

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 589
By: Aycock
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Subchapter D of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rules establish criteria and procedures applicable to establishing the supply/demand pathway as a developmental approach to providing access to higher education opportunities.

Currently, 5.73 (5) of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board states, "the full-time student equivalent ("FTSE") is determined by dividing the number of semester credit hours ("SCH") generated at each level by a full-time standard for the level." The rule states that undergraduate SCH are divided by 15 (fall or spring semester) or 30 (annual) and master's or first-professional SCH are divided by 12 (fall or spring semester) or 24 (annual).

By using the proposed annual count method, the rules would provide that SCH generated during the fall, spring, and summer semesters are counted when determining the full-time student equivalent.

Tarleton-Central Texas, located in Killeen, was the first university system center created by the state using the pathway model. Due to both the nature of the population and the limited campus space, the school primarily educates non-traditional students whose attendance patterns utilize the educational resources year round versus the traditional student who attends during the fall-spring semesters with summers off.

HB 589 would clarify that by using the annual count method, Tarleton-Central Texas has reached the statutorily required 1,000 full-time student equivalent during either a single semester or an entire academic year.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1: Provides current law of Section 87.861(d) of the Education Code, and amends it to clarify that in computing the full-time student enrollment equivalent for an academic year, the coordinating board shall include all semester credit hours completed during the fall and spring semesters and the summer session of the academic year.

SECTION 2: Effective Date.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

