

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



PA 22-16—sSB 18

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee

AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS REVISIONS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STATUTES

SUMMARY: This act requires public Connecticut higher education institutions' governing boards to adopt a policy requiring newly appointed governing board members to complete specified training within a year after their appointment or election to the board. The act establishes the required instruction and training topics, which include financial, legal, ethical, and institutional operation training topics, among others. By January 1, 2023, each institution must post on its website its training policy and a summary of the instruction and training board members received.

Additionally, the act requires the Board of Regents for Higher Education (BOR) to make the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities' (CSCU) central office a separate line item in BOR's consolidated operating budget. It also makes several conforming and technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2022

§ 1 — GOVERNING BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

The act requires BOR and the UConn Board of Trustees (BOT) to each adopt a policy by January 1, 2023, that requires newly appointed governing board members to receive instruction and training on the topics listed in the table below within the first year of their appointment or election.

Training Topics for New BOR and UConn BOT Members

<i>Board Operations and Member Duties</i>
A board member's duties to the state and the institution
Each board committee and its functions, including the executive committee
<i>Financial Matters</i>
Professional accounting and reporting standards
Business operations, administration, budgeting, financing, financial reporting, financial reserves, and endowment management for higher education institutions
Institutional advancement, including philanthropic giving, and fundraising initiatives
<i>Legal and Ethical Matters</i>
Methods for meeting the board's statutory, regulatory, and fiduciary obligations
State Freedom of Information Act
A board member's institutional and statutory ethical responsibilities
<i>Institutional Operations</i>
Development and implementation of institutional policies

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Oversight of planning, construction, maintenance, expansion, and renovation projects that impact the institution's infrastructure, physical facilities, and natural environment
Workforce planning, strategy, and investment
Alumni programming, communications and media, government and public relations, and community affairs
Student Issues
Tuition, mandatory fees, and student debt trends
Student welfare issues, including academic studies, curriculum, residence life, student governance and activities, and general physical and mental well-being
General Higher Education Issues
Current and anticipated higher education issues
Other topics each governing board determines necessary

§§ 2-5 — BOR BUDGETING PROCESS

The act requires BOR to make the CSCU central office a separate line item in the consolidated operating budget request that it submits to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) (see BACKGROUND). The law already requires BOR to itemize its budget by the Connecticut State University System, regional community-technical college system, and Charter Oak State College. Additionally, the act conforms law to practice by requiring BOR to include any tuition increase proposed by Charter Oak State College for the fiscal year covered by the budget in the consolidated higher education budget that it submits to OPM.

The act also allows BOR to apply allotment reductions (i.e., rescissions) to the CSCU central office without regard to statutory limitations after consulting with the OPM secretary, just as existing law permits the board to do for the public colleges and universities under its jurisdiction. However, the act maintains the requirement that the statutory limitations apply to the total of the amounts appropriated.

BACKGROUND

BOR Budget Preparation

By law, BOR must develop either a formula- or program-based budgeting system for each institution under its oversight to use when preparing operating budgets. Each institution's request must contain a proposed expenditure plan that includes the (1) total appropriation requested from the legislature, (2) amount to be appropriated from the General Fund, and (3) amount to be paid from tuition revenues. After reviewing and commenting on the institutions' proposed expenditure plans, BOR incorporates them into a single budget request containing any proposed tuition increases and submits it to the OPM secretary. The single request is itemized by the state university system, regional community-technical college system, and Charter Oak State College (CGS § 10a-8(a)).