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The GI is currently working with 288 students who began at UTSA in 2006.

The size of the entering class grew in 2006. The rate of participation for this LI cohort is 71%.

Late Intervention: Highest participation rate

This past summer semester saw the conclusion of Late Intervention for the cohort of first-time, full-time freshmen who started at UTSA in fall 2005. Of the 343 students initially identified as eligible in spring 2010 and invited into the program, 253 decided to participate. The activities focusing on the 2005 cohort of entering students marked the Graduation Initiative's fifth effort at working with students to help them graduate within six-years.

The seventy-four percent participation rate for the 2005 cohort represents the highest percentage of participation in the history of the Late Intervention.

Students who are part of this program receive a grant of up to \$3,000 distributed over the number of semesters remaining to degree and their continuing progress is closely monitored by analysts. Participating students in the Late Intervention have consistently graduated at a rate that is substantially higher than that of similarly situated peers in the same cohort who did not participate. **The expected graduation rate for participants from the 2005 cohort is 79.8% while the expected rate for non-participants is 47.8%.**

—Jinny Case

Participation rate by College

	Participants	Non-Participants	Rate
COA	11	5	69%
COB	47	11	81%
COE	57	18	76%
COEHD	24	5	83%
COLFA	59	26	69%
COPP	13	0	100%
COS	42	25	63%
Overall	253	90	74%

Source: The Graduation Initiative

Meet the staff—Beka Pangrac

Rebekah Pangrac earned her bachelor's degrees (Criminal Justice and Psychology) at UTSA in 2009. As an undergraduate, she collaborated briefly with the Graduation Initiative's Senior Analyst and website manager, Linda Chalmers, to create the Rowdy Cents website. In spring 2011, while pursuing her master's degree (Justice Policy), she joined the GI team as a graduate assistant.

"Here I found a few familiar faces and met others for the first time, quickly coming to know and respect each individual for their dedication, passion, and thoughtful approach to resolving students' issues. Being part of the Graduation Initiative has been an incredibly rewarding and valuable experience. In addition to acquiring new marketable skills, experience, and knowledge, I took pride in being part of a program that constantly serves as a positive influence in students' lives."

Now once again a UTSA graduate, it is time to start a new life and a career. As she begins the next chapter of her life, Beka will proudly represent UTSA—at heart a Roadrunner, always—and will never forget her time working here.



Rebekah Pangrac



Recent GI projects

Each year, the Graduation Initiative completes Retention and Graduation reports and Student Profile reports for each department and college on campus. These reports drill down to the college and department levels for retention and graduation rates so colleges know how their students contribute to the whole. The student profile fall reports give the colleges and departments info about their students and any changing patterns.

In addition to these annual reports, as part of an information sharing mission, the Graduation Initiative completes analyses and reports on an ad hoc basis for individual departments, colleges, and other offices on campus. Individualized analysis and reporting helps campus stakeholders make data driven decision based on things like how students progress toward degree through critical courses or how a certain subpopulation of students matriculates through a program.

Graduation Initiative

Dr. Patricia Glenn

Associate Dean for Retention & Graduation

Kristi Meyer

Director

Jinny Case

Senior Retention & Graduation Analyst

Linda Chalmers

Senior Retention & Graduation Analyst

Shannon Rios

Retention & Graduation Analyst

Rebekah Pangrac

Office Assistant

Richard Mejia

Student Assistant

Examples of the specialized analyses and reports that the Graduation Initiative recently completed:

Analysis of CRJ 3013: Grade performance and mathematics prerequisites of this course with a traditionally high D, F, & W rate

Analysis of CRJ 4933: Examination of the relationship between the internship, course load, enrollment, and graduation in Criminal Justice

AP Analysis and COS: AP credit and performance in various introductory science courses

Biology Three Attempt Report: Grades and attempts in gatekeeper Biology courses

Degrees Awarded to Information Systems/ Technology Management majors: Degrees awarded in Information Systems and Information Assurance from fall 2000 through fall 2010

