

By: Branch, et al.

H.B. No. 30

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 30:

By: Branch

C.S.H.B. No. 30

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to measures to facilitate the transfer of students within the public higher education system and the timely graduation of students from 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 51.96852 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.96852. TRANSFER OF CREDIT FROM LOWER-DIVISION INSTITUTIONS; ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS. (a) In this section:

(1) "Articulation agreement" means a formal written agreement between a public junior college and a general academic teaching institution identifying courses offered by the public junior college that must be accepted for credit toward specific course requirements at the general academic teaching institution.

(2) "Lower-division institution of higher education" means a public junior college, public state college, or public technical institute.

(3) "Public junior college" and "general academic teaching institution" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

(b) Each general academic teaching institution shall:

(1) publish on the institution's Internet website for use by prospective undergraduate students a detailed description developed by the institution's faculty of the learning objectives, content, and prior knowledge requirements for at least 12 courses

1 offered by the institution for which credit is frequently
2 transferred to the institution from lower-division institutions of
3 higher education;

4 (2) identify the public junior colleges from which the
5 general academic teaching institution regularly receives transfer
6 students; and

7 (3) establish, for at least five degree plans for
8 which credit is frequently transferred to the institution from
9 lower-division institutions of higher education, articulation
10 agreements with each public junior college from which the general
11 academic teaching institution has received an average of at least
12 five percent of the institution's transfer students in the three
13 preceding academic years.

14 (c) A general academic teaching institution's participation
15 in an articulation agreement under this section does not affect the
16 institution's admissions policies.

17 (d) In consultation with general academic teaching
18 institutions and public junior colleges, the Texas Higher Education
19 Coordinating Board shall adopt any rules the coordinating board
20 considers necessary for the administration of this section.

21 SECTION 2. Section 61.0515, Education Code, is amended by
22 amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (d) to read as
23 follows:

24 (a) To earn a baccalaureate degree, a student may not be
25 required by a general academic teaching institution to complete
26 more than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for
27 the degree by the institution's board-recognized accrediting

1 agency [~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its~~
2 ~~successor~~] unless the institution determines that there is a
3 compelling academic reason for requiring completion of additional
4 semester credit hours for the degree.

5 (d) The board shall adopt any rules the board considers
6 necessary for the administration of this section.

7 SECTION 3. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
8 amended by adding Section 61.05151 to read as follows:

9 Sec. 61.05151. SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED FOR ASSOCIATE
10 DEGREE. (a) To earn an associate degree, a student may not be
11 required by an institution of higher education to complete more
12 than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the
13 degree by the institution's board-recognized accrediting agency
14 unless academic accreditation or professional licensure
15 requirements require the completion of additional semester credit
16 hours for the degree.

17 (b) The board may review one or more of an institution's
18 associate degree programs to ensure compliance with this section.

19 (c) Subsection (a) does not apply to an associate degree
20 awarded by an institution to a student enrolled in the institution
21 before the 2015 fall semester.

22 (d) The board shall adopt any rules the board considers
23 necessary for the administration of this section.

24 SECTION 4. Section 61.052, Education Code, is amended by
25 amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsection (b-1) to
26 read as follows:

27 (a) Each governing board shall submit to the board once each

1 year on dates designated by the board a comprehensive list by
2 department, division, and school of all courses, together with a
3 description of content, scope, and prerequisites of all these
4 courses, that will be offered by each institution under the
5 supervision of that governing board during the following academic
6 year. The list for each institution must also specifically
7 identify any course included in the common course numbering system
8 under Section 61.832 that has been added to or removed from the
9 institution's list for the current academic year, and the board
10 shall distribute that information as necessary to accomplish the
11 purposes of Section 61.832.

12 (b) After the comprehensive list of courses is submitted by
13 a governing board under Subsection (a) [~~of this section~~], the
14 governing board shall submit on dates designated by the board any
15 changes in the comprehensive list of courses to be offered,
16 including any changes relating to offering a course included in the
17 common course numbering system.

18 (b-1) Each governing board must certify at the time of
19 submission under Subsection (a) that the institution does not:

20 (1) prohibit the acceptance of transfer credit based
21 solely on the accreditation of the sending institution; or

22 (2) include language in any materials published by the
23 institution, whether in printed or electronic form, suggesting that
24 such a prohibition exists.

25 SECTION 5. Section 61.822, Education Code, is amended by
26 amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (f) to read as
27 follows:

1 (a) The board, with the assistance of advisory committees
2 composed of representatives of institutions of higher education,
3 shall develop a recommended core curriculum of at least 42 semester
4 credit hours, including a statement of the content, component
5 areas, and objectives of the core curriculum. Administrators of an
6 institution of higher education may serve as representatives of the
7 institution on any advisory committee under this section. At least
8 a majority of the members of any advisory committee named under this
9 section shall be faculty members of an institution of higher
10 education. An institution shall consult with the faculty of the
11 institution before nominating or recommending a person to the board
12 as the institution's representative on an advisory committee.

13 (f) In an effort to facilitate the transfer of major-related
14 coursework beyond the general education core curriculum, the board,
15 with the assistance of the advisory committees described by
16 Subsection (a), shall:

17 (1) develop a course-specific core curriculum for each
18 broad academic discipline within the general core curriculum; and

19 (2) identify those degree programs offered at
20 institutions of higher education to which the course-specific core
21 curriculum, if successfully completed by a student at another
22 institution of higher education, is fully transferable.

23 SECTION 6. Section 61.832, Education Code, is amended by
24 adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

25 (e) A student who transfers from one institution of higher
26 education to another shall receive academic credit from the
27 receiving institution for each course that the student has

1 successfully completed that serves as an equivalent course under
2 the common course numbering system at the institution from which
3 the student transfers.

4 SECTION 7. Not later than May 31, 2015, each general
5 academic teaching institution shall publish on the institution's
6 Internet website the information required by Section 51.96852,
7 Education Code, as added by this Act, and establish articulation
8 agreements in accordance with that section.

9 SECTION 8. The change in law made by this Act to Section
10 61.0515(a), Education Code, applies beginning with undergraduate
11 students who initially enroll in a general academic teaching
12 institution for the 2015 fall semester. An undergraduate student
13 who initially enrolls in a general academic teaching institution
14 before that semester is covered by the law in effect before the
15 effective date of this Act, and that law is continued in effect for
16 that purpose.

17 SECTION 9. The changes in law made by this Act to Section
18 61.052, Education Code, apply to the comprehensive lists of courses
19 offered by public institutions of higher education beginning with
20 lists required to be submitted for the 2014-2015 academic year.
21 Course lists for an academic year before that academic year are
22 covered by the law in effect before the effective date of this Act,
23 and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

24 SECTION 10. Not later than May 31, 2015, the Texas Higher
25 Education Coordinating Board shall develop core curricula for broad
26 academic disciplines included within the general core curriculum
27 that conform to the requirements of Section 61.822, Education Code,

1 as amended by this Act.

2 SECTION 11. Section 61.832(e), Education Code, as added by
3 this Act, applies beginning with the 2013 fall semester.

4 SECTION 12. This Act takes effect immediately if it
5 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each
6 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.
7 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate
8 effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2013.