

# **Texas Playbook for Scaling 8-Week Terms for Pathways Transformation**

**Download the Texas Playbook:  
[tacc.org/tsc/current-research](http://tacc.org/tsc/current-research)**



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# Pathways Institute

## April 11, 2024

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# Overview of Webinar

## Introduction to the Texas Playbook

- Overview of TSC's Talent Strong Texas Pathways strategy
- Impact of 8-Week Terms
- Design and Resources Available in the Texas Playbook
- How to Use the Texas Playbook



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# Talent Strong Texas Pathways



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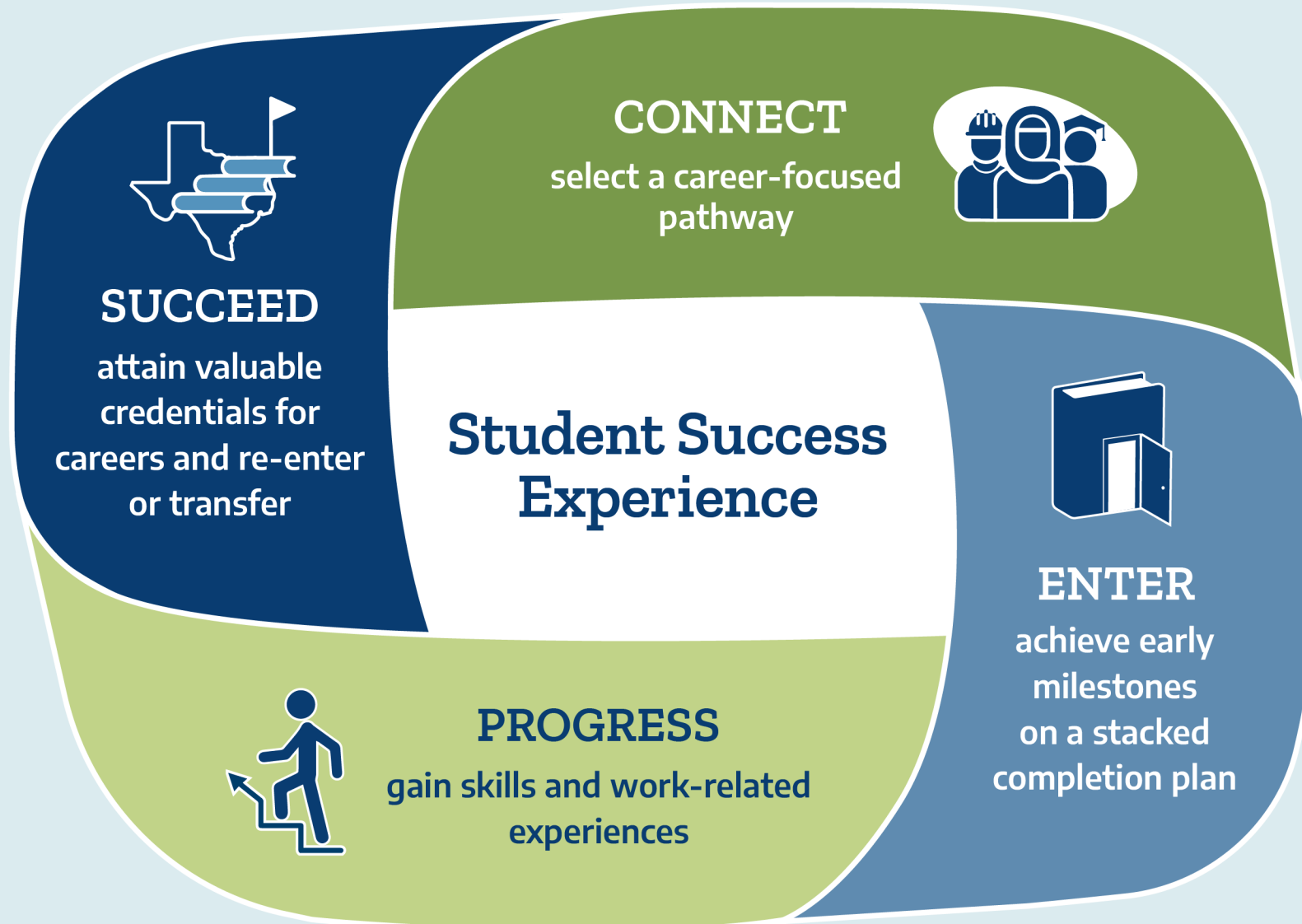


## TEXAS SUCCESS CENTER

Dedicated to social and economic mobility, we support community college strategies that will empower Texans to rise out of poverty and achieve better life outcomes.



