

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 Committee on Education

BILL: CS/SB 2

INTRODUCER: Education Committee and Senator Galvano

SUBJECT: Higher Education

DATE: January 24, 2017

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Bouck	Graf	ED	Fav/CS
2.			AHE	
3.			AP	

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Technical Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 2 establishes the “Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2017” to strengthen funding and programmatic mechanisms so that every student in Florida, regardless of his or her economic circumstances, is able to access higher education and graduate on time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the state university and Florida College System institution performance accountability metrics and standards to promote on-time student graduation in 4 years.
- Increases student financial aid and tuition assistance to:
 - Expand the Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholars (FAS) award to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees plus \$300 per fall and spring semester for textbooks and college-related expenses;
 - Expand eligibility for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to include eligible students graduating from out of state; and
 - Revise the state-to-private match requirements for contributions to the First Generation Matching Grant Program from 1:1 to 2:1.
- Establishes tuition incentives by requiring state university boards of trustees to adopt a resident and non-resident undergraduate student block tuition policy.
- Strengthens “2+2” articulation by establishing the “2+2” targeted pathway program.
- Requires school districts to provide notification to students and parents about applying acceleration mechanism credit to a postsecondary degree.

Increasing the FAS award is estimated to cost \$126.2 million for 45,213 students to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees, and \$24.9 million for college-related expenses. Including out-of-state students in the Benacquisto Scholarship Program is estimated to cost \$1.1 million for 54 scholars. Doubling the state matching funds for the First Generation in College Matching Grant program is estimated to cost an additional \$5.3 million.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

II. Present Situation:

Under the leadership of the Legislature, the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG), and the State Board of Education (SBE), Florida's public universities and colleges continue to maintain focus on improving institutional and student performance outcomes.

Institutional Accountability

The BOG has established the following accountability mechanisms to maintain a consistent focus on state university excellence:¹

- The *Annual Accountability Report*² tracks performance trends on key metrics over five years.
- The *2025 System Strategic Plan*³ provides a long-range roadmap for the System.
- The *University Work Plans*⁴ provide a three-year plan of action.

Additionally, the Legislature has established performance-based funding models in recent years to evaluate the performance of Florida's state universities and Florida College System (FCS) institutions, based on identified metrics and standards.

State University System Performance-Based Incentive

The State University System (SUS) Performance-Based Incentive is awarded to state universities using performance-based metrics⁵ adopted by the BOG.⁶ The metrics include, but are not limited to, bachelor's degree graduates' employment and wages, average cost per bachelor's degree, a

¹ Board of Governors, *Focus on Excellence: Board of Governors' State University System Initiatives*, Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), available at http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2016-2018/ED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_3540.pdf.

² Board of Governors, *2014-15 System Accountability Report*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

³ Board of Governors, *2025 System Strategic Plan*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/board/doc/strategicplan/2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Amended_FINAL.pdf.

⁴ Board of Governors, *2016 Work Plan Reports*, <http://www.flbog.edu/resources/publications/workplan.php> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

⁵ Board of Governors, *Performance Funding Model Overview*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/budget/docs/performance_funding/Overview-Doc-Performance-Funding-10-Metric-Model-Condensed-Version.pdf.

⁶ Section 1001.92(1), F.S.

six-year graduation rate, academic progress rates, and bachelor's and graduate degrees in areas of strategic emphasis.

The BOG is required to adopt benchmarks to evaluate each state university's performance on the metrics.⁷ The evaluation assists with measuring a state university's achievement of institutional excellence or need for improvement, which determines the university's eligibility to receive performance funding.⁸

Preeminent State Research Universities Program

The Preeminent State Research Universities Program is established as a collaborative partnership between the BOG and the Legislature to raise the academic and research preeminence of the highest performing state research universities in Florida.⁹ A state university that meets 11 of the 12 academic and research excellent standards, specified in law,¹⁰ is designated a "preeminent state research university."¹¹ Currently, the University of Florida and the Florida State University are designated as preeminent state research universities.¹²

A state research university that meets at least 6 of the 12 standards is designated as an "emerging preeminent state research university."¹³ Currently, the University of Central Florida and the University of South Florida-Tampa are designated as emerging preeminent state research universities.¹⁴ Each designated emerging preeminent state research university receives an amount of funding that is equal to one-half of the total increased amount awarded to each designated preeminent state research university.

Unique Courses

A university that is designated a preeminent state research university may require its incoming first-time-in-college (FTIC) students to take a six-credit set of unique courses.¹⁵ The university

⁷ Section 1001.92(1), F.S.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Section 1001.7065(1), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1001.7065(2), F.S. The standards include: incoming freshman academic characteristics (average weighted GPA and average SAT score); institutional ranking nationally; freshman retention rate; six-year graduation rate; national academy membership of institution faculty; research expenditures and patents awarded annually; doctoral degrees awarded annually; postdoctoral appointees annually; and institutional endowment.

¹¹ Section 1001.7065(3)(a), F.S.

¹² Board of Governors, State University System of Florida, *System Summary of University Work Plans 2016*, at 10, available at

http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/workplan_2016/2016_SYSTEM_WORK_PLAN_2016-09-09.pdf

¹³ Section 1001.7065(3)(b), F.S.

