

The Florida Senate
PROFESSIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

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

Prepared By: Higher Education Committee

BILL: SB 192

INTRODUCER: Senator Saunders

SUBJECT: FGCU/BS Degree/Long-term Care

DATE: March 5, 2007

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1. | Brown | Matthews | HE | Favorable |
| 2. | | | HI | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |
| 5. | | | | |
| 6. | | | | |

I. Summary:

This bill authorizes the Florida Gulf Coast University to award a bachelor of science degree in long-term care administration.

This bill creates an unnumbered section of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Long Term Care Administration Program

According to Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), a degree in long-term care administration provides a graduate with skills in the areas of nursing home, assisted living facility, retirement community, hospice, or long-term residential institution management.

The FGCU’s proposed curriculum consists of 120 credit hours, accessible through distance learning. Of these, 60 hours are dedicated to general education and common prerequisite requirements in accounting, computer science, economics, and nutrition. Another 60 hours consist of upper division online coursework in long term care administration and management, including risk management. A 500 hour internship in a nursing facility is also required. Students graduating from the program are eligible to sit for the licensing examination to receive licensure as a Long-Term Care, or Nursing Home Administrator.

Citing a strong need for this type of graduate, FGCU indicates that this will be the first stand-alone program of its kind. Although institutions such as Florida A & M University, University of North Florida, and Lynn University offer Health Service Administration programs with a specialty in Long-Term Care Administration, none provides access through distance learning.

Licensure and Program Approval

Part I of Chapter 400, F.S., addresses long-term care facilities. Section 400.141, F.S., requires all licensed facilities to be under the administrative direction and charge of a licensed administrator.¹ Legislative approval is required for any new academic program leading to a degree offered as a credential for a specific license granted pursuant to statutory authority.²

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill authorizes the Florida Gulf Coast University to create a bachelor of science degree program in the area of long-term care administration.

The Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) estimates enrollment in the first year of operation of the Long-Term Care Administration program at 9 students. Enrollment by the fifth year is projected to be 19 students.

The Board of Governors reviewed the degree program on August 3, 2006 and indicated the following:

- The program did not impermissibly exceed 120 credit hours;
- No problems with articulation were identified;
- The program did not seek limited access status; and
- Prerequisites were the same as for other programs in the State University System.

An AARP report estimates that Florida's population of 65 and over seniors will grow from 16.8 million (17.3 percent of the state population) in 2002, to over 23.3 million (18.8 percent of the state population) by 2020.³ Assuming that the need for long-term care facilities also increases, this bill would assist in providing more skilled administrative-level staff to meet the special health and care needs of this burgeoning population.

Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

¹ s. 400.141(1), F.S.

² s. 1004.03(3), F.S.

³ Gibson, Mary Jo and Steven R. Gregory et al, *Across the States, Profiles of Long-Term Care: Florida*, AARP Public Policy Institute (2004).

D. Other Constitutional Issues:

In *Floridians for Constitutional Integrity, Inc., v. State Board of Education and the Board of Governors*, plaintiffs challenged specified statutory authority, and requested judicial guidance regarding the constitutional delineation of powers and duties of the Board of Governors of the State University System and the State Board of Education.⁴ In an order granting plaintiff's motion for summary judgment, dated February 28, 2007, the 2nd circuit court judge struck down various statutes as unconstitutional, including s. 1004.03, F.S., which would require approval of the Legislature for a program like FGCU's long-term care administration degree. The time for appeal or rehearing has not run.

IV. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

This bill would provide increased options to a student population interested in this area, to attend courses online, providing greater flexibility to those already in the workforce. The FGCU states that many attendees are already working in the field, in a middle management capacity, and this offers them attractive financial opportunities and advancement to the administrative level.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Costs to the Florida Gulf Coast University, handled in-house, consist of \$1,000 in start-up funds and \$400 annually for monographs, or writings in the area of long-term care administration. Although current faculty in the College of Health Professions would staff courses for the new program, FGCU indicates a need for an additional faculty member in the area of Health Services Administration and an executive secretary by academic year 2008-2009. The FGCU estimates total costs of the program to be \$641,269 in Year 1, with costs recurring but increasing to \$839,083 in Year 5, reflecting the expected increase in student enrollment every year.

Based on this information, the Board of Governors concludes that there appears to be no significant fiscal impact from the creation of this program.

V. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VI. Related Issues:

The Board of Governors (BOG) asserts that placing an academic program in statute is problematic in that it impedes the university's ability to terminate or change the program. For

⁴ (Case No. 2004-CA-3040).

this reason, the BOG recommends placement in proviso language rather than through creation of a new statute.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

VII. Summary of Amendments:

None.

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