

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 3808
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Higher Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

A report recently developed by the RAND Corporation and American Institutes for Research (AIR) commissioned by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board found early advising to be critical to helping students and families make more strategic decisions about dual credit education. The role of advisors and counselors in promoting student success in dual credit pathways to postsecondary degree completion is deeply important. High-quality guidance can help reduce the number of excess semester credit hours dual credit students obtain, ensure course credits earned through dual credit transfer toward the requirements of a specific major or certificate, and prepare students for the expectations and rigors of college coursework.

H.B. 3808 seeks to address this issue by revising provisions relating to the filing of a degree plan by students at public institutions of higher education.

H.B. 3808 amends current law relating to the filing of a degree plan by students at public institutions of higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is modified in SECTION 2 (Section 51.9685, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 51.9685(a)(2), Education Code, to define "institution of higher education," rather than defining "institution of higher education" and "public junior college."

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 51.9685(b), (c), and (g), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Requires each student enrolled at an institution of higher education in an associate or bachelor's degree program or a course for joint high school and junior college credit under Section 130.008 (Courses For Joint High School and Junior College Credit), except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), to file a degree plan with the institution before the end of the semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 30 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, including course credit awarded by examination, rather than requiring each student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education, except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), to 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, including course credit awarded by examination.

(c) Requires a student to whom this section (Required Filing of Degree Plan) applies who begins the student's first semester or term at an institution of higher education with 30 or more semester credit hours of course credit for courses described by Subsection (b) to file a degree plan with the institution before the end of that semester or term, rather than requiring a student to whom this section applies who begins the student's first semester or term at an institution of higher education with 45 or more semester credit hours of course credit for courses described by Subsection (b) to file a degree plan with the institution not later than the end of the student's second regular semester or term at the institution.

(g) Requires, rather than authorizes, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with institutions of higher education, to adopt rules necessary for the administration of this section, including rules to ensure compliance with this section.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 130.0104(c), Education Code, as follows:

(c) Requires a student enrolled in a multidisciplinary studies associate degree program established under this section (Multidisciplinary Studies Associate Degree Program), in complying with the requirements regarding the filing of a degree plan under Section 51.9685, to meet with an academic advisor to complete a degree plan that meets certain criteria, rather than requiring a student, notwithstanding Section 51.9685, before the beginning of the regular semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student successfully completes a cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours for coursework in a multidisciplinary studies 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) (relating to the definition of "degree plan"), that meets certain criteria.

SECTION 4. Repealer: Section 51.9685(c-1) (relating to requiring a student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at a public junior college to file a degree plan with the college not later than a certain date), Education Code.

SECTION 5. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2019–2020 academic year.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.