
Higher Education Committee

HB 1147

Brief Description: Requiring a study of the transition to a three-track or four-track admission system for public institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Haler, Pollet, Manweller, Zeiger and Bergquist.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) to conduct a study on the transition to a three-track admission system for public institutions of higher education on a semester calendar and a four-track admission system for public institutions of higher education on a quarter calendar.
- Requires the WSIPP to report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by November 1, 2015.

Hearing Date: 2/3/15

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP).

The Washington State Legislature created the WSIPP in 1983 to conduct non-partisan research at the direction of the Legislature or the WSIPP's Board of Directors. The WSIPP's Board of Directors is made up of sixteen members that represent the Legislature, Governor, and public universities.

The Brigham Young University-Idaho (BYU-Idaho) Three-Track Admission System.

The BYU-Idaho operates year round with three 14 week semesters known as fall, winter, and spring. Students are admitted to the university on a track. There are three tracks, each consisting of two semesters: fall/winter, winter/spring, and spring/fall. The BYU-Idaho has a two step admissions process. The first step screens for admissibility, and once admitted, a student receives a questionnaire to determine that student's track assignment. A student indicates on their

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questionnaire which track they are first available to attend and answers additional questions about personal circumstances they might have. The BYU-Idaho uses that information to place a student into a track to begin at the university. For example, a student may list their availability to start in fall, but the university may assign them to the winter/spring track to start in the winter semester.

All of Washington's public institutions of higher education, including the community and technical colleges, operate on a quarter system, except for Washington State University. Students typically start in the fall quarter or semester of an academic year, but it is also possible to begin at the start of a different semester or quarter depending on the institution and program of study.

Summary of Bill:

The WSIPP must conduct a study on the transition to a three-track admission system for public institutions of higher education on a semester calendar and a four-track admission system for public institutions of higher education on a quarter calendar. The study must determine:

- how Brigham Young University-Idaho made the transition to a three-track admission system;
- how a transition to a three-track or four-track admission system would affect the public institutions of higher education;
- the cost savings of a three-track or four-track admission system compared to the current system; and
- how many additional students could be served by a three-track or four-track admission system.

The WSIPP must report the findings to the appropriate Legislative committees by November 1, 2015. The act expires July 1, 2016.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.