

**Negotiated Rulemaking Committee  
Degree Plan Filing**

September 24, 2019  
9:30a – 4:30p  
Lonestar Room

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**AGENDA**

- I. Introductions
- II. Brief Overview of the Negotiated Rulemaking Process: What it is, What it's not
- III. Brief Overview of Roles and Responsibilities
  - A. Role of Facilitator
  - B. Role of Sponsor Agency
    - Technical and administrative support
  - C. Role of Committee Members
    - Representative role
    - Commitment to negotiate in good faith
- IV. Consideration of Facilitator
- V. Procedural Issues
  - A. Discussion and Consideration of Ground Rules
  - B. Discussion and Consideration of Definition of Consensus
- VI. Discussion of Draft Rule Language on Degree Plan Filing
- VII. Consideration of Proposed Rule Language on Degree Plan Filing

## **THECB Adopted Rules Related to Negotiated Rulemaking**

### CHAPTER 1. AGENCY ADMINISTRATION SUBCHAPTER A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### Section

- 1.1. Dates for Regular Quarterly Meetings of the Board
- 1.2. Authority of the Commissioner to Interpret Rules
- 1.3. Educational Data
- 1.4. Rules of Order
- 1.5. Coordinating Board Committees
- 1.6. Advisory Committees
- 1.7. Petition for the Adoption of Rules
- 1.8. Historically Underutilized Business (HUBs) Program
- 1.9. Training for Members of Governing Boards and Board Trustees
- 1.10. Administration of the Open Records Act
- 1.11. Protest Procedures for Resolving Vendor Protests Relating to Purchasing Issues
- 1.12. Foreign Travel
- 1.13. Internal Auditor
- 1.14. Negotiated Rulemaking
- 1.15. Authority of the Commissioner to Propose Board Rules
- 1.16. Contracts for Materials and Services
- 1.17. Authority of the Commissioner to Provide Direct Supervision of the Education Research Centers
- 1.18. Operation of Education Research Centers
- 1.19. Education and Training of Board Administrators and Employees

1.1 – 1.13 (No change.)

1.14. Negotiated Rulemaking

(a) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this rule, shall have the following meaning:

(1) Alternative Dispute Resolution coordinator – An agency employee appointed under Chapter 1, Subchapter B, Rule 1.22.

(2) Board or agency– Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

(3) Commissioner – The Commissioner of Higher Education

(4) Consensus – The negotiated rulemaking committee has reached consensus on a matter only if the agreement is unanimous, unless the committee has unanimously agreed to define consensus in another manner. The absence or silence of a member at the time the final consensus vote is taken is equivalent to agreement. If consensus is achieved, negotiated rulemaking committee members may not thereafter withdraw their agreement.

(5) Institutions of higher education – As defined in Texas Education Code Section 61.003

(6) Private or independent institutions of higher education – As defined in Texas Education Code Section 61.003

(b) If the Assistant Commissioner whose Division has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the rule or rules to be adopted concludes that the agency may benefit from negotiated rulemaking, he or she shall request that the agency's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) coordinator assist in determining

whether it is advisable to proceed under the procedures established in Chapter 2008 of the Texas Government Code.

(1) Scope and Purpose. This rule also implements Texas Education Code Sections 61.0331, 61.0572, 61.058, and 61.07761 which require the Board to engage in negotiated rulemaking with institutions of higher education in accordance with the procedures established in Texas Government Code Chapter 2008 when adopting a policy, procedure, or rule relating to:

(2) the transfer of credit under Texas Education Code Section 61.827 or admission policies regarding:

(A) the common admission application under Texas Education Code Section 51.762;

(B) uniform admissions under Texas Education Code Section 51.807; or

(C) graduate and professional admissions under Texas Education Code 51.843; or

(3) the reevaluation of data requests under Texas Education Code Section 51.406;

(4) compliance monitoring under Texas Education Code Section 61.035;

(5) the standards for cost, efficiency, space need, and space use under Texas Education Code Sections 61.0572 and 61.058 in regards to:

(A) new construction, rehabilitation, repair of buildings and facilities at institutions of higher education; and

(B) the purchases of improved real property added to institutions of higher education's educational and general buildings and facilities inventory; or

(6) the allocation (including the allocation methodologies and related procedures) or distribution of funds, including financial aid or other trusteed funds under Texas Education Code Section 61.07761, to institutions of higher education and private or independent institutions of higher education. For rulemaking on this issue, the Board shall engage in negotiated rulemaking with both institutions of higher education and private or independent institutions of higher education, as applicable.

