

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1244
By: Castro
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Developmental education is a sequence of non-credit-bearing higher education courses that are designed to remediate an incoming college student to the point of freshman-level academic competency in the areas of reading, math, and writing. Some observers express concern that a significant percentage of first-time degree-seeking students in Texas who enroll in higher education each fall are required to take at least one developmental education course. Observers also indicate that students who require developmental education graduate at a lower rate than that of other students. C.S.H.B. 1244 seeks to reform the way developmental education is delivered at institutions of higher education with the intention of increasing student success.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 1244 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to prescribe a single standard or set of standards to effectively measure student readiness as demonstrated by current research for each test designated by the coordinating board for use under the Texas Success Initiative, rather than standards for such tests that reflect student readiness. The bill removes a provision authorizing an institution of higher education to adopt more stringent test standards with respect to student readiness under the Texas Success Initiative.

C.S.H.B. 1244 requires an institution that requires a student to enroll in developmental coursework under the Texas Success Initiative to offer a range of developmental coursework or instructional support that includes the integration of technology to efficiently address the particular developmental needs of the student. The bill requires an institution to base developmental coursework on research-based best practices that include as components assessment, differentiated placement and instruction, faculty development, support services, program evaluation, integration of technology with an emphasis on instructional support programs, non-course-based developmental education interventions, and course pairing of developmental education courses with credit-bearing courses. The bill requires the coordinating board to adopt rules for the implementation of the requirement that an institution base developmental coursework on research-based best practices. The bill requires an institution to provide professional development programs, including instruction in differentiated instruction methods designed to address students' diverse learning needs, to faculty and staff who provide developmental coursework to students. The bill makes its provisions applicable beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year and defines "program evaluation."

C.S.H.B. 1244 repeals Section 51.3062(e), Education Code, requiring the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to designate additional tests for use by institutions of higher education under the Texas Success Initiative.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.H.B. 1244 contains a provision not included in the original defining "program evaluation." The substitute contains a provision not included in the original requiring the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to prescribe a single standard or set of standards to effectively measure student readiness as demonstrated by current research for each test designated by the coordinating board for use under the Texas Success Initiative.

C.S.H.B. 1244 differs from the original by requiring an institution of higher education that requires a student to enroll in developmental coursework to offer a range of developmental coursework or instructional support that includes the integration of technology to efficiently address the particular developmental needs of the student, whereas the original requires an institution to offer the student the option of enrolling in developmental coursework offered as an online course or through the use of other technology contingent on the institution requiring a student to enroll in developmental coursework.

C.S.H.B. 1244 differs from the original by adding to the components included in research-based best practices on which an institution is required to base developmental coursework, as in the original, and by specifying that the evaluation component, as in the original, is for program evaluation. The substitute contains a provision not included in the original requiring the coordinating board to adopt rules for the implementation of the requirement that an institution base developmental coursework on research-based best practices.