# Talent Strong Texas Pathways Framework





# Talent Strong Texas Pathways

## Four Pillars of Essential Practices

1

### Map pathways to student end goals

Employer-informed maps from multiple entry & reentry points to completion, transfer, & valuable careers

2

### Help students choose and enter a pathway

Academic and social integration & career-focused onboarding to promote college-level success in the 1st year

3

### Keep students on their pathway

Proactive supports to improve completion & transfer, enhance belongingness, & address students' basic needs

4

### Ensure students are learning

Active & work-based learning with culturally responsive teaching aligned with careers & further education

How do community colleges make progress in scaling whole-college institutional transformation?



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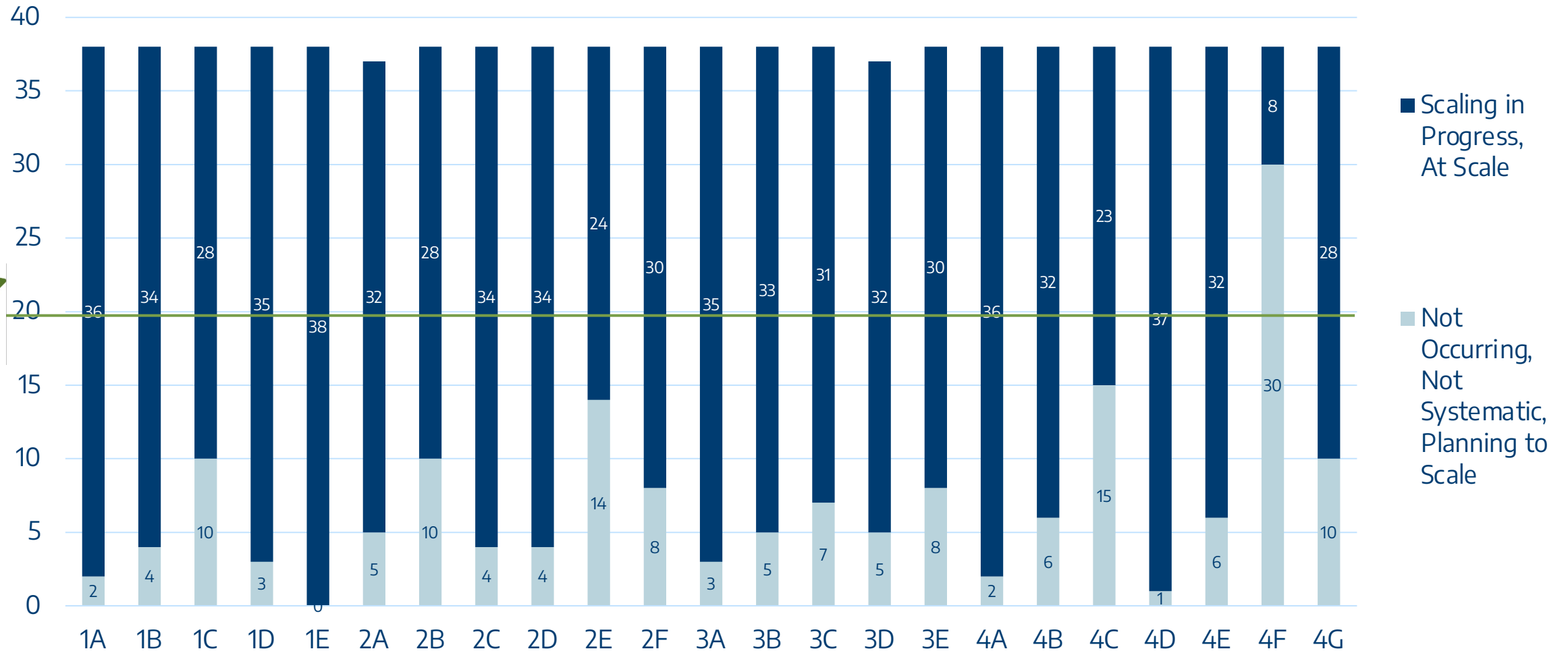
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# 2023 Scale of Adoption Assessment

Texas community colleges are meeting or exceeding collective goals in **22 of 23** measures

Number of Colleges at Each Level of Adoption (N=38)



How can we measure progress in our college's guided pathways reforms to determine impact in student success?



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# Early Momentum Metrics

Early Momentum Metric	2015%	2020%	2021%	Percentage Point Difference 2020-2021	Percentage Point Difference 2015-2021
Earned 6+ Credits in Term 1	58%	65%	62%	-3%	+4%
Completed Math in Year 1	29%	38%	35%	-3%	+6%
Completed Reading in Year 1	54%	58%	54%	-4%	0%
Completed Writing in Year 1	46%	53%	50%	-3%	+4%
Completed All Subjects in Year 1	20%	28%	25%	-3%	+5%
Persisted from Term 1 to 2	76%	72%	74%	+2%	-2%
Earned 15+ Credits in Year 1	44%	50%	47%	-3%	+3%
Earned 30+ Credits in Year 1	8%	11%	9%	-2%	+1%

*Note.* KPIs measure progress for first-time-in-college, degree-seeking students in the fall cohort of the indicated year. *N* = 50 community college districts

# Impact of 8-Week Terms



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# Grayson College Facts



## Student Headcount

Credit student headcount: 4,160

Continuing Education student headcount: 1750

## Enrollment Profile

- Average Age: 23 (inc. dual credit)
- 34% Full-Time (inc. dual credit)
- 60% Female and 40% male
- Approximately 1300 dual credit students serving more than 20 ISD partners

## Largest Employer Sectors

Healthcare

Industrial Technology

Public Services



# Grayson College 8-Week Term Impact Data



	2018	2022-2023
Course Success Rates (A, B, or C)	77%	82%
Fall to Spring Retention	73%	78%
Annual Credit Completions	1162	1398



## Viking Victories (2012 to Now)

- Increased total number of Associate Degrees and Certificates awarded by 31%
- Increased hours attempted per term among students between 2018 and 2021
- FTIC Withdrawal Rates: Have dropped almost 3 percentage points since 2018 (currently at 5.5% in fall 2023)
- More than 1 Year Faster Time to Degree (since 2012)
- Twenty-one less hours to earn degree (since 2012)
- Success Coaches By Pathway
- Course Sequencing for all OSAs, Certificates, and Degrees on the credit side (next step is for our non-credit programs)



# Odessa College Facts



## Student Headcount

Total student headcount: 10,675

Credit student headcount: 8,802

Continuing Education student headcount: 1,855

## Age of Students

Average age: 21

Traditional (22 & Under): 75

Non-traditional: (23 & Older): 25%

## Enrollment Status

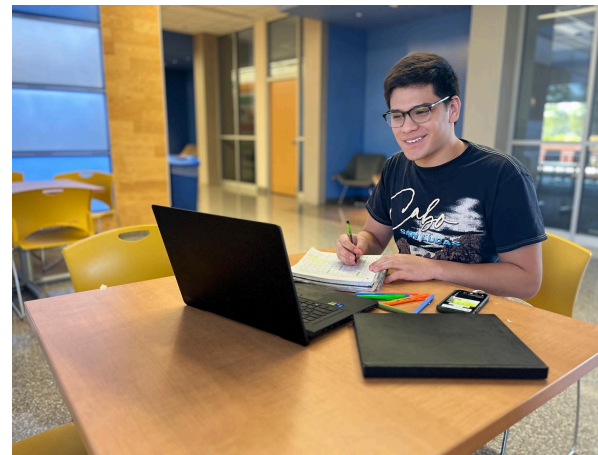
Full-time: 32%

Part-time: 68%

## Gender

Female: 57%

Male: 43%



# Odessa College 8-Week Term Impact Data



ODESSA COLLEGE  
TEN YEARS AFTER  
INTRODUCING  
EIGHT-WEEK  
COURSES

- 60% INCREASE IN ENROLLMENT
- 32% INCREASE IN FTIC ENROLLMENT
- 3% INCREASE IN COURSE COMPLETION
- 4% INCREASE IN C OR BETTER SUCCESS
- 4% DECREASE IN RETURN OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR NON-COMPLETION
- 125% INCREASE IN CREDENTIALS AWARDED





