OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Quick Look:

This document includes: Background Information, Quick Facts and Additional Resources about PCB EDC 12-02 sponsored by the House Education Committee.

Quick Facts:

$184.36/credit hour: Average in-state tuition for a SUS student (2010-11)

321,000: Approximate number of SUS students (2010-11)

47,000: Approximate number of SUS students who participate in the Prepaid Tuition Program (2009)

120,700: Approximate number of SUS students receiving Bright Futures Scholarships (2009)

3/2/2012

OPI Pulse: House Bill 7129/State Universities of Academic and Research Excellence and National Preeminence

Update: The Florida House of Representatives passed House Bill 7129 on Friday, March 2, 2012 with a vote of 85 to 28. The Bill will be sent to the Senate for substitution of the identical Senate Bill 1752.

Background:

In January 2012, each of Florida's 11 state university presidents were invited to the Florida House of Representatives to participate in a conversation with members of the House Education Committee regarding ideas to facilitate institutional and systematic excellence. As part of these conversations, representatives from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) were asked to present on the performance of the State University System of Florida (SUS) as a whole and individual SUS institutions based on widely-used performance measures. The data presented indicates Florida's existing system and its institutions have demonstrated a capacity for success in specific performance measures, however the SUS lags behind fellow SREB states and the nation in other performance measures. A summary of the data presented is below:

- The SUS has demonstrated success in its capacity to produce graduates. Data show SUS institutions graduate 60 percent of their students within six years, as compared with other states in the southern region which graduate an average of 53 percent of students in the same time period. The national average for the six year graduation rate is 56 percent.
- The entire SUS has 36 National Academy members. Comparatively, the University of California, Berkeley alone has 219 National Academy members. The National Academies consist of the Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine as well as the National Research Council. Academy members are elected to this prestigious honor in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research.
- The entire SUS has 290 National Merit winners. The University of Texas at Austin alone has 249 National Merit winners. National Merit winners are high school students who are selected to this prestigious honor based on their academic records, curriculum, PSAT scores, recommendation letters, amount of student activity and leadership, as well as a written essay.
- In regards to university-level research within the SUS, the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching classifies four Florida institutions as having very high research activity (University of Florida, Florida State University, University of South Florida, University of Central Florida), two institutions as having high research activity (Florida International University, Florida Atlantic University), two institutions as doctoral/research universities (Florida Agricultural and Manufacturing University, University of West Florida), two institutions as master's colleges and universities

For Your Reference:

National Academies

National Merit Scholars

Association of American Universities

(University of North Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University) and one institution as a baccalaureate college of arts and science (New College of Florida).

- The SUS has one member institution (University of Florida) in the Association of American Universities (AAU) while the University of California system has six and the Texas university system has two. The AAU is an association of leading comprehensive research universities distinguished by the breadth and quality of their research programs and graduation education.
- In a national comparison of total research expenditures, the University of Florida ranks 13th, the University of South Florida ranks 39th, Florida State University ranks 65th, the University of Central Florida ranks 92nd, Florida International University ranks 99th, Florida Atlantic University ranks 143rd, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University ranks 176th, the University of West Florida ranks 266th, Florida Gulf Coast University ranks 279th, and the University of North Florida ranks 283rd.
- As of the 2009-2010 school year, the average annual tuition and required fees for students in the SUS was $4,400. Average tuition rates for the Southern region and the nation were $5,700 and $6,300 respectively.
- The average in-state tuition and fees for Florida's 11 universities ranks Florida 45th nationally in overall tuition and fees.

In Florida, the Legislature, individual institutional boards of trustees and the Board of Governors all have a role in setting SUS tuition and fee rates. Currently, the Florida Legislature establishes undergraduate tuition rates. The board of trustees at each SUS institution sets graduate and professional tuition rates, which are ultimately subject to approval by the Board of Governors. The board of trustees at each institution may also administer additional fees such as an activity and service fee, a health fee, athletic fee, and tuition differential fee . The Legislature establishes the Capital Improvement Trust Fund fee, student financial aid fee and distance learning course fee.

Following the presentation of this information, each president was invited to offer input relating to policy changes that would better serve his or her specific university and the State University System of Florida as a whole. The presidents and House Members discussed institutional missions, research and accountability, as well as efficiency, effectiveness, faculty performance and cost controls, and how to maximize the use of state and student investments.

