

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5237

---

---

As of January 21, 2009

**Title:** An act relating to an accelerated baccalaureate degree program.

**Brief Description:** Requiring the development of three-year baccalaureate programs.

**Sponsors:** Senators Shin, Kilmer, Berkey, Kastama, Sheldon, Hobbs, Kauffman, Schoesler, Franklin and Fraser.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/30/09.

---

### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Staff:** Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

**Background:** A number of public and private universities offer three-year baccalaureate programs in selected subjects for students that have demonstrated academic abilities. The requirements of these accelerated baccalaureate programs vary. Some typical programmatic requirements include summer school attendance; prior college coursework taken during high school; or enrollment for the maximum credits allowed per quarter. All of these programs require careful planning. Some universities allow students to have their first year course work removed from their graduation requirements. Characteristic of these programs is a requirement that the participating students have high academic achievement such as either a high cumulative high school grade point average or high scores on either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing Program (ACT).

**Summary of Bill:** State universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College (institutions) must develop accelerated baccalaureate degree programs that will allow academically qualified students to obtain a baccalaureate degree in three years without attending summer classes or enrolling in more than a full-time class load during the regular academic year. The programs must allow academically qualified students to begin course work within their academic field during their first term or semester of enrollment, foregoing some of the normal first-year general education requirements. The institutions submit their plans for the accelerated baccalaureate degree programs to the Higher Education Coordinating Board by December 1, 2010, for approval and must be available to students admitted at the institutions for the 2010-11 academic year.

---

*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

"Academically qualified student" means a student who either: (a) graduated from high school with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher; (b) scored in the top 10 percent on both the critical reading and mathematics sections of the SAT; or (c) scored in the top 10 percent on both the mathematics and English sections of the ACT test.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 20, 2009.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.