

By: Rose

H.B. No. 708

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to higher education transfer practices, articulation
3 agreements, policies for dropping courses, and special-purpose
4 centers and to the formula funding for certain credit hours.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Sections 51.907(a) and (b), Education Code, are
7 amended to read as follows:

8 (a) In this section, "governing board," ~~and~~ "institution
9 of higher education," and "public junior college" have the meanings
10 assigned by Section 61.003.

11 (b) This section applies only to an undergraduate student
12 who drops a course at an institution of higher education other than
13 a public junior college and only if:

14 (1) the student was able to drop the course without
15 receiving a grade or incurring an academic penalty;

16 (2) the student's transcript indicates or will
17 indicate that the student was enrolled in the course; and

18 (3) the student is not dropping the course in order to
19 withdraw from the institution.

20 SECTION 2. (a) Section 61.0595(d), Education Code, is
21 amended to read as follows:

22 (d) The following are not counted for purposes of
23 determining whether the student has previously earned the number of
24 semester credit hours specified by Subsection (a):

1 (1) semester credit hours earned by the student before
2 receiving an associate or [a] baccalaureate degree that has
3 previously been awarded to the student;

4 (2) semester credit hours earned by the student by
5 examination or under any other procedure by which credit is earned
6 without registering for a course for which tuition is charged;

7 (3) credit for a remedial education course, a
8 technical course, a workforce education course funded according to
9 contact hours, or another course that does not count toward a degree
10 program at the institution; ~~and~~

11 (4) semester credit hours earned by the student at a
12 private institution or an out-of-state institution; and

13 (5) semester credit hours earned by the student before
14 graduating from high school and used to satisfy high school
15 graduation requirements.

16 (b) The change in law made by this section to Section
17 61.0595, Education Code, applies beginning with the funding
18 recommendations made under Section 61.059, Education Code, for the
19 2011-2012 academic year.

20 SECTION 3. Section 61.830, Education Code, is amended to
21 read as follows:

22 Sec. 61.830. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER GUIDELINES;
23 ~~[ADDRESSING]~~ TRANSFER PRACTICES. (a) In its course catalogs and
24 on its website, each institution of higher education shall publish:

25 (1) guidelines addressing the practices of the
26 institution regarding the transfer of course credit, under which
27 courses are identified. ~~In the guidelines, the institution must~~

1 ~~identify a course by]~~ using the common course numbering system
2 approved by the board; and

3 (2) in a format designated by the commissioner, all
4 institutional and statewide articulation agreements concerning the
5 transfer of courses.

6 (b) Each institution of higher education shall post on the
7 institution's website the dates for which each published
8 articulation agreement is valid and shall remove an expired
9 articulation agreement from the website not later than the 30th day
10 after the date of its expiration.

11 (c) The board shall adopt a standard format for the
12 publication of articulation agreements under this section. The
13 format must provide students with access to the requirements of
14 each articulation agreement to allow students enrolled in public
15 junior colleges, public state colleges, and public technical
16 institutes to plan and coordinate course schedules to meet those
17 requirements.

18 (d) The board shall provide links to each website described
19 under Subsection (a) in a prominent, easily accessible, and
20 identifiable location on the board's college information website.

21 (e) Not later than September 30 of each even-numbered year,
22 the commissioner shall make recommendations to each standing
23 committee of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over higher
24 education to improve:

25 (1) the publication of transfer policies and
26 articulation agreements for the benefit of transfer students; and

27 (2) the level of participation of institutions of

1 higher education in articulation agreements for the purpose of
2 facilitating the transfer of students between institutions.

3 (f) A student who enrolls in a public junior college, public
4 state college, or public technical institute under an articulation
5 agreement is entitled to transfer to the general academic teaching
6 institution that is a party to the agreement not later than the
7 fourth anniversary of the date the student first enrolled in the
8 public junior college, public state college, or public technical
9 institute.

10 SECTION 4. Chapter 111, Education Code, is amended by
11 adding Subchapter I to read as follows:

12 SUBCHAPTER I. UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HURRICANE CENTER FOR
13 INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

14 Sec. 111.121. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

15 (1) "Board" means the board of regents of the
16 University of Houston System.

17 (2) "Center" means the University of Houston Hurricane
18 Center for Innovative Technology (UHC-IT) established under this
19 subchapter.

20 Sec. 111.122. ESTABLISHMENT. (a) The University of
21 Houston Hurricane Center for Innovative Technology is established
22 at the University of Houston.

23 (b) The organization, control, and management of the center
24 are vested in the board.

25 (c) The center shall be hosted by the university's College
26 of Engineering. Participation in the center's activities shall be
27 open to any faculty member of the university who is an active

1 researcher in the field of materials, nanotechnology, structural
2 engineering, designing of structures, or sensor technology, or in
3 another relevant field as determined by the university.

4 Sec. 111.123. PURPOSE. The center is created to:

5 (1) promote interdisciplinary research, education,
6 and training for the development of state-of-the-art products,
7 materials, systems, and technologies designed to mitigate the wind
8 and asserted structural damages in the built environment and
9 offshore structures caused by hurricanes in the Gulf Coast region;
10 and

11 (2) develop protocols for the fast and efficient
12 recovery of the public and private sectors, including utilities,
13 hospitals, petrochemical industries, offshore platforms, and
14 municipalities and other local communities following a hurricane.

15 Sec. 111.124. POWERS AND DUTIES. The center shall:

16 (1) collaborate with appropriate federal, state, and
17 local agencies and private business or nonprofit entities as
18 necessary to coordinate efforts after a hurricane in the Gulf Coast
19 region;

20 (2) develop smart materials and devices for use in
21 hurricane protection and mitigation systems for structural
22 monitoring;

23 (3) develop anchor systems for window and door
24 screens, dwellings and other buildings, pipelines, and other
25 onshore and offshore structures to withstand hurricane wind damage;

26 (4) develop test facilities for evaluating the
27 performance of new products, materials, or techniques designed to

1 protect against hurricane wind damage;

2 (5) develop specifications and standards for products
3 used for protecting against hurricane wind damage;

4 (6) design buildings, houses, and other structures to
5 withstand hurricane wind damage; and

6 (7) provide hurricane-related educational programs,
7 seminars, conferences, and workshops to the community designed to
8 ensure safety, minimize loss of life, and mitigate the destruction
9 of property associated with hurricane wind damage.

10 Sec. 111.125. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ENTITIES. The
11 University of Houston shall encourage public and private entities
12 to participate in or support the operation of the center and may
13 enter into an agreement with any public or private entity for that
14 purpose. An agreement may allow the center to provide information,
15 services, or other assistance to an entity in exchange for the
16 entity's participation or support.

17 Sec. 111.126. GIFTS AND GRANTS. The board may solicit,
18 accept, and administer gifts and grants from any public or private
19 source for the purposes of the center.

20 Sec. 111.127. PERSONNEL. The board may employ personnel
21 for the center as necessary.

22 SECTION 5. (a) Each public institution of higher education
23 must satisfy the requirements of Section 61.830, Education Code, as
24 amended by this Act, not later than September 30, 2010.

25 (b) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
26 adopt the standard publication format required by Section
27 61.830(c), Education Code, as added by this Act, not later than

1 December 31, 2009.

2 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
3 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
4 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
5 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
6 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.