

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1453

As of March 27, 2003

Title: An act relating to improving articulation and transfer between institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Improving articulation and transfer between institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Cox, Fromhold, Jarrett, McCoy, Berkey, Hudgins, Wood, Priest, Conway, Linville, McIntire, Benson, Rockefeller, Anderson, Lantz, Morrell, Wallace and Upthegrove.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/31/03.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Background: Direct Transfer Agreement: The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) is responsible for establishing a statewide transfer of credit policy and agreement, in cooperation with public institutions of higher education and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). Together, these entities have created the Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA).

Any student who completes an approved DTA associate degree at a community college is considered to have satisfied the lower division general education requirements at a public four-year institution. These students are generally admitted as juniors when they transfer.

Most students complete a DTA associate degree before they transfer, but about 30 percent transfer before completing a degree. For these students, unless the community college has a special articulation agreement, each four-year institution makes a separate determination regarding whether the students' courses meet its general education requirements.

Transfer Associate Degrees: In the late 1990s, analysis of students' credit accumulation and graduation patterns revealed that transfer students in science, math, and other highly structured majors did not graduate as efficiently as non-transfer students. When they arrived at a four-year institution, these students needed to take additional lower division course requirements to qualify for their major.

To address this problem, the Council of Presidents (COP), the HECB, and the SBCTC convened a work group to develop a statewide Associate of Science Transfer Degree (AS-T), which was adopted in 2000. Under the AS-T, students take more math and science prerequisites while at the community college, with the objective of transferring directly into a major once they reach the four-year institution.

Currently, the work group is developing other specialized transfer associate degrees in: elementary education, secondary education for math and science teachers, and business administration. The work group has no set time line for finishing its work.

Summary of Bill: The Higher Education Coordinating Board, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Council of Presidents must convene work groups to: (1) develop a general education transfer curriculum acceptable at all public four-year institutions of higher education; and (2) develop transfer associate degrees that meet all lower division prerequisites for particular majors at public four-year institutions.

The HECB, the SBCTC, and the COP make biennial progress reports on the initiatives beginning December 1, 2003. The first report includes measurable indicators of improvement and baseline data. Subsequent reports monitor the indicators and provide other data on improving transfer efficiency.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.