

1-1 By: Sparks S.B. No. 1987  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed March 8, 2023; March 21, 2023, read  
 1-3 first time and referred to Subcommittee on Higher Education;  
 1-4 April 24, 2023, reported favorably from Committee on Education by  
 1-5 the following vote: Yeas 12, Nays 0; April 24, 2023, sent to  
 1-6 printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8				
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12			X	
1-13	X			
1-14	X			
1-15	X			
1-16	X			
1-17	X			
1-18	X			
1-19	X			
1-20	X			
1-21	X			

1-22 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-23 AN ACT

1-24 relating to the accreditation of certain postsecondary educational  
 1-25 institutions in this state or of certain programs offered by those  
 1-26 institutions.

1-27 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-28 SECTION 1. Sections 61.003(13) and (15), Education Code,  
 1-29 are amended to read as follows:

1-30 (13) "Recognized accrediting agency" means ~~[the~~  
 1-31 ~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and]~~ any ~~[other]~~  
 1-32 association or organization so designated by the board.

1-33 (15) "Private or independent institution of higher  
 1-34 education" includes only a private or independent college or  
 1-35 university that is:

1-36 (A) organized under the Texas Non-Profit  
 1-37 Corporation Act (Article 1396-1.01 et seq., Vernon's Texas Civil  
 1-38 Statutes);

1-39 (B) exempt from taxation under Article VIII,  
 1-40 Section 2, of the Texas Constitution and Section 501(c)(3) of the  
 1-41 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. Section 501); and

1-42 (C) accredited by:  
 1-43 (i) any accreditor recognized by the United  
 1-44 States Department of Education ~~[Commission on Colleges of the~~  
 1-45 ~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools];~~

1-46 (ii) the Liaison Committee on Medical  
 1-47 Education; or  
 1-48 (iii) the American Bar Association.

1-49 SECTION 2. Section 61.0515(a), Education Code, is amended  
 1-50 to read as follows:

1-51 (a) To earn a baccalaureate degree, a student may not be  
 1-52 required by a general academic teaching institution to complete  
 1-53 more than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for  
 1-54 the degree by the institution's recognized accrediting agency  
 1-55 ~~[Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its successor]~~  
 1-56 unless the institution determines that there is a compelling  
 1-57 academic reason for requiring completion of additional semester  
 1-58 credit hours for the degree.

1-59 SECTION 3. Section 61.05151(a), Education Code, is amended  
 1-60 to read as follows:

1-61 (a) To earn an associate degree, a student may not be

2-1 required by an institution of higher education to complete more  
2-2 than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the  
2-3 degree by the institution's recognized accrediting agency  
2-4 [~~Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its successor~~]  
2-5 unless the institution determines that there is a compelling  
2-6 academic reason for requiring completion of additional semester  
2-7 credit hours for the degree.

2-8 SECTION 4. Section 61.8235(f), Education Code, is amended  
2-9 to read as follows:

2-10 (f) A student enrolled in a board-established program of  
2-11 study who transfers from a public junior college, public state  
2-12 college, or public technical institute to another public junior  
2-13 college, public state college, or public technical institute that  
2-14 offers a similar program, regardless of whether the institution has  
2-15 adopted the board-established program of study, shall receive  
2-16 academic credit from the institution to which the student  
2-17 transferred for each of the courses that the student has  
2-18 successfully completed in the program of study curriculum. Unless  
2-19 otherwise required by the institution's recognized accrediting  
2-20 agency [~~Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of~~  
2-21 ~~Colleges and Schools~~], the student may complete the program of  
2-22 study at the institution to which the student transferred by  
2-23 completing only the remaining number of semester credit hours the  
2-24 student would need to complete the program of study at the  
2-25 institution from which the student transferred.

2-26 SECTION 5. Section 107.151(c), Education Code, is amended  
2-27 to read as follows:

2-28 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter,  
2-29 the university may operate as a general academic teaching  
2-30 institution only after the Texas Higher Education Coordinating  
2-31 Board certifies that the university is accredited by a recognized  
2-32 accrediting agency, as defined by Section 61.003, [~~the Southern~~  
2-33 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges~~] and has  
2-34 been approved by the coordinating board to offer one or more degree  
2-35 programs. Until the coordinating board certifies that the  
2-36 conditions of this subsection have been met, the board of regents  
2-37 may operate a branch campus of Texas Woman's University in the city  
2-38 of Dallas.

2-39 SECTION 6. Section 107.201(c), Education Code, is amended  
2-40 to read as follows:

2-41 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter,  
2-42 the university may operate as a general academic teaching  
2-43 institution only after the Texas Higher Education Coordinating  
2-44 Board certifies that the university is accredited by a recognized  
2-45 accrediting agency, as defined by Section 61.003, [~~the Southern~~  
2-46 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges~~] and has  
2-47 been approved by the coordinating board to offer one or more degree  
2-48 programs. Until the coordinating board certifies that the  
2-49 conditions of this subsection have been met, the board of regents  
2-50 may operate a branch campus of Texas Woman's University in the city  
2-51 of Houston.

2-52 SECTION 7. Section 130.301, Education Code, is amended by  
2-53 adding Subdivision (3) to read as follows:

2-54 (3) "Recognized accrediting agency" has the meaning  
2-55 assigned by Section 61.003.

2-56 SECTION 8. Section 130.305, Education Code, is amended to  
2-57 read as follows:

2-58 Sec. 130.305. ACCREDITATION. A public junior college  
2-59 offering a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter must  
2-60 meet all applicable accreditation requirements of a recognized  
2-61 accrediting agency [~~the Commission on Colleges of the Southern~~  
2-62 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools~~].

2-63 SECTION 9. Section 130.307(c), Education Code, is amended  
2-64 to read as follows:

2-65 (c) Before a public junior college may be authorized to  
2-66 offer a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter, the  
2-67 public junior college must submit a report to the coordinating  
2-68 board that includes:

2-69 (1) a long-term financial plan for receiving

3-1 accreditation from a recognized accrediting agency [~~the Commission~~  
3-2 ~~on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools~~];  
3-3 (2) a long-term plan for faculty recruitment that:  
3-4 (A) indicates the ability to pay the increased  
3-5 salaries of doctoral faculty;  
3-6 (B) identifies recruitment strategies for new  
3-7 faculty; and  
3-8 (C) ensures the program would not draw faculty  
3-9 employed by a neighboring institution offering a similar program;  
3-10 (3) detailed information on the manner of program and  
3-11 course delivery; and  
3-12 (4) detailed information regarding existing  
3-13 articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements indicating:  
3-14 (A) that at least three articulation agreements  
3-15 have been established with general academic teaching institutions  
3-16 or medical and dental units, or the reasons why no articulation  
3-17 agreements have been established; and  
3-18 (B) that, with the agreement of the applicable  
3-19 general academic teaching institution or medical and dental unit,  
3-20 established articulation agreements are at capacity.  
3-21 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

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