

HOUSE BILL No. 2318

By Representatives Claeys and Whipple

2-11

1 AN ACT concerning education; relating to establishing a Kansas nonprofit
2 online university in partnership with western governors university.

3
4 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

5 Section 1. For purposes of section 1 through 3, and amendments
6 thereto:

7 (a) "Competency" means a demonstrable acquisition of a specified
8 knowledge, skill, or ability that has been organized into a hierarchical
9 arrangement leading to higher levels of knowledge, skill, or ability.

10 (b) "Competency-based education" means an education approach that
11 requires a student to acquire a competency and includes a class structure
12 and operation that aid and facilitate the acquisition of specified
13 competencies on an individual basis wherein a student is allowed to master
14 and demonstrate competencies as fast as the student is able.

15 (c) "Online" means "distance education" as defined in K.S.A. 2014
16 Supp. 74-32,163, and amendments thereto, or as defined in K.S.A. 2014
17 Supp. 74-32,194, and amendments thereto, as applicable.

18 Sec. 2. (a) The legislature finds higher education is paramount to the
19 next generation of high wage jobs in Kansas and jobs requiring
20 postsecondary education are on the rise in our state. The legislature further
21 finds that increasing the number of college graduates in Kansas will
22 further meet the needs of employers and that achieving that goal demands
23 innovative institutions and education delivery systems.

24 (b) The legislature encourages western governors university, a
25 regionally and nationally accredited nonprofit and independent university,
26 to establish western governors university – Kansas. Western governors
27 university – Kansas would offer online, competency-based degrees and
28 provide enhanced access to postsecondary education to Kansas students.
29 The legislature further intends that western governors university – Kansas,
30 upon meeting the requirements of Kansas law, shall be recognized as a
31 Kansas baccalaureate degree-granting institution that is self-supporting
32 and does not receive state funding.

33 (c) It is the intent of the legislature that the Kansas board of regents,
34 the advisory commission on private and out-of-state postsecondary
35 educational institutions established pursuant to K.S.A. 2014 Supp. 74-
36 32,166, and amendments thereto, and other institutions of higher education

1 in Kansas include western governors university – Kansas in policies and
2 agreements regarding the efficient transfer of credits and courses between
3 institutions.

4 Sec. 3. (a) The state board of regents and the advisory commission on
5 private and out-of-state postsecondary educational institutions shall:

6 (1) Recognize, endorse and work to support online, competency-
7 based education of high quality as an important component of the Kansas
8 higher education system;

9 (2) work to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the delivery of online
10 competency-based education by western governors university – Kansas;
11 and

12 (3) work with western governors university – Kansas to integrate its
13 academic programs and services into Kansas higher education policy and
14 strategy, as appropriate under the provisions of Kansas law.

15 (b) The state board of regents shall work with western governors
16 university – Kansas to create data-sharing processes to assess the
17 performance of western governors university – Kansas and determine the
18 extent to which it assists the state in achieving state goals for higher
19 education.

20 (c) The state board of regents shall adopt rules and regulations to
21 implement sections 1 through 3, and amendments thereto

22 (d) Consultation and approval of the state board of regents is required
23 before:

24 (1) Modifications of contractual terms or relationships between the
25 state and western governors university or western governors university –
26 Kansas; or

27 (2) changes or modifications in the nonprofit status of western
28 governors university – Kansas.

29 Sec. 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
30 publication in the statute book.