

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

WTCS 6/18/2015

LRB Number	15-2470/1	Introduction Number	SB-190	Estimate Type	Original
Description University of Wisconsin and technical college credits based on military training or experience					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Senate Bill 190 requires WTCS colleges to establish policies requiring colleges to award academic credit to veterans for any course that was part of veteran's military training or service experience if the veteran demonstrates that the course meets standards of American Council on Education (or equivalent standards) and is similar in subject matter to courses offered by a WTCS college.

The WTCS State Board adopted a system wide policy on credit for prior learning in 1999 with the most recent revision in 2008. The policy states that technical colleges "shall provide maximum recognition for work completed through" accredited higher education or work, training or other experiences pertinent to the student's new educational programming and the college's graduation requirements.

The WTCS Educational Services Manual (ESM) provides additional procedures and guidance with which colleges must comply. The ESM clarifies State Board policy on credit for prior learning and states that: "Colleges shall award credit for prior learning based on previous work experience, business and industry training, military education or experience, or other prior learning which technical college personnel judge as comparable in content and level of rigor to the specific technical college course or courses."

The long-standing WTCS recognition of the importance of granting credit for prior education, work and military experience will reduce the potential local costs associated with implementing the requirements included in the bill. However, while the bill indicates the veterans must demonstrate that applicability of credits for transfer, this will require the support and review of documents by technical college staff. The most successful transfer opportunities come out of one-on-one work between college staff and those seeking credit. This could increase college costs if significant numbers of additional veterans seek to be awarded credit for prior learning.

In addition, as part of the 2015-17 budget, the Governor added and the Joint Finance Committee approved a new funding criterion that would allocate a portion of WTCS outcomes-based funding based on the development and implementation of a policy to award course credit for relevant educational experience or training not obtained through an institution of higher education. This would apply to credits for prior learning based on applicable military training and experience and will provide additional incentive for WTCS colleges to emphasize credit for prior learning for veterans.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications

Continued college resources will be needed to ensure that veterans qualify for as much credit for prior learning as possible.