¹⁴ Board of Governors, *Focus on Excellence: Board of Governors' State University System Initiatives*, Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), available at

http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2016-2018/ED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_3540.pdf.

¹⁵ Section 1001.7065(6), F.S.

may stipulate that credit for such courses may not be earned through any acceleration mechanism¹⁶ or any other transfer credit specifically determined by the university.¹⁷

Programs of National Excellence

The BOG is encouraged to establish standards and measures to identify individual programs in state universities that objectively reflect national excellence and make recommendations to the Legislature about ways to enhance and promote such programs.¹⁸

Florida College System Performance-Based Incentive

The FCS Performance-Based Incentive is awarded to FCS institutions using metrics adopted by the SBE. The metrics must include retention rates; program completion and graduation rates; postgraduation employment, salaries, and continuing education for workforce education and baccalaureate programs, with wage thresholds that reflect the added value of the certificate or degree; and outcome measures appropriate for associate of arts degree recipients.¹⁹ The SBE is required to adopt benchmarks to evaluate each institution's performance on the metrics for eligibility to receive performance funding.²⁰

Distinguished Florida College System Program

The Distinguished FCS Program is established as a collaborative partnership between the SBE and the Legislature to recognize the excellence of Florida's highest-performing FCS institutions.²¹ The excellence standards include:

- A 150 percent-of-normal-time completion rate²² of 50 percent or higher, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges.
- A 150 percent-of-normal-time completion rate for Pell Grant recipients of 40 percent or higher, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges.
- A retention rate of 70 percent or higher, as calculated by the Division of Florida Colleges.
- A continuing education, or transfer, rate of 72 percent or higher for students graduating with an associate of arts degree, as reported by the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP).
- A licensure passage rate on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) of 90 percent or higher for first-time exam takers, as reported by the Board of Nursing.

¹⁶ Acceleration mechanisms include Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), credit by examination, and dual enrollment.

¹⁷ Section 1001.7065(6), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1001.7065(8), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 1001.66(1), F.S.

²⁰ *Id.* Rule 6A-14.07621, F.A.C., provides a description of the metrics and benchmarks, and calculations for performance funding.

²¹ Section 1001.67, F.S.

²² Rule 6A-14.07621(3)(b), F.A.C. The normal-time-completion rate captures the outcomes of a cohort of full-time, FTIC students who graduate within the amount of time is dependent on the catalogue time for the academic program.

- A job placement or continuing education rate of 88 percent or higher for workforce programs, as reported by FETPIP.
- A time-to-degree for students graduating with an associate of arts degree of 2.25 years or less for first-time-in-college students with accelerated college credits, as reported by the Southern Regional Education Board.

An FCS institution that meets 5 of the 7 excellence standards is designated as a distinguished college.²³

Developmental Education

Developmental education is instruction through which a high school graduate who applies for any college credit program may attain the communication and computation skills necessary to successfully complete college credit instruction.²⁴ Developmental education may be delivered through a variety of delivery strategies, described in law.²⁵

Each FCS institution board of trustees is required to develop a plan to implement the developmental education strategies defined in law²⁶ and rules²⁷ of the SBE.²⁸ A university board of trustees may contract with a FCS institution to provide developmental education services for their students in need of developmental education.²⁹ Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) is authorized to offer developmental education.³⁰

Student Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance

The Legislature has established student financial aid programs to assist students in accessing and pursuing higher education in Florida.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (BFSP) was established in 1997³¹ as a lottery-funded scholarship program to reward a Florida high school graduate who merits recognition for high academic achievement. The student must enroll in a degree program, certificate program, or

²³ Section 1001.67(1)-(2), F.S.

²⁴ Section 1008.02(1), F.S.

²⁵ *Id.* Strategies include modularized instruction that is customized and targeted to address specific skills gaps, compressed course structures that accelerate student progression from developmental instruction to college level coursework, contextualized developmental instruction that is related to meta-majors, and corequisite developmental instruction or tutoring that supplements credit instruction while a student is concurrently enrolled in a credit-bearing course.

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ Rule 6A-14.030(12), F.A.C.

²⁸ Section 1008.30(5)(a), F.S.

²⁹ Section 1008.30(5)(c), F.S.

³⁰ Board of Governors Regulation 6.008(1).

³¹ Section 2, ch. 1997-77, L.O.F.

applied technology program at an eligible public or private postsecondary education institution³² in Florida after graduating from high school.³³ The BFSP consists of three types of awards:³⁴

- Florida Academic Scholars (FAS);³⁵
- Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS);³⁶ and
- Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (FGSV).³⁷

BFSP award amounts are specified in the General Appropriations Act (GAA)^{38, 39}.

Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The Benacquisto Scholarship Program, created in 2014,⁴⁰ rewards any Florida high school graduate who receives recognition as a National Merit Scholar or National Achievement Scholar and who enrolls in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary education institution.⁴¹

Student eligibility requirements are established in law,⁴² and include requirements that the student must earn a standard Florida high school diploma or equivalent⁴³ and be a state resident.⁴⁴

³² A student who receives any award under the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, who is enrolled in a nonpublic postsecondary education institution, and who is assessed tuition and fees that are the same as those of a full-time student at that institution, receives a fixed award calculated by using the average tuition and fee calculation as prescribed by the Department of Education for full-time attendance at a public postsecondary education institution at the comparable level. Section 1009.538, F.S.