Freshman GPA and Earned Hours Study: Comparison of GPAs and earned hours for a potential Criminal Justice major

Honors Students and Dual Credit Courses: Honors College students' performance in courses subsequent to earning dual credit

IS 1403_revisited: Course performance by section and student characteristics

UTSA residency requirement: Transfer of courses in final semester

UTSA students with outside credit for WRC 1013/1023: Patterns of WRC 1013/1023 credit for current UTSA students

82nd Legislative Wrap-Up: Legislative actions and changes important to undergraduate studies at UTSA

GI Analyst gives presentation at STEM Conference



Shannon Rios

In September, Retention and Graduation Analyst Shannon Rios presented at *Creating Pathways for STEM Transfer Student Success 2011*, sponsored by the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students (NISTS), in Asheville, North Carolina.

The NISTS, founded in 2002, is housed at the University of North Texas and was formed out of a need for research and dialogue about issues facing transfer students nationwide.

Shannon's presentation, *Native vs. Transfer Students at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA): Rates of Persistence and Graduation among Biology Majors*, compared grade performance in gatekeeper courses, graduation status, and time to degree of native versus transfer Biology majors.

-Shannon Rios

Transfer is the new norm

Nearly sixty percent of students earning a bachelors degree in the United States attended more than one college while earning their degree, making successful transfer between institutions an issue of paramount importance, as we think about how to increase the number of degrees earned in Texas. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), details recommendations for effective statewide policies in their recent report entitled *Promising Practices Guide in Statewide Articulation and Transfer Systems*.

Did you know...

In Fall 2011, 10,535, or 40%, of UTSA undergraduates were admitted as transfer students



Recommendations to enhance transfer success:

- Organizations with statewide authority should regularly assess statewide policies regarding articulation and transfer. The interests of administrators, students, parents, high school staff and faculty should be considered during this process.
- New mandates, including procedures to assess accountability, from state legislators to universities and colleges should be fully funded.
- Collaborative agreements should be reached on the type of data to be collected and the means of collecting it.
- Provide clear guides to students wishing to transfer under a specific major. Transfer pathways should be easily accessible on the internet.
- Maintain a frequent staff and faculty presence at community events to advise students regarding transfer options.
- Evaluate student transfer success regularly and share data on success widely with stakeholders.
- Establish a specific campus contact for transfer issues.
- Provide alternative pathways to degree completion.

- Jinny Case

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. (2010). *Promising practices in statewide articulation and transfer systems*.

33.7% of UTSA graduates completed 30 or more SCH at a 2-year college

Degrees awarded and predicted graduation rate key components to new outcomes based funding



The formula used to determine the primary source of state funding for colleges and universities is changing. New statute passed during the most recent legislative session mandates that no more than 10% of formula funding can be based on student success outcomes.

For general academic teaching institutions, the success measures must include:

- ⇒ total number of bachelor degrees awarded
- ⇒ number of bachelor degrees in critical fields awarded
- ⇒ number of bachelor degrees awarded to at-risk students
- ⇒ Predicted versus actual six-year graduation rate

