VIP NOMINATIONS STEP BY STEP PROCESS

- VIP nominations are sent to Ana Leos electronically
- Ana will email the VIP applicants letting them know that they have been nominated
- The College will decide if they will be paying for the VIP application fee
  - The College will have access to view the applications
- If College decides to pay for the application fee, they will need to notify the VIP applicant letting them know to start the application but to NOT PAY FOR THE APPLICATION FEE
  - The College will be responsible for monitoring the VIP applications for which they plan to pay
- Once the VIP application has been completed and is ready for payment, the college will notify the Graduate School by emailing BOTH Ana Leos and Angela Cantu.
- In the email to Ana Leos and Angela Cantu, the college will need to provide the following applicant information:
  - Applicant’s full name
  - Applicant’s Banner ID
  - The term and program they are applying for
  - Specify if the applicant is domestic or international
  - Provide the cost center or project ID
- Once Ana and Angela receive the payment request, Angela Cantu will process an IDT for the application fee payment/s.
- Ana will then waive the fee and contact the applicant to have them complete and submit their graduate application.
Dear GEAC Members,

Here is some information from Ginger Gossman relating to the presentation she gave on Marketable Skills at our GEAC meeting yesterday. She is adding new text, highlighted below, to pg. 6 of the handout she distributed at the meeting.

The goal calls for every institution in Texas to articulate the identified skills to students. How you articulate those skills is up to you. One suggestion on how to do this came from the Marketable Skills Conference in 2016. Eluned Jones, President, UK Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and Director of Student Employability, University of Birmingham, shared that all institutions in the United Kingdom are required to reference marketable skills (called employability skills) on their program websites. This is an excellent way to communicate efficiently with students before they even begin your program. At a minimum, we hope you will engage students with the idea of marketable skills on their first day in your program. You can find her presentation at that conference online. All of the presentations from that conference are posted online under Meeting Materials. Both Ireland and Canada have also made significant strides in terms of marketable skills. These are called transferrable skills in Ireland, and employability skills in Canada. GradIreland.com shares information directed at recent undergraduate completers. The Irish Universities Association also produces a skills statement for graduate level students. Resources are available online from the Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education, but they are fees associated with these products.

I hope you and your colleagues find this helpful. Thank you to Dr. Gossman and to Dr. Rex Peebles on behalf of everyone in GEAC for providing an update on the Marketable Skills initiative.

Sincerely,

-Allen Michie
The Big Picture
The 60x30TX plan was designed such that all four student-centered goals tie together. 60x30, the educated population, is the overarching goal at the center of the plan, but the other three goals are what will get us to 60% by 2030. The completion goal counts the number of degrees (associate, bachelor’s, and master’s) and undergraduate certificates conferred at Texas institutions. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics make clear that students do not get much of an economic lift from college attendance unless they complete a degree or undergraduate certificate. Also completing the degree ensures students will gain full exposure to all of the skills available to them through academic programs.

Students who can effectively market their skills to potential employers can secure employment that pays competitively. Higher earnings should position graduates to pay off their student debt without undue burden on them or their families. Student debt ties back to completion. The debt goal is not about removing debt, or even reducing debt. It’s managing student loan debt in a way that supports student’s educational and career aspirations. Incuring debt should not be a barrier to reaching those aspirations. Student debt is a tool, a resource for achieving completion, and gaining marketable skills.

THE THIRD GOAL: MARKETABLE SKILLS
By 2030, all graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills.

Marketable Skills Defined
Marketable skills include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas, are valued by employers, and are primary or complementary to a major. Marketable skills are acquired by students through education, including curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. Marketable skills are often called employability skills in other countries, or transferable skills here in the states. They include both technical and soft skills. We have purposefully left this definition broad to allow institutions the freedom to hone in on those skills valued by their industry partners. The marketable skills goal was designed to help students market themselves to employers.

Higher Calling → Graduate Success
The marketable skills goal emphasizes the value of higher education in the workforce. Texas public two- and four-year institutions must ensure that students are aware of and graduate with marketable skills. The marketable skills goal enhances higher education’s mission to produce well-rounded and well-informed individuals familiar with all fields of human activity and with a strong understanding of civic responsibilities.