³³ Sections 1009.53(1) and 1009.531(2)(a)-(c), F.S. Starting with 2012-2013 graduates, a student graduating from high school is able to accept an initial award for 2 years following high school and to accept a renewal award for 5 years following high school graduation.

³⁴ Section 1009.53(2), F.S.

³⁵ Section 1009.534, F.S.

³⁶ Section 1009.535, F.S.

³⁷ Section 1009.536, F.S.

³⁸ Specific Appropriation 4, 2016-066, L.O.F.

³⁹ Sections 1009.22(7), 1009.23(10), and 1009.24(13) and (16), F.S., prohibit the tuition differential and technology fees from inclusion in any BFSP award.

⁴⁰ The Benacquisto Scholarship Program was formerly titled the Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program. Section 26, ch. 2016-237, L.O.F.

⁴¹ Section 1009.893, F.S.

⁴² Section 1009.893(4), F.S.

⁴³ Other graduation options include Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options (s. 1002.3105, F.S.), early high school graduation (s. 1003.4281, F.S.), a high school equivalency diploma (s. 1003.435, F.S.), completion of a home education program (s. 1002.41, F.S.), or earning a high school diploma from a school outside Florida while living with a parent or guardian who is on military or public service assignment outside Florida.

⁴⁴ Section 1009.893(4)(a), F.S. Under section 1009.40(1)(a)2., F.S., the student must meet the requirements of Florida residency for tuition purposes under s. 1009.21, F.S.; see also Rule 6A-10.044, F.A.C.

An eligible student may use the Benacquisto Scholarship Program at a Florida public or private postsecondary education institution. The award amounts are as follows:

- At a Florida public postsecondary education institution the award is equal to the institutional cost of attendance minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and National Merit Scholarship (NMS) or National Achievement Scholarship (NAS)^{45,46}
- At a Florida independent postsecondary education institution the award is equal to the highest cost of attendance at a Florida public university, as reported by the BOG, minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and NMS or NAS.⁴⁷

First Generation Matching Grant Program

The First Generation Matching Grant Program was established in 2006⁴⁸ to enable each state university to provide donors with a matching grant incentive for contributions to create grant-based student financial aid for undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need and whose parents have not earned a baccalaureate degree.⁴⁹ Funds appropriated by the Legislature for the program must be allocated by the Office of Student Financial Assistance (within the Florida Department of Education) to match private contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis.⁵⁰

William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG)

The William L. Boyd, IV, FRAG is a tuition assistance program that is available to full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students registered at an independent nonprofit college or university which is located in and chartered by the state; which is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; which grants baccalaureate degrees; which is not a state university or FCS institution; and which has a secular purpose.⁵¹

Tuition Incentives

The Legislature has authorized state universities to implement flexible tuition policies to further assist students in accessing and pursuing higher education in our state.

Block Tuition

The BOG is authorized to approve a proposal from a university board of trustees to implement flexible tuition⁵² policies including, but not limited to, block tuition.⁵³ The block tuition policy for resident undergraduate students or undergraduate-level courses must be based on the

⁴⁵ The National Merit Scholarship Corporation discontinued the National Achievement Scholarship Program with the conclusion of the 2015 program,

<http://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/interior.aspx?sid=1758&gid=2&pgid=433> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

⁴⁶ Section 1009.893(5)(a), F.S.

⁴⁷ *Id.* at (5)(b)

⁴⁸ Section 1, ch. 2006-73, L.O.F.

⁴⁹ Section 1009.701(1), F.S.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at (2)

⁵¹ Section 1009.89(1) and (3), F.S.

⁵² Section 1009.01, F.S., defines tuition as the basic fee charged to a student for instruction provided by a public postsecondary education institution in this state.

⁵³ Section 1009.24(15)(a), F.S.

established per-credit-hour undergraduate tuition.⁵⁴ The block tuition policy for nonresident undergraduate students must be based on the established per-credit-hour undergraduate tuition and out-of-state fee.⁵⁵ The BOG has not received for approval, a block tuition policy from any state university.⁵⁶

2+2 Articulation and Academic Notification

It is the intent of the Legislature to facilitate articulation and seamless integration of the K-20 education system by building, sustaining, and strengthening relationships among the various education sectors and delivery systems within the state.⁵⁷

Additionally, it is also the intent of the Legislature that a variety of articulated acceleration mechanisms be available for secondary and postsecondary students attending public education institutions.⁵⁸ It is intended that such mechanisms serve to accelerate students in fulfilling high school and postsecondary education requirements, broaden the scope of curricular options available to students, and increase the depth of study in a particular subject.⁵⁹

2+2 Articulation

The SBE and the BOG are required to enter into a statewide articulation agreement to preserve Florida's "2+2" system of articulation, facilitate the seamless articulation of student credit across and among Florida's education entities, and reinforce the articulation and admission policies specified in law.⁶⁰

The articulation agreement must provide that every associate in arts graduate of an FCS institution has met all general education requirements, has indicated a baccalaureate institution and program of interest by the time the student earns 30 semester hours, and must be granted admission to the upper division, with certain exceptions,⁶¹ of a state university or an FCS institution that offers a baccalaureate degree.⁶² However, eligibility for admission to a state university does not provide to a transfer student guaranteed admission to the specific university or degree program that the student chooses.⁶³

Academic Notification

Articulated acceleration mechanisms include, but are not limited to, Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), International Baccalaureate (IB), credit

⁵⁴ Section 1009.24(15)(a)3., F.S.