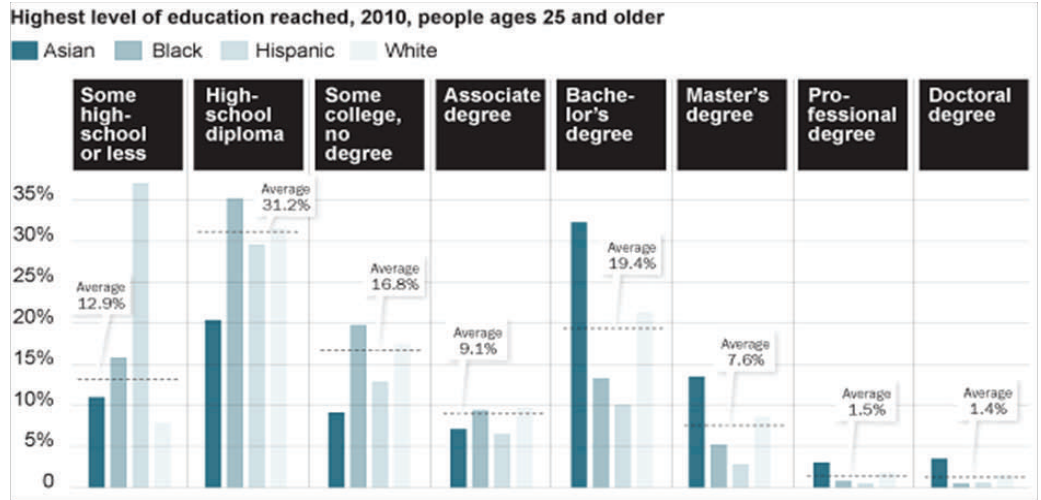
Funding for graduate education is not impacted by this legislation.

-Kristi Meyer



Adult degree attainment

According to a recent report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, as reported by The Washington Post, the U.S. ranks #2, after Norway, in the world of bachelor degree holders between ages 25 – 64. However, the U.S. has slipped from #12 to #16 in degree holders aged 25-34. In Texas, 25% of adults have a bachelor’s degree or above.



Source: Current Population Survey, Census Bureau, Reprinted from *The Almanac of Higher Education 2011*

Less than a third of American adults have at least a bachelor's degree

Welcome Back! graduates former stop outs



Michelle Dueñas
Welcome Back! participant, 2011 UTSA Graduate

The Welcome Back 2010 Outreach has provided limited financial support, maximum encouragement, and frequent advocacy for its 75 participants. In the inaugural cohort that began in spring 2010, 47% of participants graduated by August 2011, with another 5% applying for graduation this coming December and into 2012.

Welcome Back 2011 Outreach began with invitation letters in May for participation in the fall semester. The 181 students who received the invitation averaged just 13 hours remaining for the degree. Nearly one-half of these students had less than 9 hours remaining! Welcome Back has assisted 43 new participants since the outreach began and has already realized success with **5 who graduated this August , and 5 more have applied to graduate this December!**

The key to Welcome Back is that it pairs financial assistance with personalized and individualized assistance in overcoming barriers to graduation. Students like Michelle are the way that the university, state, and nation will meet their respective goals for increasing the number of Americans with college degrees.

Rowdy Cents



Rowdy Cents, Student Money and Time Matters, is the UTSA online financial literacy program created and managed by the Graduation Initiative since May 1, 2009. With the addition this past spring of drop down menus and two interactive tools, it continues to draw new and returning visitors. Nearly 9,000 visitors have viewed the 23 pages nearly 34,000 times.

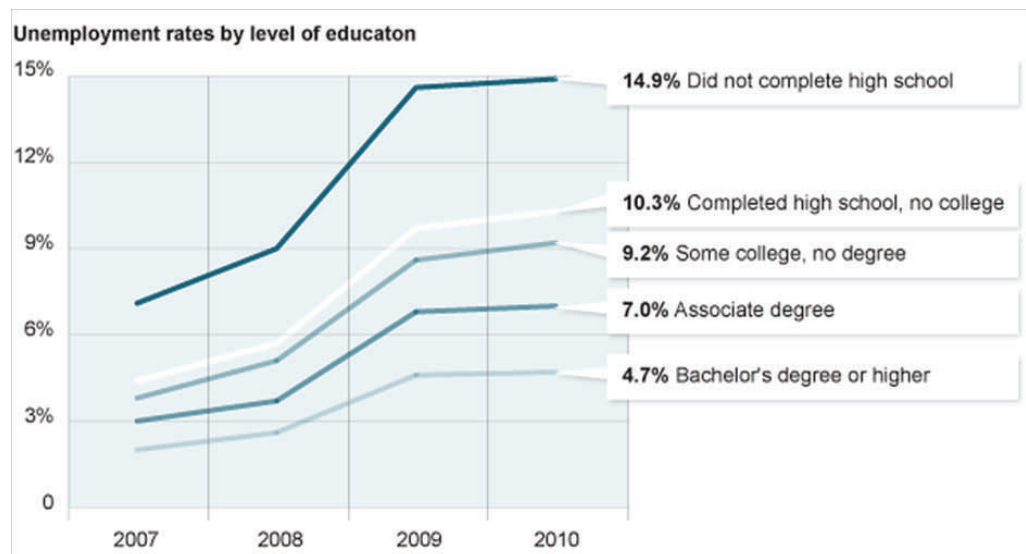
Although the content is written for a college student, anyone can get useful information about budgeting, saving, avoiding debt, and managing time at www.utsa.edu/moneymatters. Get in the financial game and score with Rowdy Cents!