# Introducing the Texas Playbook

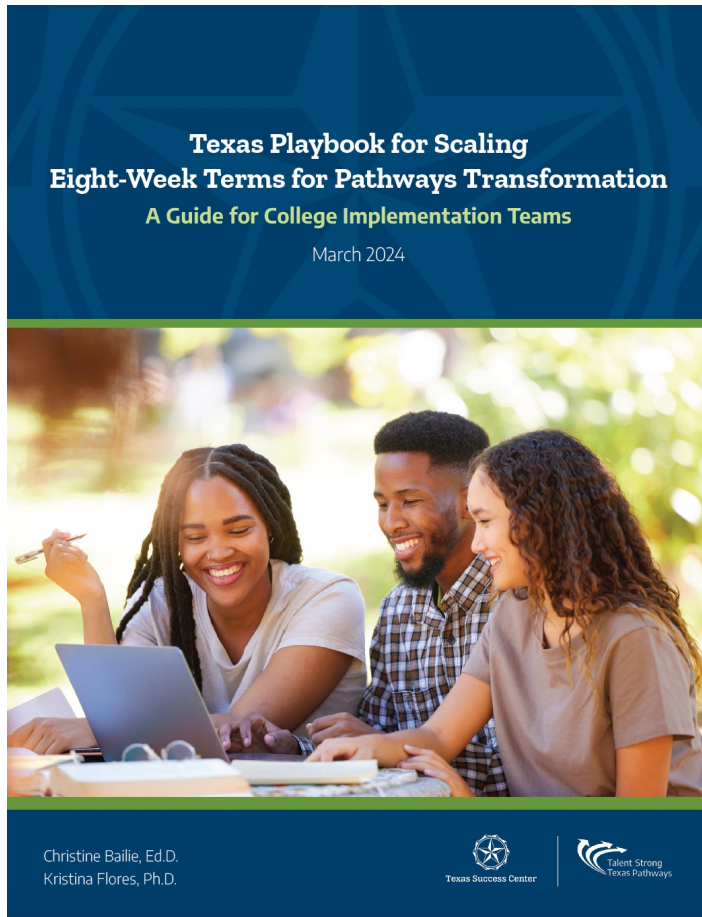


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# Texas Playbook



## One-Stop Tool-Kit

- Developed by the Texas Success Center
- Expertise from Texas Leader Colleges
  - Odessa College
  - Kilgore College
  - Grayson College
- Informed by emerging practices of excellence
- Open education resource available to all
- In partnership with the Trellis Foundation



# Texas Playbook

- **Introduction**

How to use the Texas Playbook

- **Talent Strong Texas Pathways Strategy**

Overview of Framework, 4 Pillars of Essential Practices, and Mobility Strategy

- **Chapters 1-4**

Reflection Questions Aligned with Essential Practices of 4 Pillars

- **Appendices**

Professional Development & Presentation, Resources & Samples, Helpful URLs, Research, Texas Cohorts

- **Bibliography**



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## Map Pathways to Student End Goals

### Chapter 1

The table below reflects the essential practices associated with Pillar 1 of the Texas Pathways strategy. The Implementation Team, along with other invited key stakeholders related to Pillar 1, should be solutions-oriented and focus on all systems and levels within the college to meet student outcomes, including early momentum as needed for questions related to the definition of words used in the essential practices.

Essential Practice	Policy
<b>1A. Programs are organized and marketed in broad career-focused academic and communities or "meta-majors."</b>	Which meta-major should be used for 8-week terms? Which program meta-major changed to format? Will it? How will it be decided?
<b>1B. Every program is well designed to guide and prepare students to enter employment and further education in fields of importance to the college's service area.</b>	How is implementation of 8-week terms being evaluated? What data will be used to support success?

## Help Students Choose and Enter a Pathways

### Chapter 2

The table below reflects the essential practices associated with Pillar 2 of the Texas Pathways strategy. The Implementation Team, along with other invited key stakeholders related to Pillar 2, should be solutions-oriented and focus on all systems and levels within the college to meet student outcomes, including early momentum as needed for questions related to the definition of words used in the essential practices.

