

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 2504
By: Kolkhorst et al. (Shapiro)
Higher Education
5/21/2009
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

H.B. 2504 relates to requiring a public institution of higher education to make available to the public on the institution's Internet website certain undergraduate course information.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in SECTION 1 (Section 51.974, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.974, as follows:

Sec. 51.974. INTERNET ACCESS TO COURSE INFORMATION. (a) Requires each institution of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003 (Definitions), to make available to the public on the institution's Internet website the following information for each undergraduate classroom course offered for credit by the institution:

- (1) a syllabus that satisfies any standards adopted by the institution, provides a brief description of each major course requirement, including each major assignment and examination, lists any required or recommended reading, and provides a general description of the subject matter of each lecture or discussion;
- (2) a curriculum vitae of each regular instructor that lists the instructor's postsecondary education, teaching experience, and significant professional publications; and
- (3) if available, a departmental budget report of the department under which the course is offered, from the most recent semester or other academic term during which the institution offered the course.

(a-1) Prohibits a curriculum vitae made available on the institution's Internet website under Subsection (a) from including any personal information, including the instructor's home address or home telephone number.

(b) Requires that the information required by Subsection (a) be accessible from the institution's Internet website home page by use of not more than three links, searchable by keywords and phrases, and accessible to the public without requiring registration or use of a user name, a password, or another user identification.

(c) Requires the institution to make the information required by Subsection (a) available not later than the seventh day after the first day of classes for the semester or other academic term during which the course is offered. Requires the institution to continue to make the information available on the institution's Internet website until at least the fourth anniversary of the date on which the institution initially posted the information.

(d) Requires the institution to update the information required by Subsection (a) as soon as practicable after the information changes.

(e) Requires the governing body of the institution to designate an administrator to be responsible for ensuring implementation of this section. Authorizes the administrator to assign duties under this section to one or more administrative employees.

(f) Requires each institution of higher education, not later than January 1 of each odd-numbered year, to submit a written report regarding the institution's compliance with this section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officer of each legislative standing committee with primary jurisdiction over higher education.

(g) Authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules necessary to administer this section.

SECTION 2. Provides that Section 51.974, Education Code, as added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2010 fall semester.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.