

Date of Hearing: April 23, 2013

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Das Williams, Chair
AB 386 (Levine) – As Amended: April 15, 2013

SUBJECT: Public postsecondary education: cross-enrollment: online education at the California State University.

SUMMARY: Expresses the intent of the Legislature that by the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year, students enrolled at the California State University (CSU) be provided an opportunity to enroll in online courses available at other CSU campuses, authorizes any CSU student enrolled at a CSU campus to enroll in an online course provided by another CSU campus, and requires the CSU Trustees, on or before January 1, 2015, to establish an easily accessible online database of online courses available at the CSU. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires the CSU Trustees, on or before January 1, 2015, to establish the following:
 - a) An easily accessible online database of online courses available at all CSU campuses in order to provide CSU students with a streamlined process within the CSU system to allow students to find and enroll in courses that will earn them credit toward graduation, general education, and major requirements; and,
 - b) Plans for an intrasystem cross-enrollment process to expedite student learning that will be operational at the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year.
- 2) Allows, by the beginning of the 2015-16 academic year, any student enrolled in a CSU who meets the requirements of this measure to enroll, without formal admission, and without payment of additional tuition or fees, except specified, in a course provided entirely online by another campus of the CSU on a space-available basis.
- 3) Specifies that nonresident and international CSU students who meet the conditions of this measure may also enroll in an online course provided by another CSU campus and that they shall pay their unit fees for the online course at the host campus.
- 4) Specifies that a student is qualified to participate in the program established by this measure if he/she is enrolled in a CSU campus and meets the following requirements:
 - a) The student has attained a grade point average of 2.0 on a 4-point scale for work completed; and,
 - b) The student has paid appropriate tuition or fees, or both, required by the home campus for full-time enrollment for the academic term in which the student seeks to cross-enroll and the student has no outstanding tuition or fees owed to the home campus.
- 5) Specifies that the host campus may charge participating students an administration fee and specific course-based fees, not to exceed an amount sufficient for the campus to recover administrative costs it incurs pursuant to this measure.

- 6) Requires the CSU Chancellor's Office to establish a convenient online methodology so that students meeting the requirements of this measure may do both of the following:
 - a) Be informed of the opportunity to access courses provided entirely online by another CSU; and,
 - b) Simultaneously enroll in courses at their home campus and enroll in courses provided entirely online at another CSU campus, as provided for in this measure.
- 7) Stipulates that a matriculated CSU student will have priority access to courses provided at his/her home campus, and a CSU student, meeting the requirements of this measure, seeking to enroll in courses provided entirely online by another CSU campus shall be able to enroll.
- 8) Specifies that cross-enrollment students have an opportunity to enroll in these online courses at any time after the priority enrollment period for continuing students, as determined by each host campus, and that the host campus enrollment policy, to the extent possibly, shall encourage cross-enrollment.
- 9) Stipulates that courses provided entirely online pursuant to this measure shall be accepted for credit at the student's home campus on the same basis as it would be for a student matriculated at the host campus.
- 10) Stipulates that the enrollment of a student at a host campus pursuant to this measure may be counted in the calculation of headcount or full-time equivalent student enrollment at the host campus and that the home campus and the host campus at which the student is cross-enrolled may count in the calculation of headcount or full-time equivalent student enrollment only those units for which the student is enrolled at each respective campus.
- 11) Defines "Chancellor" to mean the Chancellor of the CSU; "CSU" to mean the California State University; "Home campus" to mean the CSU campus at which the student is matriculated; and, "Host campus" to mean the campus to which the student seeks access.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Distance Learning Policy, which sets forth the guiding goals and principles for the utilization of technology in California postsecondary education (Education Code § 66940).
- 2) Establishes, until January 1, 2014, the California Virtual Campus, under the stewardship of the CCC Board of Governors and pursuant to annual Budget Act funding to, among other things, enhance the awareness of, and access to, highly engaging online courses of study, increase access to next generation Internet services, 21st century workforce development programs, and e-government services for students and staff served or employed by education entities and students served primarily online through partnerships with public libraries and community-based organizations (EC § 78910.10).
- 3) Allows any student enrolled in any campus of the three public segments who meet certain criteria, to enroll without formal admission to any of the segments, with certain specified conditions (EC § 66750 et seq.).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: Background. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) 2013-2014 Analysis of the Higher Education Budget, distance learning offers numerous benefits. These include providing greater access to educational and training opportunities due to increased scheduling flexibility, as well as allowing campuses to serve more students without needing additional physical infrastructure.

