Sent: Monday, November 29, 2010 11:20 AM
To: Subject: Recommendation on Plan to Post Student Evaluations on the Web

This email message is being sent on behalf of MacGregor M. Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Academic Affairs and Research, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

The Coordinating Board has received several questions in recent weeks about a stipulation in HB 2504 requiring Texas public institutions to develop a plan for adding student course evaluations to the information that is to be published on the institution's main website.

The Coordinating Board rules relating to HB 2504 state that institutions are required to "conduct end-of-course student evaluations of faculty for each undergraduate classroom course." (If a course has multiple sections taught by multiple faculty members, there should be an evaluation for each faculty member.) Institutions are to "develop a plan to make evaluations publicly available on the institution's website."

The original legislation did not specify a deadline or to whom a written plan should be submitted. However, the rules also stipulate that "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."

It is our suggestion that you include your plan to post student evaluations on the web as part of your required compliance report as well as any associated potential cost of doing so. There is no set format or template for the plan or the report.

A copy of the relevant Coordinating Rules is attached. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Allen Michie at allen.michie@thecb.state.tx.us or 512-427-6518

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

Subchapter N
Public Access to Course Information

4.225 Purpose
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4.225 Purpose

Each institution of higher education, other than a medical and dental unit, shall make available to the public on the institution's Internet website certain undergraduate course information, and information about available work-study opportunities.

4.226 Authority

Texas Education Code; Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Section 51.974(g) authorizes the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt rules necessary to administer this subchapter. The Texas Education Code, Section 61.051, describes the Board's role in the Texas system of higher education.

4.227 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this subchapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

(1) Commissioner --"The Commissioner of Higher Education" means the agency acting through its executive, and his or her designees, staff, or agents.

(2) Curriculum Vitae -- A document that summarizes the career and qualifications of the instructor of record, including at least the following:

(A) all institutions of higher education attended, with the degree(s) earned;

(B) all previous teaching positions, including the names of the institutions, the position, beginning and ending dates; and

(C) a list of significant professional publications relevant to the academic positions held, including full citation data for each entry.

(D) The curriculum vitae may include the instructor's professional contact

information, such as office telephone number, work address, and institutional email address. Vitae are not required to include personal information about the instructor, such as the home address or personal telephone number.

(3) Departmental Budget Report -- If a course is offered through a unit other than a department—such as a program, college, or institute—substitute the budget for that unit as appropriate. If the institution posts general budget data on its website in which the information required by statute is reported, it may substitute a hyperlink to that data in place of a separate departmental budget report. The budget report shall include:

(A) detail for the most recent academic year for which data are available;

(B) income from all sources; and

(C) a summary by functional categories such as salaries and wages, travel, etc. (as defined by the National Association of College and University Business Officers).

(4) Institutions of Higher Education or Institution--Any public technical institute, public junior college, public senior college or university, medical or dental unit, other agency of higher education as defined in Texas Education Code, §61.003.

(5) Instructor(s) of Record--The primary instructor or co-instructors of a course who are responsible for the course content and the assignment of final grades. This includes tenured and tenure-track faculty, lecturers, adjuncts, and graduate assistants (who are not working under the supervision of an instructor of record). It does not include guest lecturers or others who may be brought in to teach less than fifty percent of the class sessions.

(6) Internet Website Home Page--The primary Internet web page that serves as the opening portal to the public for all of the other public web pages and Internet services hosted by the institution. It is commonly the web page with the uniform resource locator (URL) address that ends with the domain suffix ".edu".

(7) Medical or Dental Unit--"Medical and dental unit" means Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler, The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth, and the Paul L. Foster School of Medicine at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center at El Paso, and such other medical or dental schools as may be established by statute or as provided in chapter 61 of the Texas Education Code.

(8) Significant Professional Publications--Discipline-related refereed papers/publications, books/book chapters, and juried creative performance accomplishments.

(9) Syllabus--A document describing the course that satisfies any standards for syllabi adopted by the institution. The document shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(A) brief description of each major course requirement, including each major assignment and examination;

(B) the learning objectives for the course;

(C) a general description of the subject matter of each lecture or discussion; and

(D) lists of any required or recommended readings.

(10) Undergraduate Classroom Course--Any lower- or upper-division credit course offered to five or more students. This includes on-campus, off-campus, distance education, and dual-credit courses (including those taught on high school campuses). It excludes courses with highly variable subject content that are tailored specifically to individual students, such as Independent Study and Directed Reading courses. It excludes laboratory, practicum, or discussion sections that are intrinsic and required parts of larger lecture courses and are directly supervised by the same instructor(s) of record for those large courses.

(11) Work-study employment opportunity--Includes all of the programs and opportunities in the Federal College Work-Study Program, the State of Texas Work-Study Program, and any similar financial aid employment programs sponsored by the institution. For the purposes of this subchapter, work-study applies only to resident undergraduate students.

4.228 Internet Access to Course Information

(a) Each public institution of higher education, other than a medical and dental unit, 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: a syllabus, a curriculum vitae for the instructor(s) of record, and (if available) a departmental operating budget from the most recent semester or other academic term during which the institution offered the course. Links to existing data that meet legislative requirements may suffice.

(b) If multiple sections of a course use an identical syllabus with identical assignments and readings, only one syllabus shall be posted. The curriculum vitae of each instructor(s) of record for each section shall be posted.

(c) All course information described in subsection (a) of this section 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;

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

(4) 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; and

(5) updated as soon as practicable after the information changes, at least once for every semester in which the course is offered.

(d) 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. An up-to-date curriculum vitae must be available for each instructor of each course for two years after the course is taught.

(e) Institutions shall conduct end-of-course student evaluations of faculty for each undergraduate classroom course as defined in section 4.227 (10), and develop a plan to make evaluations publicly available on the institution's website.

(f) The governing body of the institution shall designate an administrator to be responsible for ensuring implementation of this section. 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) Institutions must begin compliance with these rules no later than August 15, 2010.

4.229 Internet Access to Work-Study Information

(a) Each institution of higher education shall establish and maintain an online list of work-study employment opportunities available to students on the institution’s campus, sorted by department as appropriate. Information should be made available no later than April 1, 2010.

(b) Each institution of higher education shall 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.