—Linda Chalmers

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in addition to higher earnings, people with higher education levels are more likely work full-time and year-round.

Employment and Education: Better and Higher Education, less unemployment



Source: *The Almanac of Higher Education 2011*

While national unemployment rates have risen among the entire U.S. population since the 2008 economic decline, those individuals with a higher education, an associate's or bachelor's degree, experienced less of an increase in their unemployment rate.

GI Good Guy

As we work with students to help them graduate, we occasionally have the pleasure of discovering someone who goes the extra mile for students, patiently, cheerfully and often. Some of these folks work behind the scenes and pull out the stops to help. For many years, we have called these individuals “Good Guys” forming a network of support and caring for all of our students. Many are unsung heroes and we’d like to change that. So, we sponsor the GI Good Guy Award to honor these exceptional individuals who make this a better place for everyone who comes into contact with them. (Oh, some of our Good Guys are Gals; hope you will allow us the linguistic license!) — *Dr. Patti Glenn*



The GI Good Guy Award for fall, 2011 goes to...

Linda Gall and Ann Roberts** of Financial Services have provided outstanding service to students and to the Graduation Initiative on those occasions involving money-related holds and payment issues. We recognize both of them today as GI GOOD GUYS!

It’s a difficult job telling students they owe money to UTSA and listening to the reasons why they can’t pay. “But it’s my job...for 7 years now,” said Linda Gall, Financial Services Associate II. Serving students almost entirely by phone, Linda has an acute awareness of the student’s situation just by listening and asking a few targeted questions. Undoubtedly, she is empathetic because she’s walking in similar shoes - pursuing her BBA in Management part-time while being a fulltime UTSA employee, a wife, a mother to 2 grown children, and a grandmother to 6.

“I could not do all that I have done without the support of my family, in particular my husband,” she confesses. “That’s my advice to others who are juggling work, family, and school. Have a supportive family that will take care of things for you when you need to study.” From her financial vantage point, Linda advises students to avoid using credit cards and taking out too much in student loans, citing that these really do impact a student or graduate’s quality of life. And for women students, she says, “Don’t try to be a superwoman or supermom because something will give out or break down in the process – your health, your family, or your grades.”

When Linda has a little time for relaxation she loves to go fishing. “It’s the serenity of sitting and waiting for the fish to bite and, even if



*Linda Gall
UTSA Financial Services*

they don’t, it makes me happy,” she says. Being happy in her job has its rewards, too. “It’s when a student comes back to tell me that he/she has graduated,” she reminisces, “And thanks me for my help. That’s the best reward of all.”

**Ann Roberts, SIS Financial Accounting Manager, has been “snowed under” with end of year (2010-2011) and fall semester reporting. Unfortunately we were unable to interview and take her picture in time for this newsletter. When visiting about this recognition, Ann said, “There’s no need for recognition; I’m really just doing my job.” We do want to say publicly, “THANK YOU, Ann, for your untiring service!”

—*Linda Chalmers*

