

State of Arkansas

77th General Assembly

Regular Session, 1989

A Bill

SENATE BILL

300

By: Senators Miles, Walters, and Harriman

For An Act To Be Entitled

"AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A UNIVERSITY CENTER ON THE CAMPUS OF WESTARK COMMUNITY COLLEGE SO THAT SELECTED UPPER-LEVEL AND GRADUATE COURSES AND PROGRAMS MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE IN FORT SMITH WITHOUT THE CREATION OF A NEW INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE FUNDING OF SUCH COURSES AND PROGRAMS"

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Definitions. For the purposes of this Act:

(1) "Upper-level course" shall mean university courses which are considered junior or senior level at the institution offering such courses and are not offered at the freshman or sophomore level at Westark Community College.

(2) "Upper-level program" shall mean a prescribed series of university courses offered at the junior and senior level, which, when combined with a prescribed series of freshman and sophomore courses, qualify successful students for the baccalaureate degree.

(3) "Graduate course" shall mean university courses intended for students who have completed a baccalaureate degree.

(4) "Graduate program" shall mean a prescribed series of graduate courses which lead to a post-baccalaureate degree.

SECTION 2. (a) In order to provide the residents of Western Arkansas with greater access to higher education opportunities beyond those which can be provided by Westark Community College, there is hereby created the University Center at Westark Community College. The primary purpose of the General Assembly in creating this Center is to meet the needs of persons who cannot, because of family or work responsibilities, leave the area to become

students at universities in other communities. It is the intent of the General Assembly, in creating this Center, to avoid the establishment of an additional institution of higher education or branch of such institution, and to avoid the duplication of administrative personnel and services.

(b) The University Center at Westark Community College shall be managed and administered by the Board of Trustees of the Sebastian Community Junior College District, utilizing the administrative staff and support services of Westark Community College.

(c) Westark Community College shall determine, in cooperation with the public universities and with the approval of the State Board of Higher Education, the need for various upper-level and graduate programs and courses and shall encourage such institutions to offer the needed programs and courses.

(d) The State Board of Higher Education shall promote and encourage participation in the University Center by revising the process by which it makes funding recommendations for the various Arkansas public universities. The State Board of Higher Education shall recommend for participating institutions adequate enrollment funding for the offering of selected courses and programs at the University Center at Westark Community College. The State Board of Higher Education also shall recommend for Westark Community College funding appropriate to compensate the institution for administrative and overhead costs related to the provision of university courses and programs.

(e) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the University Center at Westark Community College serve as a pilot program for off-campus college instruction by four-year institutions of higher education on two-year campuses. Westark Community College shall furnish a progress report, on a semi-annual basis, to the Legislative Council, the Joint Interim Committee on Education, and the State Board of Higher Education.

(f) It shall be the responsibility of the Sebastian County Community Junior College District to provide facilities for approved courses and programs at the University Center at Westark Community College. Included in the overhead costs in subsection (d) shall be reasonable compensation to Westark Community College for the maintenance and provision of such facilities for the University Center.

SECTION 3. All provisions of this Act of a general and permanent nature

are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

SECTION 4. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.