

TACRAO LEGISLATIVE ISSUES COMMITTEE
83rd Legislative Session Summary
November 2013

During the legislative session there were 4,073 bills that were referred to committees, 133 of them were specifically referred to the Higher Education committees. Below you will find a list of bills that may affect TACRAO members.

[SB 62](#)

Bacterial Meningitis

Relating to the vaccination against bacterial meningitis of entering students at public and private or independent institutions of higher education

- Changes the age from 30 to 22
- The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) will develop and implement a secure, Internet-based process (exclusive to public junior colleges that elect to use the process) to allow an entering student to apply online for an exemption from the bacterial meningitis vaccination requirement for reasons of conscience
 - The bill authorizes a public junior college to require an entering student to use the Internet-based process as the exclusive method to apply for an exemption from the required bacterial meningitis vaccination for reasons of conscience
 - Students have until the 90th day after the date of the affidavit is notarized to submit to an admitting official
- Applies to students enrolling in public/private/independent institutions of higher education in the state or after January 1, 2014

[SB 498](#)

Reverse Transfer

Relating to applying credit earned by a student at a general academic teaching institution to an associate's degree at a lower-division institution of higher education previously attended by the student

- Adjusts the cumulative hours needed from 90 to 66
- Changes will need to be in effect by start of Fall '13

[SB 497](#)

Associate Degree Hour Cap

Relating to the number of semester credit hours required to earn an associate degree at public institutions of higher education

- Generally limit to 60 hours
- Allows for exceptions for compelling academic reasons
- Start Fall 2015

SB 31

Dual Credit Funding

Relating to formula funding for certain semester credit hours earned for dual course credit

- Limits funding to courses that are:
 - listed in an institutions core curriculum,
 - apply to a career and technical certificate program
 - associate's degree,
 - a foreign language course,
 - part of an early college education program.
- Effective Immediately

SB 1907

Handguns on Campus

Relating to the transportation and storage of firearms and ammunition by concealed handgun license holders in private vehicles on the campuses of certain institutions of higher education

- Allows for a license holder to keep their handgun and/or ammunition in a locked, privately owned or leased motor vehicle.
 - Applies to a street/driveway, parking lot/garage/area on the campus
- Effective September 1, 2013

SB 215

THECB Sunset

Relating to the continuation and functions of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, including related changes to the status and functions of the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation

- Requires the THECB to reevaluate its rules and policies, in consultation with institutions on its data request to identify unnecessary requests
- Conduct a study and draft legislation for the creation of a state-funded student financial assistance program
- Effective September 1, 2013

Texas Grant

- Adjust language of Eligible institutions for TEXAS Grant
 - General academic teaching institution

- Medical and dental unit
- Term does not include a public state college (Lamar State College--Orange, Lamar State College--Port Arthur, or the Lamar Institute of Technology)
- Removed 2-year institutions
 - Under provisions of the bill, a community college student could still receive a TEXAS Grant in fiscal year 2014 and subsequent renewal recipients in fiscal year 2015 would also receive TEXAS Grants. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, new community college students would not be eligible for TEXAS Grants.
- Change percentage share to proportional share
- Changed requirements for eligibility from enrolled in an undergraduate degree to a baccalaureate degree and removed certificate programs
- Added eligibility criteria for transfer students
 - Must be an undergraduate student who has:
 - Previously attended another institution of higher education;
 - Received an initial Texas Educational Opportunity Grant under Subchapter P for the 2014 fall semester or a subsequent academic term;
 - Completed at least 24 semester credit hours at any institution or institutions of higher education; and
 - Earned an overall grade point average of at least 2.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on all course work previously attempted

B-on-Time Loan

- Adjust language of Eligible institutions
 - General academic teaching institution (other than public state college)
 - Removed all 2-year institutions
- The coordinating board in collaboration with eligible institutions and other appropriate entities, shall adopt and implement measures to:
 - Improve student participation in the program
 - Improve the rate of student satisfaction of the requirements for obtaining loan forgiveness
 - Educate students regarding the eligibility requirements for forgiveness
 - Ensure that students applying for or receiving a loan understand their responsibility to repay any portion of the loan that is not forgiven and loan default prevention strategies and counseling
- Institutions that meet specified requirements listed below shall provide the loan repayment and default prevention counseling to all B-on-Time loan recipients enrolled at those institutions
 - Exceeds the statewide average default rate
 - Loan forgiveness rate that is less than 50% of the statewide average forgiveness rate

Negotiated Rulemaking Required

- The Board shall engage institutions of higher education in a negotiated rulemaking process when adopting a policy, procedure, or rule relating to:
 - admission policy regarding the common admission application
 - uniform admission policy
 - graduate and professional admissions
 - transfer of credit
 - the allocation or distribution of fund
 - financial aid
 - other trusted funds
 - reevaluation of data requests
 - compliance monitoring

Board Approval of Academic Programs

- A new degree or certificate program may be added only with specific prior approval of the board
- The Board may review the number of degrees or certificates awarded every 4 years or more frequently
- The Board shall review each degree or certificate program offered at least every 10 years after a new program is established
- The Board may not order the consolidation or elimination of any degree or certificate program offered based on the Board's review of programs
 - If an institution's governing board does not accept recommendations to consolidate or eliminate a degree or certificate program they must identify the programs recommended for consolidation or elimination on the next legislative appropriations request

Transfer Credits

- Each governing board must certify that they do not prohibit:
 - The acceptance of transfer credit based solely on the accreditation of the sending institution
 - include language in any materials published suggesting that such a prohibition exists
- Adjusted requirements to match with SACS requirements

[HB 5](#)

Relating to public school accountability, including assessment, and curriculum requirements; providing a criminal penalty.

