

# SENATE, No. 230

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## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.**

**District 18 (Middlesex)**

**Senator RONALD L. RICE**

**District 28 (Essex)**

**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.

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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.

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

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45                   STATEMENT

46  
47   This bill permits a four-year institution of higher education, in  
48   consultation with the Secretary of Higher Education and the New  
49   Jersey Presidents' Council, to establish a program to award an

1    associate degree to students who earned 60 academic credits or  
2    more at the institution. Under the bill, an institution which  
3    establishes this program may also award an associate degree to  
4    transfer students who earn 60 academic credits, of which at least 30  
5    academic credits were earned at the four-year institution. The bill  
6    requires a four-year institution of higher education seeking to award  
7    associate degrees through the bill's provisions to:

8        (1) identify what associate degrees the institution will offer;  
9        (2) ensure that associate degrees awarded by the institution meet  
10    accreditation standards;

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

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

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

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

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