

ENGROSSED HOUSE
CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 1045

By: Braddock and Deutschendorf
of the House

and

Robinson of the Senate

A Concurrent Resolution relating to virtual universities and online education; creating the Virtual University Task Force; stating purpose of Task Force; providing for study of certain issues; requiring report; stating membership; providing for meetings, appointment of a chair, staffing, and travel reimbursement; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, technology is fast becoming the means of providing quality higher education to students in the state; and

WHEREAS, Internet-based or online education is quickly becoming a way for institutions of higher education to expand learning opportunities and to offer courses to more students in a nontraditional way; and

WHEREAS, online courses can not only enhance traditional higher education, but also can provide higher education opportunities to working adults and others who do not have the time or ability to visit traditional campuses; and

WHEREAS, in the last few years the concept of a virtual university has become reality with the development of Jones International University, the first accredited purely online institution, and the Western Governors University, an online learning venture which is seeking accreditation; and

WHEREAS, institutions of higher education in Oklahoma are actively pursuing online learning by participating in the Western Governors University, providing online courses, and developing laptop computer schools; and

WHEREAS, because online education is fast becoming an integral part of higher education it is imperative that both the positive and negative aspects of this means of educating students be monitored and studied.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 1ST SESSION OF THE 47TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN:

THAT there is hereby created the Virtual University Task Force. The purpose of the Task Force shall be to work with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to study the virtual university concept and the offering of online courses by higher education institutions in the state and to collaborate with the Regents to make recommendations on the development of actions and policies that are needed to ensure the effectiveness and quality of online education.

THAT the study shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A review of the Western Governors University, including the level of participation by Oklahoma higher education institutions and Oklahoma students;
2. A review of the development of virtual universities and online education in other states;
3. A survey of the type and number of courses currently being offered online by higher education institutions in the state;
4. An evaluation of administrative challenges for online education, including library database resources, maintenance and transfer of student records, and transfer of course credit; and
5. An evaluation of academic challenges for online education including the role of faculty, measuring the effectiveness of online education, ensuring a certain level of rigor in the program, and maintaining interaction between the student and teacher.

THAT the Task Force shall collaborate with the Regents who shall issue a report of the findings and recommendations to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate by February 1, 2000.

THAT the Task Force shall include the following members:

1. Two members of the House of Representatives to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

2. Two members of the Senate to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;

3. The Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education or a designee;

4. The Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education or a designee;

5. The Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education or a designee;

6. The Secretary of Education or a designee; and

7. One representative from each of the following institutions who are involved or knowledgeable in online or distance education:

- a. University of Oklahoma,
- b. Oklahoma State University,
- c. University of Central Oklahoma,
- d. Southeastern Oklahoma State University,
- e. Northwestern Oklahoma State University,
- f. Rogers State University,
- g. Cameron University,
- h. Western Oklahoma State College,
- i. Tulsa Community College,
- j. Northern Oklahoma College, and
- k. St. Gregory's University.

THAT the first meeting of the Task Force shall be no later than September 15, 1999. The chair of the Task Force shall be selected by agreement of the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the

President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The Task Force shall meet at such times and places as deemed necessary to perform its duties as specified in this resolution. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chair. Staffing for the Task Force shall be provided by the legislative staff of the House of Representatives and the Senate. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall provide such staff support as is required by the Task Force.

THAT the members of the Task Force shall receive no compensation for serving on the Task Force, but shall receive travel reimbursement as follows:

1. Legislative members of the Task Force shall be reimbursed for their necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties in accordance with Section 456 of Title 74 of the Oklahoma Statutes from the legislative body which they serve; and

2. Members of the Task Force who are officers or employees of the state shall be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred in the performance of their duties by their respective agencies or institutions in accordance with the State Travel Reimbursement Act.

THAT copies of this resolution be distributed to the Chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, the Director of OneNet, the Secretary of Education, and the Presidents of the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, the University of Central Oklahoma, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Rogers State University, Cameron University, Western Oklahoma State College, Tulsa Community College, Northern Oklahoma College, and St. Gregory's University.

Adopted by the House of Representatives the 13th day of May,
1999.

Speaker of the House of
Representatives

Adopted by the Senate the ____ day of _____, 1999.

President of the Senate