

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill No:** HB 189

**48th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2008**

**Short Title:** WNMU Internet-Based Teacher Program

**Sponsor(s):** Representative Dianne Miller Hamilton and Others

**Analyst:** Peter van Moorsel

**Date:** January 22, 2008

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**Bill Summary:**

HB 189 appropriates funds to the Board of Regents at Western New Mexico University (WNMU) to expand the WNMU teacher preparation program.

**Fiscal Impact:**

\$388,600 is appropriated from the General Fund for expenditure in FY 09. The bill contains a reversion clause.

Since FY 06, the WNMU Web-Based Teacher Licensure program has been funded a total of \$991,000, including:

- \$213,800 for FY 06,
- \$388,600 for FY 07; and
- \$388,600 for FY 08.

According to the Higher Education Department (HED) bill analysis, funding request was submitted by WNMU to the New Mexico HED for review and is included in the department's funding recommendation for FY09.

**Issues:**

Web-based teacher preparation was begun at WNMU in school year 2004-2005. WNMU offers undergraduate and alternative teacher preparation courses leading to licensure in elementary, secondary, special education, and career and technology teacher education. The program increases access and availability to undergraduate and graduate students who cannot easily travel to Silver City or Gallup for teacher preparation coursework. According to HED, part of the overarching mission of WNMU is to provide services to outlying, rural communities; and the university's online course and program offerings make this mission particularly attainable.

According to HED, the funds would enable WNMU to expand the selection of both graduate- and undergraduate-level courses and programs offered online. In addition, the funds would enable WNMU to hire one additional IT-support employee within the WNMU School of Education.

When fully implemented, IDEAL-NM (Innovative Digital Education and Learning-NM) could be utilized to supply web-based teacher preparation program courses statewide. However, the current phase of the implementation of IDEAL-NM and the Statewide Cyber Academy focuses on K-12 education. Higher education support will be implemented in a later phase of the project.

**Related Bills:**

None