editions e-Edition Mobile Facebook Follow us on Twitter Express-News in Education	Local Services Air Conditioning Contractors in San Antonio Car Dealerships in San Antonio Cleaning Services in San Antonio Family Doctors in San Antonio Furniture Stores in San Antonio Injury Attorneys in San Antonio New Car Dealers in San Antonio Real Estate Agents in San Antonio Real Estate Attorneys in San Antonio Restaurants in San Antonio	About Us About Us Advertise online Advertise in print Newspaper Delivery Place a classified ad Buy Photos Archives Privacy Policy Terms and Conditions Ethics Policy
---	--	--	---	---	---	--

RSS