(A) With the exception of sections 1.14(a), (b), and (d)(3)-(4), this rule and the procedures set forth herein apply only to those matters, as set forth in (b-1), in which the Board is required to engage in negotiated rulemaking.

(B) In matters other than those addressed in (b-1), the Board retains the right to engage in negotiated rulemaking in accordance with the procedures established in the Texas Government Code, Chapter 2008.

(c) Appointment of Convener. The ADR coordinator will appoint an agency employee to serve as the convener to assist in negotiated rulemaking. The convener may not have a financial or other interest in the outcome of the rulemaking process that would interfere with the person's impartial and unbiased service as the convener.

(d) Duties of Convener. (1) The convener will assist the ADR coordinator in identifying institutions of higher education (and private or independent institutions when rulemaking under 1.14(a)(5) is considered) and other stakeholders (such as students, state agencies, and accreditors) who are likely to be affected by the proposed rule(s), including identifying institutions and other stakeholders who may oppose the issuance of rule(s). The convener will discuss with institution representatives and

other stakeholders whether they are willing to participate in negotiated rulemaking, which issues a negotiated rulemaking committee should address, and whether there are other institutions or persons the convener needs to identify who may be affected by the proposed rule(s).

(2) Where the Board is required to engage in negotiated rulemaking, the convener shall report to the ADR coordinator the outcome of the above discussions.

(3) Where the Board is not required to engage in negotiated rulemaking, the convener shall report to the ADR coordinator on the relevant considerations regarding negotiated rulemaking, including, but not limited to:

(i) the number of identifiable interests that would be significantly affected by the proposed rule(s),

(ii) the probable willingness and authority of the representatives of affected interests to negotiate in good faith,

(iii) the probability that a negotiated rulemaking committee would reach a unanimous or a suitable general consensus on the proposed rule(s),

(iv) the adequacy of Board, institution, and citizen resources to participate in negotiated rulemaking, and

(v) the probability that the negotiated rulemaking committee will provide a balanced representation between affected stakeholder interests.

(4) Where the Board is not required to engage in negotiated rulemaking, the convener shall also recommend to the ADR coordinator whether negotiated rulemaking is appropriate.

(5) The report and recommendations of a convener are public information and available on request to any member of the public.

(e) Publishing Notice of Proposed Negotiated Rulemaking. To initiate negotiated rulemaking, the Commissioner will publish a notice of intent to establish a negotiated rulemaking committee to prepare proposed rules. Such notice will be published both in the *Texas Register* and on the Board's website. The ADR coordinator will consider all comments received by the close of the comment period pursuant to the notice of intent. The notice of intent will include:

(1) a statement that the Board intends to engage in negotiated rulemaking;

(2) a description of the subject and scope of the rule(s) to be developed;

(3) a description of the known issues to be considered in developing the rule(s);

(4) a list of the interests likely to be affected by the proposed rule(s);

(5) a list of the individuals the ADR coordinator proposes to appoint to the negotiated rulemaking committee to represent the Board and affected interests (each committee will include at least one agency staff representative);

(6) a request for comments on the proposal to engage in negotiated rulemaking, including a description of the issues the commenter believes will need to be addressed in developing the rule(s), as well as on the proposed membership of the negotiated rulemaking committee; and

(7) a description of the procedure through which an institution or person who will be significantly affected by the proposed rule(s) may, before the ADR coordinator appoints members to the negotiated

rulemaking committee, apply for membership on the committee or nominate another to represent the institution's or person's interests on the committee (before nominating an individual to the committee, the nominator should confirm that the potential nominee can and will make the necessary time commitment to the negotiations).

