

House Study Bill 533 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED COMMITTEE ON HIGHER
EDUCATION BILL BY CHAIRPERSON
COLLINS)

A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act authorizing community colleges to offer a degree program
- 2 that leads to a baccalaureate degree.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act shall be known and may be
2 cited as the "Removing Education Access Challenges in Higher
3 Education (REACH) Act".

4 Sec. 2. Section 260C.1, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
5 following new subsection:

6 NEW SUBSECTION. 13. Degree programs that lead to
7 baccalaureate degrees, as authorized in this chapter.

8 Sec. 3. Section 260C.2, subsection 3, Code 2026, is amended
9 to read as follows:

10 3. "*Community college*" means a publicly supported school
11 ~~which may offer~~ that does one or more of the following:

12 a. Offers programs of adult and continuing education,
13 lifelong learning, community education, and up to two years
14 of liberal arts, preprofessional, or occupational instruction
15 partially fulfilling the requirements for a baccalaureate degree
16 but confers no more than an associate degree; ~~or which offers,~~
17 except as provided in paragraph "c".

18 b. Offers as the whole or as part of the curriculum ~~up to two~~
19 years of career and technical education, training, or retraining
20 to persons who are preparing to enter the labor market.

21 c. Offers a degree program that leads to a baccalaureate
22 degree and that satisfies all of the following requirements:

23 (1) Consists of programs of study or academic majors that
24 lead to jobs that address a high-demand, sustained, and
25 unmet workforce need within the community college region, as
26 demonstrated by the current number of related job vacancies and
27 employer support for such programs of study or academic majors,
28 and as shown by the community college.

29 (2) The instruction provided in courses within the degree
30 program is not delivered entirely over the internet.

31 Sec. 4. Section 260C.4, Code 2026, is amended by adding the
32 following new subsection:

33 NEW SUBSECTION. 4. Adopt rules under chapter 17A prescribing
34 standards and procedures for the authorization and oversight of
35 baccalaureate degree programs offered by community colleges.

1 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

2 This bill authorizes community colleges to offer a degree
3 program that leads to a baccalaureate degree and that satisfies
4 all of the following requirements: the degree program consists
5 of programs of study or academic majors that lead to jobs
6 that address a high-demand, sustained, and unmet workforce need
7 within the community college region as shown by the community
8 college, and the instruction provided within the degree program
9 is not delivered entirely over the internet. Under current
10 law, community colleges may offer up to two years of liberal
11 arts, preprofessional, or occupational instruction that partially
12 fulfills the requirements for a baccalaureate degree but that
13 confers no more than an associate degree.

14 The bill requires the state board of education to adopt rules
15 prescribing standards and procedures for the authorization and
16 oversight of baccalaureate degree programs offered by community
17 colleges. The tuition for residents of Iowa for courses offered
18 as part of a baccalaureate degree program at a community college
19 shall not exceed 150 percent of the tuition charged to residents
20 of Iowa for traditional community college courses. The boards
21 of directors of community colleges are authorized to establish or
22 modify any policies, seek any accreditation, and employ any staff
23 necessary to offer a baccalaureate degree program.