According to the, LAO there is no common definition of distance learning among California's public postsecondary institutions, making it impossible for the Legislature and segments to measure workload and track enrollment trends.

Governor Brown has encouraged the University of California (UC), the CSU and the California Community Colleges (CCC) to expand their online offerings. The 2013-2014 budget allocates \$16.9 million to CCC and \$10 million to both the UC and CSU systems for online education.

Online education at the CSU. Launched in January 2013, CSU Online is the newest platform of services that supports students and faculty in teaching and learning through online programs. CSU Online will host both graduate and undergraduate programs, but has an initial focus on former students who have had to drop out of the CSU and are looking to complete their degrees.

CSU at San Jose (SJSU) recently launched a joint pilot program, partnering with Udacity (an independent online education company and innovators of massive open online courses [MOOCs]) and EdX (a nonprofit MOOCs provider). This joint pilot program creates a major expansion of course offerings for students and plans to expand its current enrollment of 300 students to 1,000. The joint pilot program used three entry-level courses that typically have high failure rates, intermediate algebra, college algebra, and elementary statistics and currently has an 85% retention rate.

Need for the bill. According to the author, while the CSU does permit students to concurrently enroll in courses at campuses other than their home campus, the option is severely underutilized. According to the CSU, the average fall semester enrollment in the last five years at the CSU system is 428,397 students (2007-2011). The fall of 2012 found that there were less than 3,600 'transitory' students at the CSU. The transitory definition includes, but is not limited to, Intrasystem Concurrent Enrollment students.

According to CSU Advocacy Office, each CSU campus currently provides its students with an online registration portal that allows students to easily enroll in courses provided at their home campus, however, each portal currently operates as an isolated entity and does not provide students the ability to seek and enroll in online courses provided at other CSU campuses.

The author states:

"This bill is addressing an issue with existing online resources that the CSU has neglected to address. Legislation is necessary to direct the CSU to take action and establish an online accessibility point for students. Additionally, absent a legislative change in statute, an administrative change at the CSU could detract from the CSU's current pace of developing online education; [my] AB 386 in conjunction with AB 387 will establish minimum standards for online education at the CSU."

Suggested amendment. The measure states that the host campus may charge participating students "an administration fee and specific course based fees, not to exceed an amount sufficient for the campus to recover administrative costs it incurs."

To ensure that students are not over charged an administration fee, **staff recommend the following amendment**, The host campus may charge participating students **an a reasonable** administration fee and specific course-based fees, not to exceed an amount sufficient for the campus to recover **reasonable** administrative costs it incurs pursuant to this chapter.

Other measures to address online education. There are several online education related measures pending Legislative action this session:

- 1) AB 387 (Levine), which will be taken up today in the committee hearing, would require the CSU to have a uniform definition of online education, beginning January 1, 2017; would require the CSU Trustees to report performance data about online education to the Legislature every two years until 2021; would require, in the development of new programs and instruction at each CSU campus, that not less than 10% of new course offerings be online courses; and, would require the CSU Trustees, on or before January 1, 2015, to report to the Legislature on the feasibility of developing an accelerated bachelor's degree completion program consisting of online courses, aimed at students who started college, but never obtained a degree.
- 2) AB 895 (Rendon), which will be taken up today in the committee hearing ,would establish the California Postsecondary Online Education Task Force to evaluate and collect data on the current status of postsecondary online education.
- 3) AB 944 (Nestande), which will be taken up today in the committee hearing, would require the Trustees of the CSU and the Board of Governors of CCC and request the Regents of the UC, to report to the Legislature, by January 1, 2016, and every two years thereafter, on workload and key performance data on distance learning courses.
- 4) SB 520 (Steinberg), will be taken up on April 24, 2013, in the Senate Education Committee, would, among other things, create the California Online Student Access Platform under the joint administration of the UC President, the Chancellor of the CSU, and the CCC Chancellor, with the academic senates of the respective segments, and would require the platform to provide an efficient statewide mechanism for online course providers to offer transferable courses for credit and to create a pool of these online courses.
- 5) SB 547 (Block), which will be taken up on April 24, 2013, in the Senate Education Committee, would, among other things, require the academic senates of the UC, the CSU, and the CCC to jointly develop and identify online courses that would be made available to students of each of the three segments for enrollment by the fall of 2014.

Prior legislation. AB 626 (Blumenfield, 2011), which remained in this committee, would have established a definition for "distance learning." AB 851 (Nestande, 2011), which was similar in nature to AB 944 (as described above), failed passage in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Bay Area Council
California State Student Association
California State University

Opposition

None on file.

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