- Will start 2014-2015 school year
- Bill Eliminates Minimum, Recommended and Advanced High School graduation programs.
- Did not get rid of Algebra II

Testing

- Limits end-of-course assessments: (15 to 5)
 - Algebra I
 - Biology
 - English I & II
 - Asses both reading and writing
 - United States History
 - Algebra II & English III for post-secondary readiness at district's option

High School Curriculum

- Creates endorsements based on completion of certain courses
 - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
 - Business and Industry
 - Public Services
 - Arts and Humanities
 - Multidisciplinary Studies
- Requires 4 credits in Mathematics for any endorsements
- Student must identify their intended endorsement by 9th grade
- Districts may offer a course/activity (apprenticeship or training hours) to obtain an industry-recognized credential or certificate.
 - Can develop these programs with public or private institutions of higher education
 - The course or activity will allow students to enter an institution of higher education without remediation
- The State Board of Education shall ensure that at least six advanced career and technology education or technology applications courses, including courses in personal financial literacy consistent with Section 28.0021 and in statistics, are approved to satisfy a fourth credit in mathematics.
- Each school district shall partner with at least one institution of higher education to develop and provide courses in college preparatory Math and English language arts.
 - Took this away from the commissioners for Higher Education and Education
 - The courses will be for students at the 12th grade level whose performance on: an end-of-course assessment instrument required under Section 39.023(c) does not meet college readiness standards; or coursework, a college entrance examination, or an assessment instrument designated under Section 51.3062(c) indicates that the student is not ready to perform entry-level college coursework; and to prepare students for success in entry-level college courses.
 - Courses developed under this section must be provided:
 - On the high school or through distance learning through an institution of higher education with which the school district partners
- Foundation high school program

- 4 English Language arts
 - English I
 - English II
 - English III
 - Advance English course
- 3 Math
 - Algebra I
 - Geometry
 - Advance mathematics
- 3 Science
 - Biology
 - Advance science courses
 - Integrated physics and chemistry or an additional advance science courses
- 3 social studies
 - US history
 - .5 government
 - .5 economics
 - World Geography or world history
- 2 same foreign language
 - Computer programing languages could count
- 5 elective credits
- 1 fine arts
- 1 physical education
- Distinguished level of achievement (additions to foundation)
 - 4 math
 - Algebra I
 - Algebra II
 - Geometry
 - Advance mathematics
 - 4 Science
 - Biology
 - Advance science course
 - Integrated physics and chemistry or additional advance science courses
 - 4th science
 - Endorsements
 - Science technology engineering and mathematics (STEM)
 - Course directly related to science (environmental science, technology (computer science), engineering and advanced mathematics
 - Business and industry
 - Courses related to database management, information technology, communications, accounting, finance, marketing, graphic design,

architecture, construction, welding, logistics, automotive technology, agricultural sciences, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning

- Public services
 - Courses directly related to health sciences and occupation, education and training, law enforcement, and culinary arts and hospitality
- Arts and humanities
 - Courses related to political science, world languages, cultural studies, English literature, history, and fine arts
- Multidisciplinary studies
 - Allows a student to select courses from the curriculum for each endorsement area and earn credits in a variety of advanced courses from multiple content areas sufficient to complete the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program
- To receive an endorsement students must have
 - 4 Math
 - 4 Science
 - 2 additional elective credits
- Students can earn the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program and is entitled to receive a high school diploma by being core complete at an institution of higher education.
 - A student who is considered to have earned a distinguished level of achievement under the foundation high school program under this subsection may apply for admission to an institution of higher education for the first semester or other academic term after the semester or other academic term in which the student completes the core curriculum.
- The distinguished level of achievement and an endorsement will have to be clearly indicated on transcripts

TSI

- Students who complete the college preparatory courses are TSI exempt in that contact area
- Only applies to the partnered institution unless the commissioner determines a manner in which the exemption may be applied to other institutions
- Section applies beginning with the 2013-2014 school year

Top 10%

- Replaces recommended and Distinguished with the distinguished level of achievement under the foundation plan or equivalent
- A graduating student who does not qualify for automatic admissions may apply to any general academic teaching institution if the student successfully completes the curriculum requirements for the foundation high school program or meets the SAT/ACT College Readiness Benchmarks.

