



**Community College
Association of Texas Trustees**

Article 1 of Senate Bill 37: Understanding New Board-Level Oversight Responsibilities

Brenda S. Kays, Ed.D.

Senior Consultant
Community College Association of Texas Trustees





Agenda

SB 37 Article 1

- *Overview of Legislation*
- *General Education Curriculum Review*
- *Institutional Authority and Responsibility*
- *Degree Minors and Certificate Programs*
- *General Education Course List*
- *General Education Advisory Committee*
- *Effective Date – First Submission*

***An Act Relating to the
Governance of Public
Institutions of Higher Education***

Senate Bill 37 (SB 37)

Why? Authority and Accountability

Clarifies and Adds to the
Expected Duties and
Responsibilities of the
College Board



Bill Language

- The language of the bill predominantly reflects terminology most often associated with four-year colleges and university systems
- That aside, it is intended for all public institutions of higher education, and that includes community colleges
- Interesting threads appear throughout the bill, tying the use of SB37 as a governance tool for upholding and monitoring both HB8 (2023) and SB17 (2023). Thematic elements of SB1786 (2025)

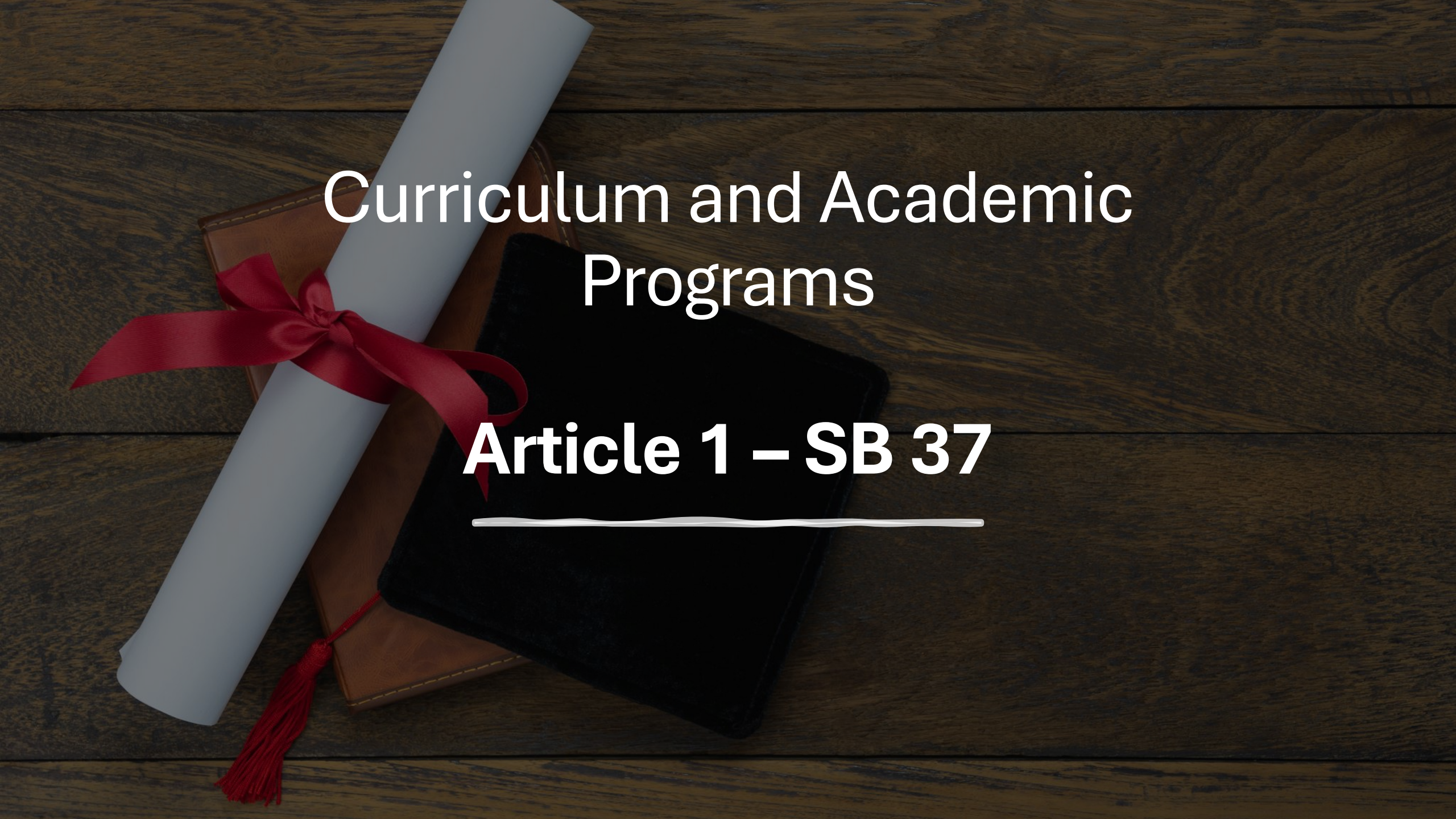


SB 37 Changes the Texas Education Code

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- Texas Education Code (TEC) governs all levels of education in Texas
 - It regulates operations, enrollment, curriculum, certification, and district accountability
 - SB 37 will be enacted via revisions made to TEC
 - Title 3 of the TEC is specific to higher education
 - Changes spurred by SB 37 now appear in two sections of Title 3
 - Section 51 – Provisions Generally Applicable to Higher Education
 - Section 61 – Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

SB 37 – Four Articles

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- Article 1 – Curriculum and Academic Programs
 - Article 2 – Institutional Governance
 - Article 3 – Coordination and Oversight of Institutions of Higher Education
 - Article 4 – Applicability; Effective Date



Curriculum and Academic Programs

Article 1 – SB 37

Sec. 1.0 – General Education Curriculum Review

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- At least once every five years, the governing board of each institution of higher education shall conduct a comprehensive review of the general education curriculum established by the institution.
 - The governing board shall ensure courses in the curriculum:
 - Are foundational and fundamental
 - Prepare students for civic and professional life
 - Equip students to enter the workforce and benefit society
 - Are compliant with applicable accreditation standards

Must You Become A Curriculum Expert?