⁵⁵ Section 1009.24(15)(a)3., F.S.

⁵⁶ Board of Governors, *2017 Legislative Bill Analysis for SB 2* (Jan. 18, 2017), at 4.

⁵⁷ Section 1007.01(1), F.S.

⁵⁸ Section 1007.27(1), F.S.

⁵⁹ Section 1007.27(1), F.S.

⁶⁰ Section 1007.23(1), F.S.

⁶¹ Section 1007.23(2)(a), F.S., exceptions include limited access programs, teacher certification programs, and those requiring an audition.

⁶² Section 1007.23(2)(a), F.S.

⁶³ Board of Governors Regulation 6.004(2)(b)

by examination, and dual enrollment.⁶⁴ The Department of Education is required to annually identify and publish the minimum scores, maximum credit, and course or courses for which credit must be awarded for specified examinations.⁶⁵ The Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC)⁶⁶ has established passing scores and course and credit equivalents for examinations specified in law^{67, 68}. The credit-by-exam equivalencies have been adopted in rule by the SBE.⁶⁹ Each FCS institution and state university must award credit for specific courses for which competency has been demonstrated by successful passage of one of the examinations associated with the identified acceleration mechanisms.⁷⁰

The law also requires the Commissioner of Education to appoint faculty committees representing secondary and public postsecondary education institutions to identify postsecondary courses that meet high school graduation requirements and equivalent high school credits earned through dual enrollment.⁷¹ Additionally, the commissioner must recommend such courses to the SBE.⁷² The dual enrollment course-to-high school subject area equivalency list specifies postsecondary courses that when completed earn both high school and college credit.⁷³ All high schools must accept these dual enrollment courses toward meeting the standard high school diploma requirements.⁷⁴

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

CS/SB 2 establishes the “Florida Excellence in Higher Education Act of 2017” to strengthen funding and programmatic mechanisms so that every student in Florida, regardless of his or her economic circumstances, is able to access higher education and graduate on time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree. Specifically, the bill:

- Modifies the state university and Florida College System institution performance accountability metrics and standards to promote on-time student graduation in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree.

⁶⁴ Section 1007.27(1), F.S.

⁶⁵ Section 1007.27(2), F.S.

⁶⁶ The Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) is established by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the Chancellor of the SUS, to make recommendations related to statewide articulation policies regarding access, quality, and data reporting. The ACC serves as an advisory body to the Higher Education Coordinating Council, the SBE, and BOG.

⁶⁷ Section 1007.27(2), F.S.

⁶⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Articulation Coordinating Committee Credit by Exam Equivalencies* (Initially adopted Nov. 14, 2001), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/0078391-acc-cbe.pdf>.

⁶⁹ Rule 6A-10.024, F.A.C.

⁷⁰ *Id.*

⁷¹ Section 1007.271(9), F.S.

⁷² *Id.*

⁷³ Florida Department of Education, *2016-2017 Dual Enrollment Course—High School Subject Area Equivalency List*, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/0078394-delist.pdf>.

⁷⁴ *Id.*

- Increases student financial aid and tuition assistance to:
 - Expand the Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholars (FAS) award to cover 100 percent of tuition and specified fees plus \$300 per fall and spring semester for textbooks and college-related expenses;
 - Expand eligibility for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to include eligible students graduating from out of state; and
 - Revise the state-to-private match requirements for contributions to the First Generation Matching Grant Program from 1:1 to 2:1.
- Establishes tuition incentives by requiring state university boards of trustees to adopt a resident and non-resident undergraduate student block tuition policy for implementation by the fall 2018 semester.
- Strengthens “2+2” articulation by establishing the “2+2” targeted pathway program.
- Requires school districts to provide notification to students and parents about applying acceleration mechanism credit to a postsecondary degree.
- Renames the William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) Program as the William L. Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Program.

Institutional Accountability

The bill strengthens institution accountability by modifying state university and FCS institution performance and accountability metrics and standards to promote on-time student graduation in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree.

State University System Performance-Based Incentive

The bill specifies that the State University System (SUS) performance-based metric for graduation rate must be a 4-year graduation rate.

