

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1394
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Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A student who is denied admittance to a prominent university program often is not aware of a less prominent but similar program at other universities and therefore does not apply to those universities. Instead of applying to such a program for which the student may have greater aptitude, the student may apply to another program for which the student may have less aptitude at a more prominent university simply to attend that university.

To address this problem, The University of Texas at Austin implemented the coordinated admissions program that allows an undergraduate applicant who is denied admission to The University of Texas at Austin to attend another institution of The University of Texas System for the student's freshman year. On successful completion of the freshman year, the student is guaranteed admission to The University of Texas at Austin the following year. Legislation is needed to create a system facilitating a student's application to more than one Texas public university.

C.S.S.B. 1394 requires each applicant for admission to a general academic teaching institution who designates on the applicant's electronic admission application form common to all such institutions one or more choices or preferences for the applicant's major field of study be promptly redirected by the application website to a notification regarding the availability of degree programs in that field of study offered by such institutions and requires the institution, on denial of admission to any such applicant, to include in its denial notice a link to the notification containing such information. The bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with the appropriate advisory committees for common application forms, to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the bill's provisions.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTIONS 1 and 3 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 1394 amends the Education Code to require each applicant for admission to a general academic teaching institution who designates on the applicant's online common admission application form or other electronic application form applicable to all such institutions one or more choices or preferences for the applicant's major field of study to be promptly redirected by the application website to a notification regarding the availability of degree programs in that field of study offered by such institutions. The bill requires the notification to include a list of those general academic teaching institutions offering comparable degree programs in the applicant's designated field of study and to provide the following information, or electronic links to the following information, for each institution:

- the institution's location and distance from the applicant's home zip code;
- a description of the programs offered by the institution in the applicant's designated

major field of study;

- graduation and retention rate information for the institution; and
- any other information the coordinating board considers appropriate to assist the applicant in selecting among institutions.

C.S.S.B. 1394 requires a general academic teaching institution that denies admission to any applicant who designated one or more choices or preferences for the applicant's major field of study on a timely and complete application form to include in its denial notice a link to detailed information available on the application website regarding the availability of degree programs in that field of study offered by other general academic teaching institutions.

C.S.S.B. 1394 establishes that the provision and receipt of information does not guarantee the availability of a degree program or admission to a degree program and does not constitute a waiver of any applicable admissions application deadline. The bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with the appropriate advisory committees for common application forms, to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the bill's provisions.

C.S.S.B. 1394 makes its provisions applicable beginning with applicants for admission to a general academic teaching institution for the 2011-2012 academic year. The bill requires the coordinating board to adopt the rules required above as soon as practicable after this bill takes effect and authorizes the coordinating board, for that purpose, to adopt the initial rules in the manner provided by law for emergency rules. The bill establishes that it does not make an appropriation and that a provision in the bill that creates a new governmental program, creates a new entitlement, or imposes a new duty on a governmental entity is not mandatory during a fiscal period for which the legislature has not made a specific appropriation to implement the provision.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.S.B. 1394 differs from the original by requiring the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with the appropriate advisory committees for common application forms, to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the substitute's provisions and requiring, by statute, that each applicant for admission to a general academic teaching institution who designates on the electronic admission application form common to all such institutions one or more preferences for a major field of study be promptly redirected by the application website to a notification regarding the availability of degree programs in that field of study offered by such institutions, whereas the original requires the coordinating board, by rule, to require that prompt redirection.

C.S.S.B. 1394 differs from the original by specifying, in the provision requiring a general academic teaching institution to include a link to the above notification in its denial notice to an applicant, that the applicant's application form must have been submitted in a timely and complete fashion.

C.S.S.B. 1394 adds a provision not in the original stating that the provision and receipt of information does not guarantee the availability of a degree program or admission to a degree program and does not constitute a waiver of any applicable admissions application deadline.

C.S.S.B. 1394 differs from the original by referring to the online application form as the online

common admission application form, whereas the original refers to the online application form as the ApplyTexas online application form.