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## College & Workforce Development Committee

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### HB 1355

**Brief Description:** Establishing staffing standards and ratios for counselors in community and technical colleges.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ortiz-Self, Orwall, Ryu, Sells, Macri, Entenman, Stonier, Valdez, Frame, Gregerson, Tarleton, Doglio, Dolan, Appleton, Bergquist, Slatter, Goodman, Pollet and Santos.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates minimum standards required to be employed as a counselor at a public community or technical college (CTC).
- Requires CTCs to have a staffing ratio of no less than one full-time equivalent state-funded counselor to 900 hundred students.

**Hearing Date:** 1/29/19

**Staff:** Trudes Tango (786-7384).

#### Background:

Counselors in the community and technical college (CTC) system are considered "academic employees" and "faculty appointments" for purposes of tenure and collective bargaining. There is no statutory definition of "counselor" for purposes of CTC employees, and there are no statutorily prescribed minimum requirements for a person to be employed as a counselor at a CTC.

There are approximately 117 faculty counselors in the CTC system. In addition, some colleges have employees under titles such as "advisors" and "education planners." As of fall 2018, there were approximately 225,000 students enrolled in the CTCs.

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*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.*

School counselors employed in Washington's K-12 system must meet minimum requirements and have a valid school counselor certification as required by the Professional Educator Standards Board. Generally, K-12 school counselors must have a master's degree in counseling and complete an approved certification program.

**Summary of Bill:**

Minimum academic standards and minimum staffing ratios are established for counselors employed in the CTC system.

To be a counselor at a CTC, a person must:

- have a master's degree in counseling or related field from a regionally accredited university;
- have completed a supervised counseling practicum and internship with an average of one hour per week of supervision. The practicum and internship must consist of: a minimum of 100 practicum hours (with at least 40 hours being direct service); and a minimum of 700 on-site internship hours (with at least 280 hours being direct service);
- have completed coursework with content covering: (a) professional counseling orientation and ethical practice; (b) social and cultural diversity; (c) human growth and development; (d) career development; and (e) counseling and helping relationships; and
- have completed coursework with content covering two of the following: (a) group counseling and group work; (b) assessment and testing; or (c) research and program evaluation.

The minimum criteria do not apply to individuals employed as counselors before the effective date of the bill.

Beginning the 2020 fall academic quarter, every CTC must have and maintain a staffing ratio of no more than 900 students to one full-time equivalent state-funded counselor.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges must include data on each CTC's ratio in its annual fall staffing report.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 23, 2019.

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