

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3498
By: Turner, Scott
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties analogize grade inflation to monetary inflation in that grade inflation devalues higher education, or student transcripts, the same way monetary inflation devalues the dollar. Those parties contend that this process is unfair to both students and employers who must attempt to appraise those students' talents during the hiring process. According to the parties, employers have long complained that grade inflation makes it virtually impossible to rank job applicants, as nearly all have A or B averages, a trend which has only increased over the past few decades. H.B. 3498 seeks to increase transparency with regard to grade inflation by requiring that a student's postsecondary transcript include the average grade awarded in each class.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTIONS 1 and 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 3498 amends the Education Code to require each general academic teaching institution to include on a student's transcript, for each class attempted by the student, the average grade that was awarded to all students in the class. The bill requires the institution, for a class for which letter grades are awarded, to include on the transcript the median grade that was awarded to all students in the class. The bill requires the institution to place the average or median grade, as applicable, immediately to the right of the student's individual grade. The bill exempts from these requirements a class offered to students solely on a pass-fail basis or for independent study credit or in which grades are reported for 10 students or fewer. The bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules to administer the bill's provisions as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date and authorizes the coordinating board to adopt the initial rules in the manner provided by law for emergency rules. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2013 fall semester.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.