H-1159.1

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**HOUSE BILL 1955**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Van Werven, Manweller, Zeiger, Haler, Hargrove, Holy, Magendanz, and Kochmar

AN ACT Relating to defining satisfactory academic progress for purposes of higher education; and amending RCW 28B.92.030.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.92.030 and 2013 c 248 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

As used in this chapter:

(1) "Council" means the student achievement council.

(2) "Disadvantaged student" means a posthigh school student who by reason of adverse cultural, educational, environmental, experiential, familial or other circumstances is unable to qualify for enrollment as a full-time student in an institution of higher education, who would otherwise qualify as a needy student, and who is attending an institution of higher education under an established program designed to qualify the student for enrollment as a full-time student.

(3) "Financial aid" means loans and/or grants to needy students enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a student at institutions of higher education.

(4) "Institution" or "institutions of higher education" means:

(a) Any public university, college, community college, or technical college operated by the state of Washington or any political subdivision thereof; or

(b) Any other university, college, school, or institute in the state of Washington offering instruction beyond the high school level that is a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the council for the purposes of this section and that agrees to and complies with program rules adopted pursuant to RCW 28B.92.150. However, any institution, branch, extension or facility operating within the state of Washington that is affiliated with an institution operating in another state must be:

(i) A separately accredited member institution of any such accrediting association;

(ii) A branch of a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the council for purposes of this section, that is eligible for federal student financial aid assistance and has operated as a nonprofit college or university delivering on-site classroom instruction for a minimum of twenty consecutive years within the state of Washington, and has an annual enrollment of at least seven hundred full-time equivalent students; or

(iii) A nonprofit institution recognized by the state of Washington as provided in RCW 28B.77.240.

(5) "Needy student" means a posthigh school student of an institution of higher education who demonstrates to the office the financial inability, either through the student's parents, family and/or personally, to meet the total cost of board, room, books, and tuition and incidental fees for any semester or quarter. "Needy student" also means an opportunity internship graduate as defined by RCW 28C.18.162 who enrolls in a postsecondary program of study as defined in RCW 28C.18.162 within one year of high school graduation.

(6) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

(7) "Placebound student" means a student who (a) is unable to complete a college program because of family or employment commitments, health concerns, monetary inability, or other similar factors; and (b) may be influenced by the receipt of an enhanced student financial aid award to complete a baccalaureate degree at an eligible institution.

(8)(a) "Satisfactory academic progress" means the student's successful completion of a minimum number of credit or clock hours for each academic year, including summer, in which state financial aid was received. Each institution of higher education's policy for measuring a student's progress must define satisfactory academic progress as the student's completion of the minimum number of credit or clock hours for which the aid was calculated and disbursed.

(b) The minimum satisfactory academic progress standards for each academic year including summer are as follows:

(i) Full-time students must complete thirty-six credits or nine hundred clock hours;

(ii) Three-quarter time students must complete twenty-seven credits or six hundred seventy-five clock hours;

(iii) Half-time students must complete eighteen credits or four hundred fifty clock hours;

(iv) Less than half-time students must complete nine credits or two hundred twenty-five clock hours.

(c) Each institution's policy must deny further disbursements of state financial aid at the conclusion of any academic year, including summer, in which the student fails to complete at least one-half of the minimum number of credits or clock hours for which the aid was calculated and disbursed or otherwise fails to fulfill the conditions of the institution's satisfactory academic progress policy.

(d) The institution may make disbursements to a student who is in probationary status. As used in this subsection (8)(d), "probation" means completion of at least one-half, but less than all of the minimum number of credits or clock hours for which the aid was calculated and disbursed. The institution must have a probation policy, approved by the institution's board of trustees, that limits the number of terms in which a student may receive financial aid while in probationary status.

(e) The institution's financial aid administrator may at any time, using professional judgment exercised on a case-by-case basis, reinstate a student back into a satisfactory academic progress status in response to an individual student's extenuating circumstances.

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