Currently, the 6-year and 4-year graduation rates for first-time-in-college (FTIC) students within the SUS are approximately 71 percent⁷⁵ and 44 percent,⁷⁶ respectively. During the 2015-16 academic year, the 6-year graduation rate for such students ranged from approximately 39 percent at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) to 87 percent at the University of Florida (UF).⁷⁷ The 4-year graduation rate for such students during the same period ranged from approximately 14 percent at FAMU to 68 percent at UF.⁷⁸ In comparison, the 4-year graduation rate for peer universities in other states ranges from 87 percent at the University of Virginia, 81 percent at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and 75 percent at the University of Michigan.⁷⁹ The shift in focus from 6-year to 4-year graduation rate will likely

⁷⁵ State University System of Florida, *2014-2015 System Accountability Report*, p.7, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

⁷⁶ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (Sept. 6, 2016).

⁷⁷ State University System of Florida, *2014-2015 System Accountability Report*, p.7, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

⁷⁸ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (Sept. 6, 2016).

⁷⁹ *Id.*

prompt a modification to the State University System (SUS) strategic plan, as well as state university accountability mechanisms, which may assist with elevating the prominence and national competitiveness of the state universities in Florida.

Graduation rates are one of the key accountability measures that demonstrate how well an institution is serving its FTIC students.⁸⁰ On-time graduation in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree may result in savings related to cost-of-attendance for students and their families. For example, nationally, every extra year beyond 4 years to graduate with a baccalaureate degree at a public 4-year college costs a student \$22,826.⁸¹ This may also result in lost wages owing to delayed entrance into the workforce. The median wage of 2013-14 baccalaureate degree graduates employed full-time one year after graduation is \$35,600.⁸²

Preeminent State Research Universities Program

Consistent with the emphasis on a 4-year graduation rate metric for the SUS Performance-Based Incentive program, the bill revises the full-time FTIC student graduation rate metric for the preeminent state research university program from a 6-year to a 4-year rate, and modifies the benchmark for the graduation rate metric from 70 percent to 50 percent. Additionally, the bill requires the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG) to calculate the graduation rate. Currently, the graduation rate is based on data reported annually to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.⁸³ The bill also revises the amount of funding provided to emerging preeminent state research universities from one-half to one-quarter of the total additional funding awarded to preeminent state research universities.

Unique Courses

The bill eliminates the authority for the preeminent state research universities to require FTIC students to take a six-credit unique set of courses. Currently, UF lists two such courses, Florida State University lists 123 such courses.⁸⁴ Students are not able to apply acceleration mechanism or transfer credits toward the unique course requirements.⁸⁵ By deleting the authority for unique courses, the bill provides students more flexibility in applying earned college credits purposefully toward degree requirements.

⁸⁰ Board of Governors, *2025 System Strategic Plan*, March 2016, p. 26, available at http://www.flbog.edu/board/doc/strategicplan/2025_System_Strategic_Plan_Amended_FINAL.pdf.

⁸¹ Complete College America, *Four-Year Myth: Make College More Affordable. Restore the Promise of Graduating on Time* (2014), p.5, available at <http://completecollege.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/4-Year-Myth.pdf>.

⁸² Board of Governors, *2014-15 System Accountability Report*, p. 6, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/ar_2014-15/2014_15_System_Accountability_Report_Summary_FINAL_2016-04-28.pdf.

⁸³ The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) calculates the graduation rate as the total number of completers within 150% of normal time divided by the revised adjusted cohort. *2016-17 Glossary*, available at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisGlossaryAll.aspx>.

⁸⁴ The Florida Senate staff analysis of the Florida Statewide Course Numbering System (<http://scns.fldoe.org>).

⁸⁵ Section 1001.7065(6), F.S.

Programs of Excellence

Consistent with efforts to strengthen institutional accountability to elevate the prominence of state universities, the bill changes from a recommendation to a requirement that the BOG establish standards and measures for programs of excellence throughout the SUS by specifying that the programs include undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees. Additionally, the bill requires the BOG to make recommendations to the Legislature, by September 1, 2017, as to how such programs may be enhanced and promoted.

Florida College System Performance-Based Incentive

In order to focus institutional efforts on initiatives that promote student graduation on-time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree, and help students avoid incurring debt, the bill revises the FCS performance metrics for awarding performance-based incentives to FCS institutions. Specifically, the bill:

- Incorporates the excellence standards for the Distinguished FCS institution Program;
- Adds a graduation rate metric for FTIC students in associate in arts (AA) programs who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in 4 years after initially enrolling in the AA programs; and
- Adds a college affordability metric, which must be adopted by the SBE.

The statewide 4-year graduation rate for a 2009 cohort of students who started at an FCS institution and earned a bachelor's degree from the FCS or SUS was approximately 4 percent.⁸⁶ The 4-year graduation rate ranged from zero percent at Florida Keys Community College to approximately 13 percent at Santa Fe College.

The revisions to the FCS institution performance metrics are likely to prompt a modification to the SBE strategic plan for the FCS, as well as changes in the FCS accountability mechanisms, which may direct FCS institutional efforts toward on-time graduation.

Distinguished Florida College System Institution Program

The bill reinforces on-time graduation by revising the excellence standards for the Distinguished FCS institution Program. Specifically, the bill:

- Changes the normal-time completion rate metric from 150 percent to 100 percent;
- Changes the normal-time completion rate metric for Pell Grant recipients from 150 percent to 100 percent;
- Specifies that the job placement metric must be based on the wage thresholds that reflect the added value of the applicable certificate or degree; and specifying that the continuing education and job placement metric does not apply to AA degrees; and
- Replaces the time-to-degree metric with an excess-hours rate metric of 40 percent or lower of AA degree recipients who graduate with 72 or more credit hours.