Updated 09.20.2017
“The marketable skills goal does not diminish higher education’s obligation to produce well-rounded and well-informed individuals familiar with all fields of human activity and with a strong understanding of our country’s founding principles (p.vi, 60x30TX).”

All programs develop skills of value in the marketplace. The plan requires institutions to formally identify those skills for each of its degree programs so that students are aware of and can communicate these skills to future employers. The Planning Committee who wrote 60x30TX felt the need to include a goal for marketable skills because of national discussions around graduate employability. Employers are looking for more than hard or technical skills. They need staff who can communicate, synthesize, and improve information.

Graduates from the liberal arts and humanities are especially good at these kinds of “soft skills,” but may not realize the value that holds in the workplace. The marketable skills goal is designed to help students understand the full array of marketable skills and talents they are accruing in their college experience. The Coordinating Board and the Planning Committee truly believe students are graduated with desired skills, they just don’t realize it. A 2017 article in Forbes articulated this well. He argued the skills gap is really an awareness gap, “Simply put, this is the inability for college graduates to make employers aware of the skills they actually have.” The marketable skills goal is designed to close this awareness gap.

**What is Required?**

To implement this goal, institutions will need to (1) identify and document the skills offered in their programs, (2) communicate those skills to students, and (3) update documented skills on a regular basis (and continue to communicate them to students). Much of these guidelines are dedicated to helping institutions with the first step – identifying and documenting marketable skills. The first target in the 60x30TX plan for the marketable skills goal is that institutions will create and implement a process for identifying these skills. Ideally, this process will be identified and implemented by 2020.

Once identified, marketable skills should be communicated to students in a way that makes it easy for them to communicate their skills to potential employers. Essentially, marketable skills should be “résumé ready” to help students build a résumé that has relevance in the workforce. One marketable skills are identified and communication, the process will start over again. This ‘repeat mechanism’ is part of the goal to help institutions document their ongoing alignment with industry, and to capture continuous improvement in curriculum design and delivery. The target years for the ‘repeat mechanism’ can be modified to accommodate institutional program review cycles.

Updated 09.20.2017
Tracking the Marketable Skills Goal
The Coordinating Board is tracking progress towards our goals in our Accountability System. Staff are working to develop a reporting mechanism for the marketable skills goal that may or may not be part of our Accountability portal. This reporting mechanism will likely ask your institutions to report the number or percentage of programs for which a process has been created and implemented. We may also ask how you are sharing marketable skills with students.

We are using the Accountability System to track the progress of 60x30TX because that is the purpose of that system. Our legacy Accountability System tracked the progress for Closing the Gaps by 2015. This does not mean we will use identified marketable skills, in and of themselves, for accountability purposes. We will not. Some institution leaders and faculty may be wary of this goal for several reasons, including being held accountable to external stakeholders. The Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee (HESPC) discussed the merits of measurement, and its potential value to educators and employers. The HESPC decided the value of measuring marketable skills was not significant because there are many student assessments and methods that inform student progression and mastery of course material, including course grades, student learning outcomes, recommendation letters from faculty, and commendations from institutions. Thus, assessment of marketable skill is not part of the design of this goal. The marketable skills goal is intended to provide students with a clearer picture of how courses, curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities relate to workforce opportunities.

*NEW* As workforce opportunities change overtime, so will marketable skills. That is why the plan call for the skills to be continuously updated. The HESPC recognized these updates would be cumbersome for maintaining assessment, another reason it is not required for this goal. Instead, the committee chose to monitor success of this goal indirectly, through a target that reports graduate placement in the workforce. This target measures whether graduates are found enrolled in higher education or in the workforce one year after completing an undergraduate certificate of degree. The target is set at 80 percent, which is based on data from the last 15 years; this metric has remained within five percentage points since 2000. *END*
Getting Started
The first target for the marketable skills goal is "By 2020, institutions will have created and implemented a process to identify and regularly update marketable skills for each of their programs, in collaboration with business and other stakeholders." The first step your program or institution should take towards the marketable skills goal is creating a process for identifying marketable skills, if such a process does not already exist. Be sure this process is replicable, since the skills are to be updated regularly. This is an important component of this goal. We do not know what the job market will look like in 15 years; we do not know what jobs will exist in 15 years. Continually updating the skills that are in demand and in development is crucial.

