

By: West, et al.

S.B. No. 25

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to measures to facilitate the transfer, academic progress,
and timely graduation of students in public higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter H, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Sections 51.400 and 51.4033 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.400. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

(2) "General academic teaching institution" and "institution of higher education" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

Sec. 51.4033. REPORT OF NONTRANSFERABLE CREDIT. (a) Not later than September 1 of each year and in the form prescribed by the coordinating board, each general academic teaching institution shall provide to the coordinating board a report describing any courses in the Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual or its successor adopted by the coordinating board for which a student who transfers to the institution from another institution of higher education is not granted academic credit at the receiving institution.

(b) A report required by this section must indicate:

(1) the course name and type;

(2) which institution of higher education provided

1 academic credit for the course; and

2 (3) the reason why the receiving institution did not
3 grant academic credit for the course.

4 SECTION 2. Section 51.762, Education Code, is amended by
5 adding Subsection (j) to read as follows:

6 (j) In adopting a form under this section, the board shall
7 ensure that an applicant may indicate on the form the applicant's
8 consent to an institution of higher education to which the
9 applicant submits an application for admission to a particular
10 degree program using the form to, if the institution denies the
11 applicant admission to that degree program, provide the applicant's
12 application to other institutions of higher education that offer
13 the degree program.

14 SECTION 3. Section 51.9685(a)(2), Education Code, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 (2) "Institution of higher education" has [~~and "public~~
17 ~~junior college" have~~] the meaning [~~meanings~~] assigned by Section
18 61.003.

19 SECTION 4. Section 51.9685, Education Code, is amended by
20 amending Subsections (b), (c), and (g) and adding Subsection (c-2)
21 to read as follows:

22 (b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), each
23 student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an
24 institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the
25 institution before [~~not later than~~] the end of the [~~second regular~~]
26 semester or term immediately following the semester or term in
27 which the student earned a cumulative total of 30 [~~45~~] or more

1 semester credit hours for coursework successfully completed by the
2 student, including transfer courses, international baccalaureate
3 courses, dual credit courses, and any other course for which the
4 institution the student attends has awarded the student college
5 course credit, including course credit awarded by examination.

6 (c) A student to whom Subsection (b) [~~this section~~] applies
7 who begins the student's first semester or term at an institution of
8 higher education with 30 [~~45~~] or more semester credit hours of
9 course credit for courses described by Subsection (b) shall file a
10 degree plan with the institution before [~~not later than~~] the end of
11 that [~~the student's second regular~~] semester or term [~~at the~~
12 ~~institution~~].

13 (c-2) A student enrolled in a dual credit course at an
14 institution of higher education and to whom Subsection (b) does not
15 apply shall file a degree plan with the institution not later than:

16 (1) the end of the second regular semester or term
17 immediately following the semester or term in which the student
18 earned a cumulative total of 15 or more semester credit hours of
19 course credit for dual credit courses successfully completed by the
20 student; or

21 (2) if the student begins the student's first semester
22 or term at the institution with 15 or more semester credit hours of
23 course credit for dual credit courses successfully completed by the
24 student, the end of the student's second regular semester or term at
25 the institution.

26 (g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in
27 consultation with institutions of higher education, shall [~~may~~]

1 adopt rules as necessary for the administration of this section,
2 including rules to ensure compliance with this section. In
3 adopting those rules, the coordinating board shall use the
4 negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter 2008, Government
5 Code.

6 SECTION 5. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is
7 amended by adding Sections 51.96852 and 51.96853 to read as
8 follows:

9 Sec. 51.96852. RECOMMENDED COURSE SEQUENCES. (a) In this
10 section:

11 (1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher
12 Education Coordinating Board.

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

15 (b) Each institution of higher education shall develop at
16 least one recommended course sequence for each undergraduate
17 certificate or degree program offered by the institution. Each
18 recommended course sequence must:

19 (1) identify all required lower-division courses for
20 the applicable certificate or degree program;

21 (2) include for each course, if applicable:

22 (A) the course number or course equivalent under
23 the common course numbering system approved by the coordinating
24 board under Section 61.832; and

25 (B) the course equivalent in the Lower-Division
26 Academic Course Guide Manual or its successor adopted by the
27 coordinating board;

1 (3) be designed to enable a full-time student to
2 obtain a certificate or degree, as applicable, within:

3 (A) for a 60-hour degree or certificate program,
4 two years; or

5 (B) for a 120-hour degree program, four years;
6 and

7 (4) include a specific sequence in which courses
8 should be completed to ensure completion of the applicable program
9 within the time frame described by Subdivision (3).

10 (c) Each institution of higher education shall:

11 (1) include the recommended course sequences
12 developed under this section in the institution's course catalog
13 and on the institution's Internet website; and

14 (2) submit the recommended course sequences developed
15 under this section to the coordinating board as provided by
16 coordinating board rule.

