

---

## Higher Education Committee

---

### SSB 5442

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

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Shin, Tom, Kilmer, White and Chase).

#### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Permits state and regional universities and The Evergreen State College (TESC) to develop accelerated baccalaureate degree programs that allow qualified students to obtain a baccalaureate degree in three years.
- Requires that qualified students in such programs must be allowed to begin course work within their academic field during their first term or semester of enrollment.
- Requires the universities and TESC to report to the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) for approval on plans for accelerated programs.

**Hearing Date:** 3/17/11

**Staff:** Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

#### Background:

Some public and private colleges and universities offer students the opportunity to obtain a baccalaureate degree in three years. The requirements of these accelerated baccalaureate programs vary. Frequently, these accelerated degree programs require summer school attendance, prior college credits earned during high school through such programs as Advanced Placement and Running Start, or enrollment for the maximum credits allowed per quarter.

In the Fall of 2009, the University of Washington (UW) announced a new program, called The Husky Advantage, to make it easier for students entering the university with a high number of Advanced Placement or Running Start credits to complete a bachelor's degree in three years. According to the UW, about 500 freshmen enter each year with 45 college credits obtained while they were in high school. Through careful planning and advising, these students can complete

---

*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.*

general education requirements and fulfill the requirements of certain majors, mostly in the College of Arts and Sciences.

TESC reports that 9 percent of those entering as first year students graduate in three years.

**Summary of Bill:**

The state and regional universities and TESC may 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. Qualified students in such programs must be allowed to begin course work within their academic field during their first term or semester of enrollment.

The universities and TESC must report on their plans for these accelerated programs to the HECB for approval.

**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.