Issues at a Glance:

The State Universities of Academic and Research Excellence and National Preeminence Act was introduced in the House Education Committee. The Act proposes to recognize and reward the success of Florida's universities while incentivizing performance. Proponents express the following reasons for the bill:

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

State University System of Florida Institutions:

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

Florida Gulf Coast University

Florida State University

University of Central Florida

University of North Florida

University of West Florida

Florida Atlantic University

Florida International University

New College of Florida

University of Florida

University of South Florida

- Proponents state the continued growth of both academic and research achievement among SUS institutions is vital to the system's future success.
- Proponents believe recognizing the overall level of academic and research achievement among the highest performing research universities in Florida will enable these institutions to compete with top ranked public universities across the nation.
- Proponents believe growth in the academic and research achievement of SUS institutions will attract the best and brightest high school students from both inside the state of Florida and beyond.

What the Bill Does:

The State Universities of Academic and Research Excellence and National Preeminence Act establishes 14 academic and research excellence standards and a process by which qualifying universities (those that meet 11 of the 14 standards) would have the authority to establish differential student tuition and fees at market rates after meeting specified criteria. The bill requires that the Board of Governors and the Legislature form a collaborative partnership in order to carry out the mission of the Act. The bill would allow any state research university that overwhelmingly meets 11 of 14 academic and research standards to:

- Establish student tuition and fees rates as approved by the State University System of Florida Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors; and
- Raise tuition and fees once each academic year beginning with the fall term; and
- Require its incoming first-time-in-college students to take at that university, a 9-12 credit set of courses specifically determined by that university.

In addition, the bill requires a state research university that substantially meets the requirements of the bill to:

- Submit a tuition and fee rate proposal to the Board of Governors detailing the requested budget authority in the Education and General Student and Other Fees Trust Fund needed to implement the new tuition and fee structure; and
- Maintain fees at an appropriate level to meet all debt obligations of that university.

Frequently Asked Questions: Academic and Research Excellence and National Preeminence

Is a Prepaid Tuition Program beneficiary exempt from the payment of any increases in tuition and fees if they enter into the Prepaid contract prior to a university receiving the authority to raise tuition and fees?

Yes, if an advance payment contract for a student benefitting from the Prepaid Program predates the first year the university receives the authority to raise tuition and fees, and the contract remains in effect.

Representative John Legg
Speaker pro tempore
Office of Public Information
850.921.7747
PublicInfo@myfloridahouse.gov

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

Additional Resources:

OPI Pulse: The State University System of Florida

Florida Board of Governors

Florida House Education Committee

Florida House K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee

Florida House K-20 Innovation Subcommittee

What if a Prepaid Tuition Program beneficiary enters into the Prepaid advance payment contract in the first year a university receives the authority to raise tuition and fees, or in the years thereafter?

In this case, the student must pay the difference between the highest rate of tuition and fees covered by the advance payment, and the tuition and fees assessed by that university.

Can an incoming first-time-in-college student use Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), Dual Enrollment, College Level Examination Program (CLEP), or any other high school courses to earn credit toward the 9-12 credit set of courses required by universities recognized under this designation?

No. Credits toward the 9-12 credit set of courses must be earned at the university. Credits toward such courses may not be earned through acceleration mechanisms or through articulation.

What are the 14 academic and research standards listed in the bill?

- An average weighted grade point average of 3.8 or higher on a 4.0 scale and an average SAT score of 1800 or higher for fall semester incoming freshman, as reported annually
- A top 50 ranking on at least two well-known and highly respected national public university rankings, reflecting national preeminence, using most recent rankings
- A freshman retention rate of 90 percent or higher for full-time first-time-in-college students reported annually
- A six year graduation rate of 70 percent or higher for full-time first-time-in-college students reported annually
- Six or more faculty members at the state university who are members of a national academy reported annually
- Total annual research expenditures, including federal research expenditures, of $200 million or more reported annually
- Total annual research expenditures in diversified nonmedical sciences of $100 million or more reported annually
- A top 100 university national ranking for research expenditures in five or more science, technology, engineering, or mathematics fields of study reported annually
- One hundred or more total patents awarded for the most recent 3-year period
- Two hundred fifty or more doctoral degrees awarded annually
- Two hundred or more post-doctoral appointed annually
- A national ranking in quality better than predicted by available financial resources reported annually
- An endowment of $400 million or more reported annually
- Annual giving of $50 million or more reported annually

Representative John Legg
Speaker pro tempore
Office of Public Information
850.921.7747
PublicInfo@myfloridahouse.gov