

Interim Charge 1: Update on Legislation

- 1. HB 1638 (85R), which relates to statewide goals for dual credit programs. Review best practices for providing opportunities to high school students to earn college credit while ensuring that courses taken reflect authentic, college-level rigor.***
 - a. What challenges have institutions faced with dual credit prior to and as a result of the pandemic?***
 - b. How have institutions addressed these challenges?***
 - c. What changes, if any, are needed to ensure that students have opportunities to earn college credit which fulfills the criteria outlined above?***

The A&M System offers very little dual credit, however we are a recipient of a significant amount of dual credit hours. Our primary concern is the “college-level rigor” or lack thereof that occurs in some dual credit experiences. There is considerable variance in dual credit experiences across the state. Some are outstanding; some are little more than a high school course mapped to college learning outcomes. The variance is attributable to variables such as the preparation and support of the faculty member teaching the class, the level of school district resources available to support the student and the teacher, and the level of investment the college or university provides to the faculty member teaching the course. It is also worth noting that these variances disadvantage underrepresented populations. To assure equitable quality experiences in dual credit courses across the state likely made more pronounced by COVID-19 challenges, the A&M System would support greater consistency in student learning in dual credit courses and in the students’ preparation for subsequent college level courses.

- 2. SB 25, which relates to measures to facilitate the transfer, academic progress, and timely graduation of students in public higher education. Monitor the process by which the Higher Education Coordinating Board adopts rules via negotiated rulemaking. Monitor the progress of institutions developing recommended course sequences and the progress of the feasibility study to implement statewide meta majors.***
 - a. In what ways can data collection and sharing between THECB and TEA improve and assist institutions with college credit transferability?***
 - b. What role can school counselors and advisors play in the success of transferable credits? Are there ways in which the state can utilize their expertise and student relationships more effectively?***

The reporting required by SB 25 could be very helpful in identifying patterns where course applicability is not occurring, whether those patterns be within certain degree programs, certain institutions, certain component area options, etc. Current data does not provide that level of information, so we are optimistic that future data made possible by SB 25 will be helpful for advisors in guiding students toward the appropriate courses and away from courses less likely to be applicable to the students’ degrees. More broadly, THECB and TEA have tremendously rich

data but have struggled with how that data may be used more effectively. The A&M System supports THECB's examination of its data structures and processes with an eye toward transforming its data systems in a way that allows this rich data resource to guide student success. This information, once granulated and provided to school counselors, advisors, students, and parents, can be tremendously helpful in guiding the student to the appropriate courses applicable to the degree.

