

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Higher Education Committee

BILL: SB 1606

INTRODUCER: Senator Bennett

SUBJECT: Postsecondary Education Study Committee

DATE: February 8, 2012

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Harkey	deMarsh-Mathues	HE	Favorable
2.			BC	
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

The bill creates the Postsecondary Education Study Committee for the purpose of evaluating and determining whether state university branch campuses should be combined with Florida College System (FCS) campuses to create a three-level postsecondary education system in the state. Members are appointed by the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives. Members must serve without compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expense. The Committee must prepare and submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature by January 1, 2013. The law creating the committee will expire on January 1, 2013.

This bill creates one unnumbered section of law.

II. Present Situation:

Florida's Public Postsecondary Institutions

Florida's public postsecondary education system could be said to have two tiers, though they are not described as such in the laws that create them. The 28 Florida College System institutions and the county areas they serve are established in s. 1000.21, F.S. The purpose of the Florida college system institutions is to maximize open access for students, respond to community needs for postsecondary academic education and career degree education, and provide associate and baccalaureate degrees that will best meet the state's employment needs.¹ The colleges are required to deliver the associate and baccalaureate degrees that they provide in a cost-effective manner that demonstrates substantial savings to the student and to the state over the cost of

¹ s. 1001.60(1), F.S.

providing the degree at a state university.² The 11 institutions of the State University System, including 10 universities and one college, provide baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees. Because FCS institutions and state universities are located in all the major geographic regions of the state, an FCS institution campus and a state university campus are often located in close proximity to each other.

FCS institutions and state universities are administered by institutional boards of trustees. The FCS institutions are governed by rules of the State Board of Education. Under the State Constitution, state universities are governed by the Board of Governors.³

While the bill refers to university branch campuses, as university campuses away from the main campus commonly are called, the Board of Governors (BOG) does not use the term "branch campus," but, rather, "additional campus," in order to avoid conflict with the definition used by the regional accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. BOG Regulation 8.009, Educational Sites,⁴ defines and provides processes for establishing, reclassifying, relocating, and closing educational sites. The regulation defines an additional campus as one that has received separate regional accreditation; is defined as an instructional and administrative unit of a university, apart from the main campus, that primarily offers students upper-division undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as a wide range of administrative and student support services appropriate for the number of student FTE served; and reflects a relatively permanent commitment by a university for the foreseeable future, not an occasional, time-limited, or transitory activity, in facilities which are university-owned, university-leased, or jointly used with another public institution. According to the BOG, as of June 2010, there were 16 additional campuses in the state university system.⁵

Three types of additional campuses are defined in the regulation, each providing a range of enrollment to assist in determination of the appropriate classification as follows:

- A Type I Campus is defined as a university operation that has obtained and continues to maintain an enrollment level of more than 2,000 university student FTE in courses which lead to a college degree. A Type I Campus typically provides a broad range of instruction for numerous full and partial degree programs, research activity, and an extensive complement of student services.
- A Type II Campus is defined as a university operation that has obtained and continues to maintain an enrollment level of 1,000 to 2,000 university student FTE in courses which lead to a college degree. A Type II Campus typically provides a moderate range of instruction for full and partial degree programs, limited research activity, and a moderate complement of student services.
- A Type III Campus is defined as a university operation that has obtained and continues to maintain an enrollment level of at least 300 but less than 1,000 university student FTE. The Board may, within its discretion, require an operation with less than 300 FTE to be presented to the Board for approval if the operation otherwise meets the remaining criteria in sub-paragraph (1)(b)3. of BOG Regulation 8.009. A Type III Campus typically

² s. 1001.60(2)(a), F.S.

³ Fla. Const., art IX, s. 7.

⁴ Readable at: http://www.flbog.edu/documents_regulations/regulations/8_009_2011_11_10_FINAL.pdf

⁵ BOG staff e-mail communication, February 7, 2012, on file with the committee.

provides a limited range of instruction for full and partial degree programs, limited research activity, and a limited complement of student services.

The Higher Education Coordinating Council

The Higher Education Coordinating Council⁶ was created by the 2010 Legislature to serve as an advisory board to the Legislature, State Board of Education, and the Board of Governors and to make recommendations consistent with the following guiding principles:

- To achieve within existing resources a seamless academic educational system that fosters an integrated continuum of kindergarten through graduate school education for Florida's students;
- To promote consistent education policy across all educational delivery systems, focusing on students;
- To promote substantially improved articulation across all educational delivery systems;
- To promote a system that maximizes educational access and allows the opportunity for a high-quality education for all Floridians; and
- To promote a system of coordinated and consistent transfer of credit and data collection for improved accountability purposes between the educational delivery systems.

Members of the council represent both public and private postsecondary education sectors. While the council's charge is somewhat related to the purpose of this bill, the council is not charged with addressing the possible combination of campuses or the creation of a three-tiered system.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill creates the Postsecondary Education Study Committee for the purpose of evaluating and determining whether state university branch campuses should be combined with Florida College System (FCS) campuses to create a three-level postsecondary education system in the state.

Committee members are appointed by the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives. Members must serve without compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for per diem and travel expense. The committee must prepare and submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature by January 1, 2013.

The law creating the committee will expire on January 1, 2013.

There is no provision for administrative support or staffing for the Postsecondary Education Study Committee.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

⁶ 1004.015 F.S.,

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

There will be costs associated with the reimbursement of per diem and travel expenses incurred by Committee members; however, the bill does not indicate the entity that would assume responsibility for such costs.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.