

Docket Item:

Applied baccalaureate discussion

Summary:

Agency staff have prepared a draft Legislative Concept (LC 462) that would permit community colleges, with approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, to award applied baccalaureate degrees. In order for a request to offer applied baccalaureate degrees to be approved, the board of a district operating a community college would need to demonstrate a workforce need and ensure that the program would not unnecessarily duplicate an academic program currently offered by other community colleges or public universities in the state or be located in a geographic area that and would cause undue hardship to other community colleges or public universities. The Legislative Concept has not been approved by the Governor of the Commission. This docket item provides some background for the HECC on applied baccalaureate degrees and is an information item only.

Docket Material:

The applied baccalaureate degree is defined as, “a bachelor’s degree designed to incorporate applied associate courses and degrees once considered as ‘terminal’ or non-baccalaureate level while providing students with the higher-order thinking skills and advanced technical knowledge and skills so desired in today’s job market”¹. They are currently offered in at least 17 states in a variety of fields, in particular education, health, science, technology, business, and public safety. ²

In Oregon, HB 3093 (2009) directed the Oregon Joint Board of Education to develop a plan for applied baccalaureate degrees in Oregon. A steering committee with representatives from the Oregon Institute of Technology, Portland Community College, Lane Community College, Western Oregon University, Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, Oregon State University, Linn-Benton Community College, Oregon University System, Clatsop Community College, and Portland State University produced a report with recommendations in July 2010. Regarding the awarding of applied baccalaureate degrees, the steering committee recommended,

that public universities and community colleges continue to work together to offer applied baccalaureate degrees as the need for them is documented. At this time the Committee does not have

¹ Bragg, D. D., & Ruud, C. M. (2011). The adult learner and the applied baccalaureate: Lessons from six states. Champaign: Office of Community College Research and Leadership, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, p.4. Retrieved from: <http://occr.illinois.edu/docs/librariesprovider4/ab/six-lessons>.

² Community College Baccalaureate Association. <http://www.accbd.org/resources/baccalaureate-conferring-locations/>. Retrieved October 6, 2016.

a position on whether community colleges should be allowed to offer these degrees. Additional analysis and consideration of this issue will be needed as new degrees are proposed.³

Since 2009, Oregon's Technical and Regional Universities have started 10 Applied Baccalaureate (AB) degree programs; enrolled 115 students; and awarded 83 AB degrees. No applied baccalaureate degrees are currently offered at Oregon community colleges.

Staff Recommendation:

Information item only.

³Applied Baccalaureate Report, Version 1.9 July 29, 2010, p. 12. Retrieved from:
<http://www.ode.state.or.us/superintendent/priorities/applied-baccalaureate-study-2.pdf>