17 Sec. 51.96853. TRANSFER OF CREDIT FROM LOWER-DIVISION
18 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS.

19 (a) In this section:

20 (1) "Articulation agreement" means a formal written
21 agreement between a lower-division institution of higher education
22 and a general academic teaching institution identifying courses
23 offered by the lower-division institution that must be accepted for
24 credit toward specific course requirements at the general academic
25 teaching institution.

26 (2) "General academic teaching institution" has the
27 meaning assigned by Section [61.003](#).

1 (3) "Lower-division institution of higher education"
2 means a public junior college, public state college, or public
3 technical institute, as those terms are defined by Section 61.003.

4 (b) Each general academic teaching institution may enter
5 into an articulation agreement with a lower-division institution of
6 higher education for a certificate or degree program for which
7 students transferring from the lower-division institution to the
8 general academic teaching institution receive transfer credit.

9 (c) An articulation agreement entered into under Subsection
10 (b) on or after September 1, 2019, must, to the greatest extent
11 practicable, use fields of study curricula developed by the Texas
12 Higher Education Coordinating Board under Section 61.823.

13 (d) A general academic teaching institution may extend an
14 existing articulation agreement entered into under Subsection (b)
15 to another lower-division institution of higher education with
16 respect to the transfer of courses from that lower-division
17 institution of higher education to the general academic teaching
18 institution, on request by that lower-division institution of
19 higher education.

20 (e) An articulation agreement established under this
21 section may enable a transfer student to receive up to 60 semester
22 credit hours for courses completed at the lower-division
23 institution of higher education.

24 (f) A general academic teaching institution's participation
25 in an articulation agreement under this section does not affect the
26 institution's admissions policies.

27 SECTION 6. Section 51.9715, Education Code, is amended by

1 adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b) to read as
2 follows:

3 (a-1) An institution of higher education, or a school
4 district that offers international baccalaureate courses, dual
5 credit courses, or any other course for which an institution of
6 higher education may award students enrolled at the district
7 college course credit, including course credit awarded by
8 examination, may release student information to an institution of
9 higher education for purposes of transferring course credit to that
10 institution or enabling the awarding of course credit by that
11 institution, in accordance with federal law regarding the
12 confidentiality of student information, including the Family
13 Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. Section
14 1232g), and any state law relating to the privacy of student
15 information.

16 (b) An institution of higher education or school district
17 may release student information in accordance with Subsection (a)
18 or (a-1), as applicable, through:

- 19 (1) the National Student Clearinghouse; or
20 (2) a similar [~~national~~] electronic data sharing and
21 exchange platform operated by an agent of the institution or
22 district that meets nationally accepted standards, conventions,
23 and practices.

24 SECTION 7. Section 61.059(p), Education Code, is amended to
25 read as follows:

26 (p) In its instruction and operations formula applicable to
27 an institution of higher education, the board may not include any

1 semester credit hours earned for dual course credit by a high school
2 student for high school and college credit at the institution
3 unless those credit hours are earned through any of the following:

4 (1) a course in the core curriculum of the institution
5 providing course credit;

6 (2) a course offered by the institution providing
7 course credit in:

8 (A) a field of study curriculum developed by the
9 board under Section 61.823; or

10 (B) a program of study curriculum established by
11 the board under Section 61.8235;

12 (3) a career and technical education course that
13 applies to any certificate or associate's degree offered by the
14 institution providing course credit; or

15 (4) [~~3~~] a foreign language course.

16 SECTION 8. Section 61.822, Education Code, is amended by
17 adding Subsections (a-2), (a-3), (f), and (g) and amending
18 Subsections (b), (c), and (d) to read as follows:

19 (a-2) The recommended core curriculum developed under
20 Subsection (a-1) must have the following components:

21 (1) a general core curriculum of at least 30 semester
22 credit hours that includes:

23 (A) six semester credit hours in each of the
24 following component areas:

25 (i) American or Texas history, as provided
26 by Section 51.302;

27 (ii) government or political science, as

1 provided by Section 51.301; and

2 (iii) communication; and

3 (B) three semester credit hours in each of the
4 following component areas:

5 (i) language, philosophy, or culture; and

6 (ii) creative arts; and

7 (2) for each broad academic discipline, an academic
8 discipline core curriculum of not more than 12 semester credit
9 hours specific to that discipline and that includes relevant
10 courses in mathematics and physical sciences.

11 (a-3) In developing an academic discipline core curriculum
12 as described by Subsection (a-2), the board, in accordance with
13 rules adopted by the board using the negotiated rulemaking
14 procedures under Chapter 2008, Government Code, shall consult with
15 relevant faculty at institutions of higher education.