Here are some ideas on how to start developing a skills identification process:

• **Work with Career Services.** Partner or confer with your Career Services colleagues to identify business partners. Consider including both for- and non-profit employers as stakeholders that can contribute to your skills identification process. Your Career Services office may also be able to help you identify the marketable skills offered in your program. Consider sharing your degree plan with them to start the conversation. You might also invite your Career Services colleagues for classroom observations; it's possible they will identify a skill that is not obvious to you. These colleagues may also be better positioned to connect internships to marketable skills. Ideally, Career Services will become part of the FTIC experience to embed marketable skills into the college-going experience.

• **Use Available Resources.** There are a number of resources already available that can help you both create a process and identify skills in your programs.
  o **First Destination Survey.** Check with your institution or department leadership to learn if you conduct an annual "first destination survey," a survey of your recent graduates. Visit NACE or the Gallup-Purdue Index for survey examples. You may learn where graduates from your program work shortly after they complete their degrees. This might help you lay out the skills your graduates are leveraging to enter the workforce. You may also want to add questions to this survey to learn what marketable skills were of value to graduates as they entered the workforce. **Note: The Coordinating Board is working to design a statewide survey of this kind.**
  o **O*NET Online.** The Occupational Information Network (O*NET) is a free online database developed by the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration that contains hundreds of occupational definitions. For each job, O*NET provides:
    - Personal requirements: the skills and knowledge required to perform the work,
- Personal characteristics: the abilities, interests and values needed to perform the work,
- Experience requirements: the training and level of licensing and experience needed for the work,
- Job requirements: the work activities and context, including the physical, social, and organizational factors involved in the work, and
- Labor market: the occupational outlook and the pay scale for the work.

O*NET is a tool that could guide your identification of marketable skills. If you drill down to the jobs you think your graduates are qualified for, you can use the “personal requirements” and “personal characteristics” to tease out the skills embedded in your programs. The Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics presented on O*NET at the 2016 Marketable Skills Conference; her presentation is online.

- **Launch My Career TX.** This site offers information about colleges and majors, as well as showing the “hot jobs” in your state, the “hot skills” that can help you land those jobs, and the return on your investment of time and money in college as you graduate and look for employment. The "Skills" tab can be a useful tool for resume building. The "Skills" tab shows skills in demand, but not connected with a particular job. This may help acclimate you and your stakeholders to the language used in job postings, should you choose to adopt that kind of working in your identification process. You may also have access to other resources with similar skills information, such as Burning Glass. Or you may use job search sites, such as Indeed, Glassdoor, LinkedIn, or Monster.com. *TO BE REVISED*

- **Pipeline Partners.** Collaborate with your existing partners: university, community college, industry, or organizations. Your neighboring or pipeline institution may be making strides towards identifying marketable skills for each program. Consider reaching out to them to ask for assistance or collaboration. If you have established relationships with industry or business for job placement, internships, apprenticeships, or for work-study (see the first bullet on Career Services), those partners are well-suited to help you identify the marketable skills you are offering. Your established relationships with organizations like the Texas Skill Standards, or regional / local groups like workforce development boards may also be helpful. In addition, you may want to consider the Texas Education Agency endorsements, depending on your student pipeline. Those endorsements include (1) STEM, (2) business & industry, (3) public services, (4) arts & humanities, and (5) multidisciplinary studies. Your K-12 partners are required to offer at least three of these endorsements.

- **NACE Competencies.** The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has defined career readiness as “the attainment...of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.” NACE delineates this readiness by list eight core competencies that support this transition. These competencies may be a great place to start for your programs when identifying marketable skills. One organization has already developed a common framework and definitions of marketable skills for its members by creating a crosswalk between the core objectives already assessed in the Texas Core Curriculum and the in-demand skills sought by employers using the NACE competencies.
Creating this process may be challenging. It might help to understand how this process can help your students. Consider requesting resumes from an assortment of students in their senior year. If they haven't started a resume, that is perhaps a signal of student readiness to transition to their next phase in life, be that workforce or graduate studies. Review these resumes from your perspective. Do they truly represent what each student can do, based on your knowledge of your institution or program? What would you change to help these student market themselves better to potential employers and graduate programs?

