
Higher Education Committee

HB 2596

Brief Description: Regarding student involvement in higher education governance.

Sponsors: Representatives Stanford, Haler, Pollet, Zeiger, Goodman, Parker, Miloscia, Buys, Fitzgibbon, Fagan, Probst, Rivers, Ormsby, Wilcox, Lias, Anderson, Moscoso, Upthegrove, Sells, Appleton, Lytton, Hasegawa, Eddy, Orwall, Ladenburg, Carlyle, Kelley, Kenney and Tharinger.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires that students be active participants in the immediate governance and policy development of institutions of higher education.

Hearing Date: 1/25/12

Staff: Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

Background:

Students and student government associations at institutions of higher education may be involved in the governance of the institutions in several ways. Their involvement includes consultation regarding tuition increases and recommendations regarding services and activities fees. At state universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College, their involvement also includes membership on the governing boards and approval of technology fees. At community and technical colleges, it also includes membership on faculty review committees.

Governing boards. The state universities are each governed by a board of regents, and the regional universities and The Evergreen State College (TESC) are each governed by a board of trustees. These boards include one student member. The community college districts are each governed by a board of trustees. These boards do not include a student member.

Tuition. The governing boards of the state universities, the regional universities, and TESC set tuition for students. (Beginning with the 2019-20 academic year, tuition-setting authority for

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resident students reverts to the Legislature.) The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) sets tuition for community and technical college students, subject to any limitations in the operating budget. The boards of the state universities, the regional universities, and TESC, as well as the SBCTC, must consult with student groups before raising tuition, and also provide certain data to them.

Services and activities fees. The governing boards of institutions of higher education collect services and activities fees to fund student services and programs. Services and activities fee committees at each institution evaluate programs and submit budget recommendations to the board and the administration. A majority of committee members must be students. The administrations review the recommendations. The boards have the final authority for adopting the budget. The boards must give priority consideration to student desires in budget areas that do not impact the stability of programs affecting students, pre-existing contractual obligations, or bond covenants.

Technology fees. The governing boards of the state universities, the regional universities, and TESC, with the written agreement of student government associations, may establish student technology fees to help pay for certain services. The associations must approve changes in the amount of the fees, as well as annual expenditure plans for fee revenue.

Faculty review. The governing boards of community college districts may award tenure to probationary faculty members. The boards must give reasonable consideration to the recommendations of a review committee composed of faculty peers, administrative staff, and a student. The student associations choose the student member of the review committee.

Summary of Bill:

Students must be active participants in the immediate governance and policy development of their institutions of higher education. Student participation occurs through the undergraduate and graduate student governments. Any governance responsibility and authority, and any policy development, is subject to the authority of the institutions' governing boards.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.