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A-2911 was approved as P.L.2009, c.197 on January 14, 2010.

“New Jersey College Student and Parent Consumer Information Act”; requires each four-year public institution of higher education to provide on its website certain information regarding its costs, faculty, and graduation rates.

This bill will maximize the awareness of students and their families of the costs associated with enrollment in the institution, the institution’s success in ensuring the graduation of its students, and the composition of the teaching faculty that a student will encounter in his coursework. Under the bill, each four-year public institution of higher education in the State is required to provide on its website comprehensive information on the cost of attendance, the graduation rates of admitted students, and the faculty of the institution. Such information must be updated annually. The institution must also provide with all paper applications for admission to the institution a hard copy of the information prepared under the bill for the website.

Specifically,

- (1) overall four-year and six-year graduation rates;
- (2) four-year and six-year graduation rates by demographic group;
- (3) four-year and six-year graduation rates by major;
- (4) four-year and six-year graduation rates for student-athletes;
- (5) the student transfer rate;
- (6) an overview of the institutions to which former students of that college or university have transferred prior to the completion of a degree;
- (7) the cost for the current academic year of attending the institution including tuition, student fees, room and board, and books and materials;
- (8) a description of the types of financial assistance offered directly by the institution to both student-athletes and to students who do not participate in athletic programs at the institution;
- (9) the percent of student-athletes who receive financial assistance directly from the institution and the average value of the assistance and the percent of students who do not participate in athletic programs at the institution who receive financial assistance directly from the institution and the average value of the assistance;

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(10) the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to live on campus and complete a degree in four years and the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to commute to school and complete a degree in four years;

(11) the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to live on campus and complete a degree in six years and the total projected cost for an incoming freshman to commute to school and complete a degree in six years;

(12) average student loan indebtedness of four-year graduates for both students who live on campus and students who commute;

(13) average student loan indebtedness of six-year graduates for both students who live on campus and students who commute;

(14) average student loan indebtedness of a student who withdraws from the institution prior to the completion of a degree program for both students who live on campus and students who commute;

(15) an overview of the institution's faculty, including the percentage of faculty employed as a tenured professor, the percentage of faculty employed as a full-time non-tenured professor, and the percentage of faculty employed as an adjunct or visiting professor;

(16) the percentage of courses taught by each of the different categories of faculty; and

(17) an indicator of each academic department's capacity to serve the students majoring within that department's programs, as determined by the Commission on Higher Education.

The bill requires each four-year public institution of higher education to:

(1) conform to the guidelines, criteria, and format prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education in reporting the required information;

(2) submit its student consumer information report to the Commission on Higher Education for inclusion in a comparative profile of the student consumer information reports of all four-year public institutions of higher education;

(3) ensure that the page of its Internet site which includes its student consumer information report contains a link to the comparative profile of student consumer information reports on the Commission on Higher Education's Internet site;

(4) ensure that the Internet site for submitting an online application to the institution contains a link to the institution's student consumer information report; and

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(5) require the parent or guardian of a student applying for admission into the institution, or the student if he is an independent adult, to sign and submit a statement acknowledging that he has reviewed the institution's student consumer information report.

The bill directs the Commission on Higher Education to issue guidelines and criteria for collecting and calculating the information required to be reported under the bill. The commission is further directed to prescribe a uniform reporting method for the posting of the information. The bill also directs the commission to compile a comparative profile of the student consumer information reports of the four-year public institutions of higher education and to present the profile on its website in a manner that allows college students and their families to easily compare student consumer information across institutions.