

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 3039  
By: West  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The bill sponsor has informed the committee that students who transfer from junior colleges to universities can often face barriers when trying to obtain certain information, that the academic credits earned at junior colleges are not always transferable, and that students are often not aware of this lack of transferability until they begin the process of seeking a transfer. S.B. 3039 seeks to address these issues by requiring comprehensive reporting by institutions of higher education on nontransferable courses and transfer student success and retention, requiring the publication of certain information regarding the denial of transfer credit, and requiring each institution of higher education to designate one employee to act as a liaison officer for current or incoming students at the institution who will transfer into or out of the institution.

### **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 SECTIONS 1, 2, and 3 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **Transfer Report**

S.B. 3039 amends the Education Code to expand the requirement for each general academic teaching institution, not later than May 1 of each year and in the form prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), to provide to the THECB and the legislature a report describing any courses in the Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual or its successor adopted by the THECB for which a student who transfers to the institution from another public institution of higher education is not granted academic credit to require the transfer report to also do the following:

- detail the institution's goals to increase the number, success, and persistence, as measured by the THECB, of students who transfer to the institution from a public junior college;
- assess the institution's academic and technical transfer pathways;
- identify any existing barriers to transferring to the institution and emerging issues affecting transfer students at the institution;
- detail the institution's actions to serve current and prospective transfer students through local and regional articulation agreements that include the following:
  - faculty collaboration;
  - public junior college program enhancements;
  - student outreach and advising services;

- website information development;
- targeted financial aid;
- student success programs; and
- degree program alignment; and
- contain any other information relating to the transfer of academic credit to the institution required by THECB rule.

The bill revises the requirements for such a transfer report to indicate certain information for each course described by the report as a course for which credit is nontransferable as follows:

- specifies that the report must indicate the information for each course;
- requires the report to indicate the common course number for each course;
- requires the report to indicate the name of the institution of higher education or other postsecondary educational institution at which the student completed the course; and
- clarifies that the report must indicate the name of the institution of higher education that awarded or transcribed the academic credit.

S.B. 3039 requires the THECB, not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit to the governor, the Legislative Budget Board, the house appropriations committee, and the senate finance committee a report that evaluates actions to increase the number, success, and persistence of students who transfer to a general academic teaching institution from a public junior college. The bill requires the report to include the following:

- a comparative analysis of institution reports and performance data, including application and admission rates, financial aid awarded, time-to-degree, and baccalaureate graduation rates of students, including transfer students, by program completion at public junior colleges and general academic teaching institutions during the preceding academic year;
- a study of public junior college transfer practices; and
- recommendations for legislative or other action to meet the transfer student-related goals of the state's master plan for higher education developed under statutory provisions relating to the coordination of institutions of public higher education.

The bill authorizes the THECB to adopt rules necessary to implement provisions relating to transfer reports.

### **Report of Courses Taken at Public Junior Colleges**

S.B. 3039 expands the requirement for each public junior college, not later than May 1 of each year and in the form prescribed by the THECB, to provide to the THECB and the legislature a report on courses taken by students who, during the preceding academic year, transferred to a general academic teaching institution or earned an associate degree at the college to include courses taken by students who completed a field of study curriculum during the preceding academic year. The bill requires that report to include any other relevant information required by THECB rule and authorizes the THECB to adopt rules necessary to implement provisions relating to such a report.

### **Publication of Information Regarding Denial of Transfer Credit**

S.B. 3039 requires each institution of higher education to maintain on the admissions page of the institution's website a list of the following:

- the five majors or degree or certificate programs offered by the institution with the highest number of courses for which academic credit is denied or not applied toward the major or program; and
- the five courses for each such major or degree or certificate program for which academic credit is most frequently denied because the credit is not applicable toward the major or program.

The bill requires the THECB to annually provide to each institution of higher education a list of those courses that are most frequently denied credit and authorizes the THECB to adopt rules necessary to implement these provisions relating to the publication of information regarding the denial of transfer credit.

## **Transfer Liaison**

S.B. 3039 requires each institution of higher education, using existing resources, to designate at least one employee of the institution to serve as a single point of contact for other institutions of higher education and the THECB regarding transfer issues and to act as a liaison officer for current or incoming students at the institution who will transfer into or out of the institution. On a transfer or request to transfer to or from an institution of higher education, the institution's transfer liaison must provide a current, former, or prospective student, as applicable, with the following:

- a complete and current list of the institution's core curriculum applicable to the student;
- a complete and current list of the institution's field of study curricula that may be applicable to the student;
- for a receiving institution, a list of courses completed by the student:
  - for which the institution will accept academic credit; and
  - for which the institution proposes to deny academic credit in accordance with statutory provisions relating to credit transfer dispute resolution, including the procedures for credit transfer dispute required by those provisions; and
- any other information required by THECB rule.

The bill requires the receiving institution of higher education's transfer liaison, on the admission of a transfer student, to assist the student in obtaining a degree audit to determine whether the student's completed coursework satisfies the institution's core curriculum, satisfies a field of study curriculum of the institution, or qualifies the student to be awarded a Texas Direct associate degree or any other degree or certificate offered by the institution. The bill requires the THECB to adopt rules necessary to implement its provisions relating to transfer liaisons.

## **Applicability**

S.B. 3039 applies beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year.

## **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.