(f) Appointment of Negotiated Rulemaking Committee Members. After considering comments and nominations received in response to the notice of proposed negotiated rulemaking, the ADR coordinator will appoint members to a negotiated rulemaking committee to serve until the proposed rule(s) (if any) is adopted by the Board. The ADR coordinator will appoint members to the committee with a goal of providing adequate and balanced representation for the affected interests while keeping the size of the committee manageable. The ADR coordinator shall select individuals with demonstrated expertise or experience in the relevant matters under negotiations and who reflect the diversity of the identifiable interests which could be significantly affected by the proposed rule(s). An individual selected to serve on the committee will be expected to represent the interests of his or her entity, organization or group, and participate in the negotiations in a manner consistent with the goal of developing proposed rules on which the committee will reach consensus.

(g) Costs of Participating in Negotiated Rulemaking.

(1) The Board will provide appropriate administrative support to the negotiated rulemaking committee. Except as provided below, a member of a negotiated rulemaking committee is responsible for the member's own costs in serving on the committee. However, if:

(A) The member certifies that he or she (or the entity, organization or group which the member represents) lacks sufficient financial resources to participate as a member of the committee and provides any requested proof of same; and

(B) The ADR coordinator determines that the member's service on the committee is necessary for the adequate representation of an affected interest,

(C) then, the Board may pay a member's reasonable travel and per diem costs related to the member's service on the committee at the rate set in the General Appropriations Act for state employees.

(2) The costs of the negotiated rulemaking facilitator described in subsection (h) shall be borne equally, on a pro rata basis, by all entities represented on the negotiated rulemaking committee, unless the negotiated rulemaking committee unanimously agrees to a different cost allocation; or the facilitator is an employee of the Board, in which event the costs of the facilitator shall be borne by the Board.

(h) Appointment of Negotiated Rulemaking Facilitator. The ADR coordinator will appoint a negotiated rulemaking facilitator who will utilize alternative dispute resolution skills to attempt to arrive at a consensus on a proposed rule(s). The ADR coordinator may appoint a Board employee or contract with another state employee or private individual to serve as the facilitator. The ADR coordinator's appointment of the facilitator is subject to the approval of the negotiated rulemaking committee and the facilitator serves at the will of the committee. The ADR coordinator will appoint the facilitator utilizing, among other things, the following criteria:

(1) The facilitator must possess the qualifications required for an impartial third party under Civil Practice and Remedies Code Section 154.052(a) and (b);

(2) The facilitator is subject to the standards and duties prescribed by Civil Practice and Remedies Code Sections 154.053(a) and (b) and has the qualified immunity prescribed by Civil Practice and Remedies Code Section 154.055, if applicable;

(3)The facilitator will not be the person designated to represent the Board on the negotiated rulemaking committee on substantive issues related to the rulemaking; and

(4)The facilitator will not have a financial or other interest in the outcome of the rulemaking process that would interfere with the person's impartial and unbiased service as the facilitator.

(i) Duties of Negotiated Rulemaking Committee and Facilitator. The facilitator will preside over meetings of the negotiated rulemaking committee and assist the members of the committee to establish procedures for conducting negotiations and will utilize alternative dispute resolution skills to encourage a consensus on the proposed rule(s). The facilitator may not, however, compel or coerce the members to reach a consensus.

(j) Consensus and the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee's Report. If the negotiated rulemaking committee reaches a consensus, the committee will draft and send a report to the Board that contains the text of the proposed rule(s). If the committee determines that only a partial agreement on a proposed rule(s) has been reached, the committee will draft and send a report to the Board that describes the partial agreement achieved, lists the unresolved substantive issues, and includes any other information or recommendations of the committee. The committee's report is public information. If consensus is not achieved, the Board shall determine whether to proceed with proposed rule(s). If the Board decides to proceed with proposed rule(s), the Board may use language developed during the negotiations or develop new language for all or a portion of the proposed rule(s).

