

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;

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

(A) postsecondary education;

(B) teaching experience; and

(C) significant professional publications; and

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

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

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

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

(2) searchable by keywords and phrases; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) The uniform standards must:

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

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

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

(1) prominently display on the institution's Internet website in accordance with the uniform standards prescribed under this section information regarding the cost of attendance at the institution by a full-time entering first-year student; and

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

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

(e) The board shall prescribe requirements for an institution of higher education to provide on the institution's Internet website consumer-friendly and readily understandable information regarding student financial aid opportunities. The required information must be provided in connection with the information displayed under Subsection (c)(1) and must include a

link to the primary federal student financial aid Internet website intended to assist persons applying for student financial aid.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

APPROVED: _____
Date

Governor

Secretary of the Senate