The goal calls for every institution in Texas to articulate the identified skills to students. How you articulate those skills is up to you. One suggestion on how to do this came from the Marketable Skills Conference in 2016. Eluned [ELun id] Jones, President, UK Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services and Director of Student Employability, University of Birmingham, shared that all institutions in the United Kingdom are required to reference marketable skills (called employability skills) on their program websites. This is an excellent way to communicate efficiently with students before they even begin your program. At a minimum, we hope you will engage students with the idea of marketable skills on their first day in your program. You can find her presentation at that conference online. All of the presentations from that conference are posted online under Meeting Materials. Canada has also made significant strides in employability skills. Resources are available online from the Centre for Skills and Post-Secondary Education, but they are fees associated with these products.

**Marketable Skills ≠ Learning Outcomes, But SLOs Are Great Place to Start**

We expect that many institutions will be well poised to respond to the marketable skills goal because of the work done to create learning outcomes. Learning outcomes relate directly to the subject matter content of a program. In developing student learning outcomes (SLOs), the focus is on the knowledge and skills students exit with when they complete a program. In many majors/disciplines, there is congruence between SLOs and marketable skills. In the process of mastering an SLO or set of SLOs, a student also may have mastered a complementary marketable skill. In accounting, for example, an SLO might be to demonstrate knowledge with tax accounting as it applies to a sole proprietorship. A marketable skill associated with this SLO could be advanced use of a spreadsheet, or simply “specialized tax accounting.” Another 2017 Forbes article explained how SLOs could be leveraged to appeal to employers.

We encourage faculty to think about and discuss the connection between what students are taught and how that instruction can lead to a functional workplace skill. What other skills are you teaching in the course of programs that do not relate directly to an SLO? Could those also be marketable skills? For example, a student who “masters” statistics for social science has acquired a skill with broad application in private and public sectors.

Another way to think about the relationship between learning outcomes and marketable skills is to ask yourself, “If I gave a learning outcome to a student, would it make sense to him or her? Would it make sense to an employer if that student put it on a resume?” The idea is to help students make the connection between what they learn and the functional value of that learning. As mentioned earlier, marketable skills should be “résumé ready” to help students build a profile of their present their backgrounds and skills that has relevance in the workforce. SLOs are internal mechanisms to inform

Updated 09.20.2017
faculty, administrators, and accrediting bodies. Marketable skills are external mechanisms to inform students, employers, and families. Marketable skills are an opportunity to help student take what they have learned and show how it fits into a potential organization.

Your Role
Implementing the marketable skills goal on your campus will require an “all hands on deck” approach. It may well require a culture shift on campuses to integrate transition to the workforce into regular practice. In a national study by the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute, most students surveyed identified “getting a better job” as the most important reason for attending college. Students who can articulate their marketable skills are better positioned to get a better job.

Institution leadership will play a vital role in achieving the marketable skills goal. They will advocate for policy and / or practice that guides implementation on campuses. *NEW* 60x30TX provides latitude for two- and four-year institutions and encourages local creativity in pursuing the plan’s goals as institutions continue to pursue their own unique missions. Your leadership may decide that part of your unique mission now includes marketable skills. This could foster discussion around questions like, “What characteristics do you want employers and communities to associate with your graduates? Decision-making (skill = leadership), invention (skill = creativity), policy-making (skill = systems thinking)?” *END*

Heads of colleges and programs, and other administrators will implement policies and practices set forth by your leaders, and inform leadership of what works at department levels. Leadership at any level may design incentives for programs to identify their skills. Faculty are critical, as they are most informed of the marketable skills their programs are designed to impart. They are also the front line for sharing and / or reminding students of the skills they are acquiring through academic programs. All of these stakeholders likely have relationships with industry to help identify relevant marketable skills.

Our Role
The Coordinating Board will continue to facilitate discussions around marketable skills. There are still many who do not know about 60x30TX or the marketable skills goal. We will also fold marketable skills into our coordination work. For example, we are drafting proposed rules to integrate marketable skills into new program approvals. Though the plan sets a deadline of 2020 for identifying marketable skills, it behooves new programs to identify the skills they will be offering sooner rather than later.