(k) Proposed Rulemaking under the APA. If the Board decides to proceed with rulemaking after receipt of the negotiated rulemaking committee's report, the Board shall initiate rulemaking under the regular Administrative Procedures Act (APA) procedures, as prescribed in Texas Government Code Chapter 2001, Subchapter B. In addition to the APA's requirements regarding the contents of notice of proposed rulemaking, the notice will also state that:

(1)the Board used negotiated rulemaking in developing the proposed rule, and

(2)the negotiated rulemaking committee report is public information and the report's location at which it will be available to the public.

All published proposed rules will conform to the agreements resulting from consensus, if any, achieved through negotiated rulemaking (as reflected in the negotiated rulemaking committee's report).

(l) Confidentiality of Certain Records and Communications. Civil Practice and Remedies Code (CPRC) Sections 154.053 and 154.073 apply to the communications, records, conduct, and demeanor of the facilitator and the members of the negotiated rulemaking committee as if the negotiated rulemaking were a dispute being resolved in accordance with CPRC Chapter 154. In the negotiated rulemaking context, the Texas Office of the Attorney General, subject to review by a Travis County district court, decides in accordance with CPRC Section 154.073(d) whether a communication or material subject to Section 154.073(d) is confidential, excepted from required disclosure, or subject to required disclosure. Notwithstanding CPRC Section 154.073(e):

(1) a private communication and a record of a private communication between a facilitator and a member or members of the committee are confidential and may not be disclosed unless the member or members of the committee, as appropriate, consent to the disclosure; and

(2) the notes of a facilitator are confidential except to the extent that the notes consist of a record of a communication with a member of the committee who has consented to disclosure in accordance with subdivision (1).

(m) The Board hereby delegates to the Commissioner the responsibilities and authority set forth in this section.

## **THECB Ground Rules For Negotiated Rulemaking**

### **I. GOAL**

To reach consensus on the language of a proposed rule

### **II. REACHING DECISIONS**

- A. Use of Consensus. Negotiations will be conducted with the intent of reaching a consensus decision.
- B. Consensus. Unless the Committee members agree unanimously to another definition at the outset of the process:

*Consensus means that all Committee members concur in the decision because their major interests have been taken into consideration and addressed in a satisfactory manner. While committee members may differ in their acceptance of individual terms of the agreement, all committee members can support the final agreement given the trade-offs and current circumstances.*

Committee members can reach consensus without embracing each element of the agreement with the same fervor as other members. Some parties may strongly endorse a particular solution while others may accept it as a workable agreement.

### **III. AGREEMENT**

- A. Final Product/Proposed Rule. The Committee intends for its final work product to be the text of a proposed rule. If the Committee reaches consensus on a proposed rule, the agency will accept the proposed rule as its draft with the recommendation that it be published in the Texas Register as drafted.
- B. Failure to Reach Consensus. If the Committee is unable to reach consensus on a proposed rule, then the Committee will draft a report that specifies the issues on which consensus was reached, the issues that remain unsolved, and any other information that the Committee considers important.
- C. Support of Agreement. The Committee members agree not to take any action to inhibit the adoption or implementation of a rule that conforms to the consensus proposal of the Committee. Furthermore, members agree to advocate for the consensus rule to their membership and to other policy makers both during and after the negotiated rulemaking process. If a member fails to keep this agreement, all other members agree to submit comments to the agency, any other relevant state officials, government bodies, or Courts, stating that:
1. All members concurred in the proposed rule; and
  2. All members supported approval of the final rule that conforms to the consensus proposal of the Committee.

### **IV. COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- A. Meeting Attendance
1. The same Committee members listed at the end of this document need be present at each full meeting of the Committee.
  2. Scheduled meetings will proceed even if some members are absent.
  3. Absent members are responsible for updating themselves in the proceedings of missed meetings.

4. After the negotiations have begun, additional members may join the Committee only with the concurrence of the Committee.