Essential Practice	Policy
<b>2A. Every new student is helped to explore career/college options, choose a program of study, and develop a full-program plan as soon as possible.</b>	Is it standard policy at the college to provide every new student the following: (a) explore career/college options (b) choose a program of study, and (c) develop a full program plan as soon as possible?
<b>2B. Contextualized supports are provided to help all students to succeed in the "gateway" courses for the college's major program areas.</b>	Is it standard policy at the college to offer contextualized support to help ALL students to succeed in the "gateway" courses for your institution's major program areas?

## Help Students Choose and Enter a Pathways

### Chapter 3

The table below reflects the essential practices associated with Pillar 3 of the Texas Pathways strategy. The Implementation Team, along with other invited key stakeholders related to Pillar 3, should be solutions-oriented and focus on all systems and levels within the college to meet student outcomes, including early momentum as needed for questions related to the definition of words used in the essential practices.

Essential Practice	Policy
<b>3A. The college's advisors have accurate information to monitor which program every student is in and how far along the student is toward completing the program requirements.</b>	How does the college ensure that advisors have accurate information to monitor which program every student is in and the student's progress toward completing the program requirements? What types of policy changes should be considered in order to best serve students opting into programs organized in 8-week terms?
<b>3B. The college provides students with accurate information so students can easily see the progress they are making toward their program, life, and career goals.</b>	How does the college ensure that students are provided with accurate information so they can easily see the progress they are making toward their program, life, and career goals?

## Ensure Students are Learning

### Chapter 4

The table below reflects the essential practices associated with Pillar 4 of the Texas Pathways strategy. The Implementation Team, along with other invited key stakeholders related to Pillar 4, should set aside enough time to reflect on each practice as they relate to the implementation and scaling of 8-week terms. The discussion should be solutions-oriented and focus on the changes needed in Policy, Process, Practice, and People across all systems and levels within the college to scale 8-week terms to a broader group of students and to improve student outcomes, including early momentum metrics and credential completion. Refer to the [Glossary of Terms](#) as needed for questions related to the definition of words used in the essential practices.

Essential Practice	Policy	Process	Practice	People
<b>4A. Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are aligned with the requirements for success in the further education and employment outcomes targeted by each program.</b>	Does the college have an effective strategy for securing the engagement and input of key stakeholders in the development/revision of PLOs? Which programs will be the first to be converted to 8-week terms? How can the strategy of program conversion and the policies adopted to scale 8-week courses assist the college in better aligning program learning outcomes with postsecondary success? What skills, knowledge, and abilities will be gained in each program that are relevant to the workplace and or transfer institution?	How might the process of converting a program to 8-week terms assist the college in identifying/ revising program learning outcomes to ensure students are successful in post-completion outcomes? How will the college better communicate with transfer university partners to ensure learning outcomes are aligned with future education? How will the college better communicate with workforce partners to ensure learning outcomes are aligned with employer needs?	How are program learning outcomes aligned with the requirements targeted by each program (e.g., to pursue a BAAS or to secure employment in the field of interest)? What activities should be planned for in the coming year to ensure that program learning outcomes are better aligned with corresponding programs at transfer university partners? What activities should be planned for in the coming year to better utilize business advisory councils in the co-creation and validation of program learning outcomes?	How will the college guide faculty in programs organized in 8-week terms to review and revise PLOs? How will students understand where and when they will meet PLO milestones during programs organized into 8-week terms? How will the college support faculty to strengthen connections between Student Learning Outcomes at the course level and PLOs at the program level? How does the college partner with employers to validate the skills and credentials that a student gains through their program?

# Chapters are Modular and Aligned with 4 Pillars



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# Aligning Systems and Scaling Change

## 4 P's of Transformational Change

- **Policy** – Changes in the design of systems or to organizational policies developed to guide actions that result in structural changes
- **Process** – Changes to rules and procedures that influence a set of human interactions with systems and business practices
- **Practice** – Activities or essential practices adopted by the college intended to serve a broad population of students
- **People** – Changes in the underlying attitudes, beliefs, or values of individuals that result in new behaviors

Source: Adapted from research on transformative change from the Community College Research Center regarding the components of change that must occur across multiple dimensions of an institution



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## Map Pathways to Student End Goals

