

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1782
By: West
Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current statute places formula restrictions on the number of repeated or dropped courses, and the number of hours accumulated beyond a student's degree plan. These restrictions are meant to encourage timely degree completion, but can be a barrier to adult non-completers wishing to return to higher education. S.B. 1782 grants returning adult students with at least 50 semester credit hours completed, and who have not been enrolled for at least 24 months, one opportunity to enroll in higher education without penalty due to statutory restrictions such as the "30 hour rule," the "45 hour rule," the "three-peat rule", and the "six-drop rule."

As proposed, S.B. 1782 amends current law relating to the elimination of certain formula funding and dropped course restrictions for returning adult students at public institutions of higher education and to the tuition rate that may be charged to those students for certain excessive undergraduate hours.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 51.907, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 51.907, Education Code, by adding Subsection (e-1), to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to adopt rules under which an institution of higher education (IHE) is required to permit a student to drop one additional course under certain circumstances if the student has reenrolled at the IHE following a certain break in enrollment and successfully completed at least 50 semester credit hours of course work at the IHE before that break in enrollment.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 54.014, Education Code, by adding Subsection (b-1) to prohibit an IHE, notwithstanding Subsection (a) (relating to the authority of an IHE to charge a resident undergraduate student tuition at a higher rate than the rate of certain other students), from charging tuition to a resident undergraduate student at a higher rate under that subsection for semester credit hours for courses taken by the student that are required to be included by THECB in the formulas established under Section 61.059 (Appropriations), Education Code, by application of Section 61.0595(f-1).

SECTION 3. Amends Section 61.0595, Education Code, by adding Subsection (f-1) to require THECB, in the formulas established under Section 61.059, to include without consideration of Subsection (a) (relating to THECB's prohibition from including funding for semester credit hours earned by a certain resident undergraduate student) or (e) (relating to the application of Subsection (a) only to funding for semester credit hours earned by a certain student) funding for the first 15 additional semester credit hours earned by a certain student.

SECTION 4. Provides that Section 51.907, Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with the 2017 fall semester.

SECTION 5. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act to Section 61.0595, Education Code, apply beginning with funding recommendations made under Section 61.059, Education Code, for the state fiscal biennium beginning September 1, 2019.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.