



This Bill Analysis reflects the contents of the bill as it was presented in committee.

# SENATE BILL 315: Make Various Changes Regarding Higher Ed.

2017-2018 General Assembly

<b>Committee:</b>	House Education - Universities	<b>Date:</b>	June 15, 2017
<b>Introduced by:</b>	Sens. Barefoot, Curtis, Tarte	<b>Prepared by:</b>	Drupti Chauhan* Committee Counsel
<b>Analysis of:</b>	PCS to First Edition S315-CSRQ-11		

**OVERVIEW:** Senate Bill 315 directs the President of The University of North Carolina to implement The University of North Carolina Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan.

The Proposed Committee Substitute would also:

- Require development of an articulation agreement between The University of North Carolina and the Community College System in early childhood education programs.
- Direct the President of The University of North Carolina, or the President's designee, and the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina to consider and evaluate the feasibility of applying for and implementing the UTEACH program as part of the curricula offered by The University of North Carolina system.
- Allow the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina to set the expenditure benchmark for certain purchasing contracts for the President of The University of North Carolina to be the same as the maximum allowed for the constituent institutions.
- Change a reporting date for data on graduates of cooperative innovative high schools.

## PART I: UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE COMPLETION

**ANALYSIS:** The Proposed Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 315 directs the President of The University of North Carolina (President) to implement The University of North Carolina Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan that was submitted to the General Assembly in December, 2016. The Plan would be implemented beginning with the 2017-2018 academic year.

A copy of the report can be found at:

<http://www.ncleg.net/documents/sites/committees/JLEOC/Reports%20Received/2017%20Reports%20Received/Modify%20NCGAP-Improve%20Student%20Degree%20Completion%20Rates.pdf>

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This section would become effective when it becomes law.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2015, the General Assembly directed the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina (BOG) and the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC) to study and evaluate how a deferred admissions program, the North Carolina Guaranteed Admission Program (NC GAP), could improve graduation rates at the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and provide students with a college education at significantly lower costs for the students and the State. NC GAP would require students who satisfy the admissions criteria of a constituent institution but whose academic credentials are not as competitive as other admitted students, to first enroll in a community college and earn an associate's degree before enrolling in the constituent institution. Each constituent

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institution was to design a deferred admission program as a part of NC GAP for implementation at that institution beginning with the admissions process for the 2017-2018 academic year.

In 2016, the General Assembly made some revisions to its 2015 provision and directed the President, in consultation with the BOG, to adopt a plan to improve student completion of baccalaureate degrees that include specific targets for each constituent institution's completion rates. The plan could allow for a variety of strategies designed to best meet the needs of the individual constituent institutions including redesigned courses, early alert systems, and tutoring. This resulted in The University of North Carolina Undergraduate Degree Completion Improvement Plan which is to be implemented by this bill. Any constituent institution that does not implement the requirements of the Plan would have to implement NC GAP and a deferred admissions program.

## **PART II: EARLY EDUCATION ARTICULATION AGREEMENT**

**ANALYSIS:** By March 1, 2018, the BOG and the SBCC would be required to develop an articulation agreement for transfer of credits earned for an early childhood education program associate degree toward an early childhood education program baccalaureate degree. The articulation agreement would apply to all community college campuses and constituent institutions with early childhood education programs, and could include requirements for minimum grade point averages and minimum Praxis I scores for transferring students.

By April 15, 2018, the BOG and SBCC would be required to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the development of the systemwide articulation agreement and plan for implementation. The systemwide articulation agreement would apply beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This section would become effective when it becomes law.

## **PART III: UNC/UTEACH PROGRAM**

**ANALYSIS:** The President, or the President's designee, and the BOG would be directed to consider and evaluate the feasibility of applying for and implementing the UTEACH program as part of the curricula offered by The University of North Carolina system. UTEACH is a model program originally developed by the University of Texas at Austin that allows students to obtain the necessary requirements for a secondary teaching license at the same time as earning a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degree.

The President and BOG must consider a detailed list of factors in their evaluation, such as potential cost and which institutions would participate. A report of their findings and recommendations would be required to be submitted to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by April 1, 2018.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This section would be effective when it becomes law.

## **PART IV: UNC EXPENDITURE BENCHMARKS**

**CURRENT LAW:** The BOG has the authority to set the expenditure benchmark for special responsibility constituent institutions at an amount no greater than \$500,000 for certain purchasing contracts so they do not have to be purchased through the State Purchasing Office. The BOG also has the authority to set the benchmark at different amounts for the different constituent institutions. In setting the benchmarks, the BOG must consider the institution's overall capacity including staff resources, purchasing compliance reviews, and audit reports. For those constituent institutions with expenditure benchmarks of greater than \$250,000, they must submit to the Division of Purchase and Contract for approval a copy of all offers received and the institution's recommendation of action. Notice of the

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Division's decision is sent back to the constituent institution with the institution proceeding with the action recommended by the Division.

**ANALYSIS:** The BOG would be allowed to set the expenditure benchmark for the President at an amount no greater than \$500,000. The BOG would be able to change the benchmark from time to time and must consider the capacity of the President including staff resources, purchasing compliance reviews, and audit reports. If the President is given an expenditure benchmark of greater than \$250,000, then the President must follow the same requirements as those followed by the constituent institutions currently with that authority including submitting offers to the Division of Purchase and Contract.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This section would become effective when it becomes law.

## **PART V: REPORTING DATE CHANGE**

**CURRENT LAW:** The 2015 Appropriations Act directed the BOG to report annually beginning March 1, 2017 to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the numbers of students who graduated from a cooperative innovative high school program with an associate degree and whether the students applied as freshmen or transfer students.

**ANALYSIS:** the annual reporting date of this report would be changed to September 30 beginning with September 30, 2017.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This section would become effective when it becomes law.

*\*Kara McCraw and Brian Gwyn, Committee Counsel, significantly contributed to this summary.*