

TTUS Charge 1 Responses

Texas Tech University System

Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 86th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:

- SB 18, which relates to the protection of expressive activities at public institutions of higher education. Monitor the process by which institutions of higher education implement policies to protect the expressive rights of persons guaranteed by the constitutions of the United States and of this state.
1. What have institutions done to protect the expressive rights of persons while also maintaining an orderly and safe learning environment?

Response:

The Texas Tech University System and its four component universities recognize the expressive rights of persons guaranteed by the constitutions of the United States and the State of Texas. A System-wide working group developed Texas Tech University System [Regulation 07.04 Freedom of Expression](#) after the 86th Legislature's enactment of Senate Bill 18 to recognize freedom of speech and assembly as central to the mission of each university, ensure that all persons may assemble peaceably on university campuses for expressive activities, and satisfy the additional requirements of Texas Education Code § 51.9315. This System Regulation was approved by the System Board of Regents, and each component university independently adopted this regulation through university operating policies.¹ The System Regulation and university operating policies are publicly available on the respective System and each university's websites, applied to personnel through university operating policies, and incorporated into each university's *Student Handbook*, which are made available to new students during orientation. After approval of these policies, university communities were notified of the new law and policies, and student affairs offices at each university developed and posted *FAQ* documents to assist students in understanding the policies' applicability.²

System and university leaders and employees responsible for educating or disciplining students were engaged in workshops, trainings, and conversations regarding Senate Bill 18 and the resulting expressive activities policy.³ The Vice Chancellor and General

¹ Adopted as Texas Tech University [Operating Policy 61.44](#), Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center [Operating Policy 61.27](#), Angelo State University [Operating Policy 74.07](#), and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso [Operating Policy 61.27](#).

² Available on the websites of the Texas Tech University [Office of the Dean of Students](#), Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center [Office of Student Affairs](#), Angelo State University [Office of Student Affairs](#), and Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center [Office of Student Services and Student Affairs](#).

³ *Id.* § 51.9315(j).

Counsel led discussions during separate meetings and conference calls with the Board of Regents, Chancellor, Presidents and executive leadership regarding development and implementation of these policies. The System Office of General Counsel led workshops and trainings regarding Senate Bill 18 and expressive activities for all component universities' student affairs administrators, university police departments, and provosts' offices. Finally, the Texas Attorney General's office led trainings relating to these policies for the System Chancellor and component university Presidents, and for the System Office of General Counsel and each university's student affairs and academic administrators.

Texas Tech University

Monitor the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 86th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:

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.

- 1. What challenges have institutions faced with dual credit prior to and as a result of the pandemic?**

Texas Tech University operates TTU OnRamps in partnership with UT-Austin. OnRamps is a dual enrollment, rather than a dual credit, program. TTU OnRamps courses are all delivered virtually, so no interruption to course delivery is expected. However, a major challenge has emerged in the ability of individual school districts to select variable start dates for the fall term.

- 2. How have institutions addressed these challenges?**

Texas Tech University has developed procedures that will ensure that high school students are able to enroll in TTU OnRamps courses regardless of fall term start dates. These procedures have been reviewed and vetted by our offices of the Registrar, Institutional Reporting, Admissions, and eLearning and Academic Partnerships.

- 3. What changes, if any, are needed to ensure that students have opportunities to earn college credit which fulfills the criteria outlined above?**

As described in #2, changes to the enrollment procedures for the TTU OnRamps program ensure that K-12 district start dates will not impede any student's ability to enroll in the TTU OnRamps program.

SB 18, which relates to the protection of expressive activities at public institutions of higher education. Monitor the process by which institutions of higher education implement policies to protect the expressive rights of persons guaranteed by the constitutions of the United States and of this state.

- 1. What have institutions done to protect the expressive rights of persons while also maintaining an orderly and safe learning environment?**

See TTUS response for system components.

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.

- 1. In what ways can data collection and sharing between THECB and TEA improve and assist institutions with college credit transferability?**

It is unclear how the data collection and sharing between these entities would be needed. There are different definitions and data needed for each of them.

- 2. 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?**

School counselors should be trained on what dual credit classes are transferable as core courses. High school students should be advised to take courses that will meet the core requirements for the majority of the degrees offered at colleges and universities. When students are planning to enter a specific major, the school counselor should contact an advisor at the preferred college or university to determine if there are specific core requirements for that specific major. Planning in advance for what courses will transfer will increase the transferability of credits.

Angelo State University

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4. What challenges have institutions faced with dual credit prior to and as a result of the pandemic?

Dual Credit students enrolled in face-to-face courses at their high school went to an online format. Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, many students, especially those from low socioeconomic families did not have reliable internet access.

There are lower division college bearing (not work-force training) courses that are not in the university's core but in a university's degree plan requirement that universities cannot teach per Education Code, Section 130.008 (Courses for joint high school and junior college credit). At one point universities had been told by the THECB that a course not in the core but in the degree plan could be taught, but that course would not be eligible for formula funding reimbursement. However, recently we learned that we could not offer a course that is not in our core, but Early College High Schools are not restricted to this same requirement.

5. How have institutions addressed these challenges?

ASU worked with each school district to ensure that students had reliable Internet access and technology to complete their dual credit course. ASU also provided additional training to all dual credit instructors and counselors regarding accessing ASU's online support services to assist students with their needs including 24/7 online tutoring and the online writing center.

ASU has notified dual credit partners that we will no longer be able to offer courses not in the core but in a degree plan.

6. What changes, if any, are needed to ensure that students have opportunities to earn college credit which fulfills the criteria outlined above?

Either the interpretation of Education Code, Section 130.008 needs to be modified or Education Code 130.008 (a-2) needs to include public senior colleges or universities...130.008 does not apply to Early College High schools.

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Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso

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HB 1638

- The focus of HB 1638 is on community college/high school dual credit pathways.
- TTUHSC El Paso does not offer dual credit programs, since the institution is not authorized to offer lower division undergraduate course work. However, TTUHSC El Paso has developed transfer pathways into its undergraduate nursing degree program in partnership with local high schools and El Paso Community College, as well as concurrent enrollment programs with Texas community college nursing programs outside of El Paso.

SB 18

See TTUS response for system components.

- Since 9/1/2019, TTUHSC El Paso has:
 - 1) added OP 61.27 <https://el Paso.ttuhsc.edu/opp/ documents/61/op6127.pdf> ;
 - 2) added a FAQ on its web-site addressing SB 18 and Expressive Freedoms
<https://el Paso.ttuhsc.edu/studentservices/student-resources/expressive-activities.aspx>

SB 25

Health Related Institutions (HRIs) are not included in the description of General Academic Institutions (GAIs) in TEC Section 61.003; therefore, SB 25 does not pertain to TTUHSC El Paso. The THECB has not requested HRIs to report regarding SB 25.

