
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5557

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1995 Regular Session

By Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Sutherland, Bauer, Wood, Palmer and Kohl)

Read first time 02/24/95.

1 AN ACT Relating to assessment of prior experiential learning
2 programs in higher education; creating new sections; making an
3 appropriation; and declaring an emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares that:

6 Providing greater flexibility and access to undergraduate degree
7 programs for the working adult population is of vital importance to the
8 expansion of economic opportunities for individuals and families.

9 Existing degree programs are not providing the needed flexibility
10 for many working adults. In order to provide greater access to a
11 larger portion of the working adult population, more creative
12 alternatives to the traditional time and place-bound educational
13 delivery system must be developed.

14 As demonstrated in other states, the opportunity for working adult
15 students to earn college credit for clearly demonstrating important
16 knowledge that they have attained in the workplace is a key element for
17 providing greater access to undergraduate degree programs. These
18 credit-for-prior-learning-experience opportunities have also been shown
19 to be most effective when they are offered as a component of distance

1 learning programs. Many institutions of higher education in Washington
2 provide opportunities to earn credit for prior learning experience, but
3 they are not adequately included as a component of distance learning
4 programs.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The higher education coordinating board
6 shall contract with one or more public higher education institutions to
7 provide access to higher education on a pilot project basis in Clark
8 county beginning in the fall term of 1995. The access will be provided
9 through a distance learning degree program that contains an opportunity
10 for students to earn credits for prior experiential learning in a
11 portfolio-based credit for prior experiential learning opportunity
12 structured by the guidelines and standards set forth by the northwest
13 association of schools and colleges.

14 The higher education coordinating board shall monitor and evaluate
15 the pilot project baccalaureate degree program and shall report to the
16 senate and house of representatives higher education committees by
17 December 1, 1997. Elements in the report shall include but not be
18 limited to the number of students served, the number of degrees
19 granted, the ability of the credit for prior learning component to be
20 self-sustaining, and the satisfaction of the students, graduates, and
21 the employer community.

22 In order to best meet the needs of the citizens of southwest
23 Washington, the higher education coordinating board will work together
24 with the administrations of local public higher education institutions
25 and the local business community in developing the pilot project.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of two hundred thousand dollars, or
27 as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the biennium
28 ending June 30, 1997, from the general fund to the higher education
29 coordinating board for the purposes of this act.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
31 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
32 state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take
33 effect immediately.

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