

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 282

52nd Legislature, 1st Session, 2015

Tracking Number: .198827.1

Short Title: Higher Ed Common Course Naming & Numbering

Sponsor(s): Representative Rodney D. Montoya and Others

Analyst: Travis Dulany

Date: February 17, 2015

Bill Summary:

HB 282 amends the *Post-Secondary Education Articulation Act* to require the Higher Education Department (HED) to establish, by August 1, 2017, a common course naming and numbering system for courses identified as substantially equivalent lower-division courses.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 282 does not contain an appropriation.

Substantive Issues:

HB 282 does not amend the substance of the *Post-Secondary Education Articulation Act*; rather, the bill requires HED to implement requirements in current law by August 1, 2017.

The provisions in the *Post-Secondary Education Articulation Act* being amended by HB 282, which require a common course naming and numbering system for courses identified as substantially equivalent lower-division courses, were enacted in 2005. It appears, however, that such a common course naming and numbering system has not yet been implemented. For example, a student who takes college algebra at New Mexico Highlands University will enroll in MATH 140; meanwhile, a college algebra student at the University of New Mexico will enroll in MATH 121.

Background:

According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), trends related to transfer and articulation of course credits have shifted from institutional agreements to statewide policies. Many states, however, still have fragmented policies that apply to one system of higher education and not another. ECS's analysis shows that:

- 36 states have a transferable core of lower-division courses;
- 16 states use a common course-numbering system;
- 36 states have a guaranteed transfer of associate degrees; and
- 16 states have a standard credit-by-assessment policy.

In 1995, legislation was enacted that charged the then Commission on Higher Education (now HED) to "establish and maintain a comprehensive statewide plan to provide for the articulation

of educational programs and facilitate the transfer of students between institutions.” It further required the creation of “transfer modules [that] shall include a common general education core component of not less than [35] semester hours.”

During the 2003 and 2004 interims, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) heard testimony that articulation problems:

- occur both for courses in the general education core and those in particular degree programs;
- cause additional expense for students and the state Lottery Tuition Fund; and
- lengthen the time required to complete a degree and discourage some students from doing so.

Subsequently, in 2005, the LESL endorsed legislation (Laws 2005, Chapter 272) to require, among other items, the common course naming and numbering system referenced in HB 282.

Committee Referrals:

HEC/HGEIC

Related Bills:

None as of February 17, 2015.