

HB 183 -- HIGHER EDUCATION CORE CURRICULUM

SPONSOR: Parker

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development by a vote of 14 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill specifies that, prior to June 30, 2027, the coordinating board, with the assistance of an advisory committee, shall approve a 60 credit hour transferable lower-division courses and common course numbering equivalency matrix for the five applicable degree programs outlined in the bill beginning in the 2027-28 academic year. Each public institution of higher education, offering the approved degree programs, must include in its programs of study an approved 60 hour program equivalency matrix.

If a student successfully completes the transferable lower-division courses at a public institution of higher education, such courses may be transferred and shall be substituted for core curriculum courses in the same degree program at a receiving institution. The transferring student receives credit toward the student's degree and is not required to take additional core classes for the same degree program at the receiving institution. Transferring students who have not fully completed the transferable coursework curriculum may be required to satisfy further course requirements at the receiving institution.

The coordinating board must report to the House Higher Education Committee and the Senate Education Committee on progress related to the requirements of the bill.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 2310 (2024).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this is not an indictment on the universities in Missouri or the community colleges but a structural problem with the transfer system. There are many articulation agreements in place and there should be a way to determine what would transfer from one level to the next. With most community college students staying within the state it would be most beneficial to provide these students with a clear path to public universities to complete their education.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Parker; Missouri Community College Association; Molly Prichard; St. Louis Community College; and Metropolitan Community College.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that a better solution would be for the Department to have a centralized clearinghouse that students could research and determine for themselves the best course and college to apply for. Certain universities and colleges have articulation agreements in place already and that agreement might be more beneficial to local students rather than a statewide common core set of curriculum. These agreements should stay in place.

Testifying in person against the bill were Jim Spain, University of Missouri; and Council on Public Higher Education.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.