

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 2847
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Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, all public institutions of higher education in Texas are mandated to offer a 42-semester credit hour core curriculum. While this framework ensures consistency and a well-rounded education, the bill sponsor has informed the committee that it may inadvertently extend the time required to complete bachelor's degrees, particularly for students pursuing workforce-oriented programs that emphasize applied, technical, or specialized training over broad general education. The bill sponsor has further informed the committee that this issue has increasingly become prominent as Texas seeks to meet growing workforce demands and provide more streamlined academic pathways that focus on career readiness and faster degree attainment. Additionally, the need for flexibility in core curriculum requirements for bachelor's degree programs has been highlighted by educational institutions and stakeholders aiming to align academic structures more closely with workforce needs. C.S.S.B. 2847 seeks to resolve this issue by authorizing the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to approve core curricula of fewer than 42 semester credit hours for bachelor's degree programs. In addition, C.S.S.B. 2847 provides for the establishment of an advisory committee to review the general education curriculum requirements of public institutions of higher education.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 2847 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to take the following actions:

- establish an advisory committee to review the general education curriculum requirements of public institutions of higher education;
- call for nominations from presidents or chief executive officers, chancellors, and chief academic officers at all institutions of higher education for representatives to serve on the advisory committee; and
- select a number of representatives determined by the THECB from those nominated with nominees drawn equally from two-year and four-year institutions.

The bill defines "general education curriculum" as a core curriculum, as that term is defined by reference to statutory provisions relating to the transfer of course credit, and any other curriculum or competency all undergraduate students of an institution of higher education are required to complete before receiving an undergraduate degree. The bill requires the advisory committee to consider methods for determining general education curriculum component

courses and for condensing the number of general education curriculum courses required at institutions of higher education.

C.S.S.B. 2847 requires the advisory committee, not later than November 1, 2026, to produce a report regarding the advisory committee's findings and recommendations and provide the report to the THECB. The bill requires the THECB, not later than December 31, 2026, to review the advisory committee's report and submit to the legislature the THECB's recommendations for legislative or other action necessary to implement the findings of the report. The advisory committee is abolished and the bill's provisions relating to the committee expire September 1, 2027.

C.S.S.B. 2847 authorizes the THECB by rule to approve a core curriculum of fewer than 42 semester credit hours for a bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education if the THECB determines that the approval would accelerate student completion of workforce-aligned credentials, as defined by THECB rule.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.

COMPARISON OF SENATE ENGROSSED AND SUBSTITUTE

C.S.S.B. 2847 differs from the engrossed only by amending the caption.