

AN ACT

relating to requiring a public institution of higher education to establish uniform standards for publishing cost of attendance information, to conduct student course evaluations of faculty, and to make certain information available on the Internet.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.974 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.974. INTERNET ACCESS TO COURSE INFORMATION. (a) Each institution of higher education, other than a medical and dental unit, as defined by Section 61.003, shall 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:

(A) satisfies any standards adopted by the institution;

(B) provides a brief description of each major course requirement, including each major assignment and examination;

(C) lists any required or recommended reading; and

(D) provides a general description of the subject matter of each lecture or discussion;

1 (2) a curriculum vitae of each regular instructor that
2 lists the instructor's:

3 (A) postsecondary education;

4 (B) teaching experience; and

5 (C) significant professional publications; and

6 (3) if available, a departmental budget report of the
7 department under which the course is offered, from the most recent
8 semester or other academic term during which the institution
9 offered the course.

10 (a-1) A curriculum vitae made available on the
11 institution's Internet website under Subsection (a) may not include
12 any personal information, including the instructor's home address
13 or home telephone number.

14 (b) The information required by Subsection (a) must be:

15 (1) accessible from the institution's Internet website
16 home page by use of not more than three links;

17 (2) searchable by keywords and phrases; and

18 (3) accessible to the public without requiring
19 registration or use of a user name, a password, or another user
20 identification.

21 (c) The institution shall make the information required by
22 Subsection (a) available not later than the seventh day after the
23 first day of classes for the semester or other academic term during
24 which the course is offered. The institution shall continue to make
25 the information available on the institution's Internet website
26 until at least the second anniversary of the date on which the
27 institution initially posted the information.

1 (d) The institution shall update the information required
2 by Subsection (a) as soon as practicable after the information
3 changes.

4 (e) The governing body of the institution shall designate an
5 administrator to be responsible for ensuring implementation of this
6 section. The administrator may assign duties under this section to
7 one or more administrative employees.

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

15 (g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board may adopt
16 rules necessary to administer this section.

17 (h) Institutions of higher education included in this
18 section shall conduct end-of-course student evaluations of faculty
19 and develop a plan to make evaluations available on the
20 institution's website.

21 SECTION 2. Subchapter E, Chapter 56, Education Code, is
22 amended by adding Section 56.080 to read as follows:

23 Sec. 56.080. ONLINE LIST OF WORK-STUDY EMPLOYMENT
24 OPPORTUNITIES. Each institution of higher education shall:

25 (1) establish and maintain an online list of
26 work-study employment opportunities, sorted by department as
27 appropriate, available to students on the institution's campus; and

1 (2) ensure that the list is easily accessible to the
2 public through a clearly identifiable link that appears in a
3 prominent place on the financial aid page of the institution's
4 Internet website.

5 SECTION 3. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
6 amended by adding Section 61.0777 to read as follows:

7 Sec. 61.0777. UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR PUBLICATION OF COST OF
8 ATTENDANCE INFORMATION. (a) The board shall prescribe uniform
9 standards intended to ensure that information regarding the cost of
10 attendance at institutions of higher education is available to the
11 public in a manner that is consumer-friendly and readily
12 understandable to prospective students and their families. In
13 developing the standards, the board shall examine common and
14 recommended practices regarding the publication of such
15 information and shall solicit recommendations and comments from
16 institutions of higher education and interested private or
17 independent institutions of higher education.

18 (b) The uniform standards must:

19 (1) address all of the elements that constitute the
20 total cost of attendance, including tuition and fees, room and
21 board costs, book and supply costs, transportation costs, and other
22 personal expenses; and

23 (2) prescribe model language to be used to describe
24 each element of the cost of attendance.

25 (c) Each institution of higher education that offers an
26 undergraduate degree or certificate program shall:

27 (1) prominently display on the institution's Internet

1 website in accordance with the uniform standards prescribed under
2 this section information regarding the cost of attendance at the
3 institution by a full-time entering first-year student; and

4 (2) conform to the uniform standards in any electronic
5 or printed materials intended to provide to prospective
6 undergraduate students information regarding the cost of
7 attendance at the institution.

8 (d) Each institution of higher education shall consider the
9 uniform standards prescribed under this section when providing
10 information to the public or to prospective students regarding the
11 cost of attendance at the institution by nonresident students,
12 graduate students, or students enrolled in professional programs.

13 (e) The board shall prescribe requirements for an
14 institution of higher education to provide on the institution's
15 Internet website consumer-friendly and readily understandable
16 information regarding student financial aid opportunities. The
17 required information must be provided in connection with the
18 information displayed under Subsection (c)(1) and must include a
19 link to the primary federal student financial aid Internet website
20 intended to assist persons applying for student financial aid.

21 (f) The board shall provide on the board's Internet website
22 a program or similar tool that will compute for a person accessing
23 the website the estimated net cost of attendance for a full-time
24 entering first-year student attending an institution of higher
25 education. The board shall require each institution to provide the
26 board with the information the board requires to administer this
27 subsection.

1 (g) The board shall prescribe the initial standards and
2 requirements under this section not later than January 1, 2010.
3 Institutions of higher education shall comply with the standards
4 and requirements not later than April 1, 2010. This subsection
5 expires January 1, 2011.

6 (h) The board shall encourage private or independent
7 institutions of higher education approved under Subchapter F to
8 participate in the tuition equalization grant program, to the
9 greatest extent practicable, to prominently display the
10 information described by Subsections (a) and (b) on their Internet
11 websites in accordance with the standards established under those
12 subsections, and to conform to those standards in electronic and
13 printed materials intended to provide to prospective undergraduate
14 students information regarding the cost of attendance at the
15 institutions. The board shall also encourage those institutions to
16 include on their Internet websites a link to the primary federal
17 student financial aid Internet website intended to assist persons
18 applying for student financial aid.

19 (i) The board shall make the program or tool described by
20 Subsection (f) available to private or independent institutions of
21 higher education described by Subsection (h), and those
22 institutions shall make that program or tool, or another program or
23 tool that complies with the requirements for the net price
24 calculator required under Section 132(h)(3), Higher Education Act
25 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 1015a), available on their Internet
26 websites not later than the date by which the institutions are
27 required by Section 132(h)(3) to make the net price calculator

1 publicly available on their Internet websites.

2 SECTION 4. Section 51.974, Education Code, as added by this
3 Act, applies beginning with the 2010 fall semester.

4 SECTION 5. As soon as practicable after the effective date
5 of this Act, each public institution of higher education shall
6 establish an online list of work-study employment opportunities for
7 students as required by Section 56.080, Education Code, as added by
8 this Act.

9 SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
10 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
11 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
12 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
13 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2504 was passed by the House on May 8, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 138, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 2504 on May 29, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 143, Nays 0, 1 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 2504 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 27, 2009, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor