

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board awards expansion grant for University of Houston-Downtown's new Texas Affordable Baccalaureate program

Austin, Texas, January 22, 2018— Today the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us) announced the award of \$250,000 to the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) for its proposal to expand the Texas Affordable Baccalaureate (TAB) program. The funds awarded will support the planning, development and implementation of the institution's new affordable baccalaureate program. UHD and Houston Community College (HCC) are partnering to develop a streamlined competency-based curriculum to offer a bachelor of applied arts and sciences (BAAS) in applied public administration and leadership at UHD and an associate of applied sciences (AAS) in business management from HCC.

"The Texas Affordable Baccalaureate is a cost-effective option to provide greater socioeconomic mobility for a greater number of Texans," said Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes. "The state must continue to innovate and provide cost-effective, high-quality education that meets the needs of an ever-changing global economy while providing greater opportunity and prosperity for Texans. The Coordinating Board welcomes this Houston-area partnership that helps us expand affordable baccalaureate options in Texas."

The BAAS in applied public administration and leadership will be offered to students in fall 2019 pending final approvals from the University of Houston System Board of Regents, THECB and Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It will be a new concentration (part of the existing BAAS in Applied Administration based in UHD's University College) aimed at bolstering the skills and knowledge of those serving the public sector. This concentration will be targeted toward seasoned professionals with extensive career experience who have not completed their undergraduate degrees. It will be an asset to those seeking to elevate their careers to management positions and other administrative roles that require a university degree.

Through competency-based curriculum, students will have opportunities to accelerate their education and quickly complete college credits. Competency-based coursework will be structured through strategic learning outcomes. Students who demonstrate a mastery of principles outlined in these outcomes can advance through the program in a timely manner and progress in their careers.

The BAAS in applied public administration and leadership was developed following research and consultation with employees from the Houston Police Department, Houston Fire Department, Houston Port Authority, Harris County Sheriff's Office and other organizations. It would be the only Texas Affordable Baccalaureate degree located in a major urban setting and address workforce needs in the Greater Houston region and throughout the state.

Through the UHD-HCC partnership, students will have the opportunity to seamlessly transfer from HCC's AAS in business management into UHD's BAAS in applied public administration and leadership, or complete both degrees through joint admissions.

Students with no previous college credits can complete the BAAS in as few as three years at a cost of \$15,002. Those who have completed their AAS can complete their bachelor's degrees in slightly less than two years at a cost of \$9,875.

"We are proud to partner with Houston Community College in providing Texans with access to affordable higher education opportunities," said Dr. Juan Sánchez Muñoz, UHD president. "This TAB Grant will support both institutions' efforts in delivering a dynamic new degree program that helps Houstonians achieve success in the classroom and in their careers. The Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree in applied public administration and leadership was designed for professionals serving the city's public sector. We are confident that its curriculum will benefit both students and ultimately, the communities they serve."

"This grant is another testament to the value of higher education. We celebrate with our partners from University of Houston - Downtown for receiving the resources to put many students on the path of professional success," said Dr. Cesar A. Maldonado, HCC Chancellor. "Together we are stronger and we can't wait to see the impact this grant will have in our city's future leaders."

[The College For all Texans Foundation](#) supported the fundraising efforts for recent TAB grants, which were made possible through [AT&T Aspire](#), [Greater Texas Foundation](#), [Kresge Foundation](#), and [Meadows Foundation](#). In the past year, grants were awarded to UHD, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Tarleton State University, South Texas College (in partnership with Austin Community College), and Texas A&M University-Commerce. Grant recipients were selected through a competitive application and review process. On Jan. 9, the Coordinating Board released a [request for proposals](#) for additional TAB programs. There is no deadline, however, funds are limited.

The Texas Affordable Baccalaureate program supports *60x30TX*, the state's higher education goals for completion, marketable skills, managing student debt, and ensuring that at least 60 percent of Texans age 25-34 will have a college degree or certificate by 2030.

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THECB Mission Statement

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is to provide leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through 60x30TX, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.