

House Bill 2973

Sponsored by Representative WHISNANT

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Establishes Affordable Baccalaureate Degree Act.
Requires public universities to offer two or more bachelor's degrees at cost of \$10,000 or less.
Establishes degree requirements.
Requires public universities to first offer low-cost degree programs for 2019-2020 academic year.
Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to degree programs at public universities; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. Sections 1 and 2 of this 2015 Act shall be known as the Affordable Baccalaureate Degree Act.

SECTION 2. (1) Each public university listed ORS 352.002 shall offer at least two low-cost bachelor's degrees.

(2) To qualify as a low-cost bachelor's degree under subsection (1) of this section, each degree must:

(a) Be offered at the lowest cost possible, not to exceed \$10,000. The \$10,000 limit must include four years' cost of:

(A) Tuition;

(B) All required student fees; and

(C) All books and other course materials required to complete the degree program.

(b) Meet the same educational and accreditation standards as other bachelor's degrees offered by the university and be capable of being approved by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission under ORS 351.047.

(3) Degree programs offering bachelor's degrees under subsection (1) of this section may utilize courses offered through the Internet, other Internet-based technology or educational methods such as massive open online courses (MOOCs).

SECTION 3. The low-cost bachelor's degree programs set forth in section 2 of this 2015 Act shall be first offered by public universities listed in ORS 352.002 at the start of the 2019-2020 academic year.

SECTION 4. This 2015 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2015 Act takes effect on its passage.

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.