

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center

S.B. 16  
By: Hughes  
Subcommittee on Higher Education  
3/21/2023  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Public institutions of higher education should be committed to creating environments where students are equipped for participation in the workforce and society while also respecting intellectual diversity.

S.B. 16 would establish this express purpose for public institutions of higher education. The bill would also prohibit faculty from compelling or attempting to compel students to adopt a belief that any race, sex, or ethnicity or social, political, or religious belief is inherently superior to any other race, sex, ethnicity, or belief.

As proposed, S.B. 16 amends current law relating to the purpose of public institutions of higher education and a prohibition on compelling students enrolled at those institutions to adopt certain beliefs.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Subtitle A, Title 3, Education Code, by adding Chapter 50, as follows:

#### CHAPTER 50. HIGHER EDUCATION PURPOSE

Sec. 50.001. HIGHER EDUCATION PURPOSE. Requires a public institution of higher education to be committed to creating an environment of:

- (1) intellectual inquiry and academic freedom so that all students are equipped for participation in the workforce and the betterment of society; and
- (2) intellectual diversity so that all students are respected and educated regardless of race, sex, or ethnicity or social, political, or religious background or belief.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.982, as follows:

Sec. 51.982. PROHIBITION ON COMPELLING CERTAIN BELIEFS. (a) Defines "institution of higher education."

- (b) Prohibits a faculty member of an institution of higher education from compelling or attempting to compel a student enrolled at the institution to adopt a belief that any race, sex, or ethnicity or social, political, or religious belief is inherently superior to any other race, sex, ethnicity, or belief.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.