
Higher Education Committee

HB 1973

Brief Description: Creating an open education pilot program at Eastern Washington University.

Sponsors: Representatives Stambaugh, Bergquist, Hargrove, Haler, Zeiger, Van Werven, Magendanz, Kochmar, Muri, Gregerson, Parker and Riccelli.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the Washington Open Education Pilot Program (Pilot) at Eastern Washington University (Eastern) beginning in the 2015-16 academic year.
- Provides that the purpose of the Pilot is to reduce student's cost of attendance by creating an open educational resources program.
- Requires the Eastern libraries to award up to ten grants per year, subject to funds appropriated, to faculty members to develop or obtain open educational materials and resources.
- Requires the Eastern libraries to submit a report of the Pilot's progress beginning November 1, 2016, and by November 1 of the following year.
- Includes an emergency clause.

Hearing Date: 2/17/15

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Open Educational Resources are educational materials and resources that are free and available for use by anyone. Some resources are under license to re-mix, improve, and redistribute. Open Educational Resources include full courses, course materials, learning objectives, software, and intellectual property licenses, among other things.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass) created the Open Education Initiative (Initiative) in 2011. Through the Initiative, the UMass libraries offer grants for instructors who

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use low-cost or free alternatives to expensive course materials. The Initiative awards \$1,000 to instructors teaching courses with enrollments of fewer than 200 students, and \$2,500 to instructors teaching courses with enrollment of 200 or more students. The instructors can use open-access scholarly resources, library-licensed and owned resources, or create their own resources. Since 2011, the Initiative has saved students over \$1 million.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington Open Education Pilot Program (Pilot) is established at Eastern Washington University (Eastern) to reduce student's cost of attendance by creating an open educational resources program, beginning in the 2015-16 academic year.

Subject to funds appropriated specifically for this purpose, the Eastern libraries must award up to 10 grants per year to faculty members to develop or obtain open educational materials and resources. The faculty members must develop the materials and resources in collaboration with the Eastern libraries.

The Eastern libraries must develop a process for review and selection of grant applications. In developing the Pilot, the Eastern libraries are encouraged to use the UMass Initiative as a model.

Beginning November 1, 2016, and by November 1 of the following year, Eastern must submit to the Legislature a report of the Pilot, including:

- how the program is being implemented, including a comparison between the Pilot at Eastern and programs at the UMass and other institutions with similar models;
- the number of faculty that applied for and received the grants;
- the courses and departments of the faculty members that received the grants; and
- the total cost savings to students and the cost savings per student enrolled in a course taught by a grant recipient.

The provisions expire June 30, 2018.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 2, 2015.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.