
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1696 Session of
2013

INTRODUCED BY GAINNEY, MILLARD, YOUNGBLOOD, MCNEILL, O'BRIEN,
HAGGERTY, BOBACK, READSHAW, CALTAGIRONE, GOODMAN, DEASY,
SWANGER, FRANKEL, COHEN, MOLCHANY, KORTZ, GABLER, KINSEY AND
SCHREIBER, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, SEPTEMBER 24, 2013

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, providing for course scheduling for
3 military students.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Title 51 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated
7 Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

8 CHAPTER 97

9 COURSE SCHEDULING FOR MILITARY STUDENTS

10 Sec.

11 9701. Scope.

12 9702. Definitions.

13 9703. Priority scheduling for military students.

14 9704. Duties of department and public institutions of higher
15 education.

16 9705. Expiration.

17 § 9701. Scope.

1 This chapter relates to a course scheduling preference for
2 military students who are enrolled in public institutions of
3 higher education to obtain a bachelor's or an associate's
4 degree.

5 § 9702. Definitions.

6 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter
7 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
8 context clearly indicates otherwise:

9 "Active duty military service member." An individual who is
10 an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States
11 or the National Guard or any other reserve component of the
12 armed forces of the United States.

13 "Department." The Department of Education of the
14 Commonwealth.

15 "Distance education." A traditional or nontraditional path
16 in which a student is enrolled in an approved online education
17 program at a public institution of higher education.

18 "Nontraditional student." Any undergraduate student over 21
19 years of age who has a family and work responsibilities or other
20 life circumstances that may interfere with successful completion
21 of educational objectives.

22 "Public institution of higher education." A community
23 college, State-related institution or a member institution of
24 the State System of Higher Education.

25 "Military student." An individual who meets all of the
26 following:

27 (1) Is an active duty military service member or a
28 veteran.

29 (2) Has been admitted to a public institution of higher
30 education.

1 (3) Resides in this Commonwealth while enrolled in the
2 public institution of higher education.

3 (4) Is in his or her final year at the public
4 institution of higher education and is working toward a
5 bachelor's or an associate's degree.

6 "Traditional student." A financially dependent student
7 matriculating from high school to college who pursues college
8 studies on a continuous full-time basis and completes a
9 bachelor's degree program in four or five years.

10 "Veteran." An individual who meets all of the following:

11 (1) Has served in the armed forces of the United States
12 or the National Guard or any other reserve component.

13 (2) Was discharged or released from such service under
14 any conditions other than dishonorable.

15 § 9703. Priority scheduling for military students.

16 (a) General rule.--Within 90 days of the effective date of
17 this section, a public institution of higher education shall
18 provide a scheduling preference to military students to obtain a
19 bachelor's or associate's degree over a traditional,
20 nontraditional or part-time student taking classes on-campus or
21 through distance education.

22 (b) Exception.--If a professor offers to open enrollment in
23 a class to add a military student, a public institution of
24 higher education does not need to offer priority scheduling to
25 the military student.

26 (c) Existing policies.--If on the effective date of this
27 section a public institution of higher education has established
28 and implemented a policy relating to preference in course
29 scheduling that includes military students and the policy
30 complies with this chapter, the public institution of higher

1 education shall not be required to establish and implement a new
2 policy under the provisions of this chapter.

3 § 9704. Duties of department and public institutions of higher
4 education.

5 (a) Duties of department.--The department shall have the
6 following duties:

7 (1) Promulgate regulations to administer this chapter.

8 (2) Create a one-page form for public institutions of
9 higher education to access and input information required by
10 the department through the department's Internet website.

11 (3) Share reporting information with the department's
12 Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education, Division of
13 Veterans and Military Education.

14 (4) Share reporting information with the Veterans
15 Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the Senate,
16 the Education Committee of the Senate, the Veterans Affairs
17 and Emergency Preparedness Committee of the House of
18 Representatives and the Education Committee of the House of
19 Representatives.

20 (b) Duties of public institutions of higher
21 education.--Public institutions of higher education shall have
22 the following duties:

23 (1) Provide the department with information relating to
24 an existing priority scheduling policy or a new priority
25 scheduling policy.

26 (2) Provide the department with information relating to
27 the number of military students taking senior-level courses
28 to obtain bachelor's or associate's degrees.

29 (3) Provide the department with information relating to
30 the number of traditional, nontraditional or distance

1 education students affected by priority scheduling under this
2 chapter.

3 § 9705. Expiration.

4 This chapter shall expire December 31, 2018.

5 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 90 days.