

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, 51.4033, and 51.4034 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," "institution of higher education," and "public junior college" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

Sec. 51.4033. REPORT OF NONTRANSFERABLE CREDIT. (a) Not later than March 1 of each year and in the form prescribed by the coordinating board, each general academic teaching institution shall provide to the coordinating board and the legislature 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:

(1) academic credit at the receiving institution; or

(2) if the student has declared a major and has not changed majors, academic credit toward the student's major at the

1 receiving institution.

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

3 (1) the course name and type;

4 (2) which institution of higher education provided  
5 academic credit for the course; and

6 (3) the reason why the receiving institution did not  
7 grant academic credit for the course as described by Subsection  
8 (a).

9 Sec. 51.4034. REPORT OF COURSES TAKEN AT JUNIOR COLLEGES.

10 (a) Not later than March 1 of each year and in the form prescribed  
11 by the coordinating board, each public junior college shall provide  
12 to the coordinating board and the legislature a report on courses  
13 taken by students who, during the preceding academic year,  
14 transferred to a general academic teaching institution or earned an  
15 associate degree at the college.

16 (b) A report required by this section must include the total  
17 number of:

18 (1) courses attempted and completed at the college,  
19 including the total number of semester credit hours for those  
20 courses, disaggregated by whether the course is in:

21 (A) the Workforce Education Course Manual or its  
22 successor adopted by the coordinating board; or

23 (B) the Lower-Division Academic Course Guide  
24 Manual or its successor adopted by the coordinating board;

25 (2) courses attempted and completed at the college  
26 that are not in the recommended core curriculum developed by the  
27 coordinating board under Section 61.822; and

1           (3) dual credit courses, including courses for joint  
2 high school and junior college credit under Section 130.008,  
3 attempted and completed at the college.

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 after the 12th class day but before [~~not later than~~] the  
26 end of the [~~second regular~~] semester or term immediately following  
27 the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total

1 of 30 [~~45~~] or more semester credit hours for coursework  
2 successfully completed by the student, including transfer courses,  
3 international baccalaureate courses, dual credit courses, and any  
4 other course for which the institution the student attends has  
5 awarded the student college course credit, including course credit  
6 awarded by examination.

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

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

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

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

27 (g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 coordinating board;

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

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

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

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

11 (c) Each institution of higher education shall:

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

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

18 (d) The coordinating board, in consultation with  
19 institutions of higher education, shall adopt rules as necessary  
20 for the administration of this section. In adopting those rules,  
21 the coordinating board shall use the negotiated rulemaking  
22 procedures under Chapter 2008, Government Code.

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

25 (a) In this section:

26 (1) "Articulation agreement" means a formal written  
27 agreement between a lower-division institution of higher education

1 and a general academic teaching institution identifying courses  
2 offered by the lower-division institution that must be accepted for  
3 credit toward specific course requirements at the general academic  
4 teaching institution.

5 (2) "General academic teaching institution" has the  
6 meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

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

10 (b) Each general academic teaching institution may enter  
11 into an articulation agreement with a lower-division institution of  
12 higher education for a certificate or degree program for which  
13 students transferring from the lower-division institution to the  
14 general academic teaching institution receive transfer credit.

15 (c) An articulation agreement entered into under Subsection  
16 (b) on or after September 1, 2019, may use field of study curricula  
17 developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under  
18 Section 61.823.

19 (d) A general academic teaching institution may extend an  
20 existing articulation agreement entered into under Subsection (b)  
21 to another lower-division institution of higher education with  
22 respect to the transfer of courses from that lower-division  
23 institution of higher education to the general academic teaching  
24 institution, on request by that lower-division institution of  
25 higher education.

26 (e) An articulation agreement established under this  
27 section may enable a transfer student to receive up to 60 semester

1 credit hours for courses completed at the lower-division  
2 institution of higher education.

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

6 SECTION 6. Section 51.9715, Education Code, is amended by  
7 adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b) to read as  
8 follows:

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

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

25 (1) the National Student Clearinghouse; or

26 (2) a similar [~~national~~] electronic data sharing and  
27 exchange platform operated by an agent of the institution or



1 district that meets nationally accepted standards, conventions,  
2 and practices.

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

5 (p) In its instruction and operations formula applicable to  
6 an institution of higher education, the board may not include any  
7 semester credit hours earned for dual course credit by a high school  
8 student for high school and college credit at the institution  
9 unless those credit hours are earned through any of the following:

10 (1) a course in the core curriculum of the institution  
11 providing course credit;

12 (2) a course offered by the institution providing  
13 course credit in:

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

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

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

21 (4) [~~3~~] a foreign language course.

22 SECTION 8. Section 61.821, Education Code, is amended by  
23 adding Subdivision (4) to read as follows:

24 (4) "Meta major" means a collection of programs of  
25 study or academic disciplines that share common foundational  
26 skills.

