
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 3306

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2008 Regular Session

By House Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Wallace and Dunn)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/08.

1 AN ACT Relating to electronic learning at institutions of higher
2 education; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Technology has changed the breadth and
5 depth of educational opportunities available by providing access to
6 higher education through online, web-based learning and other digital
7 technologies. These technological advances have expanded access to
8 help meet the needs of all students, including those with historically
9 low levels of participation in higher education. Technology has
10 enabled nontraditional students, many of whom work full time and have
11 family responsibilities, to access postsecondary education on a
12 schedule that accommodates their lifestyle. The legislature finds that
13 distance learning has expanded beyond correspondence courses and other
14 forms of off-site education to include online, web-based learning,
15 videoconferencing, podcasting, and any other digital medium that
16 connects students to learning opportunities.

17 (2) Therefore, it is the legislature's intent to establish and
18 maintain a comprehensive set of best practices and standards of

1 accountability and quality for all eLearning programs to guide students
2 and their families when making course and program degree selections.

3 (3) The state board for community and technical colleges shall
4 convene a work group that includes representatives from the workforce
5 training and education coordinating board, the prosperity partnership,
6 the technology alliance, the higher education coordinating board, a
7 private career or vocational school, a four-year public institution of
8 higher education, the council of faculty representatives, the united
9 faculty of Washington state, and a community or technical college
10 student to take the following actions related to eLearning:

11 (a) Review, and to the extent necessary, establish standards and
12 best practices regarding electronic learning and related support
13 services including online help desk support, advising, mentoring,
14 counseling, and tutoring;

15 (b) Recommend methods to increase student access to eLearning
16 programs of study and identify barriers to program of study
17 participation and completion;

18 (c) Determine methods to increase the institutional supply and
19 quality of open course materials, with a focus on the OpenCourseWare
20 initiative at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology;

21 (d) Recommend methods to increase the availability and use of
22 digital open textbooks;

23 (e) Review and report demographic information on eLearning programs
24 of study enrollments, retention, and completions; and

25 (f) Create a subgroup of the work group, led by the workforce
26 training and education coordinating board and including additional
27 industry representation, to examine worksite eLearning programs and
28 options for improvement and expansion of such programs. The subgroup's
29 findings and recommendations shall be included in the report to the
30 legislature as outlined in subsection (4) of this section.

31 (4) The work group shall report its findings and recommendations to
32 the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2008.

33 (5) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
34 section.

35 (a) "eLearning" means a program of study in which digital
36 technologies are used to support learning in flexible, anytime,
37 anywhere learning spaces. The "e" in "eLearning" stands variously for
38 enhanced, electronic, or extended.

1 (b) "Program of study" means a credit or noncredit class, degree,
2 or certificate program.

--- END ---