B. During the Meetings

1. Meetings will be open to the public. However, participation in negotiations will be limited to Committee members and invited experts.
2. Visitors are requested to respect the process and abide by these ground rules. This request will be stated at the beginning of each meeting.
3. Visitors who wish to comment during the negotiations may do so through the following avenues:
  - a. Channel comments through one of the Committee members;
  - b. Submit written comments to the Committee members; or
  - c. Submit comments through the website, if available.Further, a Committee member may invite a member of the audience to speak, as that member sees fit. Initial comments should be limited to three minutes and may be extended at the Committee's request.
4. The proceedings of the Committee will not be electronically recorded, but the facilitator may prepare draft summaries of the meetings for the convenience of the members. Such summaries shall not be approved by the Committee, and they are not to be construed to represent the official position of the Committee or any member on what transpired at a Committee meeting. Summaries will note issues discussed, any outcome to discussions, requests for data, and any other action items.

C. Caucuses

1. The facilitator may at any time request a confidential caucus with specific members or groups of members to attempt resolution of a specific issue.
2. Any member may request a caucus at any time to consult with other members, but such caucuses are to be used sparingly. The caucusing members will be asked to move into the hallway or another meeting area to conduct the caucus. The length of caucuses will be determined at the discretion of the facilitator who may serve as a mediator during such caucuses.

- D. Stakeholder Representatives. Individual members acknowledge that they have been named to the Committee as the representative of all others in their stakeholder class, and not just themselves. To this end, the members pledge to communicate with other members of their organization or stakeholder class to ensure that the deliberations reflect the viewpoints of the stakeholder class as a whole.

## V. **NEGOTIATING**

- A. All members agree to act in good faith in all aspects of these negotiations. Members agree to speak openly and commit to addressing each other's concerns and needs. Members may not use other members' specific offers, positions, or statements made during the negotiations for any purpose outside the negotiation.
- B. All members commit to share relevant information, which if excluded, would damage the credibility or outcome of the consensus. Members will make every effort to provide requested information reasonably in advance of scheduled meetings.
- C. All members will endeavor to tailor their statements during meetings to ensure the opportunity for all members to participate fully on issues in which they have an interest. Members agree to speak one at a time and allow each other a reasonable opportunity for uninterrupted comments. All members will refrain from personal attacks.

- D. Any Committee member may withdraw from the negotiations at any time without prejudice. The remaining Committee members will then decide whether to continue the negotiations.

## **VI. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. When communicating with the press, Committee members agree to limit their statements to expressions of their own interests. Inquiries from the press may be referred to the facilitators. If the Committee decides to issue a press statement, the Committee will agree on the language of the press statement.
- B. In all communications outside of the Committee, including those to the press, members may give information concerning issues raised and actions taken but agree to refrain from attributing views or positions expressed in a non-public setting and identified as confidential to a particular group or individual, even if that party withdraws from negotiations.

**Mary E. Smith, Ph.D.**

Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy  
Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Mary E. Smith has been a staff member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board since 1987 and now serves as the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy. In this role, she is responsible for the administration and management of matters related to the Board's higher education academic planning and policy functions, and she provides leadership and coordination on key projects that cut across divisions of the agency. Smith also serves as the agency's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Coordinator for negotiated rulemaking. In this role, she is responsible for managing the agency's consensus-based process of developing policies, procedures, or rules relating to certain matters in collaboration with stakeholders who have shared interests. She has taught communication courses at The University of Texas at Austin and at St. Edward's University.

Smith served for five years as a program director in the Coordinating Board's former Division of Universities and Health-Related Institutions where her primary responsibilities included the review of new degree program proposals and the administration of the Minority Health Research and Education Grant Program. Smith spent her first 12 years of employment with the Coordinating Board in the Department of Personnel Services, where from 1996 to 1999 she served as the department's assistant director. Prior to her employment with the Coordinating Board, Smith spent 13 years working in health care organizations, with nine of those years serving in direct patient care positions.

Smith holds a Ph.D. in Communication Studies, a Certificate in Dispute Resolution, a Master of Arts degree in Speech Communication, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, all from The University of Texas at Austin.

**Senate Bill 25**, relating to measures to facilitate the transfer, academic progress, and timely graduation of students in public higher education.