Modifications to the excellence standards may steer institutional efforts toward helping students graduate timely.

⁸⁶ Email, Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (Dec. 29, 2016).

Developmental Education

The bill strengthens developmental education instruction by emphasizing the focus on instructional strategies specified in law⁸⁷ in the delivery of developmental education instruction by a state university. FAMU is the only state university within the SUS that provides developmental education.⁸⁸ In accordance with the bill modifications, FAMU may need to revise its developmental education program to incorporate the developmental education strategies specified in law. Currently, each FCS institution board of trustees is required to develop a plan to implement the developmental education strategies defined in law.⁸⁹

Student Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance

The bill expands student financial aid and tuition assistance programs to address financial insecurity concerns of students and their families as they consider higher education options in Florida. The bill is likely to assist students with accessing higher education, graduating on time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree, and incurring less education-related debt. Additionally, the bill may assist Florida's postsecondary education institutions in recruiting and retaining talented and qualified students.

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program – Florida Academic Scholars (FAS)

The bill increases the FAS award amount to cover 100 percent of public postsecondary education institution tuition and certain tuition-indexed fees⁹⁰ plus \$300 for textbooks and college-related expenses during fall and spring terms, beginning in the fall 2017 semester.

The table below shows the current and projected FAS award per credit hour:

Current 2016-17 FAS Per-Credit-Hour Award⁹¹	Projected 2017-18 FAS Average Per-Credit-Hour Award
\$103 at 4-year institutions	\$198.11 at 4-year institutions ⁹²
\$63 at two-year institutions	\$106.74 at two-year institutions ⁹³

⁸⁷ Section 1008.02, F.S.

⁸⁸ BOG Regulation 6.008(1).

⁸⁹ Section 1008.30(5)(a), F.S.

⁹⁰ The tuition-indexed fees specified in SB 2 include financial aid, capital improvements, technology enhancements, equipping buildings, or the acquisition of improved real property, and technology (s. 1009.22, F.S.); activity and service, financial aid, technology, capital improvements, technology enhancements, and equipping student buildings or the acquisition of improved real property (s. 1009.23, F.S.); financial aid, Capital Improvement Trust Fund, activity and service, health, athletic, technology, transportation access, and includes the tuition differential (s. 1009.24, F.S.).

⁹¹ Specific Appropriation 4, Ch. 2016-66, L.O.F.

⁹² State University System of Florida, *Tuition and Required Fees, 2016-17*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/tuition/Tuition_Fees_%202016-17.pdf.

⁹³ Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *2016 Fact Book*, Table 7.8T, available at <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/15267/urlt/FactBook2016.pdf>.

The total cost for FAS awards in the 2016-17 fiscal year is projected to be \$104 million.⁹⁴ The change in the FAS award to 100 percent of tuition and specified fees is estimated to cost approximately an additional \$126.2 million for 45,213 students⁹⁵ in the 2017-18 fiscal year.⁹⁶ The bill also includes \$300 per semester for textbooks and other education-related expenses, which is estimated to cost approximately \$24.9 million⁹⁷ in the 2017-18 fiscal year. The total additional cost is estimated to be approximately \$151.1 million in the 2017-18 fiscal year.⁹⁸

Expanding the FAS program promotes college affordability and one-time graduation in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree. The bill may also help with retaining Florida's talented students in the state.

Benacquisto Scholarship Program

The bill modifies eligibility requirements for the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to attract talented and qualified students from out-of-state and assist out-of-state students to access higher education in Florida, graduate on time, and incur less education-related debt. Specifically, the bill:

- Establishes student eligibility criteria, which only apply to students who are not residents of the state and who initially enroll in a baccalaureate degree program in the 2017-2018 academic year or thereafter, requiring such students to:
 - Physically reside in Florida on or near the campus of the postsecondary education institution in which they enroll;
 - Earn a high school diploma or equivalent or complete a home education program, comparable to Florida; and
 - Be accepted by and enroll full-time in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible regionally accredited public or private postsecondary education institution.
- Provides that for an eligible student who is not a resident of the state and who attends:
 - A public postsecondary education institution, the award amount must be equal to the institutional cost of attendance⁹⁹ for a resident of the state less the student's National Merit Scholarship. Such student is exempt from out-of-state fees.
 - A private postsecondary education institution, the award amount must be equal to the highest cost of attendance¹⁰⁰ for a resident of the state enrolled at a state university, less the student's National Merit Scholarship.

⁹⁴ Office of Economic & Demographic Research, *Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program* (Nov. 16, 2016) <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/financialaid/ConsensusDetail.pdf>.

⁹⁵ *Id.*

⁹⁶ The Florida Senate staff analysis.

