

ASSEMBLY, No. 3582

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman NANCY J. PINKIN

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires certain undergraduate students to file degree plan and requires public institutions of higher education to develop pathway systems to graduation.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning college degree completion and supplementing
2 chapter 62 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. a. As used in this section, “degree plan” means a statement
8 of the course of study requirements that an undergraduate student
9 enrolled in a public institution of higher education must complete to
10 graduate from the institution.

11 b. Except as otherwise provided in subsection c. of this section,
12 an undergraduate student enrolled in a four-year public institution
13 of higher education shall file a degree plan with the institution as
14 soon as practicable, but not later than by the completion of 45 credit
15 hours of course work.

16 c. An undergraduate student who transfers to a four-year public
17 institution of higher education with at least 45 credit hours of
18 course work shall file a degree plan with the institution during the
19 student’s first semester at the institution.

20 d. A degree-seeking undergraduate student enrolled in a county
21 college shall file a degree plan with the institution upon entering the
22 institution.

23 e. A degree plan filed pursuant to this section shall:

24 (1) be developed in consultation with an academic advisor in the
25 student’s degree program, or if an academic advisor is not available
26 in the student’s degree program, any academic advisor at the
27 institution; and

28 (2) follow a pathway to a degree as required pursuant to section
29 2 of this act.

30
31 2. a. A public institution of higher education shall:

32 (1) develop a pathway system whereby the institution
33 establishes graduation progress benchmarks for each academic
34 major and for the general education program for students who have
35 not declared a major;

36 (2) require the pathway for each first-time degree-seeking
37 student to include credit-bearing mathematics and English courses
38 in the first 24 credit hours of course work; and

39 (3) require the pathway for each degree-seeking student
40 enrolled in a remedial course in mathematics, reading, or English to
41 include the credit-bearing course in mathematics, reading, or
42 English concurrent with or in the semester immediately following
43 completion of the remedial course.

44 b. (1) The graduation progress benchmarks established pursuant
45 to paragraph (1) of subsection a. of this section shall specify the
46 credit and course criteria that indicate satisfactory progress toward a
47 degree.

(2) The academic departments of a public institution of higher education shall establish schedules for regular periodic reviews of student progress.

(3) A student who is in danger of falling behind the graduation progress benchmarks shall be required to consult with an academic advisor prior to course registration.

3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first be applicable to the first class of students entering a public institution of higher education following the effective date of this act.

STATEMENT

This bill requires undergraduate students enrolled in four-year public institutions of higher education to file a degree plan with the institution by the completion of 45 credit hours of course work. The bill requires degree-seeking students enrolled in county colleges to file a degree plan upon entering the institution. The bill defines “degree plan” as a statement of the course of study requirements that an undergraduate student at a public institution of higher education must complete in order to graduate. A student’s degree plan must be developed in consultation with an academic advisor and must follow a pathway to a degree.

In addition, the bill requires public institutions of higher education to develop pathway systems that establish graduation progress benchmarks for each academic major and for the general education program for students who have not declared a major. The pathway for each first-time degree-seeking student must include credit-bearing mathematics and English courses in the first 24 credit hours. The pathway for each degree-seeking student enrolled in a remedial course in mathematics, reading, or English must include the credit-bearing course in that subject concurrent with or in the semester immediately following completion of the remedial course.

Under the bill, the graduation progress benchmarks established by a public institution of higher education must specify the credit and course criteria that indicate satisfactory progress toward a degree. Academic departments at the institution must establish schedules for periodic reviews of student progress, and students who are in danger of falling behind the graduation progress benchmarks will be required to consult with an academic advisor prior to course registration.