
Higher Education Committee

HB 1221

Brief Description: Regarding the rights of certain higher education students involved in military service.

Sponsors: Representatives Finn, Rodne, Eddy, Shea, Klippert and Kelley; by request of Washington State Bar Association.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires institutions of higher education to provide an opportunity to make up missed exams for reservist students who are called to active duty and training for 30 days or less.
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Hearing Date: 1/26/11

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

Under current law students of public higher education institutions who are members of the Washington National Guard or other military reserve and who are ordered into active state or federal military service for longer than 30 days have certain rights. After providing documentation of orders, these students may:

1. withdraw from courses without negative annotation on their transcript or record and have tuition and fees credited to their account;
2. be given a grade of incomplete with an opportunity to complete the course upon release from duty; or
3. continue and complete the course for full credit without penalty for any missed classes. The student may still be required to complete necessary assignments, and the award of a grade and credit is subject to the instructor's determination that sufficient work has been completed and sufficient progress demonstrated to justify the grade.

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.

Students who withdraw must be readmitted and enrolled without penalty within one year following release from active duty. Students are also entitled to receive a refund of amounts paid for room, board, and fees that are attributable to the time they were in the military and which they did not use. Any refunds of tuition and fees or room and board are subject to requirements of state or federal financial aid programs that were the source of funds.

These protections are minimums; institutions can provide additional options or protections for students.

Summary of Bill:

Higher education students who are members of the Washington National Guard or other military reserve and who are ordered to active or inactive state or federal service for a period of 30 days or less, are entitled to make up classes or exams without affecting their grades or standing.

Specifically, if a student misses a class, test, exam, lab or other event due to their service or medical appointments for injuries incurred during service, then the student is entitled to make up the missing class, test, exam, lab or other event without affecting his or her grades or standing.

If the faculty member teaching the course determines that the student has made sufficient progress towards meeting course requirements, the student is not required to make up missed classes or other missed events. In this case, the missed class, test, exam, lab or other event must not be used in any way to adversely impact the student's grades or standing.

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.