

TICUA Policy Update

April 2, 2015

Committees Beginning to Close

Both the Senate and House began closing committees this week. Last night the Senate Education Committee finished their final calendar of bills and closed for the year. Earlier in the week, both House Education Subcommittees closed leaving final calendars for both full committees. The closure of committees marks the beginning of the wind-down of the first session of the 109th Tennessee General Assembly. There is still a lot of work ahead of both chambers before they adjourn for the year.

Attempt to Expand TELS Fails in Senate

The legislative attempt to expand the number of institutions eligible for the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships failed last night in the Senate Education Committee. The bill was designed to add colleges accredited by the Association of Biblical Higher Education. Effectively, the bill would have added three new institutions to the TELS eligible list. The bill failed to gain a majority vote due to many Senators choosing to pass rather than vote either for or against.

VISA Reporting Bill Passes Senate Education

The bill requiring higher education institutions to report to the State the number of M-1 and F-1 visa holders on campus passed the Senate Education Committee. The House companion bill has already passed the full chamber. The Senate bill will now head to the floor early next week. If passed, colleges and universities will begin reporting the visa counts on campus twice during each enrollment period. TICUA will continue to monitor the rule promulgation process and inform member campuses on how to comply once the reporting cycles begin.

Dual Enrollment Course Grades to be Used for TELS GPA

Senator Ken Yager is sponsoring a bill which will allow students taking dual enrollment courses to use those grades toward retaining the Hope Scholarship. The bill was approved by the Senate Education Committee last night and will now go on to the Finance, Ways, and Means Committee. If passed, students may choose whether or not to use the GPA prior to enrolling in a postsecondary institution. While the grades may be used to boost the overall TELS GPA the hours taken will not count against any of the Hope Scholarship terminating events. The bill carries with it a \$1.3 million fiscal note which threatens its ability to survive.

Come Back for Your Future Passes House Education Sub

Representative Joe Pitts successfully moved the “Come Back for Your Future” bill through the House Education Administration and Planning Subcommittee. The bill will provide up to \$3,500 in grants for adult learners to return to college to complete their degrees. This is a pilot program with a fiscal note of \$1.5 million from the lottery scholarship funds. The bill will now move to full committee. The Senate version of the bill is currently held behind budget consideration.

Bill Allowing TELS Students to Drop Classes Fails

A bill which would allow Hope Scholarships students to drop from full-time to part-time status failed in the House Education Administration and Planning Subcommittee this week. The bill, which failed for a lack of a second motion for consideration, would have provided students one “free” drop below full-time student status without jeopardizing their scholarship eligibility.

Make Plans to Attend the TICUA Legislative Reception

There is still time to register to attend the TICUA Legislative scheduled for **5-7 pm (CDT) on April 14, 2015 in the Ballroom of the Hermitage Hotel**. At 6 pm we pause to honor both Senator Dolores Gresham and Representative Harry Brooks for their tireless support of TICUA member colleges and universities. Register today!

You may register to attend by clicking [here](#).