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- No
 - Instead, you will exercise expanded oversight while preserving effective governance
 - You will not review the curriculum as a professor
 - You will review it as a fiduciary for the college, its students, and the taxpayers
 - Analogy-Annual Audit

The Lens of Student Burden

- **Consideration of:**
 - Potential costs of the gen ed curriculum on students
 - Additional tuition, fees and time
- **Annual update of gen ed curriculum to the Board**
 - Governing Board may overturn any changes made
- **Optional Committee**
 - Faculty (full time), administration, community leaders, industry leaders, others
- **Board must certify compliance with this section**
 - 5-year cycle
 - NLT January 1 (2027)



Reviewing Data & Asking Questions

Data Analysis - Examples

- Transfer acceptance rate of core courses
- Percentage of students completing the core prior to transfer
- Percentage of dual credit students who are core complete

Critical Inquiry - Examples

- What was the process for conducting this review?
- Who was responsible for conducting the review?
- Are there any new courses added to the core curriculum?
- When is the last time we reviewed the core curriculum?

Sec. 1.02 – Institutional Authority and Responsibility

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- Section 1.02 was added as a preamble to an existing section of the Education Code which outlined your general responsibilities as related to the institution's role and mission
 - Institution has final decision-making on its degree programs and curricula
 - Those institutional decisions are to be made under the direction of the institution's governing board

Lens for Degree Programs & Curricula

- Transmit culture through general education
 - Extend knowledge
 - Teach and train students for professions
 - Provide for scientific, engineering, medical, and other academic research
 - Strive for intellectual excellence
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- Protect intellectual exploration and academic freedom
 - Provide educational opportunity for all who can benefit from postsecondary education and training
 - Provide continuing education opportunities

Sec. 1.03 – Degree Minors & Certificate Programs

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- College president/CEO is responsible for creating and implementing a **review process** to examine existing degree minors and certificate programs to:
 - Identify programs with low enrollment for consolidation or elimination
 - Ensure specific industry data exists to substantiate workforce demand
 - Review must happen every 5 years, programs in existence for less than 5 years are exempt from this review under the law
 - Governing board will approve or deny any decision made by the president/CEO for program consolidation or elimination



Reviewing Data & Asking Questions

Data Analysis - Examples

- Five-year program enrollment and completing trends
- Local and State Labor Market Information
- Graduate Placement Rates
- Cost-Per-Contact-Hour
- Advisory Committee Affirmations

Critical Inquiry - Examples

- How are our local employer advisory committees involved in the curriculum review process?
- Are any of these low-enrollment certificates serving as critical 'steppingstone' or stackable credentials that help low-income or adult students finish a full Associate Degrees?

Sec. 1.04 – General Education Course List

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- Section 61
 - Courses not taught as an organized class
 - Courses not offered for the previous two years

Sec. 1.05 – General Education Advisory Committee

- Part of Section 61 - Establishes a statewide committee
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will be responsible for all deliverables of the Advisory Committee
- Committee Charge: Review the general education courses that are required to be taught by all IHEs
- Rules for establishing the committee
 - Seek Nominations (CEOs and Chief Academic Officers)
 - Equal Membership from 2-year and 4-year institutions
 - The consent agenda from the THECB illustrated 12 members appointed

Tasks of Committee

- Methods for determining general education curriculum courses
 - Heavy emphasis on career and life usefulness
- Condense the number of courses required
 - Currently at 42 SCH
- NLT November 1, 2026, produce a report of findings and recommendations to THECB
- Advisory committee & Sec. 1.05 are abolished September 1, 2027

The 90th Legislative Session

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- NLT December 31, 2026, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) will review the advisory committees' report
 - THECB will submit the board's recommendations to the legislature for action necessary to implement the findings of the report

Sec. 1.06 – Effective Date for First Gen Ed Curriculum Review

January 1, 2027





https://tacc.org/ccatt/data-informed-governance



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EVENTS

RESOURCES

Building Board Capacity for Informed Decision-Making

Effective, data-informed governance empowers boards to make policy decisions that advance student success and strengthen institutional effectiveness. This learning module series is designed to build data competency while emphasizing strategic oversight, strong board-CEO partnerships, and the balance between governance and operations. Using the case study of Bluebonnet Community College, a fictional institution in rural Texas, the modules explore practical strategies for asking better questions, interpreting both quantitative and qualitative data, and applying insights in ways that align with community needs and the college mission. The below resources are designed to support boards in setting expectations, monitoring progress, and making informed decisions that serve students and ensure long-term institutional sustainability.

Introduction to Data-Informed Governance Learning Modules

Building Data Competency for Texas Community College Trustees



BECOMING A DIG CHAMPION

Two recognition pathways are available in 2026:

Individual Recognition is intended for trustees or regents who have watched all three currently available DIG Module videos, completed the discussion guides to the best of their ability, and had a follow-up conversation with their board chair or college CEO.

College Recognition is intended for colleges whose boards have featured at least one DIG Module video and its accompanying discussion guide during a board meeting, workshop, or retreat.





Community College
Association of Texas Trustees

2026 CCATT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SUSTAINABLE SUCCESS:

Community College Governance &
Long-Term Impact



SEPTEMBER 17-19, 2026



HYATT REGENCY BAYTOWN, TX

Thank you!

