TITLE 19. EDUCATION

PART 1. TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

CHAPTER 9. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

SUBCHAPTER M. BLOCK SCHEDULING

19 TAC §§9.660 - 9.666

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board) proposes new §§9.660 - 9.666 regarding Rules Applying to Program Development in Public Two-Year Colleges concerning Block Scheduling. The intent of these new sections is to establish the Board’s oversight for public junior colleges regarding block scheduling of certain associate degree and certificate programs. House Bill 1583, 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session requires public junior colleges to adopt at least five associate degree or certificate programs from the allied health, nursing, or career and technology education fields as block scheduled programs. In addition, Senate Bill 215, 83rd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, called for the Board to engage institutions of higher education in a negotiated rulemaking process as described in Subchapter 2008, Government Code in the development of such rules. The new Block Scheduling rules proposed for this chapter were reviewed and approved by the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on Block Scheduling on October 13, 2015.

Dr. Rex C. Peebles, Assistant Commissioner for Academic Quality and Workforce, has determined that for the first five years there will be no fiscal implications for state or local governments as a result of these proposed new rules.

Dr. Peebles has also determined that for the first five years the new rules are in effect, the program will encourage more students to complete associate degree or certificate programs in a timelier manner and with fewer semester credit hours that do not apply to the program of study. There are no anticipated economic costs to persons who are required to comply with the section as proposed. There is no impact on local employment.

Comments on the proposed new rules may be submitted by mail to Rex C. Peebles, Assistant Commissioner, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, P.O. Box 12788, Austin, Texas 78711 or via email at AQWcomments@thechb.state.tx.us. Comments will be accepted for 30 days following publication of the proposal in the Texas Register.

The new rules are proposed under the Texas Education Code, Chapter 130, §130.0095, which provides the Coordinating Board with the authority to adopt rules to administer the section.

The new rules affect the implementation of Texas Education Code, Chapter 130.
§9.660.Purpose.

The purpose of this subchapter is to establish the coordinating board's oversight for public junior colleges regarding block scheduling of certain associate degree or certificate programs.

§9.661.Authority.

Authority for this subchapter is provided by Texas Education Code, §130.0095, which provides the board with the authority to administer block schedule programs.


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

1) Block Scheduling--Co-registration in a group of courses equal to a full-time load related to a specific program of study or major to facilitate schedule predictability from semester to semester and encourage timely degree completion.

2) Board or Coordinating Board--The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

3) Full-time load--The number of semester credit hours a student is required to complete per semester to complete the program in the amount of time the degree or certificate represents. As examples, a Level I certificate should be completed in one year or less; a Level II certificate should be completed in less than two years; and an associate degree should be completed in two years.

4) Block Scheduled Program--A Coordinating Board approved associate of applied science degree or credit-bearing certificate program in the fields of allied health, nursing, or career education and technology utilizing block scheduling.

5) Public Junior College--Has the meaning as defined in Texas Education Code, §61.003(2).

§9.663.Block Scheduled Program.

A block scheduled program established at a public junior college under this section must allow a student to enroll in courses equal to that of a full-time load for the program of study and shall be offered each semester in scheduled blocks, such as a morning, full-day, afternoon, evening, or weekend block to provide scheduling predictability from semester to semester for students enrolled in the program. Clinical, practicum and other externships may deviate from the block schedule.

§9.664.Adoption of Block Scheduled Programs.

Each public junior college shall establish a block scheduled program curriculum from among the allied health, nursing, and career education and technology associate degree or certificate programs offered by the public junior college in at least five of those programs not previously offered as a block scheduled curriculum.

Each public junior college shall publish in advance of each semester the available curricula for each associate degree or certificate program identified as a block scheduled program offered by the college for that semester. Students may enroll in an entire block scheduled program curriculum offered under the program in a semester, rather than enrolling in individual courses leading toward the degree or certificate.


If a public junior college does not offer the minimum number of block scheduled programs as described by this subchapter, the institution must provide detailed written documentation to the coordinating board describing the reason why offering the required number of programs creates a hardship for the institution and how students would be impacted by offering additional block scheduled programs. Factors creating an institutional hardship may include, but are not limited to, programmatic accreditation requirements; statutory requirements; number of students enrolled in the program; availability of faculty; or availability of classroom, laboratory, or other types of instructional/experiential spaces. The Coordinating Board will review the documentation provided and make a determination to approve or deny a request to not offer the minimum number of block scheduled programs as defined by this subchapter.

The agency certifies that legal counsel has reviewed the proposal and found it to be within the state agency's legal authority to adopt.

Filed with the Office of the Secretary of State on October 19, 2015.

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Bill Franz

General Counsel

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Earliest possible date of adoption: November 29, 2015

For further information, please call: (512) 427-6114