

RCW 28B.50.825 Bachelor of science degree in computer science.

(1) Subject to approval by the college board, community colleges and technical colleges are authorized to offer bachelor of science degrees in computer science.

(2) Community colleges and technical colleges may develop the curriculum for and design and deliver courses leading to a bachelor of science degree in computer science.

(3) Degree programs developed under this section are subject to approval by the college board under RCW 28B.50.090 before a college may enroll students in upper-division courses.

(4) (a) Colleges may submit an application to the college board. The college board shall review the applications and select the colleges using objective criteria including, but not limited to:

(i) The college demonstrates the capacity to make a long-term commitment of resources to build and sustain a high quality program;

(ii) The college has or can readily engage faculty appropriately qualified to develop and deliver a high quality curriculum at the baccalaureate level;

(iii) The college can demonstrate demand for the proposed program from a sufficient number of students within its service area to make the program cost-effective and feasible to operate;

(iv) The college can demonstrate that employers demand the level of technical training proposed within the program, making it cost-effective for students to seek the degree; and

(v) The proposed program fills a gap in options available for students because it is not offered by a public four-year institution of higher education in the college's geographic area or if there is a shortage of programs demanded by industry and workforce.

(b) Applications may not be submitted earlier than December 1, 2021.

(5) A community college offering a bachelor of science degree in computer science on July 25, 2021, is exempt from the requirements of subsection (4) of this section. [2021 c 147 § 2; 2016 sp.s. c 33 § 1.]

Findings—2021 c 147: "The legislature finds it essential that Washington students, especially low-income students and students of color, have the necessary credentials to secure the high-demand jobs of the future. Washington is fortunate to be home to a large, and growing, technology sector. The technology sector in Washington currently has more than 24,000 job openings, most of which require a four-year bachelor of science degree in computer science. The legislature also finds that the state imported four times as many computer science graduates than it produced in state. The legislature also finds that the state can do a better job of training Washington residents to secure these living wage jobs of the future. Additionally, of the 1,883 computer science degrees awarded in Washington during the 2018-19 school year, only 3.8 percent were awarded to African American students, 5.6 percent to Hispanic students, and less than 1 percent to Native Americans. The legislature further finds that Washington's competitiveness in the global economy requires the state to ensure companies are able to hire a qualified workforce of Washington residents. To achieve the goals set forth in the workforce education investment act, specifically 70 percent postsecondary credential attainment, the legislature finds that we

need to expand access to the high-demand field of computer science, especially to students of color." [2021 c 147 § 1.]