

- SUBJECT:** Creating an occupational and life skills associate degree program
- COMMITTEE:** Higher Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — C. Turner, Stucky, Button, Frullo, Howard, E. Johnson, Schaefer, Walle
- 0 nays
- 3 absent — Pacheco, Smithee, Wilson
- WITNESSES:** For — Lee Ann Nutt, Lone Star College; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Chris Masey, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Annie Spilman, National Federation of Independent Business; Jessica Boston, Texas Association of Business; Kyle Piccola, The Arc of Texas)
- Against — None
- On — Ashley Ford, Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Rex Peebles, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)
- BACKGROUND:** Interested parties have noted that the Lone Star College System District has an existing program in occupational and life skills that was designed for adults with certain cognitive disabilities and that currently offers no degree. It has been suggested that expanding the program to award an associate degree in occupational and life skills would allow students access to federal student aid.
- DIGEST:** HB 3165 would authorize the governing board of the Lone Star College System District to establish an occupational and life skills associate degree program at each junior college in the district.
- The degree program would have to require a student to successfully complete the junior college's core curriculum and then successfully complete the courses selected by the student in the student's degree plan.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board would be required to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the bill.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.