

By: Branch

H.B. No. 3025

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 3025:

By: Branch

C.S.H.B. No. 3025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to measures to facilitate the transfer of students within
3 the public higher education system and the timely graduation of
4 students from public institutions of higher education.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
7 amended by adding Section 61.05135 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 61.05135. STATEWIDE TRANSFER COMPACTS. (a) In this
9 section:

10 (1) "Career school or college" has the meaning
11 assigned by Section 132.001.

12 (2) "Qualified degree-granting career school or
13 college" means a career school or college that:

14 (A) is authorized to grant degrees in this state;

15 (B) has adopted the core curriculum, as defined
16 by Section 61.821; and

17 (C) identifies for each of its core curriculum
18 courses the course number equivalency under the common course
19 numbering system under Section 61.832.

20 (b) The board, in collaboration with institutions of higher
21 education, shall develop transfer compacts that identify learning
22 objectives for coursework in major degree fields that are
23 acceptable across institutions offering coursework or degrees in
24 those fields in an effort to facilitate the universal articulation

1 of specific courses completed at public junior colleges, public
2 state colleges, public technical institutes, general academic
3 teaching institutions, and qualified degree-granting career
4 schools or colleges and transferred to general academic teaching
5 institutions.

6 (c) An institution of higher education or qualified
7 degree-granting career school or college shall comply with any
8 applicable compact under Subsection (a) entered into by the
9 institution, school, or college and the board.

10 (d) A general academic teaching institution designated as a
11 research institution under the board's higher education
12 accountability system that elects not to participate in an
13 applicable transfer compact developed under this section shall:

14 (1) publish on the institution's website for use by
15 prospective undergraduate students a detailed description,
16 developed by the institution's faculty, of the learning objectives,
17 content, and prior knowledge requirements for at least 12 courses
18 for which credit is frequently transferred to the institution from
19 lower-division institutions of higher education; and

20 (2) establish honors articulation agreements with at
21 least two public junior colleges designed to strengthen the
22 lower-division course offerings of those public junior colleges and
23 to improve the persistence and success rates of students who
24 transfer to the institution from public junior colleges.

25 SECTION 2. Section 61.0515(a), Education Code, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 (a) To earn a baccalaureate degree, a student may not be

1 required by a general academic teaching institution to complete
2 more than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for
3 the degree by the institution's board-recognized accrediting
4 agency [~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its~~
5 ~~successor~~] unless academic accreditation or professional licensure
6 requirements require the [~~the institution determines that there is~~
7 ~~a compelling academic reason for requiring~~] completion of
8 additional semester credit hours for the degree.

9 SECTION 3. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
10 amended by adding Section 61.05151 to read as follows:

11 Sec. 61.05151. SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED FOR ASSOCIATE
12 DEGREE. (a) To earn an associate degree, a student may not be
13 required by an institution of higher education to complete more
14 than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the
15 degree by the institution's board-recognized accrediting agency
16 unless academic accreditation or professional licensure
17 requirements require the completion of additional semester credit
18 hours for the degree.

19 (b) The board may review one or more of an institution's
20 associate degree programs to ensure compliance with this section.

21 (c) Subsection (a) does not apply to an associate degree
22 awarded by an institution to a student enrolled in the institution
23 before the 2013 fall semester.

24 SECTION 4. Section 61.052, Education Code, is amended by
25 amending Subsections (a) and (b) and adding Subsection (b-1) to
26 read as follows:

27 (a) Each governing board shall submit to the board once each

1 year on dates designated by the board a comprehensive list by
2 department, division, and school of all courses, together with a
3 description of content, scope, and prerequisites of all these
4 courses, that will be offered by each institution under the
5 supervision of that governing board during the following academic
6 year. The list for each institution must also specifically
7 identify any course included in the common course numbering system
8 under Section 61.832 that has been added to or removed from the
9 institution's list for the current academic year, and the board
10 shall distribute that information as necessary to accomplish the
11 purposes of Section 61.832.

12 (b) After the comprehensive list of courses is submitted by
13 a governing board under Subsection (a) [~~of this section~~], the
14 governing board shall submit on dates designated by the board any
15 changes in the comprehensive list of courses to be offered,
16 including any changes relating to offering a course included in the
17 common course numbering system.

18 (b-1) Each governing board must certify at the time of
19 submission under Subsection (a) that the institution does not:

20 (1) prohibit the acceptance of transfer credit based
21 solely on the accreditation of the sending institution; or

22 (2) include language in any materials published by the
23 institution, whether in printed or electronic form, suggesting that
24 such a prohibition exists.