### Chapter 1

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Essential Practice	Policy	Process	Practice	People
<b>1A. Programs are organized and marketed in broad career-focused academic and communities or “meta-majors.”</b>	<p>Which meta-majors should be considered for transformation to 8-week structures?</p> <p>Which programs in these meta-majors will be changed to the 8-week format? Which programs will not? How will these decisions be made?</p>	<p>What waiver process will the college develop to determine which meta-majors and/or courses will be able to opt out of 8-week format?</p> <p>How will the waiver process be improved?</p>	<p>How will change management be handled to ensure a smooth transition?</p>	<p>How will leadership communicate changes underway to build early buy-in of faculty?</p> <p>Who will implement the waiver process?</p>

# Reflective Questions for Implementation Teams

## Appendix A: Professional Development and Presentations

### Professional Development Created for College Implementation Teams

- Pre-Institute Workshop: [Transforming Culture and Adopting 8-Week Terms to Improve Student Success](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, November 2021
- Pre-Institute Workshop: [Implementing and Scaling 8-Week Terms](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, Kilgore College, and Grayson College, April 2022
- Concurrent Session: [Scaling 8-Week Terms](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, April 2022
- Concurrent Session: [Focus to Finish: Implementing 8-Week Course Scheduling](#) (presentation slides), Kilgore College, April 2022
- Webinar: [Financial Aid](#) (presentation slides & recording), Odessa College, Kilgore College, and Grayson College, July 2022
- Webinar: [Faculty Buy-In](#) (presentation slides & recording), Odessa College, Kilgore College, and Grayson College, September 2022
- Site Visit: [8-Week Courses: Student Success Data](#) (presentation slides), Kilgore College, September 2022
- Webinar: [Dual Credit/Early College Programs](#) (presentation slides & recording), Odessa College, Kilgore College, and Grayson College, October 2022

### State and National Presentations & Recognition

- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: [Odessa College Receives Star Award for 8-Week Courses](#) (video), Odessa College, December 2017
- Achieving the Dream: [Odessa College Receives 2018 Leah Meyer Austin Award](#) (document), Odessa College, 2018
- American Association of Community Colleges 2022 Annual: [Scaling 8-Week Terms to Increase Enrollment and Retention](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, April 2022
- American Association of Community Colleges 2023 Annual: [Scaling 8-Week Terms to Increase Enrollment and Retention](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, April 2023
- American Association of Community Colleges 2023 Annual: [Scaling 8-Week Terms for Institutional Transformation](#) (presentation slides), Grayson College and Kilgore College, April 2023
- Wrangler Waves Podcast: [Lessons Learned - 10 Years of 8-Week Courses](#), Odessa College, October 2023

# Professional Development and Presentations



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# Texas Resources and Samples

## Appendix B: Texas Resources and Samples

### Transitioning Steps

- National Junior College Athletic Association: [Letter of Notification - Change to 8-Week Terms and Academic Calendar Revisions](#) (document), Odessa College, April 2014
- [Institutional Commitments for Students, Employees, and Faculty](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, February 2015
- Sample Waiver: [8-Week Course Waiver Form](#) (document), Grayson College, Fall 2017
- Sample Waver: [Request for Exception to 8-Week Course Format](#) (document), Kilgore College, March 2022

### Course Syllabi/Calendar Samples

- [Biology 2401: 8-Weeks Course Calendar](#) (document), Kilgore College, Fall 2023
- [College Algebra 1314: 8-Weeks Course Syllabus](#) (document), Grayson College, Fall 2023
- [College Algebra 1314: 16-Weeks Course Syllabus](#) (document), Grayson College, Fall 2023
- [English 1301: 8-Weeks Course Calendar](#) (document), San Jacinto College, Fall 2023
- [English 1301: 16-Weeks Course Calendar](#) (document), San Jacinto College, Fall 2023
- [English 1302: 8-Weeks Course Calendar](#) (document), San Jacinto College, Fall 2023
- [English 1302: 16-Weeks Course Calendar](#) (document), San Jacinto College, Fall 2023
- [History 1301: 8-Weeks Course Syllabus](#) (document), Grayson College, Fall 2023
- [History 1301: 16-Weeks Course Syllabus](#) (document), Grayson College, Fall 2023

