

By: Shofner

H.B. No. 1705

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), Education Code, are amended
7 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 SECTION 2. Section 61.0515(a), Education Code, is amended
12 to read as follows:

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

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

23 (a) To earn an associate degree, a student may not be
24 required by an institution of higher education to complete more

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

7 SECTION 4. Section [61.8235](#)(f), Education Code, is amended
8 to read as follows:

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

25 SECTION 5. Section [107.151](#)(c), Education Code, is amended
26 to read as follows:

27 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter,

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

11 SECTION 6. Section 107.201(c), Education Code, is amended
12 to read as follows:

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

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

26 (3) "Recognized accrediting agency" has the meaning
27 assigned by Section 61.003.

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

3 Sec. 130.305. ACCREDITATION. A public junior college
4 offering a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter must
5 meet all applicable accreditation requirements of a recognized
6 accrediting agency [~~the Commission on Colleges of the Southern~~
7 ~~Association of Colleges and Schools~~].

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

10 (c) Before a public junior college may be authorized to
11 offer a baccalaureate degree program under this subchapter, the
12 public junior college must submit a report to the coordinating
13 board that includes:

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

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

18 (A) indicates the ability to pay the
19 increased salaries of doctoral faculty;

20 (B) identifies recruitment strategies for
21 new faculty; and

22 (C) ensures the program would not draw
23 faculty employed by a neighboring institution offering a similar
24 program;

25 (3) detailed information on the manner of program and
26 course delivery; and

27 (4) detailed information regarding existing

1 articulation agreements and dual enrollment agreements indicating:

2 (A) that at least three articulation
3 agreements have been established with general academic teaching
4 institutions or medical and dental units, or the reasons why no
5 articulation agreements have been established; and

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

9 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.