

AN ACT

relating to measures to facilitate the timely completion of degrees by students of public institutions of higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.9685 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.9685. REQUIRED FILING OF DEGREE PLAN. (a) In this section:

(1) "Degree plan" means a statement of the course of study requirements that an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education must complete in order to be awarded an associate or bachelor's degree from the institution.

(2) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), each student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the institution not later than the end of the second regular semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 45 or more semester credit hours for coursework successfully completed by the student, including transfer courses, international baccalaureate courses, dual credit courses, and any other course for which the institution the student attends has awarded the student college course credit,

1 including course credit awarded by examination.

2 (c) A student to whom this section applies who begins the
3 student's first semester or term at an institution of higher
4 education with 45 or more semester credit hours of course credit for
5 courses described by Subsection (b) shall file a degree plan with
6 the institution not later than the end of the student's second
7 regular semester or term at the institution.

8 (d) An institution of higher education shall provide to
9 students to whom this section applies information regarding the
10 degree plan filing requirement under this section and options for
11 consulting with an academic advisor for that purpose, which may
12 include consultation through electronic communication.

13 (e) At each registration for a semester or term, a student
14 who is required to have filed a degree plan under this section
15 before that semester or term shall verify to the institution that:

16 (1) the student has filed a degree plan with the
17 institution; and

18 (2) the courses for which the student is registering
19 are consistent with that degree plan.

20 (f) If a student to whom this section applies does not
21 timely file a degree plan, the institution of higher education in
22 which the student is enrolled shall notify the student that the
23 degree plan is required by law and require the student to consult
24 with an academic advisor for that purpose in accordance with the
25 consulting options under Subsection (d) during the semester or term
26 in which the student receives the notice. The student may not
27 obtain an official transcript from the institution until the

1 student has filed a degree plan with the institution.

2 (g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in
3 consultation with institutions of higher education, may adopt rules
4 as necessary for the administration of this section.

5 SECTION 2. Subchapter S, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
6 amended by adding Section 61.833 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 61.833. CREDIT TRANSFER FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE. (a) In
8 this section, "lower-division institution of higher education"
9 means a public junior college, public state college, or public
10 technical institute.

11 (b) This section applies to a student enrolled in a general
12 academic teaching institution who:

13 (1) transferred to the institution from or previously
14 attended a lower-division institution of higher education;

15 (2) earned at least 30 credit hours for course work
16 successfully completed at the lower-division institution of higher
17 education; and

18 (3) has earned a cumulative total of at least 90 credit
19 hours for course work successfully completed.

20 (c) As soon as practicable after a student who is enrolled
21 in a general academic teaching institution has met the criteria
22 established by Subsection (b)(3), the institution by e-mail or
23 other reasonable method shall request authorization from the
24 student for the institution to release the student's transcript to
25 the lower-division institution of higher education that the student
26 previously attended for the purpose of determining whether the
27 student has earned the credits required for an associate degree

1 awarded by the lower-division institution of higher education. On
2 receipt of a student's authorization under this subsection, the
3 general academic teaching institution shall release the student's
4 transcript to the lower-division institution of higher education.

5 (d) After receiving a student transcript from a general
6 academic teaching institution under Subsection (c), a
7 lower-division institution of higher education shall review the
8 transcript and, if the lower-division institution of higher
9 education determines the student has earned the credits required to
10 receive an associate degree awarded by the lower-division
11 institution of higher education, may award the student the degree.

12 SECTION 3. Section 51.9685, Education Code, as added by
13 this Act, applies beginning with undergraduate students who
14 initially enroll in a public institution of higher education for
15 the 2012 fall semester.

16 SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act by adding
17 Section 61.833, Education Code, applies to a student who not
18 earlier than the 2011 fall semester transfers to or otherwise
19 initially enrolls in a general academic teaching institution after
20 attending a lower-division institution of higher education.

21 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
22 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
23 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
24 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
25 Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3025 was passed by the House on May 10, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 147, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting; that the House refused to concur in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 3025 on May 27, 2011, and requested the appointment of a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the House adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 3025 on May 29, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

H.B. No. 3025

I certify that H.B. No. 3025 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 25, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; at the request of the House, the Senate appointed a conference committee to consider the differences between the two houses; and that the Senate adopted the conference committee report on H.B. No. 3025 on May 29, 2011, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor