

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 992
By: Castro
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Currently, an institution of higher education may not permit a student to drop more than six courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, under certain circumstances. In addition, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is restricted from including formula funding for an institution of higher education for semester credit hours earned by a resident undergraduate student that exceed the hours necessary to complete that student's degree program by 30 hours or more.

H.B. 992 seeks to prohibit a general academic teaching institution from counting a dropped class for purposes of the six-course limit if the student drops the class while enrolled at a public junior college and the student transferred to a general academic teaching institution after earning at least 30 semester credit hours or an associate degree. The bill requires institutions of higher education to provide written notice of the limitations on the number of class drops to an undergraduate student before the end of the student's first semester at the institution. The bill also creates an additional exemption as it relates to the 30-hour cap for semester credit hours earned by a student before receiving an associate degree that has previously been awarded to the student.

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

H.B. 992 amends the Education Code to prohibit a general academic teaching institution, in determining the number of courses dropped by a student relative to the limit on the number of courses that a student may drop, from counting a course dropped by a student enrolled in the institution if the student dropped the course while enrolled in a public junior college and the student transferred to the general academic teaching institution after earning from another institution of higher education at least 30 semester credit hours or an associate degree. The bill requires an institution of higher education to provide written notice to each undergraduate student before the end of the first semester in which the student is enrolled in the institution of limitations on the number of courses the student may drop and provides for the meanings of "general academic teaching institution" and "public junior college." The bill makes these provisions applicable beginning with the fall 2011 semester.

H.B. 992 adds semester credit hours earned by a student before receiving an associate degree that has previously been awarded to the student to the list of credit hours not counted for purposes of determining whether the student has previously earned the number of credit hours above which certain state funding is prohibited. The bill makes this provision applicable beginning with the funding recommendations made by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the 2013-2014 academic year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2011.