16 (b) Each institution of higher education shall adopt a core
17 curriculum of [~~no less than~~] 42 semester credit hours, including
18 specific courses comprising the curriculum. The core curriculum
19 shall:

20 (1) include a general core curriculum and, for each
21 broad academic discipline offered by the institution, an academic
22 discipline core curriculum as described by Subsection (a-2); and

23 (2) be consistent with the common course numbering
24 system approved by the board and with the statement,
25 recommendations, and rules issued by the board. [~~An institution~~
26 may have a core curriculum of other than 42 semester credit hours
27 only if approved by the board.]

1 (c) If a student successfully completes the 42-hour core
2 curriculum or the general core curriculum or academic discipline
3 core curriculum at an institution of higher education, that block
4 of courses may be transferred to any other institution of higher
5 education and must be substituted for the receiving institution's
6 core curriculum, general core curriculum, or academic discipline
7 core curriculum, as applicable. A student shall receive academic
8 credit toward the applicable disciplinary course requirements for
9 the student's degree program for each of the courses transferred
10 and may not be required to take additional core curriculum, general
11 core curriculum, or academic discipline core curriculum courses, as
12 applicable, at the receiving institution [~~unless the board has~~
13 ~~approved a larger core curriculum at the institution~~].

14 (d) A student who transfers from one institution of higher
15 education to another without completing the core curriculum of the
16 sending institution shall receive academic credit from the
17 receiving institution toward that institution's general core
18 curriculum or academic discipline core curriculum, as applicable,
19 for each of the courses that the student has successfully completed
20 in the core curriculum of the sending institution. Following
21 receipt of credit for these courses, the student may be required to
22 satisfy any remaining [~~further~~] course requirements in the core
23 curriculum of the receiving institution.

24 (f) Each institution of higher education shall:

25 (1) identify in the institution's course catalog and
26 on the institution's Internet website each course offered by the
27 institution that fulfills a course requirement in the institution's

1 general core curriculum or academic discipline core curriculum and
2 the specific course requirement that the course fulfills;

3 (2) provide to the board in accordance with board rule
4 the institution's general core curriculum and academic discipline
5 core curriculum and the information described by Subdivision (1);
6 and

7 (3) advise each student enrolled at the institution
8 regarding the importance of taking coherent sequences of courses in
9 the core curriculum that are aligned with the student's academic
10 and career goals.

11 (g) To assist in advising a student regarding the selection
12 of coherent sequences of courses in the core curriculum that are
13 aligned with the student's academic and career goals, the board
14 shall make available to each institution of higher education and to
15 school counselors and other postsecondary advisors employed by a
16 school district or charter school information regarding:

17 (1) the general core curriculum and academic
18 discipline core curriculum required under Subsection (b); and

19 (2) the transferability of course credit between
20 institutions of higher education for courses in the core curriculum
21 as provided by this section.

22 SECTION 9. Section 61.823, Education Code, is amended by
23 adding Subsection (f) to read as follows:

24 (f) A public junior college or public technical institute
25 shall adopt in whole or in part each field of study curriculum
26 developed by the board under this section for an academic area in
27 which the college or institute offers courses.

1 SECTION 10. Section 61.827, Education Code, is amended to
2 read as follows:

3 Sec. 61.827. RULES. (a) The board is authorized to adopt
4 rules implementing the provisions of this subchapter.

5 (b) In adopting rules regarding the recommended core
6 curriculum developed under Section 61.822, the board shall use the
7 negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter 2008, Government
8 Code.

9 SECTION 11. Section 130.0104(c), Education Code, is amended
10 to read as follows:

11 (c) In complying with the requirements regarding the filing
12 of a degree plan under [Notwithstanding] Section 51.9685, [before
13 the beginning of the regular semester or term immediately following
14 the semester or term in which] a student enrolled [successfully
15 completes a cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours for
16 coursework] in a multidisciplinary studies associate degree
17 program established under this section[, the student] must meet
18 with an academic advisor to complete a degree plan[, as defined by
19 Section 51.9685(a)(1),] that:

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

22 (2) emphasizes:

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

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

27 SECTION 12. Section 51.9685(c-1), Education Code, is

1 repealed.

2 SECTION 13. Each public institution of higher education
3 required to submit a report under Section 51.4033, Education Code,
4 as added by this Act, shall submit the first report not later than
5 September 1, 2021.

6 SECTION 14. Sections 51.762, 51.9715, and 61.822, Education
7 Code, as amended by this Act, and Sections 51.96852 and 51.96853,
8 Education Code, as added by this Act, apply beginning with the
9 2021-2022 academic year.

10 SECTION 15. Not later than December 31, 2020, the Texas
11 Higher Education Coordinating Board shall develop a recommended
12 core curriculum that conforms to the requirements of Section
13 61.822, Education Code, as amended by this Act.

14 SECTION 16. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.