⁹⁷ *Id.*

⁹⁸ *Id.*

⁹⁹ The 2016-17 cost of attendance on campus for full time undergraduate Florida resident students includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and other expenses; the average annual cost of attendance for the State University System is \$21,534.98. Board of Governors, *Fall/Spring Cost of Attendance On-Campus for Full-Time Undergraduate Florida Residents 2016-17*, available at http://www.flbog.edu/about/doc/budget/attendance/CostAttendance2016_17_FINAL.xlsx.

¹⁰⁰ The highest State University System cost of attendance in 2016-17 is \$23,463 at Florida International University.

Of the 320 National Merit Scholars (NMS) and National Achievement Scholars (NAS) who attended Florida colleges and universities in the 2015-16 academic year,¹⁰¹ 266 received an initial award as a Benacquisto Scholar.¹⁰² Therefore, an estimated 54 NMS graduated from out-of-state in 2015 and enrolled in Florida universities in the 2015-16 academic year. Assuming this number of students remains constant for the 2017-18 academic year, and out-of-state students meet the eligibility requirements, the cost to fund the additional out-of-state students is estimated to be approximately \$1.1 million. The modifications to student eligibility requirements may assist the state universities in recruiting and retaining talented and qualified students from other states.

First Generation Matching Grant Program

The bill expands need-based financial aid by revising the state to private match requirements from a 1:1 match to a 2:1 match. In 2015-16, 8,234 initial and renewal students received an average award of \$1,289.45, with 13,700 unfunded eligible students reported by postsecondary education institutions.¹⁰³ The increase in the state matching contribution may raise the award amount and assist more eligible students to receive the award, which may help the students to graduate on time.

William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG)

The bill renames the William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant (FRAG) Program as the William L. Boyd, IV, Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Grant Program.

Tuition Incentives

The bill establishes tuition incentives by codifying a block tuition and fee policy to provide to students incentives to graduate on time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree.

Block Tuition

The bill requires each state university board of trustees to adopt, for implementation by the fall 2018 semester, a block tuition policy for resident and non-resident undergraduate students. Under such a policy, students may take additional courses without paying increased tuition, which gives students a financial incentive to take more courses within an academic term or year and which may help students to graduate faster.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ National Merit Scholarship Corporation, *2014-15 Annual Report* (Oct. 31, 2015), available at http://www.nationalmerit.org/s/1758/images/gid2/editor_documents/annual_report.pdf

¹⁰² Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report, 2015-16*, Benacquisto Scholarship (FIS), available at: https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/EOY_Reports/2015-16/FIS_2015_2016.pdf.

¹⁰³ Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, *End-of-Year Report, 2015-16*, First Generation Matching Grant Program (FGMG), available at https://www.floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org/pdf/EOY_Reports/2015-16/FGMG_2015_2016.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), *The State Has Several Options Available When Considering the Funding of Higher Education*, Report 04-54, August 2004.

Institutions that have implemented a block tuition policy include, but are not limited to, the University of Michigan, the Ohio State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC).¹⁰⁵ As an example, UNC allows students to take 12 or more credit hours and assesses a block tuition based on 12 credit hours.¹⁰⁶

2+2 Articulation and Academic Notification

The bill strengthens 2+2 articulation and academic notification by creating mechanisms for expanding locally-developed targeted “2+2” articulation agreements and student advising.

2+2 Targeted Pathway Program

The bill reinforces the state’s intent to assist students enrolled in associate in arts (AA) degree programs to graduate on-time. Accordingly, the bill establishes the “2+2” targeted pathway program to strengthen Florida’s “2+2” system of articulation and improve student retention and on-time graduation. Specifically, the bill:

- Requires each public college to execute at least one “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement to establish a “2+2” targeted pathway program with one or more state universities.
- Requires the “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement to provide students who meet specified requirements guaranteed access to the state university and baccalaureate degree program in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
- Establishes student eligibility criteria to participate in a “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement. A student must:
 - Enroll in the program before completing 30 credit hours.
 - Complete an associate in arts degree.
 - Meet the university’s transfer admission requirements.
- Establishes requirements for state universities that execute “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreements with their partner public college. A state university must:
 - Establish a 4-year on-time graduation plan for a baccalaureate degree program.
 - Advise students enrolled in the program about the university’s transfer and degree program requirements.
 - Provide students access to academic advisors and campus events, and guarantee admittance to the state university and degree program.
- Requires the state board governing the public colleges and BOG to collaborate to eliminate barriers to executing “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreements.

The “2+2” targeted pathway program is consistent with recent efforts by state universities to strengthen regional articulation. The statewide “2+2” articulation agreement established in law¹⁰⁷ does not require a 4-year graduation plan and does not guarantee access to a university or degree program of a student’s choice. To provide students a path to on-time graduation in 4 years with a

¹⁰⁵ Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability, *State University System Undergraduate Student Success Overview*, p. 33, available at http://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2016-2018/ED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_3540.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ Email, Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (Nov. 29, 2016).

¹⁰⁷ Section 1007.23(2), F.S.

baccalaureate degree, some state universities have established articulation agreements with regional public colleges.¹⁰⁸ For instance, the “DirectConnect to UCF”¹⁰⁹ guarantees admission to UCF with an associate degree from a partner institution, and offers university advising to develop an academic plan and access to UCF campuses for services and events. Similarly, the University of South Florida’s “FUSE” program¹¹⁰ offers students guaranteed admission to a USF System institution. The FUSE program creates an academic pathway that provides a map for taking required courses, advising at USF and the partner institution regarding university requirements, a specially-designed orientation session for 2+2 students at the beginning of the program, and access to USF facilities and events.