Our planned activities include:
- Presentations on 60x30TX and marketable skills – ongoing (as invited)
- *NEW WORDING* Draft proposed rules for including identified marketable skills in new program proposals, fall 2017 *END*
- Small group discussion with industry, fall 2017
- Convene statewide learning community, fall 2017
- Second marketable skills conference, 2018

Examples of Implementing / Integrating Marketable Skills
• Reflection on internships, work-study. Student reflection on experiential learning can be valuable in helping them connect their classroom learning, to work experience, and to marketable skills. The

Updated 09.20.2017
The importance of reflection is articulated by PennState in this 2012 article. A number of Texas institutions already include reflection as part of their internship placements: Texas State and educator preparation, Texas A&M and counseling, and Texas Wesleyan University and kinesiology.

- **Curriculum response to the market.** As mentioned earlier, you or your Career Services colleagues may see a growing demand for a particular set of skills. One response to this might be to codify those sets of skills in a credential. For example, Brown University saw a need to better connect data to policy, so they added data science track, to help their master’s in public administration graduates learn to use data to improve social policies. UTSA has also taken this approach by offering a number of undergraduate and graduate certificate programs, including oil/gas and operations and supply chain.

- **Provide more examples? Keep this section?**

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** Is graduate education included in the 60x30TX plan?

**A:** Yes, graduate education is embedded into the plan, and it appears in three of the goals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Graduate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60x30</td>
<td>certificates, associates bachelor’s</td>
<td>master’s, doctoral, professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion</td>
<td>certificates, associates bachelor’s</td>
<td>master’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketable Skills</td>
<td>certificates, associates bachelor’s</td>
<td>master’s, doctoral, professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Debt</td>
<td>certificates, associates bachelor’s</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Q:** Are guidelines for graduate programs different?

**A:** This will be a local decision, by your leadership and faculty. It may be that marketable skills for undergraduates are phrased to have general application. For example, your undergraduate Liberal Arts majors may include “ability to evaluate information” as a marketable skill. Your graduate marketable skills may be more specific. For example, your History graduate programs may include “ability to evaluate information as historically valid” as a marketable skill.

**Q:** How will institutions and the state know if we are doing a good job with marketable skills?

**A:** Ideally, some aspect of “doing a good job” or quality assurance will be built into the process institutions create to identify marketable skills and communicate them to students.

**Q:** Will every course be required to have identified marketable skills?

**A:** No. The goal is for programs to have identified marketable skills, not courses.

**Q:** Does the Marketable Skills Goal ask for more than what institutions have implemented for the core curriculum?

**A:** Yes, this goal is asking for more. The goal is for all programs to have identified marketable skills. The Texas Core Curriculum identifies knowledge and skills all students should have upon exiting a degree program, regardless of major. The Core Objectives include a minimal level of proficiency in three often-cited skills needed by business and industry: communications, critical thinking, and teamwork. Programs may well build on these core objectives, and include other marketable skills, especially those determined, to be desirable during the stakeholder process of identifying marketable skills.

Updated 09.20.2017
Q: Will we be accountable for assessment of marketable skills?
A: No, assessment of student mastery of marketable skills is not included in the plan. Assessment may be something you decide to pursue at your institution, but the plan does not require it. Be sure any plans you make for assessment are aligned with your institution’s vision for this goal.

Q: Do we come up with marketable skills independent of other institutions?
A: You may choose to work independently at your institution. However, you are welcome to work as a group, or as a consortium of institutions. The plan does not dictate how you will identify the marketable skills associated with your programs.

Q: How will you differentiate between “marketable skills,” as used in the strategic plan, versus the “marketable skills award,” as reported on the CBM 00M?
A: Coordinating Board worked with stakeholders to rename the “marketable skills awards” to “occupational skills award”, to avoid confusion. This change occurred in August 2016.

Q: The marketable skills “80%” target sounds like gainful employment. Is that what it is?
A: This target measures whether graduates are found enrolled in higher education or in the workforce one year after completing an undergraduate certificate of degree. The target is set at 80 percent, which is based on data from the last 15 years; this metric has remained within five percentage points since 2000. We assume regional and state economic fluctuations are captured in the historical data, and that fluctuations similar to those that occurred in the past 15 years will occur in the next 15 years. This target is a way for stakeholders to monitor the market. If the metric falls to 70 percent, then something has changed, and we should know what that is, or if it jumps to 90 percent, then again, something has changed, and we should know what that is. In a 2012 national study, 88 percent of surveyed students said a better job was the motivation for going to college. These results underscore why it is important that a substantial portion of completers are employed or pursuing additional education one year after earning a degree or certificate.