



North Texas Regional P-16 Council
University of North Texas
940-565-3427

Academic Vertical Alignment Training and Renewal (AVATAR)

*A Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Funded Project
Implemented by the North Texas Regional P-16 Council,
The University of North Texas, and Educational Service Center Region XI*

AVATAR Partnership Agreement with Tarrant County College

Project Timeline: September 2011-August 2013

Overall Project Goals:

- Conduct a pilot vertical alignment training program with Fort Worth ISD, Tarrant County College, and University of North Texas;
- Design scalable secondary and postsecondary training processes for vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment that support successful transition and completion for students preparing for higher education and careers; and
- Facilitate secondary and postsecondary faculty, administrators, and P-16 Council leaders work groups to conduct horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment among high school courses, higher education lower division course sections and between lower division course sequences in 2 year and 4 year higher education settings.

Overall Project Outcomes/Partnership Benefits:

- Enhance the success of students graduating college-ready from high schools and prepared for smooth transitions to postsecondary education with a significant decrease in the need for developmental education;
- Ensure course descriptions, content learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and student and instructor expectations are aligned and communicated so that secondary students are prepared to enroll and succeed in postsecondary education at all levels;
- Create secondary and postsecondary course templates aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STARR) End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments, and Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) in Chemistry, English Language Arts and Mathematics; and
- Develop and deliver project training workshops to faculty, administrators, Education Service Center personnel, and P-16 leaders throughout the state of Texas and provide technical assistance to these participants so they replicate the vertical alignment training processes and activities in their regions.

The University of North Texas AVATAR staff agrees to the following:

- Manage and direct the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board 2011-2013 Vertical Alignment Training Grant project activities and evaluations.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with Tarrant County College, Fort Worth ISD, and ESC Region XI on achieving the AVATAR project outcomes and processes.
- Provide compensation to faculty, selected by Tarrant County College, who participate in the AVATAR project.
- Provide compensation of up to \$2,000.00 per person upon receipt of satisfactorily completed training sessions, integration of the concepts into practice discussions with Tarrant County College faculty and administration about the project and opportunities to scale the project, and draft templates by December 30, 2011.
- Provide compensation of up to \$2,000.00 per person upon receipt of satisfactorily completed on-going training sessions and team discussion, refinement of templates based on practice, and completed surveys, process outlines, and evaluations by May 31, 2012.
- Provide compensation of \$1,000.00 per person upon receipt of satisfactorily completed training sessions, review of the statewide training protocol with critique, completion of surveys, process outlines, and evaluations, and participation in the statewide training by May 31, 2013.

The Education Service Center Region XI agrees to the following:

- Facilitate the vertical curriculum alignment process sessions with AVATAR Project staff support.
- Work collaboratively with the University of North Texas AVATAR staff.
- Work collaboratively with Fort Worth ISD, Tarrant County College and University of North Texas faculty and staff.
- Provide ongoing telephone and email teacher mentoring support to Fort Worth ISD, Tarrant County College and UNT project team members

Tarrant County College agrees to the following:

- Identify one administrator and one faculty member who have taught and/or supervise the teaching of Freshman English Composition and Literature to become an AVATAR project team member for the time period of **October 1, 2011 through May 31, 2013.**
- Identify one administrator and one faculty member who have taught and/or supervise the teaching of Introduction to Chemistry for Science Majors to become an AVATAR project team member for the time period of **October 1, 2011 through May 31, 2013.**
- Participate in **four**, six hour sessions, between **October 1 and December 16, 2011**, creating vertically aligned course profiles and a vertical curriculum alignment process that can be utilized statewide by secondary and postsecondary institutions to support student course success.
- Implement course profiles during the spring 2012 and share the course profiles and vertical curriculum alignment process with at least two peers.
- Validate and promote the AVATAR vertical and horizontal alignment discussions within their disciplines and/or institutions.
- Participate in **four**, six hour sessions, between **February and May, 2012.**
- Refine AVATAR course profiles and the vertical curriculum alignment training process based on team member implementation and continued discussions, so that the AVATAR vertical curriculum alignment process can be replicated and scaled to various disciplines and areas in the state of Texas.
- Continue course profile implementation and share the vertical alignment process with at least two peers.
- Assess the vertical curriculum alignment process and share observations and data related to student outcomes.
- Develop a college-wide or district plan to share the AVATAR training and vertical alignment process with other disciplines and schools throughout the district during the 2012-2013 academic year.
- Review the statewide AVATAR project professional development training materials and resources.

- Participate in **three**, up to six hour sessions, between **August 2012 and May 2013**.
Project outcomes for this time period will be further developed throughout the first year of the project.
- Participate in evaluation surveys and interviews during AVATAR sessions and provide open and honest input regarding the process and outcomes.
- Meet with English Language Arts and Science faculty from Fort Worth ISD, Tarrant County College, and the University of North Texas to achieve the AVATAR project goals and outcomes outlined above.
- Agree to work in a collaborative and cooperative fashion; yet, openly discuss issues and concerns related to vertical curriculum alignment and the process of conducting curriculum alignment between secondary and postsecondary faculty and institutions.
- Commit to active participation in the AVATAR project and working with the AVATAR staff and ESC Region XI staff for tenure of the project.

Tarrant County College

Date

ESC Region XI

Date

M. Jean Keller,
AVATAR Project and
North Texas Regional P-16 Co- Coordinator

Date