
Wisconsin Legislative Council

AMENDMENT MEMO



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2019 Senate Bill 165

Senate Substitute Amendment 2

2019 SENATE BILL 165

Under current law, the University of Wisconsin (UW) System Board of Regents (BOR) and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Board must enter into and implement an agreement that identifies at least 30 credits of core general education courses that are transferable between and within each institution participating in the agreement. This agreement is commonly called the Universal Credit Transfer Agreement (UCTA). Tribal and private nonprofit colleges may elect to participate in the agreement.

2019 Senate Bill 165 repeals the existing statutory language that created the UCTA, and instead requires that the BOR and WTCS Board enter into an agreement that establishes policies for ensuring that, beginning in academic year 2020-21, credits for completing courses in different subject areas, which may include core general education courses, are transferable between and within each institution participating in the agreement. The agreement must specify the total number of transferable course credits, which must be at least 75 credits or nine credits for each course subject area, whichever is greater. As under current law, tribal and private nonprofit colleges may elect to participate in the agreement.

The agreement must include policies for institution faculty to periodically identify the courses for which credits are transferable under the agreement and must include procedures for revising the agreement every two years.

The agreement must be submitted to the Joint Committee on Finance (JCF) by December 31, 2019, for review before implementation. If the agreement is later revised to decrease the number of transferable credits, then the revised agreement must be submitted to JCF for review before implementation.

The BOR must include in its annual report to the governor and the Legislature a description of the agreement and a summary of its implementation.

SENATE SUBSTITUTE AMENDMENT 2

Under Senate Substitute Amendment 2, the BOR and WTCS Board must enter into two agreements regarding the transfer of credits between and within institutions of the two systems.

First, instead of repealing the current statutory language that created the UCTA, the substitute amendment modifies the language by increasing the number of credits that must be identified as transferable. Specifically, the substitute amendment requires that the BOR and WTCS Board enter into an agreement that identifies an array of not less than 72 credits of core general education courses that, beginning in 2022-23, are transferable between and within each institution participating in the agreement. As under current law, tribal colleges and private nonprofit colleges may choose to participate in the agreement.

Second, the substitute amendment defines “program-to-program articulation agreements” and creates a requirement that the BOR and WTCS Board enter into an agreement regarding such articulation agreements. Tribal and private nonprofit colleges may elect to participate in the agreement. Under the substitute amendment, a “program-to-program articulation agreement” is an agreement that articulates how the completion of requirements for a specified program of study at an educational institution transfers toward completion of requirements for a specified program of study at another educational institution.

Specifically, the substitute amendment requires that the BOR and WTCS Board enter into an agreement to promote and support program-to-program articulation agreements that will apply to programs of study specified in the agreements between UW System, WTCS, and, if they elect to participate, tribal and private nonprofit colleges. The agreement must identify and prioritize articulation agreements in high demand fields of study or in fields of study that are included under articulation agreements that were already in place at the time the amendment takes effect.

Finally, the substitute amendment requires that the BOR and WTCS Board jointly submit a report to the JCF and to appropriate standing committees of the Legislature on their progress in complying with the program-to-program articulation agreement requirements of the substitute amendment. The report must be submitted by April 2, 2021.

BILL HISTORY

Senator Strobel introduced 2019 Senate Bill 165 on April 18, 2019, and offered Assembly Substitute Amendment 2 on September 27, 2019. On October 16, 2019, the Senate Committee on Universities, Technical Colleges, Children and Families recommended adoption of the amendment by a vote of Ayes, 7; Noes, 0; and recommended passage of the bill, as amended, by a vote of Ayes, 6; Noes, 1.

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