### Faculty Buy-in

- [Drop Rate Improvement Program: What's Your Superpower?](#) (presentation slides), Odessa College, January 2022
- [Faculty Data Summit Questions](#) (document), Grayson College, Spring 2023

### Data Analysis for Student Impact

- [Texas Pathways 8-Week Transformation Data Report](#) (document), San Jacinto College, December 2023

### Implementing Year-Round Registration

- [Alamo Together: Full Academic Year Registration Project Overview](#) (presentation slides), Alamo Colleges, December 2023
- Inside Higher Education: [Registering for Classes—3 Semesters at a Time](#) (article), September 21, 2023



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## Appendix C: Helpful URLs

### Academic Calendars and Course Enrollment

- [8-Week Classes at ACC | Austin Community College](#)
- [2023-2024 Academic Calendar | El Paso Community College](#)
- [2023-2024 Academic Calendar | Odessa College](#)
- [2023-2024 Official College Calendar | Kilgore College](#)
- [Fall 2023 Academic Calendar | Grayson College](#)
- [Fall 2023 Schedule for the 1st 8-Week Session | Austin Community College](#)
- [Fall 2023 Schedule for the 2nd 8-Week Session | Austin Community College](#)
- [Spring 2024 Academic Calendar | Grayson College](#)
- [Registration Guide: Summer and Fall 2023 | Laredo College](#)
- [Full Academic Year Registration | Alamo Colleges](#)

### Student Recruitment into 8-Week Programs

- [8-Week Classes | Texarkana College](#)
- [8-Week College at the Mission del Paso Campus | El Paso Community College](#)
- [8-Week Courses: FAQ | Alvin Community College](#)
- [8-Week Terms: FAQ | Del Mar College](#)
- [8-Week FAQ | Paris Junior College](#)
- [8-Week Sessions: Put Completing Studies on the Fast Track | Del Mar College](#)
- [Cre8 Your Future | Howard College](#)
- [PJC's 8-Week Courses | Paris Junior College](#)
- [PJC Empowers Students With Move to 8-Week Classes | Paris Junior College](#)

# Helpful URLs

### Career & Academic Advising

- [Pathways | Grayson College](#)
- [Career Center | Grayson College](#)
- [New Student Advising | Grayson College](#)
- [2022-2023 Advising Guide | Del Mar College](#)

### Financial Assistance

- [Office of Financial Aid | Grayson College](#)
- [Promise Programs | Grayson College](#)
- [Scholarships | Grayson College](#)

### External Communications for Community

- [Texarkana College Trustees Approve 8-Week Format for Academic Courses Beginning Fall 2023 | Texarkana College](#)



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## Appendix D: Studies and Research on 8-Week Model

### Implementing 8-Week Terms

- Achieving the Dream: [Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms: A Guide](#) (document), May 2021
- Achieving the Dream: [Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms: Workbook](#) (document), May 2021
- Community College Executive Forum: [Closing the Part-Time Student Success Gap](#) (presentation slides), February 13, 2020

### Case Studies

- Achieving the Dream: Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms College Spotlight: [Amarillo College: Big Goals for Student Success](#) (document), May 2021
- Achieving the Dream: Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms College Spotlight: [Northeast Wisconsin Technical College: Big Jump to Close Equity Gaps](#) (document), May 2021
- Achieving the Dream: Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms College Spotlight: [Odessa College: An Overnight Success Several Years in the Making](#) (document), May 2021
- Achieving the Dream: Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms College Spotlight: [Trident Technical College: Bold Strategy for Student Success](#) (document), May 2021
- Achieving the Dream: Preparing for Shortened Academic Terms College Spotlight: [Waukesha County Technical College: More Students Complete a Credential in a Timely Manner](#) (document), May 2021
- Community College Executive Forum: [Preventing Early Attrition: Pathing Students to Success from Application Through the First Year](#) (document), Practice 12: Compressed Mini-Semesters, pp. 61-63, 2015

