

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1669

C 60 L 14

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning self-supporting, fee-based programs at four-year institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Pollet, Haler, Cody, Tarleton, Johnson, Seaquist, Farrell, Magendanz, Riccelli and Ryu).

House Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Background:

Public baccalaureate institutions in Washington offer a variety of fee-based programs that are self-supporting and are not funded through state funding. These programs are primarily aimed at students who would benefit from alternative delivery options such as evenings and weekends, and via distance learning. Self-supporting, fee-based programs range from the certificate level to doctorate level programs and are offered in a variety of disciplines.

At the University of Washington, for example, self-supporting programs are managed by the Educational Outreach program. For the 2011-2012 academic year the university's provost permitted certain degree programs to be created or transferred to the Educational Outreach program, only if they: (1) were offered in an alternative format from an existing campus-based, daytime, full-time degree program; (2) served primarily non-traditionally-aged students in undergraduate programs, professionals in masters-level programs, part-time students, or international students; or (3) were new interdisciplinary programs that did not align well with exiting academic units. In 2012 the University of Washington placed a moratorium on transferring state-supported programs to fee-based, self-supporting programs. That moratorium is in place until July 1, 2015.

Summary:

When a decision is being considered to change a degree program that is supported by state funding to a self-supporting, fee-based program, a public baccalaureate institution must:

- publicly notify prospective students, including notification in admission offers with an estimate of tuition and fees;

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- provide at least six months' notification to enrolled students and undergraduate or graduate student government associations; and
- allow students currently enrolled in the program that is changing to a self-supporting program to continue in the state-supported program structure for a consecutive amount of time no greater than four years in length.

Each public baccalaureate institution is required to establish or designate a committee (Committee) comprising administrators, faculty, and students to evaluate a proposed shift from a state-funded degree program to a self-supporting, fee-based program. When establishing evaluation criteria, the Committee must consider including the following criteria:

- the financial health and sustainability of the program;
- if moving the program to a self-supporting funding basis alters the availability of student financial aid;
- the audience for the program, the format of the program, and the institutional priority for state funding of the program;
- demographics of students served and graduates practicing in typical fields of study; and
- alternatives to shifting to a self-supporting funding basis including raising tuition within the state-funded context or program elimination.

The Committee may also establish a process to periodically evaluate programs that have shifted from a state-supported program to a fee-based funding model for alignment with criteria established.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	84	14
House	86	11
Senate	49	0

Effective: June 12, 2014