
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 637 **Hearing Date:** June 21, 2017
Author: Medina
Version: June 12, 2017
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Olgalilia Ramirez

Subject: Community colleges: student equity plans

NOTE: This bill has been amended to replace its contents and this is the first time the bill is being heard in its current form.

SUMMARY

This bill statutorily authorizes a California Community College (CCC) student who meets specified requirements to enroll, without payment of additional tuition or fees and without formal admission, in an online course provided by another CCC through the Online Education Initiative (OEI) Consortium. The bill also authorizes a participating community college district to accept the determination of a student's residency classification under certain conditions.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires that each student be classified as a resident or nonresident at the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), or the California Maritime Academy or at a CCC. (Education Code (EC) § 68040)
- 2) Authorizes a student who meets specified requirements and is enrolled at a campus of the CSU, to enroll, without formal admission, and without payment of additional tuition or fees, except as provided, in a course provided entirely online, as defined, by another campus of the CSU. (EC § 66760.5 – 66764)
- 3) Using funds appropriated under the Budget Act of 2013, requires the Chancellor of the CCCs to expand the delivery of higher education courses through the use of technology, in order to maximize the development of online courses available across campuses to alleviate shortages of certain core courses at campuses, specifically those courses that have the highest demand, fill quickly, and are prerequisites for many different degrees. Under these provisions the Chancellors office is required to ensure that students enrolling and successfully completing these courses are granted degree-applicable cross-campus transfer credit and that these online-only courses are made available to students systemwide. These efforts are referred as the OEI. (Schedule 26 and Provision 42 Item 6870-101-0001 of Section 2.00 of the Budget Act of 2013 (AB 110, Chapter 20, Statutes of 2013))

ANALYSIS

This bill:

- 1) Statutorily authorizes a student who meets specified requirements to enroll without payment of additional tuition or fees and without formal admission, in a course provided entirely online by other California Community College (CCC).
- 2) Requires a student to meet the following requirements for enrollment:
 - a) Be enrolled at a CCC that is part of the Online Education Initiative (OEI) Consortium.
 - b) Attain a 2.0 G.P.A.
 - c) Pay the appropriate fees and tuition required by the home college.
 - d) Have no outstanding tuition and or fees to be paid at the host college.
- 3) Establishes the following requirements and authorities for cross-enrollment in online courses at the CCC:
 - a) Authorizes nonresident or an international student who satisfies the conditions outlined in #2 above to cross-enrollment but requires that these students pay the required nonresident tuition at the host campus.
 - b) Requires a host campus to charge participating students the appropriate course enrollment fees for residents as specified.
 - c) Requires the CCC Chancellor's Office to establish an online methodology to allow students to be informed of the online cross-enrollment option, to simultaneously enroll in both home and host colleges and provide consent to transfer relevant enrollment data to the host college.
 - d) Requires that the course be accepted for credit at the home campus on the same basis as that for a matriculated student at the host campus.
 - e) Authorizes the host campus to count cross-enrolled students in the calculation of headcount or full-time equivalent student enrollment at the host campus, but limits both the home and host campus to counting a cross-enrolled student only for those units in which the student is enrolled at each respective campus.
 - f) Authorizes a community college district to accept the determination of another community college district as to a student's residency classification provided certain conditions are satisfied.
 - g) Requires a host college to inform each student who enrolls in an online course of the technical or any prerequisite course requirements and any materials, skills knowledge or other elements that are necessary to ensure that a student has an opportunity to succeed in the online course.

- 4) Statutorily defines various terms including, “Online course exchange,” to mean the technological mechanism used by the Online Education Initiative (OEI) Consortium to offer an online-only course that has highest demand, fill quickly and are prerequisites for many different courses.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “currently, students selecting courses that they need to complete their degree or transfer to a four-year institution in the California Community College’s OEI Course Exchange encounter delays when attempting to enroll due to the requirement that each community college verify student residency prior to enrollment. At the same time, colleges offering courses in the OEI Course Exchange are at risk of failing to comply with residency determination requirements if they allow a student to enroll prior to verifying student residency.” This bill seeks to remove administrative barriers for students seeking to enroll in courses through the OEI Course Exchange.
- 2) ***Online Exchange Initiative.*** As noted in the background of this analysis the 2013 Budget Act included a \$16.9 million allocation and ongoing annual funding of \$10 million for the California Community Colleges (CCC) to establish the OEI course exchange. According to the CCC, OEI Course Exchange provides students who are enrolled at a community college, and cannot find the course they need to complete their degree or transfer, the opportunity to find and take that course at a different CCC through the OEI.

A student’s participation in OEI does not mean that a student will complete his or her degree by taking courses exclusively online. Rather, it is a tool available to students after they have exhausted opportunities to enroll them at their home college. It appears that the program is open to all community colleges but participation is not required. Of the 24 pilot schools in the OEI Consortium, eight colleges joined the OEI Course Exchange. According to the author, expansion of courses and the addition of more colleges is ongoing.

This bill establishes OEI in statute and additionally authorizes a community college district to accept the determination of a student’s residency classification.

- 3) ***Related activity at California State University (CSU).*** AB 386 (Levine, Chapter 363, Statutes of 2013) authorized cross-enrollment in online education among CSU campuses. AB 386 also required the Legislative Analyst Office to report and review CSU's Online Programs by October 2017. This report is now scheduled to be released in 2018. The provisions in this bill parallel the authority granted to CSU under AB 386.

SUPPORT

California Community Colleges

OPPOSITION

None received

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