# Studies and Research

### Research

- [2024 Benchmark report: Analysis of the Relationship Between Scheduling Effectiveness, Student Progress, and Completion](#) (2024). Section 2: Rethinking Flexible schedules, pp. 12-16. Ad Astra.
- Brenner, V. (January 2024). [Course-Level Evaluation of an 8-Week Calendar Implementation After Two Years](#). Community College Journal of Research and Practice.
- Burn, H., Thrill, C., Mesa, V., Zamani-Gallaher, E., Wood, J. L. (2023). [Promoting Racial Equity in the STEM Math Pathway in Community Colleges](#). Justice Through the Lens of Calculus: Framing New Possibilities for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (pp. 175-183). MAA Press.
- [From Practice to Policy: How Institutions Accelerate Adult Completion and Fuel Prosperity](#) (February 2020). California Competes.
- [From Setback to Success: Meeting Combacker Students Where They Are](#) (February 2024). California Completes
- Redl, T. (December 2020). [Accelerating Students Successfully through Developmental and College-Level Mathematics and Embracing Co-Requisite Models: An 8-week + 8-week Model](#). Journal of Education and Social Development (4-2).
- Sheldon, C. Q., Durdella, N.R. (2010). [Success Rates for Students Taking Compressed and Regular Length Developmental Courses in the Community College](#). Community College Journal of Research and Practice, Vol. 34, pp. 39-54.
- Sloan, R. (November 2017). [Improving Student Outcomes Utilizing 8-Week Courses: Considering its Feasibility for Ivy Tech Community College](#). Ivy Tech Community College.



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## Appendix E: Leader College Pairings with Mentee Colleges

Cohort 2022 and Cohort 2023

Odessa College	Kilgore College	Grayson College
<b>Austin Community College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)	<b>Alvin Community College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)	<b>Howard College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)
<b>El Paso Community College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)	<b>Del Mar College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)	<b>Paris Junior College</b> Cohort 2022 (Implementation in Fall 2022)
<b>Alamo Colleges</b> Cohort 2023 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)	<b>Laredo College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)	<b>Texarkana College</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2023)
<b>Angelina College</b> Cohort 2023 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)	<b>Lamar State College Orange</b> Cohort 2022 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)	<b>Trinity Valley Community College</b> Cohort 2022 (Transition through Fall 2024)
	<b>College of the Mainland</b> Cohort 2023 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)	<b>Ranger College</b> Cohort 2023 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)
	<b>San Jacinto College</b> Cohort 2023 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)	<b>Temple College</b> Cohort 2023 (Scaled Implementation in Fall 2024)

# Mentee Colleges Participating in Cohort 2022 and Cohort 2023



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# How to Use the Texas Playbook



## Recommended Use

- Set up 90-minute meetings for each chapter
- Build momentum with 4 monthly meetings
- Determine best group of stakeholders to invite to each meeting to improve cross-systems collaboration
- Share Texas Playbook with Implementation Team
- Determine the best approach for exploring resources



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# Recommendations for Implementation Teams

## Insights from Odessa College



- Getting started
  - There is nothing sacred about 16-week courses
  - Gather ALL the stakeholders
  - Relationships matter
- How to define and approach scale
  - Hybrid courses are essential for both time and space
  - Review program, course and student outcomes
  - High engagement strategies for instruction
- Continuous improvement
  - Annual program review
  - Stay nimble



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# Recommendations for Implementation Teams

## Insights from Grayson College



- Getting started
  - Organize a strong institution-wide group to implement the change in culture, policies, publications, and procedures
  - Involve faculty from the inception
- How to define and approach scale
  - Understand your student population – not all institutions are built alike (GC is heavy on CTE with workforce and health science programs)
- Continuous improvement
  - Data Dashboards for faculty such as Program Directors and Chairs (Faculty Data Summit held annually in early spring semester)
  - Faculty are important for having needed conversations about what's needed to improve the model (and be prepared for enhanced student supports to include things like open lab concepts in workforce)



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# Accessing Resources

## Next Steps

- Visit the TSTP Institute event page to retrieve this presentation deck
- Download the [Texas Playbook](#)
- View/Share the recorded [Webinar](#)



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# Group Reflection: Chapters 1-4

In which ways does the structure (4-P's) appear useful to support new types of productive, solutions-focused conversations?

What resonates with you? How will you share this document with others at your campus?

How might you document the next steps/recommendations arising from each conversation?





**What goal might you want to set in your College  
Action Plan relating to the Texas Playbook?**

**For Pillar 2 as it relates to 8-Week Terms?**



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# Thank you.



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