

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 324
By: Jackson
Higher Education
8/4/2011
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 324 directs the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UH-Clear Lake) to offer all levels of undergraduate programs, rather than only junior and senior programs. This process is commonly known as "downward expansion." Current law allows UH-Clear Lake to offer only junior and senior programs. UH-Clear Lake is statutorily authorized to offer graduate level programs.

Downward expansion by UH-Clear Lake provides a cost-competitive opportunity for students to remain in the Houston-Galveston region and receive a quality education. It enables UH-Clear Lake to work closely with area public school districts so that their students can earn college credit while they are in high school and thus reduces the overall cost of a college education.

S.B. 324 allows for an additional pathway for students seeking a bachelor's degree within the University of Houston System which will be different but complementary to the University of Houston and the University of Houston-Downtown, since all three institutions would have different admissions standards.

Finally, downward expansion by UH-Clear Lake helps to increase the college attendance and graduation rates for the Houston-Galveston region and will result in a more cost-effective use of the university's existing facilities.

S.B. 324 amends current law relating to the course levels offered by the University of Houston-Clear Lake.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 111.83, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 111.83. ROLE AND SCOPE. Requires the University of Houston-Clear Lake (UH-Clear Lake) to offer undergraduate and graduate programs. Deletes existing designation of Subsection (a) and existing text requiring UH-Clear Lake to be organized to offer only junior, senior, and graduate-level programs. Deletes existing Subsection (b) authorizing UH-Clear Lake to enroll a student who has successfully completed at least 30 semester credit hours of course work at a public or private institution of higher education and who is concurrently enrolled in another public or private institution of higher education.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with course levels that may be offered by UH-Clear Lake for the 2012-2013 academic year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.