

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1189
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Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In general, S.B. 1189 requires all community colleges to offer a transfer associate degree. The degree would require students to take the community college's core curriculum and then 18 hours of the student's choice. Additionally, the bill would require students to meet with an advisor when the student achieves 30 semester credit hours to develop a degree plan. It also requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop rules and describe this degree on the common application form.

As proposed, S.B. 1189 amends current law relating to the establishment of a transfer associate degree program at each public junior college.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 130.0104, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 130, Education Code, by adding Section 130.0104, as follows:

Sec. 130.0104. TRANSFER ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM. (a) Requires the governing board of each public junior college district to establish a transfer associate degree program at each junior college in the district.

(b) Requires a transfer associate degree program established at a junior college under this section to require a student to successfully complete:

(1) the junior college's core curriculum adopted under Section 61.822(b) (requiring each institution of higher education to adopt a core curriculum of no less than 42 semester credit hours); and

(2) the courses selected by the student in the student's degree plan completed under Subsection (c).

(c) Requires the student, notwithstanding Section 51.9685 (Required Filing of Degree Plan), before the beginning of the regular semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which a student successfully completes a cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours for coursework in a transfer associate degree program established under this section, to meet with an academic advisor to complete a degree plan, as defined by Section 51.9685(a)(1) (defining "degree plan"), that:

(1) accounts for all remaining credit hours required for the completion of the degree program; and

(2) emphasizes:

(A) the student's transition to a particular four-year college or university that the student chooses; and

(B) preparations for the student's intended field of study or major at the four-year college or university.

(d) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of this section, including rules ensuring that:

(1) a transfer associate degree program is established at each public junior college; and

(2) the common application form adopted under Section 51.762 (Common Admission Application Forms) contains a description of transfer associate degree programs established under this section.

SECTION 2. (a) Requires THECB to adopt the rules required by Section 130.0104, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act. Authorizes THECB, for that purpose, to adopt the initial rules in the manner provided by law for emergency rules.

(b) Requires the governing board of each public junior college district to offer a transfer associate degree program at each junior college in the district as required by Section 130.0104, Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning with the 2016 fall semester.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.