25 SECTION 5. Section 61.822, Education Code, is amended by
26 amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsection (f) to read as
27 follows:

1 (a) The board, with the assistance of advisory committees
2 composed of representatives of institutions of higher education,
3 shall develop a recommended core curriculum of at least 42 semester
4 credit hours, including a statement of the content, component
5 areas, and objectives of the core curriculum. At least a majority
6 of the members of any advisory committee named under this section
7 shall be administrators or faculty members of an institution of
8 higher education. An institution shall consult with the faculty of
9 the institution before nominating or recommending a person to the
10 board as the institution's representative on an advisory committee.

11 (f) In an effort to facilitate the transfer of major-related
12 coursework beyond the general education core curriculum, the board,
13 with the assistance of the advisory committees described by
14 Subsection (a), shall:

15 (1) develop a course-specific core curriculum for each
16 broad academic discipline within the general core curriculum; and

17 (2) identify those degree programs offered at
18 institutions of higher education to which the course-specific core
19 curriculum, if successfully completed by a student at another
20 institution of higher education or at a qualified degree-granting
21 career school or college, as defined by Section 61.05135, is fully
22 transferrable.

23 SECTION 6. Section 61.832, Education Code, is amended by
24 adding Subsection (e) to read as follows:

25 (e) A student who transfers from one institution of higher
26 education to another shall receive academic credit from the
27 receiving institution for each course that the student has

1 successfully completed that serves as an equivalent course under
2 the common course numbering system at the institution from which
3 the student transfers.

4 SECTION 7. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is
5 amended by adding Section 51.9685 to read as follows:

6 Sec. 51.9685. REQUIRED FILING OF DEGREE PLAN. (a) In this
7 section:

8 (1) "Degree plan" means a statement of the course of
9 study requirements that an undergraduate student at an institution
10 of higher education must complete in order to be awarded an
11 associate or bachelor's degree from the institution, established
12 through collaboration between the student and an academic advisor
13 for the student's degree program and approved by the academic
14 advisor.

15 (2) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning
16 assigned by Section 61.003.

17 (b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), each
18 student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an
19 institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the
20 institution not later than the semester or term immediately
21 following the semester or term in which the student earned a
22 cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours for coursework
23 successfully completed by the student, including transfer courses,
24 international baccalaureate courses, dual credit courses, and any
25 other course for which the institution the student attends has
26 awarded the student college course credit, including by
27 examination.

1 (c) A student to whom this section applies who begins the
2 student's first semester or term at an institution of higher
3 education with 30 or more semester credit hours of course credit for
4 courses described by Subsection (b) shall file a degree plan with
5 the institution during the student's first semester at the
6 institution.

7 (d) A student to whom this section applies may not register
8 for any course offered by the institution of higher education for a
9 semester or term succeeding the semester or term in which the
10 student is required to file a degree plan under this section unless
11 the student has filed a degree plan with the institution.

12 (e) After filing a degree plan with an institution of higher
13 education as required by this section, a student to whom this
14 section applies may not change the student's degree plan or enroll
15 in a course that is not included in the student's degree plan unless
16 the student has consulted with the student's academic advisor and
17 satisfied any applicable prerequisite or other requirement imposed
18 by the institution regarding that degree plan change or course
19 enrollment, as applicable.

20 (f) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in
21 consultation with institutions of higher education, may adopt rules
22 as necessary for the administration of this section.

23 SECTION 8. The change in law made by this Act to Section
24 61.0515(a), Education Code, applies beginning with undergraduate
25 students who initially enroll in a general academic teaching
26 institution for the 2013 fall semester.

27 SECTION 9. The changes in law made by this Act to Section

1 61.052, Education Code, apply to the comprehensive lists of courses
2 offered by public institutions of higher education beginning with
3 lists required to be submitted for the 2012-2013 academic year.

4 SECTION 10. Not later than May 31, 2012, the Texas Higher
5 Education Coordinating Board shall develop core curricula for broad
6 academic disciplines included within the general core curriculum
7 that conform to the requirements of Section 61.822, Education Code,
8 as amended by this Act.

9 SECTION 11. Section 61.832(e), Education Code, as added by
10 this Act, applies beginning with the 2011 fall semester.

11 SECTION 12. Section 51.9685, Education Code, as added by
12 this Act, applies beginning with undergraduate students who
13 initially enroll in a general academic teaching institution for the
14 2011 fall semester.

15 SECTION 13. This Act takes effect immediately if it
16 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each
17 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.
18 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate
19 effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2011.