The value of such targeted “2+2” agreements is to assist AA students to transfer to a state university and graduate on time in 4 years with a baccalaureate degree. In 2014-15, more than 36 percent of AA graduates from the FCS did not apply to the SUS. Forty-five percent of AA graduates from the FCS ultimately enrolled in the SUS.¹¹¹ The 4-year graduation rate for a 2011 cohort of AA transfer students to the SUS (those who transferred with an AA and graduated in two more years) was 25 percent.¹¹²

Academic Notification

The bill requires district school boards to notify students who enroll in acceleration mechanism courses or take exams about the *credit-by-examination equivalency list* and *dual enrollment and high school subject area equivalency list*. The notification requirement promotes targeted student advising at the secondary school level to inform students about generating college credits through certain acceleration mechanism courses and exams, and applying such credits purposefully to a postsecondary certificate or degree program, to ensure students receive credit for such courses and exams taken during high school.¹¹³ As a result, the notification may also assist students with higher education planning and affordability considerations.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

¹⁰⁸ Examples of regional articulation agreements are the “[DirectConnect to UCF](#),” the [University of South Florida “FUSE” program](#), “[TCC2FSU](#),” “[TCC2FAMU](#),” “[FIU Connect4Success](#),” “[Link to FAU](#),” “[UWF Transfer Student Partnership](#),” and “[UNF/SJR Gateway](#).” The Florida Senate staff analysis.

¹⁰⁹ University of Central Florida, Presentation to the Senate Committee on Education, *DirectConnect to UCF* (Dec. 12, 2016), available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/ED/Meeting%20Packet/3540/>.

¹¹⁰ University of South Florida, Presentation to the Senate Committee on Education, *FUSE* (Dec. 12, 2016), available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/ED/Meeting%20Packet/3540/>.

¹¹¹ Board of Governors, *Associate in Arts Transfer Students in the State University System*, Presentation to the BOG Select Committee on 2+2 Articulation, (Mar. 17, 2016), available at http://www.flbog.edu/documents_meetings/0199_0978_7295_6.3.2%202+2%2003b_AA%20Transfer%20data%20points_JMI.pdf.

¹¹² Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, *State University System Undergraduate Student Success Overview*, Presentation to the Committee on Education, The Florida Senate (Dec. 12, 2016), available at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/Show/ED/Meeting%20Packet/3540/>.

¹¹³ Office of The Governor, *Governor Rick Scott Issues “Finish in Four, Save More” Challenge to Universities and Colleges* (May 25, 2016), <http://www.flgov.com/2016/05/25/governor-rick-scott-issues-finish-in-four-save-more-challenge-to-universities-and-colleges/> (last visited Jan. 20, 2017).

IV. Constitutional Issues:**A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

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:

CS/SB 2 provides financial benefits to students and families. Specifically, the bill:

- Provides students who qualify for the Florida Academic Scholars program an increased tuition and fee benefit, plus \$300 for textbooks and college-related expenses in the fall and spring terms, which is likely to lower the cost of education for such students.
- Expands the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to include out-of-state National Merit Scholar students who are accepted by and enroll in an eligible Florida postsecondary education institution, which is likely to provide a significant cost savings to such students.
- Doubles the state match for the First Generation in College Matching Grant, which is likely to make the matching grant available to more students, or result in an increase in the award amount.
- Requires a block tuition policy that is likely to provide a cost savings to students, but the savings are indeterminate to students and their families.

C. Government Sector Impact:

CS/SB 2 creates a state fiscal impact. Specifically, the bill:

- Revises the state university and colleges performance funding programs, which has no state fiscal impact. However, such revisions may change institution performance relating to revised metrics, and therefore how the funds are distributed to institutions.
- Increases the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) program award, which is estimated to cost an additional \$126.2 million to cover 100 percent and specified fees, and \$24.9 million for college-related expenses.

- Includes out-of-state students in the Benacquisto Scholarship Program, which may cost an estimated \$1.1 million for 54 scholars.
- Doubles the state match for the First Generation in College Matching Grant program, which may cost an additional \$5.3 million.
- Requires implementation of a block tuition policy for resident and non-resident undergraduate students; however, the cost to the state universities in lost revenue is indeterminate.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1001.66, 1001.67, 1001.7065, 1001.92, 1007.23, 1007.27, 1008.30, 1009.22, 1009.23, 1009.24, 1009.534, 1009.701, 1009.89, and 1009.893.

This bill creates two undesignated sections of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

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

CS by Education on January 23, 2017:

The committee substitute clarifies that:

- The eligibility requirements for out-of-state students to qualify for the Benacquisto Scholarship applies to students who initially enroll in a baccalaureate program in the 2017-18 academic year or later.
- The Benacquisto Scholarship award for an out-of-state student must be equal to the institutional cost of attendance for a resident of this state less the student's National Merit Scholarship.

B. Amendments:

None.