27 SECTION 9. Subchapter S, Chapter 61, Education Code, is

1 amended by adding Section 61.8221 to read as follows:

2 Sec. 61.8221. STUDY AND REPORT ON CORE CURRICULUM.

3 (a) The board shall conduct a study and make recommendations to  
4 the legislature regarding the feasibility of implementing  
5 statewide meta majors for institutions of higher education. The  
6 board shall consider meta majors in the following academic  
7 disciplines:

8 (1) arts, humanities, communications, and design;

9 (2) business;

10 (3) education;

11 (4) health sciences;

12 (5) industry, manufacturing, and construction;

13 (6) public safety;

14 (7) science, technology, engineering, and

15 mathematics; and

16 (8) social and behavioral sciences and human services.

17 (b) The board shall establish an advisory committee to  
18 assist the board in completing the board's duties under this  
19 section and provide the board with subject matter expertise and  
20 analysis. The advisory committee consists of the following members  
21 appointed by the board in equal numbers:

22 (1) representatives of public junior colleges  
23 designated by the applicable college to represent the college on  
24 the advisory committee; and

25 (2) representatives of general academic teaching  
26 institutions designated by the applicable institution to represent  
27 the institution on the advisory committee.

1       (c) A majority of members appointed to the advisory  
2 committee under Subsection (b)(2) must be representatives of a  
3 general academic teaching institution at which at least 25 percent  
4 of students enrolled at the institution for the 2018 fall semester  
5 were classified as transfer students.

6       (d) In appointing members to the advisory committee under  
7 Subsection (b), the board shall, to the greatest extent  
8 practicable, ensure that the membership of the advisory committee  
9 is balanced with respect to:

10           (1) institutional representation, including:

11                   (A) the regions of the state;

12                   (B) the mission type of the general academic  
13 teaching institution or public junior college;

14                   (C) university system affiliation, as  
15 applicable;

16                   (D) student enrollment; and

17                   (E) institutional groupings under the board's  
18 higher education accountability system;

19           (2) representation of faculty and administrators at  
20 general academic teaching institutions or public junior colleges;

21           (3) representation of academic disciplines; and

22           (4) any other factors the board determines relevant.

23       (e) The advisory committee shall study and make  
24 recommendations to the board regarding the effectiveness of the  
25 requirements regarding the transfer of course credit between  
26 institutions of higher education for courses in the core curriculum  
27 under Section 61.822 in supporting more efficient undergraduate

1 transfer between institutions of higher education. The study and  
2 recommendations must include an analysis of:

3 (1) the efficacy of dividing the recommended core  
4 curriculum for each meta major into a general academic core  
5 curriculum and an academic discipline core curriculum and, if  
6 determined to be efficacious, the recommended number of semester  
7 credit hours for each component of the recommended core curriculum  
8 for each meta major;

9 (2) methods to ensure that courses completed in the  
10 general academic core curriculum and academic discipline core  
11 curriculum transfer between institutions of higher education for  
12 course credit applied toward a student's major at the receiving  
13 institution; and

14 (3) the potential inclusion of courses in the field of  
15 study curricula adopted by the board under Section [61.823](#) in the  
16 recommended core curriculum adopted by the board under Section  
17 [61.822](#).

18 (f) Each quarter ending before November 1, 2020, the  
19 advisory committee shall submit to the chairs of the standing  
20 legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over higher  
21 education a report on the advisory committee's progress on the  
22 study and recommendations required under Subsection (e).

23 (g) Not later than November 1, 2020, the board shall submit  
24 to the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of  
25 representatives, and the standing legislative committees with  
26 primary jurisdiction over higher education a report on the results  
27 of the study conducted under Subsection (a) and any recommendations

1 for legislative or other action.

2 (h) This section expires September 1, 2021.

3 SECTION 10. Section 61.827, Education Code, is amended to  
4 read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

24 (2) emphasizes:

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

27 (B) preparations for the student's intended

1 field of study or major at the four-year college or university.

2 SECTION 12. Section 51.9685(c-1), Education Code, is  
3 repealed.

4 SECTION 13. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) of  
5 this section, this Act applies beginning with the 2019-2020  
6 academic year.

7 (b) Sections 51.96852 and 51.96853, Education Code, as  
8 added by this Act, apply beginning with the 2021-2022 academic  
9 year.

10 SECTION 14. Each public institution of higher education  
11 required to submit a report under Section 51.4033 or 51.4034,  
12 Education Code, as added by this Act, shall submit the first report  
13 not later than March 1, 2021.

14 SECTION 15. This Act takes effect immediately if it  
15 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each  
16 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.  
17 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate  
18 effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 25 passed the Senate on April 24, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0; and that the Senate concurred in House amendments on May 23, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Senate

I hereby certify that S.B. No. 25 passed the House, with amendments, on May 21, 2019, by the following vote: Yeas 142, Nays 0, two present not voting.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor