

Accelerated Degree Program Work Group
June 15, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Conference Call

Attendees:

Bernadette Jungblut – CWU, Janet Hubbard – EWU, Scott Coleman – Evergreen, Emily Leggio- UW, Mary Wack – WSU, Steve VanderStaay – WWU, James Crandall – Senate Majority Coalition Caucus, and Julie Garver – COP

Discussion of Scope of Work

COP provided an overview of the budget proviso language included in the final 2016 Supplemental Budget to create a work group to study the benefits, challenges and best practices surrounding accelerated degree programs. The Work Group reviewed the charge, membership and deliverables required in the budget proviso language. WSU shared information about their [program](#) for pre-pharmacy students and pre-veterinary medicine students that allows for a seven-year fast track B.S. Biochemistry – Pharm.D. program or B.S. Microbiology to DVM program. EWU also shared their effort, “[Finish in 3](#)”, which offers students the opportunity to finish their baccalaureate degree in three-years. The program currently offers eight degrees across the curriculum.

The Work Group also discussed the [presentation](#) by COP to the Senate Higher Education Committee in 2015 with regard to accelerated degree programs. COP shared background about the discussion of accelerated degree programs in recent years in the Legislature including the passage of [Senate Bill 5442](#).

Finally the Work Group shared their thoughts about what they would like to achieve through this work. Among the areas noted were the obstacles and challenges that are barriers to accelerated degree pathways; issues around financial aid and affordability; definition of full-time with regard to financial aid and tuition policies; an environmental scan of what the public baccalaureate sector is currently doing around accelerated degree pathways and what are the gaps; the need to recognize that accelerated degree pathways will meet some student’s educational goals but not all and how best to reconcile these pathways with the intention of some students to attain their degree on a traditional timeline; how do accelerated degree pathways align with the needs of adult learners and connect with prior learning experience and assessment; how do accelerated degree pathways align with dual credit programs; what is the role of student services and financial aid programs within accelerated degree pathways; what role do accelerated degree pathways play in meeting the goal of higher education institutions to graduate students in the areas that students want to pursue their degrees; how do institutions avoid creating parallel programs between existing degree pathways and accelerated degree pathways that may increase costs and allow for fewer resources and fewer students served; and how do accelerated degree pathways meet the needs of students whose educational goal is to pursue graduate and professional degrees.

Discussion of Deliverables

The Work Group reviewed the components of the required report to the Legislature on December 31, 2016. In addition, the Group finalized the Work Group timeline recognizing that as this work moves forward adjustments to the timeline may be necessary.

Structure and Membership

The Work Group considered additional membership and how to structure itself. Steve VanderStaay, Western Washington University, agreed to be Chair of the Work Group. Reflecting on the discussion regarding the scope of the work, the Work Group agreed to invite additional representatives to join this work including representatives from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the COP Interinstitutional Council of Legislative Officers (ICLO) as well as a baccalaureate representative on prior learning assessment and financial aid.

The Work Group agreed to meet monthly by conference call. Finally, COP will create a page on the Council's website to provide information to those interested about the Work Group including charge, membership and meetings.

Next Steps

- COP will invite a representative from SBCTC, ICLO, the PLA work group, and the financial aid directors to join the Work Group.
- COP will schedule the monthly meetings of the Work Group for September, October, November and December.
- In preparation for the July meeting focused on institutional best practices and the engagement of programs in other states COP will compile a review of best practices for accelerated degree programs and accelerated degree programs in other states to inform the discussion. In addition, COP will research the origins for the 180 quarter credit/120 semester credit requirement for a baccalaureate degree.