SENATE, No. 3711

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED APRIL 26, 2021

Sponsored by:
Senator SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM
District 31 (Hudson)
Senator VIN GOPAL
District 11 (Monmouth)

SYNOPSIS

Requires four-year public institutions of higher education to provide on website certain information on online degree students and graduate degree students.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning information provided by four-year public institutions of higher education and amending P.L.2009, c.197.

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

1. Section 2 of P.L.2009, c.197 (C.18A:3B-44) is amended to read as follows:

2. a. A four-year public institution of higher education shall provide for public inspection on its website comprehensive information on the cost of attendance, the graduation rates of admitted students, and the faculty of the institution. The purpose of the information shall be to maximize the awareness of students and their families of the costs associated with enrollment in the institution, the institution's success in ensuring the graduation of its students, and the composition of the teaching faculty that a student will encounter in his coursework. The institution shall post, and annually update, a student consumer information report on its website that includes:

(1) overall four-year and six-year graduation rates;

(2) four-year and six-year graduation rates by demographic group;

(3) four-year and six-year graduation rates by major;

(4) four-year and six-year graduation rates for student-athletes;

(5) the student transfer rate;

(6) an overview of the institutions to which former students of that college or university have transferred prior to the completion of a degree;

(7) the cost for the current academic year of attending the institution including tuition, student fees, room and board, and books and materials;

(8) a description of the types of financial assistance offered directly by the institution to both student-athletes and to students who do not participate in athletic programs at the institution;

(9) the percent of student-athletes who receive financial assistance directly from the institution and the average value of the assistance and the percent of students who do not participate in athletic programs at the institution who receive financial assistance directly from the institution and the average value of the assistance;

(10) the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to live on campus and complete a degree in four years **[**and**]**, the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to commute to school and complete a degree in four years, and the total projected cost for an incoming freshman exclusively enrolled in online education courses to complete a degree in four years;

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

(11) the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to live on campus and complete a degree in six years **[**and**]**, the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to commute to school and complete a degree in six years, and the total projected cost for an incoming freshman exclusively enrolled in online education courses to complete a degree in six years;

(12) average student loan indebtedness of four-year graduates calculated separately for **[**both**]** students who live on campus **[**and**]**, students who commute, and students exclusively enrolled in online education courses;

(13) average student loan indebtedness of six-year graduates calculated separately for **[**both**]** students who live on campus **[**and**]**, students who commute, and students exclusively enrolled in online education courses;

(14) average student loan indebtedness of a student who withdraws from the institution prior to the completion of a degree program calculated separately for **[**both**]** students who live on campus **[**and**]**, students who commute, and students exclusively enrolled in online education courses;

(15) an overview of the institution's faculty, including the percentage of faculty employed as a tenured professor, the percentage of faculty employed as a full-time non-tenured professor, and the percentage of faculty employed as an adjunct or visiting professor;

(16) the percentage of courses taught by each of the different categories of faculty; **[**and**]**

(17) an indicator of each academic department's capacity to serve the students majoring within that department's programs, as determined by the **[**Commission on**]** Secretary of Higher Education;

(18) the number and percentage of students exclusively enrolled in online education courses; and

(19) an overview of the education courses the institution offers online, including the total number of courses offered and the course level for each course.

The institution shall provide with all paper applications for admission to the institution a hard copy of the information prepared pursuant to this section.

b. A four-year public institution of higher education shall conform to the guidelines, criteria, and format prescribed by the **[**Commission on**]** Secretary of Higher Education in reporting the information required pursuant to this section.

c. A four-year public institution of higher education shall submit its student consumer information report to the **[**Commission on**]** Secretary of Higher Education for inclusion in a comparative profile of the student consumer information reports of all four-year public institutions of higher education.

d. A four-year public institution of higher education shall ensure that the page of its Internet site which includes its student consumer information report contains a link to the page of the ⟦Commission on⟧ Secretary of Higher Education's Internet site that includes the comparative profile required pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of this act.

e. A four-year public institution of higher education shall ensure that the Internet site for submitting an online application to the institution contains a link to the institution's student consumer information report.

f. A four-year public institution of higher education shall require the parent or guardian of a student applying for admission into the institution, or the student if he is an independent adult, to sign and submit a statement acknowledging that he has reviewed the institution's student consumer information report.

g. A four-year public institution of higher education shall provide for public inspection on its website comprehensive information on the cost of attendance, the graduation rates of admitted students, and the faculty of the institution, as similarly required pursuant to subsection a. of this section and as applicable, for the institution's graduate degree programs. The information shall be calculated separately for students who live on campus, students who commute, and students exclusively enrolled in online education courses. The information shall be submitted to the Secretary of Higher Education as part of the institution's student consumer information report required pursuant to subsection c. of this section.

(cf: P.L.2009, c.197, s.2)

2. Section 3 of P.L.2009, c.197 (C.18A:3B-45) is amended to read as follows:

3. a. The ⟦Commission on⟧ Secretary of Higher Education shall issue guidelines and criteria for collecting and calculating the information required pursuant to section 2 of this act and shall prescribe a uniform reporting method for posting the information.

b. The ⟦Commission on⟧ Secretary of Higher Education shall annually compile the student consumer information reports submitted pursuant to subsection c. of section 2 of this act into a comparative profile of all four-year public institutions of higher education. The ⟦commission⟧ secretary shall present the information on its website in a manner that allows college students and their families to easily compare student consumer information across institutions.

(cf: P.L.2009, c.197, s.3)

3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall first be applicable to the 2021-2022 academic year.

STATEMENT

Under the provisions of the "New Jersey College Student and Parent Consumer Information Act," P.L.2009, c.197 (C.18A:3B-43 et seq.), four-year public institutions of higher education are required to provide for public inspection on their websites information on the cost of attendance, the graduation rates of admitted students, and the faculty of the institution. The purpose of the information is to maximize the awareness of students and their families of the costs associated with enrollment in the institution, the institution's success in ensuring the graduation of its students, and the composition of the teaching faculty that a student will encounter in his coursework.

This bill amends that law to require the institutions to also provide the information on students who are exclusively enrolled in online education courses at the institution, and for students enrolled in a graduate degree program at the institution.