SECTION 4. Section 51.9685, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsections (b), (c), and (g) and adding Subsection (c-2) to read as follows:

(b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), each student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the institution after the 12th class day but before [~~not later than~~] the end of the [~~second regular~~] semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 30 [45] or more semester credit hours for coursework successfully completed by the student, including transfer courses, international baccalaureate courses, dual credit courses, and any other course for which the institution the student attends has awarded the student college course credit, including course credit awarded by examination.

(c) A student to whom Subsection (b) [~~this section~~] applies who begins the student's first semester or term at an institution of higher education with 30 [45] or more semester credit hours of course credit for courses described by Subsection (b) shall file a degree plan with the institution after the 12th class day but before [~~not later than~~] the end of that [~~the student's second regular~~] semester or term [~~at the institution~~].

(c-2) A student enrolled in a dual credit course at an institution of higher education and to whom Subsection (b) does not apply shall file a degree plan with the institution not later than:

(1) the end of the second regular semester or term immediately following

the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 15 or more semester credit hours of course credit for dual credit courses successfully completed by the student; or

(2) if the student begins the student's first semester or term at the institution with 15 or more semester credit hours of course credit for dual credit courses successfully completed by the student, the end of the student's second regular semester or term at the institution.

(g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with institutions of higher education, shall [~~may~~] adopt rules as necessary for the administration of this section, including rules to ensure compliance with this section. In adopting those rules, the coordinating board shall use the negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter 2008, Government Code.

**House Bill 3808**, relating to measures to facilitate the timely graduation of and attainment of marketable skills by students in public higher education.

SECTION 3. Section 51.9685, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsections (b), (c), and (g) to read as follows:

(b) Except as otherwise provided by Subsection (c), each student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the institution after the 12th class day but before ~~[not later than]~~ the end of the ~~[second-regular]~~ semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 30 ~~[45]~~ or more semester credit hours for coursework successfully completed by the student, including transfer courses, international baccalaureate courses, dual credit courses, and any other course for which the institution the student attends has awarded the student college course credit, including course credit awarded by examination.

(c) A student to whom Subsection (b) ~~[this section]~~ applies who begins the student's first semester or term at an institution of higher education with 30 ~~[45]~~ or more semester credit hours of course credit for courses described by Subsection (b) shall file a degree plan with the institution after the 12th class day but before ~~[not later than]~~ the end of that ~~[the student's second-regular]~~ semester or term ~~[at the institution]~~.

(g) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with institutions of higher education, shall ~~[may]~~ adopt rules as necessary for the administration of this section, including rules to ensure compliance with this section. In adopting those rules, the coordinating board shall use the negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter 2008, Government Code.

Strawman: Negotiated Rulemaking on Required Degree Planning (Texas Education Code (TEC),  
Section 51.9685 as amended by Senate Bill 25)

Chapter 4. Rules Applying to All Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas

Subchapter T. Required Degree Planning

4.340 Purpose

4.341 Authority

4.342 Definitions

4.343 Degree Plans for a Student Enrolled in an Associate or Bachelor's Degree Program

4.344 Degree Plans for a Student Enrolled in Dual Credit Courses

4.345 Responsibilities of Institutions

4.346 Responsibilities of Students

4.347 Institutional Compliance

4.340 Purpose

The purpose of this subchapter is to ensure students file degree plans early in their enrollment at public institutions of higher education and graduate from their degree programs without excess hours.

4.341 Authority

Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 51.9685, Required Filing of Degree Plan, authorizes the Board to adopt rules necessary for the administration of the section and to ensure compliance.

4.342 Definitions

(1) Degree plan - defined in TEC Section 51.9685(a) (1) A statement of the course of study requirements that an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education must complete in order to be awarded an associate or bachelor's degree from the institution.

(2) Institution of higher education - has the meaning assigned by TEC Section 61.003(8).

(3) Board or Coordinating Board - The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

(4) Dual credit courses - College courses in which an eligible high school student enrolls and receives credit for the course(s) from both the college and the high school.

(5) Associate degree program - A grouping of subject matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a student, will entitle the student to an associate degree from an institution of higher education.

(6) Bachelor's degree program - Any grouping of subject matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a student, will entitle the student to a baccalaureate degree from an institution of higher education.

