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**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2007 3:45 PM

**To:** Wildenthal, Bryan H

**Cc:** Alford, Roger; Reyes, Pedro

**Subject:** Coordinating Board Request - Statutory Four-Year Review of Degree Programs, Mission Statements, and Table of Programs

**Importance:** High

*This e-mail is sent on behalf of Roger Alford, Director of Instruction and Academic Affairs, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board*

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Hobson Wildenthal, Executive Vice President and Provost

**From:** Roger Alford, Director of Instruction and Academic Affairs

**Subject:** Statutory four-year review of degree programs, Mission Statement and Table of Programs

It is once again time for a reconsideration and possible update of your institution's Mission Statement and Table of Programs. State statutes [*Texas Education Code*, Chapter 61, Section 61.051(e)] require that the Coordinating Board review public universities' and health-related institutions' degree programs, role and mission statements, and Tables of Programs every four years.

In practice, this process involves a review of the following documents that the Coordinating Board maintains and approves for your institution:

(1) *The Mission Statement*

— a text statement that you produce describing the teaching, research, and service missions of your institution, including regional, state and national dimensions of those missions. Coordinating Board review of this statement generally involves determining whether the statement is accurate, whether it describes your institution's mission in appropriate detail, and whether requested expansions or changes are warranted.

(2) *The Table of Programs*

— a document that maps out the disciplinary areas and levels that the Coordinating Board considers consistent with the academic mission of your institution. The Table of Programs shows authority in disciplines and at levels where institutions have approved degree programs. It also indicates disciplinary areas where the institution has authority, but no programs. We refer to the latter situation as "preliminary authority." When reviewing Tables of Programs, the Board is charged to consider "the present and future needs of the state" as well as regional needs [TEC, Section 61.051(e)].

Taken together, the Mission Statement and Table of Programs broadly describe the academic mission of an institution and the academic fields and degree levels that the Board has approved as appropriate for that mission. Approval of new degree programs through the Coordinating Board generally involves two steps: 1) gaining Table of Programs' authority for a program during the regular four-year review, and 2) submitting a program proposal that is approved by the Coordinating Board.

Please note that the Coordinating Board's streamlined degree approval process can only be used in cases where a proposed program is authorized in the Table of Programs. If you know of programs that your institution may propose within the next several years, please include them in your Table of Programs update request.

(3) *The program inventory*

– the Coordinating Board document that lists all degree programs that the Board has approved for your institution. (Look at this document if you have questions about what degree programs the Board has approved for your institution or about how the programs are classified.)

The review process also involves a fourth, computer-generated document:

(4) *A list of low-producing degree programs* – degree programs at your institution that have not met the Coordinating Board's minimum standards for productivity over the last three years. Low productivity may be a sign of quality problems with a given program or low student interest, or may indicate that institutional resources could be more effectively allocated to other programs. TEC, Section 61.051(e) gives the Coordinating Board the authority to "order the initiation, consolidation, or elimination of degree or certificate programs where that action is in the best interest of the public institutions themselves or the general requirements of the State of Texas, the counties in which they are located, or when that action offers hope of achieving excellence by a concentration of available resources." In practice, we ask you how you propose to address issues related to low-productivity programs, and we hope that you will use the review as a tool to improve the effectiveness of program offerings at your institution.

Below are the processes you should use for requesting Table of Program and Mission Statement changes and for reviewing low-producing degree programs.

### **Process for review of Tables of Programs and Mission Statements**

1. We send systems and institutions a link to our website of currently approved Table of Programs and a copy of Mission Statements.  
Table of Programs link: <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/aar/top/>
2. We ask institutions to review both of these. In the case of the Table of Programs, we ask you to look very closely at whether the Table of Programs includes authority for any degree programs that are in development or that you anticipate developing in the next four or five years.
3. An institution should gain approval from its Board of Regents for any proposed changes to the Mission Statement or Table of Programs before sending them to the Coordinating Board for review.
4. Your recommended changes to the Table of Programs should be submitted using the attached form titled *Format for Preliminary Authority Requests*.
5. If you are making changes to your Mission Statement, it is probably simplest just to submit a copy of the revised statement. If you have no changes to either the Table of Programs or Mission Statement, please let us know that.

### **Process for review of low-producing degree programs**

1. We send you a list of low-producing degree programs.
2. We ask you to review these programs and, for each low-producing program, let us know
  - a.) whether you intend to phase the program out or combine it with other programs; or
  - b.) if you do not intend to eliminate the program, your justification for continuing it.

The Board's standards for degree productivity, which were approved in January 1992, consider the most recent three academic years. Programs are classified as low-producing based on the following criteria:

- baccalaureate programs with fewer than nine graduates over the three-year period;
- master's/specialist programs with fewer than six graduates; and
- doctoral programs with fewer than three graduates.

## Timeline and Deadlines

Coordinating Board consideration and re-approval of your institution's Mission Statement and Table of Programs are planned for January 2008. Prior to that, there may be a consideration of individual Table of Programs expansion requests by Academic Excellence and Research Committee of the Coordinating Board.

To allow time for a review of the materials you send us as well as time for any discussions that are needed before our Board considers your request, we ask you to help us adhere to the following schedule:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Response to Roger Alford about low-producing degree programs	November 1, 2007
Board of Regents approval of proposed changes to Mission Statement and Table of Programs	Prior to submission to Coordinating Board
Submission to Roger Alford of proposed changes to Mission Statement and Table of Programs	November 1, 2007
Discussion of Mission Statement and Table of Programs requests with Coordinating Board Academic Excellence and Research Committee	December 12, 2007
Consideration of requests by Coordinating Board	January 2008

If you have questions, please contact me by phone at 512/427-6216 or by e-mail at [Roger.Alford@thecb.state.tx.us](mailto:Roger.Alford@thecb.state.tx.us). As always, thanks for your cooperation.