

By: Sparks

S.B. No. 1987

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to the accreditation of certain postsecondary educational
3 institutions in this state or of certain programs offered by those
4 institutions.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Sections 61.003(13) and (15), Education Code,
7 are amended to read as follows:

8 (13) "Recognized accrediting agency" means [~~the~~
9 ~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and~~] any [~~other~~]
10 association or organization so designated by the board.

11 (15) "Private or independent institution of higher
12 education" includes only a private or independent college or
13 university that is:

14 (A) organized under the Texas Non-Profit
15 Corporation Act (Article 1396-1.01 et seq., Vernon's Texas Civil
16 Statutes);

17 (B) exempt from taxation under Article VIII,
18 Section 2, of the Texas Constitution and Section 501(c)(3) of the
19 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. Section 501); and

20 (C) accredited by:

21 (i) any accreditor recognized by the United
22 States Department of Education [~~Commission on Colleges of the~~
23 ~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools~~];

24 (ii) the Liaison Committee on Medical

1 Education; or

2 (iii) the American Bar Association.

3 SECTION 2. Section 61.0515(a), Education Code, is amended
4 to read as follows:

5 (a) To earn a baccalaureate degree, a student may not be
6 required by a general academic teaching institution to complete
7 more than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for
8 the degree by the institution's recognized accrediting agency
9 [~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its successor~~]
10 unless the institution determines that there is a compelling
11 academic reason for requiring completion of additional semester
12 credit hours for the degree.

13 SECTION 3. Section 61.05151(a), Education Code, is amended
14 to read as follows:

15 (a) To earn an associate degree, a student may not be
16 required by an institution of higher education to complete more
17 than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the
18 degree by the institution's recognized accrediting agency
19 [~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its successor~~]
20 unless the institution determines that there is a compelling
21 academic reason for requiring completion of additional semester
22 credit hours for the degree.

23 SECTION 4. Section 61.8235(f), Education Code, is amended
24 to read as follows:

25 (f) A student enrolled in a board-established program of
26 study who transfers from a public junior college, public state
27 college, or public technical institute to another public junior

1 college, public state college, or public technical institute that
2 offers a similar program, regardless of whether the institution has
3 adopted the board-established program of study, shall receive
4 academic credit from the institution to which the student
5 transferred for each of the courses that the student has
6 successfully completed in the program of study curriculum. Unless
7 otherwise required by the institution's recognized accrediting
8 agency [~~Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of~~
9 ~~Colleges and Schools~~], the student may complete the program of
10 study at the institution to which the student transferred by
11 completing only the remaining number of semester credit hours the
12 student would need to complete the program of study at the
13 institution from which the student transferred.

14 SECTION 5. Section 107.151(c), Education Code, is amended
15 to read as follows:

16 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter,
17 the university may operate as a general academic teaching
18 institution only after the Texas Higher Education Coordinating
19 Board certifies that the university is accredited by a recognized
20 accrediting agency, as defined by Section 61.003, [~~the Southern~~
21 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges~~] and has
22 been approved by the coordinating board to offer one or more degree
23 programs. Until the coordinating board certifies that the
24 conditions of this subsection have been met, the board of regents
25 may operate a branch campus of Texas Woman's University in the city
26 of Dallas.

27 SECTION 6. Section 107.201(c), Education Code, is amended

1 to read as follows:

2 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter,
3 the university may operate as a general academic teaching
4 institution only after the Texas Higher Education Coordinating
5 Board certifies that the university is accredited by a recognized
6 accrediting agency, as defined by Section 61.003, [~~the Southern~~
7 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges~~] and has
8 been approved by the coordinating board to offer one or more degree
9 programs. Until the coordinating board certifies that the
10 conditions of this subsection have been met, the board of regents
11 may operate a branch campus of Texas Woman's University in the city
12 of Houston.

13 SECTION 7. Section 130.301, Education Code, is amended by
14 adding Subdivision (3) to read as follows:

15 (3) "Recognized accrediting agency" has the meaning
16 assigned by Section 61.003.

17 SECTION 8. Section 130.305, Education Code, is amended to
18 read as follows:

19 Sec. 130.305. ACCREDITATION. A public junior college
20 offering a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter must
21 meet all applicable accreditation requirements of a recognized
22 accrediting agency [~~the Commission on Colleges of the Southern~~
23 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools~~].

24 SECTION 9. Section 130.307(c), Education Code, is amended
25 to read as follows:

26 (c) Before a public junior college may be authorized to
27 offer a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter, the

1 public junior college must submit a report to the coordinating
2 board that includes:

3 (1) a long-term financial plan for receiving
4 accreditation from a recognized accrediting agency [~~the Commission~~
5 ~~on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools~~];

6 (2) a long-term plan for faculty recruitment that:

7 (A) indicates the ability to pay the increased
8 salaries of doctoral faculty;

9 (B) identifies recruitment strategies for new
10 faculty; and

11 (C) ensures the program would not draw faculty
12 employed by a neighboring institution offering a similar program;

13 (3) detailed information on the manner of program and
14 course delivery; and

15 (4) detailed information regarding existing
16 articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements indicating:

17 (A) that at least three articulation agreements
18 have been established with general academic teaching institutions
19 or medical and dental units, or the reasons why no articulation
20 agreements have been established; and

21 (B) that, with the agreement of the applicable
22 general academic teaching institution or medical and dental unit,
23 established articulation agreements are at capacity.

24 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.