#### 4.343 Degree Plans for a Student Enrolled in an Associate or Bachelor's Degree Program

(a) A student enrolled in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education must file a degree plan with the institution after the 12th class day but before the end of the semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours for coursework successfully completed by the student, including transfer courses, international baccalaureate courses, dual credit courses, and any other course for which the institution the student attends has awarded the student college course credit, including course credit awarded by examination.

(b) A student who enrolls in an associate or bachelor's degree program at an institution of higher education for the first time with a cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours, shall file a degree plan with the institution after the 12th class day but before the end of the semester of first enrollment.

#### 4.344 Degree Plans for a Student Enrolled in Dual Credit Courses

(a) A student enrolled in dual credit courses at an institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the institution not later than:

(1) the end of the second regular semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which the student earned a cumulative total of 15 or more semester credit hours of course credit for dual credit courses successfully completed by the student; or

(2) if the student begins the student's first semester or term at the institution with 15 or more semester credit hours of course credit for dual credit courses successfully completed by the student, the end of the student's second regular semester or term at the institution.

#### 4.345 Responsibilities of Institutions

(a) Institutions of higher education shall provide students information about the degree plan filing requirement and options for academic advising, including electronic communication.

(b) Institutions shall notify students failing to file a degree plan and shall not provide official transcripts to the students until a degree plan is filed.

#### 4.346 Responsibilities of Students

(a) Students shall file a degree plan with the institution as specified in this subchapter.

(b) Students shall notify appropriate offices at the institution of higher education of changes in their choice of degree programs.

(c) Students shall enroll in courses consistent with the filed degree plan.

#### 4.347 Institutional Compliance

The Board reserves the right to audit institutional student records at any time to ensure compliance with any of the conditions of this subchapter.

## Chapter 4. Rules Applying to All Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas

### Subchapter D. Dual Credit Partnerships Between Secondary Schools and Texas Public Colleges

- 4.81 Purpose
- 4.82 Authority
- 4.83 Definitions
- 4.84 Institutional Agreements

4.81 - 4.84 No change

#### 4.85 Dual Credit Requirements

(a) – (e) No change.

(g) Academic Policies and Student Support Services.

(1) Regular academic policies applicable to courses taught at the college's main campus must also apply to dual credit courses. These policies could include the appeal process for disputed grades, drop policy, the communication of grading policy to students, when the syllabus must be distributed, etc.

(2) Students in dual credit courses must be eligible to utilize the same or comparable support services that are afforded college students on the main campus. The college is responsible for ensuring timely and efficient access to such services (e.g., academic advising and counseling), to learning materials (e.g., library resources), and to other benefits for which the student may be eligible.

(3) A student enrolled in dual credit courses at an institution of higher education shall file a degree plan with the institution as prescribed by TAC 4.344 Degree Plans for a Student Enrolled in Dual Credit Courses.

(h) No change.

(i) No change.

## Chapter 9. Program Development in Public Two-Year Colleges

### Subchapter L. Multidisciplinary Studies Associate Degrees

- 9.552 Definitions
- 9.553 Multidisciplinary Studies Associate Degree Program
- 9.554 Adoption of Program
- 9.555 Student Advising

9.552 - 9.554 No change.

9.555 Student Advising

A student enrolled in a multidisciplinary studies associate degree program shall file a degree plan as prescribed by TAC Chapter 4, Subchapter T. The ~~[Notwithstanding Texas Education Code §51.9685, before the beginning of the regular semester or term immediately following the semester or term in which a student successfully completes a cumulative total of 30 or more semester credit hours for coursework in a multidisciplinary studies associate degree program established under this section, the]~~ student must meet with an academic advisor to complete a degree plan, as defined by §9.553 of this title (relating to Multidisciplinary Studies Associate Degree Program, that:

- (1) Accounts for all remaining credit hours required for the completion of the degree program; and
- (2) Emphasizes the student's transition to a particular four-year college or university that the student chooses; and
- (3) Preparations for the student's intended field of study or major at the four-year college or university.