

ASSEMBLY, No. 952

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ROBERT J. KARABINCHAK

District 18 (Middlesex)

Assemblywoman MILA M. JASEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

SYNOPSIS

Permits four-year institution of higher education to award associate degrees.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** concerning the awarding of associate degrees at four-year
2 institutions of higher education and supplementing chapter 3B of
3 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

7
8 1. a. Notwithstanding the provisions of any law or regulation
9 to the contrary, a four-year institution of higher education, in
10 consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education and the New
11 Jersey Presidents' Council, may establish a program pursuant to
12 which the institution may award an associate degree to a student
13 who has earned 60 academic credits or more at the four-year
14 institution. Under the program, the four-year institution of higher
15 education may also award an associate degree to a transfer student
16 who has earned 60 academic credits, of which at least 30 academic
17 credits were earned at the four-year institution. A four-year
18 institution of higher education that establishes a program pursuant
19 to this section shall:

20 (1) identify what associate degrees the institution will offer,
21 ensuring that the degrees fit the mission, faculty mix, and current
22 campus resources of the institution;

23 (2) ensure that associate degrees awarded by the institution meet
24 the accreditation standards of the Middle States Commission on
25 Higher Education;

26 (3) provide a student with academic advising that identifies the
27 courses that the student needs to complete in order to attain an
28 associate degree through the program;

29 (4) notify a student of the student's potential eligibility for an
30 associate degree under the program upon completion of 60
31 academic credits at the institution;

32 (5) notify a student withdrawing from the institution prior to
33 completion of a baccalaureate degree of the student's potential to
34 earn an associate degree under the program; and

35 (6) establish policies and procedures for the annual review of
36 the associate degrees offered under the program.

37 b. The Secretary of Higher Education shall report annually to
38 the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of
39 P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), on the number of associate degrees
40 conferred by four-year institutions of higher education.

41
42 2. This act shall take effect in the first full academic year
43 following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill permits a four-year institution of higher education, in consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education and the New Jersey Presidents' Council, to establish a program to award an associate degree to students who earned 60 academic credits or more at the institution. Under the bill, an institution which establishes this program may also award an associate degree to transfer students who earn 60 academic credits, of which at least 30 academic credits were earned at the four-year institution. The bill requires a four-year institution of higher education seeking to award associate degrees through the bill's provisions to:

- (1) identify what associate degrees the institution will offer;
- (2) ensure that associate degrees awarded by the institution meet accreditation standards;
- (3) provide a student with academic advising that identifies the courses that the student needs to complete in order to attain an associate degree through the program;
- (4) notify a student of the student's potential eligibility for an associate degree under the program upon completion of 60 academic credits at the institution;
- (5) notify a student withdrawing from the institution prior to completion of a baccalaureate degree of the student's potential to earn an associate degree under the program; and
- (6) establish policies and procedures for the annual review of the associate degrees offered under the program.

The bill also requires the Secretary of Higher Education to report annually to the Governor and the Legislature on the number of associate degrees conferred by four-year institutions of higher education.