

## STATE LAWS AFFECTING UHCL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

In an ongoing effort to encourage timely undergraduate graduation, the State of Texas legislature has passed several laws in recent years that have serious implications for many students pursuing undergraduate degrees at State institutions. The State is limiting, and sometimes withholding, its financial contributions to the universities for students who have accrued excess hours or repeatedly withdrawn from courses during their undergraduate careers. Consequently, additional charges will be incurred by students who go beyond these limits. It is in each student's best interest to become familiar with these new laws. These new restrictions are going to require thoughtful evaluation of manageable course loads and careful course selection. Withdrawals can be costly! Academic advisors are key resources for academic planning. Use them!

### The 45-Hour and 30-Hour Rule

Students who enrolled for the first time in a Texas public institution of higher education *between fall 1999 and summer 2006* must graduate with no more than *45 hours* earned or attempted beyond the number of hours required for their degree. Student who enrolled for the first time in *fall 2006 or later* must graduate with no more than *30 hours* earned or attempted beyond the number of hours required for their degree.

All withdrawals initiated after the census date (usually the twelfth class day in fall and spring and the fourth class day in summer) are counted, as well as all failed classes, repeated classes, and earned electives, whether or not they apply to the student's degree.

| <b>Semester You First Enrolled in a Texas Public Institution of Higher Education</b> | <b>Hours Allowed in Excess of The Minimum Hours Required for the Degree</b> |
|--|---|
| Prior to Fall 1999   | no limit  |
| Fall 1999 through Summer 2006  | 45 hours  |
| Fall 2006 and thereafter   | 30 hours  |

### The "Three-Peat" Rule

If a student attempts a course more than twice, there will be a supplemental fee administered per semester credit hour. A third attempt is subject to the fee whether the student has previously withdrawn from it or completed it with a grade. Courses dropped before the census date (12<sup>th</sup> class day of fall and spring semesters, 4<sup>th</sup> class day of summer semester) are *not* included in the three-peat count.

### The Six-Course Drop Limit

Students who entered college for the first time in Fall 2007 or later should be aware of the course drop limitation imposed by the Texas Legislature. Dropping a course between the first day of class and the census date for the semester/session does not affect your six-drop rule count. Dropping a course between the census date and the last day to drop a class for the semester/session will count as one of your six permitted drops. You should take this into consideration before dropping any course. Visit [www.uhcl.edu/records](http://www.uhcl.edu/records) for more information on the six-course drop rule and the census date.

### The 120-Hour Degree Program Restriction

H.B. 1172 requires that students entering an institution in fall 2008 or later may not be required to complete more than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the baccalaureate degree by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (120 semester credit hours) unless the institution determines that there is a

compelling academic reason for requiring completion of additional semester credit hours for the degree. All UHCL baccalaureate degrees are in compliance with H.B. 1172 effective fall 2008.

H.B. 1172 does not apply to students enrolling prior to fall 2008 or to degree plans in existence prior to fall 2008. Students requesting new degree plans should be aware that they may risk being charged a higher tuition if the new degree plan puts them in violation of exceeding 30/45 semester credit hours required for completion of the degree rule (H.B. 1172). Furthermore, changing degree plans may disqualify a student from being eligible to receive a tuition rebate upon graduation for completion of the degree with no more than three attempted hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree under the catalog under which the student graduated.

*All UHCL undergraduate students transfer in with an academic history already established. Students are strongly urged to consult with academic advisors about the potential effect of these new laws on their degree program and graduation. A meeting with your academic advisor could save you time and money!*