

81st Interim Charges for SHEC

- I. Study and make recommendations regarding more cost-effective funding of financial aid, including ways to restructure financial aid programs to promote student success and the efficacy of the current \$365 million in current exemptions and waivers offered to students at institutions of higher education. Examine the new Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and determine the impact on eligibility for existing Texas financial aid programs and on data availability resulting from the simplification. Include recommendations on how to expand the TEXAS Grant and B-on-Time programs.
- II. Review community college service areas to ensure that student needs are being met in the most effective and efficient manner. Study and make recommendations to improve the productivity and cost-effectiveness of the community college/university model for producing baccalaureate degrees, including identifying proven best practices; analyzing success rates of similar cohorts of students by comparing those who begin at community colleges with those who begin at four-year institutions; and analyzing transfer issues including dual admissions programs and academic advising services to facilitate a seamless transfer from two-year to four-year institutions. Include an assessment of the role of technical and vocational training programs and their impact on jobs.
- III. Study and make recommendations regarding improving developmental education, which costs the state over \$100 million per year, with a focus on enhancing student success in these courses.
- IV. Study and make recommendations regarding the current accountability system and ways to measure student progress, faculty workload, and student advising; and to improve time-to-degree. Examine the quality of academic advising services to ensure that students are taking courses relevant to their degree program and are on path for graduation. Study and make recommendations to eliminate unnecessary or duplicative reporting requirements.
- V. Examine cost drivers in higher education. Recommend opportunities for achieving cost efficiencies including reporting requirements, three-year degree programs, and community college baccalaureate degree programs.

Study and make recommendations regarding more effective means of using technology, including digital textbooks and online degree programs, to improve access, enhance quality, and reduce the cost of higher education while preserving excellence.

- VI. 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. Include an assessment of higher education reporting requirements and make recommendations to eliminate duplicate requirements and streamline reporting.
- VII. Review endowed funds at institutions of higher education to ensure compliance with all state laws and, in particular, the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act. Study and make recommendations for requiring all institutions of higher education to report annually to donors on the use of gifts and endowed funds. Review state laws to determine if they provide adequate oversight of these funds. Study the manner in which scholarship and other funds are given and bequeathed to institutions of higher education and make recommendations for ensuring that donors' wishes are honored while institutions are allowed appropriate flexibility with the use of the funds.
- VIII. Review dual credit courses, including the cost of delivery, funding mechanisms, and possibility of a statewide dual credit system. This review should also include an examination of the rigor, quality and consistency of dual credit courses. (Joint charge with Senate Education Committee)
- IX. Monitor the implementation of legislation addressed by the Senate Committee on Higher Education, 81st Legislature, Regular and Called Sessions, and make recommendations for any legislation needed to improve, enhance and/or complete implementation. Specifically, focus the following, as well as tuition legislation:
 - A. HB 51 relating to emerging research Tier 1 universities;
 - B. SB 175 relating to top ten percent.