Terms and Definitions

The Mission Statement is the formal statement of the mission of an institution of a public university or health-related institution. The Mission Statement takes the form of a narrative that addresses the fundamental purpose of the institution with respect to its teaching, research, and public service responsibilities from a regional, state, and national perspective. Current Mission statements can be viewed here: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/AAR/missions.cfm.

The Table of Programs is a chart indicating instructional discipline areas that the Coordinating Board has approved as being within the institution's mission. The chart indicates areas in which the institution already has programs for which the institution is authorized to grant degrees, as well as areas appropriate for future program expansion through the granting of preliminary authority. In addition to discipline area, the Table of Programs indicates the level of degree (from associate level to professional) authorized by the Board. In accordance with the rule changes adopted by the Coordinating Board on July 30, 2009, universities and health-related institution need only request preliminary authority for engineering programs (all levels) and doctoral programs.

When the Coordinating Board approves expansions to an institution's Table of Programs as part of the regular review cycle, it is not approving the program indicated in the expansion; rather, it is giving the institution approval to amass the resources needed to propose the new degree program at a later date. The Coordinating Board will then consider the request to offer the degree program once a proposal has been submitted, based on quality standards, commitment of resources and cost effectiveness, and state and regional need at the time of submission. Current Institutional Tables of Programs can be viewed here: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/aar/top/.

Tables of Programs are arranged according to a system of instructional program identifiers developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) called the Classification of Instructional Programs, commonly referred to as the "CIP Codes." The national taxonomy is available here: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2002/cip2000/. Texas CIP Codes are derived from the national ones, but may indicate degree programs that do not appear in the national taxonomy. Texas CIP Codes use a system of up to eight-digit identifying numbers, while the national CIP Codes use only six identifying numbers. More information about federal and Texas CIP Codes is available here: http://www.txhighereddata.org/Interactive/CIP/.

Low-producing degree programs are monitored as part of the four-year review of Mission Statements and Tables of Programs. Any degree programs that have not met the Coordinating Board's minimum standards for productivity over the last three years are considered to be low-producing. 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."

An institution is asked to provide a justification for continuing a low-producing degree program (e.g., if the program is small by nature) and to develop an action plan to improve a low-producing degree program. The action plan must include a detailed plan to increase enrollment and graduation productivity during the next four years. A follow-up review of the program will take place at the next four-year cycle to determine whether significant progress has been made.