

1-1 By: West S.B. No. 676  
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 23, 2005; March 2, 2005, read  
1-3 first time and referred to Subcommittee on Higher Education;  
1-4 April 12, 2005, reported adversely, with favorable Committee  
1-5 Substitute to Committee on Education; April 18, 2005, reported  
1-6 adversely, with favorable Committee Substitute from Committee on  
1-7 Education by the following vote: Yeas 8, Nays 0; April 18, 2005,  
1-8 sent to printer.)

1-9 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 676 By: West

1-10 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
1-11 AN ACT

1-12 relating to identifying which public institutions of higher  
1-13 education in this state are universities of the first class.

1-14 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-15 SECTION 1. The purpose of this Act is to provide guidance  
1-16 regarding the definition of a university of the first class to  
1-17 enable a common understanding and the use of common terminology in  
1-18 legislative decisions relating to the designation of and support  
1-19 for universities of that character.

1-20 SECTION 2. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is  
1-21 amended by adding Section 61.0818 to read as follows:

1-22 Sec. 61.0818. IDENTIFYING INSTITUTIONS AS UNIVERSITIES OF  
1-23 THE FIRST CLASS. (a) The board shall establish a system for  
1-24 designating a general academic teaching institution as a university  
1-25 of the first class and shall prescribe criteria to determine  
1-26 whether a general academic teaching institution should be assigned  
1-27 that designation. The board shall determine which general academic  
1-28 teaching institutions merit the designation and shall periodically  
1-29 review that determination.

1-30 (b) In prescribing the criteria for purposes of Subsection  
1-31 (a), the board shall consider the criteria used by generally  
1-32 recognized college and university classification systems to  
1-33 identify those universities in the highest classification or  
1-34 ranking. The board shall specifically consider whether to  
1-35 prescribe criteria based on the following factors:

1-36 (1) the number, variety, and quality of an  
1-37 institution's undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate, and  
1-38 professional degree programs, the number of programs accredited by  
1-39 a recognized accrediting agency or recognized nationally, the  
1-40 institution's selectivity in admissions to each program, the  
1-41 standard time required for a student to obtain a degree in each  
1-42 program, the institution's graduation rates in each program, and  
1-43 the institution's faculty-to-student classroom ratios;

1-44 (2) the degree to which writing and critical thought  
1-45 are incorporated as elements in each undergraduate degree program,  
1-46 the number of graduates of each undergraduate degree program who  
1-47 enroll in selective graduate, postgraduate, and professional  
1-48 degree programs, the level of graduate performance on licensing  
1-49 examinations, the number, variety, and quality of honors programs  
1-50 available at the institution, whether honors theses are required  
1-51 for participation in those honors programs, and the availability of  
1-52 independent study credits at the institution;

1-53 (3) the number of doctoral degrees awarded by the  
1-54 institution, the number, variety, and quality of the programs in  
1-55 which those degrees are awarded, and the number of students  
1-56 enrolled in each program;

1-57 (4) the degree of faculty and student engagement in  
1-58 research and other creative activities, the number of faculty and  
1-59 students who engage in those activities, the resources applied by  
1-60 the institution to those activities, the number, variety, and  
1-61 quality of degree programs in which those activities occur, the  
1-62 success of the institution in receiving federal research and  
1-63 development funding, and the number of faculty who are members of

2-1 nationally recognized academic associations such as the National  
2-2 Academy of Sciences or the National Academy of Engineering;

2-3 (5) the quality of the libraries of the institution;

2-4 (6) the amount of institutional endowment and state  
2-5 revenue available on behalf of each student;

2-6 (7) whether the institution is a member of the  
2-7 Association of American Universities, the Association of Research  
2-8 Libraries, or another similar entity that recognizes institutional  
2-9 excellence on a national level; and

2-10 (8) alumni involvement in institution activities.

2-11 (c) In prescribing the criteria for purposes of Subsection  
2-12 (a), the board must include any criteria the commissioner of higher  
2-13 education considers appropriate to achieve the purposes of this  
2-14 section.

2-15 (d) The board shall administer this section with the  
2-16 assistance of an advisory committee composed of at least five but  
2-17 not more than 15 higher education experts or scholars from any  
2-18 state. The commissioner of higher education shall select the  
2-19 members of the advisory committee. Chapter 2110, Government Code,  
2-20 does not apply to the advisory committee.

2-21 (e) Not later than October 1, 2006, the board shall  
2-22 establish the initial criteria and make its initial determinations  
2-23 under this section and report the board's actions to each  
2-24 legislative standing committee and subcommittee with primary  
2-25 jurisdiction over higher education. This subsection expires  
2-26 January 1, 2007.

2-27 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2-28 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
2-29 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2-30 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
2-31 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.

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