

81st Interim Charges for House Higher Education Committee

- I. Evaluate the state's continuing effort to close achievement gaps in success, participation, excellence, and research by 2015. Study how state public education institutions compare to peer institutions around the country.
- II. Study current financial aid programs, tuition and fee exemption programs, loan repayment programs, and professional incentive programs. Evaluate the impact of need-based versus merit-based assistance. Recommend changes where appropriate to improve the alignment of these programs to meet state needs.
- III. Review the structure and operation of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Evaluate the board's data collection systems, including costs to higher education institutions, and make recommendations for improvements.
- IV. Study and recommend strategies for improving community college participation and success. Examine the role of community colleges within the state higher education system. Include a review of programs, practices, and incentives to improve efficiency and productivity, such as expanding dual credit options, encouraging credit by examination, and improving student preparation in high school.
- V. Study and recommend strategies for reducing the costs of instructional materials in higher education institutions, including electronic textbooks, open source materials, and other web-based resources.
- VI. Examine the state's higher education funding mechanisms, including approaches to funding capital improvement projects at public institutions of higher education. Evaluate modifications that would improve the institutions' national peer rankings and help the state to achieve its Closing the Gaps objectives, including improved community college transfer pathways and the impact of shifting the basis of the formula funding methodologies from attempted to completed hours. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*
- VII. Monitor the progress of the capital improvement plan and use of state funds at The University of Texas at Galveston involving the renovation and upgrade of existing facilities and the construction of new facilities. *Joint Interim Charge with House Committee on Appropriations*
- VIII. Study the feasibility of offering an optional curriculum that emphasizes ethics, Western civilization, and American traditions to satisfy portions of the Texas Core Curriculum.
- IX. Monitor the agencies and programs under the committee's jurisdiction.