

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to higher education; requiring the
3 boards of trustees of the University of Florida and
4 Florida Polytechnic University to submit a merger
5 application to a specified entity and an
6 implementation plan to the Board of Governors;
7 providing for the transfer of the Florida Polytechnic
8 University to the University of Florida; requiring
9 Florida Polytechnic University to take specified
10 actions to obtain consents for the transfer of a
11 specified educational broadband service station
12 license; requiring Florida Polytechnic University to
13 assign the license for such service station to the
14 University of Florida; providing duties and
15 responsibilities of the University of Florida;
16 requiring the boards of trustees of the University of
17 Florida and New College of Florida to submit a merger
18 application to a specified entity and an
19 implementation plan to the Board of Governors;
20 providing for the transfer of New College of Florida
21 to the University of Florida; requiring the tuition
22 and fees for Florida Polytechnic University and New
23 College of Florida to remain in place for a specified
24 period; providing immunity; amending s. 1004.32, F.S.;
25 providing for the contingent future repeal of

26 specified provisions relating to New College of
 27 Florida; amending ss. 1004.345 and 1004.3451, F.S.;
 28 providing for the contingent future repeal of
 29 specified provisions relating to Florida Polytechnic
 30 University; amending s. 1009.534, F.S.; authorizing
 31 Florida Academic Scholars to receive a stipend, as
 32 provided in the General Appropriations Act, for
 33 specified educational expenses; amending s. 1009.535,
 34 F.S.; revising the amount of an award certain Florida
 35 Medallion Scholars may receive under certain
 36 circumstances; providing effective dates.

37

38 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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40 Section 1. The boards of trustees of the University of
 41 Florida and Florida Polytechnic University shall submit to the
 42 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges
 43 and Schools an application for merger. Upon approval by the
 44 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges
 45 and Schools of the application for merger, the boards of
 46 trustees shall submit an implementation plan to the Board of
 47 Governors, which shall monitor the fidelity of the
 48 implementation of the plan. Under the implementation plan the
 49 following transfers shall be made:

50 (1) All real and personal property, licenses and

51 associated revenues, existing contracts, unexpended balances,
52 appropriations, allocations, funds, and mutually agreed-upon
53 obligations, responsibilities, and liabilities of the Florida
54 Polytechnic University shall be transferred to the University of
55 Florida.

56 (2) All Florida Industrial and Phosphate Research
57 Institute programs, functions, offices, records, faculty
58 positions, and staff positions of the Florida Polytechnic
59 University shall be transferred to the University of Florida.

60 Section 2. Upon approval by the Commission on Colleges of
61 the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools of the
62 application for merger, Florida Polytechnic University shall
63 take appropriate action to obtain all consents required by the
64 Federal Communications Commission and third parties before
65 assigning the educational broadband service station license that
66 has a Federal Communications Commission-issued reference point
67 in Polk County to the University of Florida. Upon obtaining such
68 consents, and upon the approval of the Federal Communications
69 Commission, Florida Polytechnic University shall assign the
70 license, including the excess capacity lease agreement for the
71 license, to the University of Florida, which shall assume the
72 benefits, obligations, and liabilities as the successor in
73 interest, including all regulatory and contractual
74 responsibilities. This section is contingent upon the approval
75 of the assignment of the lease by the Federal Communications

76 Commission.

77 Section 3. The boards of trustees of the University of
78 Florida and New College of Florida shall submit to the
79 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges
80 and Schools an application for merger. Upon approval by the
81 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges
82 and Schools of the merger, the boards of trustees shall submit
83 an implementation plan to the Board of Governors, which shall
84 monitor the fidelity of the implementation of the plan. Under
85 the implementation plan all real and personal property, licenses
86 and associated revenues, existing contracts, unexpended
87 balances, appropriations, allocations, funds, and mutually
88 agreed-upon obligations, responsibilities, and liabilities of
89 New College of Florida shall be transferred to the University of
90 Florida.

91 Section 4. The tuition and fees established by the Board
92 of Governors for Florida Polytechnic University and New College
93 of Florida shall remain in place for undergraduate and graduate
94 students of Florida Polytechnic University and New College of
95 Florida, respectively, until such students graduate.

96 Section 5. The boards of trustees of the University of
97 Florida, Florida Polytechnic University, and New College of
98 Florida and their respective officers, trustees, employees,
99 attorneys, and agents, are immune from all civil liability
100 pertaining to or arising from compliance with this act,

101 including the transfers required in sections 1., 2., and 3. of
 102 this act.

103 Section 6. Subsection (5) is added to section 1004.32,
 104 Florida Statutes, to read:

105 1004.32 New College of Florida.—

106 (5) This section shall stand repealed upon approval by the
 107 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges
 108 and Schools of the merger of the University of Florida and New
 109 College of Florida.

110 Section 7. Subsection (4) is added to section 1004.345,
 111 Florida Statutes, to read:

112 1004.345 The Florida Polytechnic University.—

113 (4) This section shall stand repealed upon approval by the
 114 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges
 115 and Schools of the merger of the University of Florida and
 116 Florida Polytechnic University.

117 Section 8. Section 1004.3451, Florida Statutes, is amended
 118 to read:

119 1004.3451 Direct-support organization for Florida
 120 Polytechnic University.—In accordance with s. 1004.28 and the
 121 regulations of the Board of Governors, the Board of Trustees of
 122 the Florida Polytechnic University may certify a direct-support
 123 organization to serve the Florida Polytechnic University. Upon
 124 approval by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern
 125 Association of Colleges and Schools of the application for

126 merger, the Board of Trustees of the Florida Polytechnic
127 ~~University of South Florida~~, in conjunction with the University
128 of ~~South~~ Florida Foundation, shall develop and implement a plan
129 to transfer, after obtaining consent from the appropriate
130 donors, assets derived from donations intended for the
131 enhancement of the ~~University of South Florida~~ Polytechnic
132 campus to the University of Florida Foundation. This section
133 shall stand repealed upon approval by the Commission on Colleges
134 of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools of the
135 merger of the University of Florida and Florida Polytechnic
136 University new direct support organization serving the Florida
137 Polytechnic University.

138 Section 9. Subsection (2) of section 1009.534, Florida
139 Statutes, is amended to read:

140 1009.534 Florida Academic Scholars award.—

141 (2) A Florida Academic Scholar who is enrolled in a
142 certificate, diploma, associate, or baccalaureate degree program
143 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary education institution is
144 eligible, beginning in the 2017-2018 academic year, for an award
145 equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and
146 fees established under ss. 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7);
147 1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8), (10), and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-
148 (13), (14)(r), and (16), as applicable, and is eligible for an
149 additional stipend ~~\$300 each fall and spring academic semester~~
150 ~~or the equivalent~~ for textbooks, to assist with the payment of

151 educational expenses as funds are specifically appropriated in
152 the General Appropriations Act.

153 Section 10. Effective July 1, 2021, subsection (3) of
154 section 1009.535, Florida Statutes, is renumbered as subsection
155 (5), subsection (2) is amended, and a new subsection (3) and
156 subsection (4) are added to that section, to read:

157 1009.535 Florida Medallion Scholars award.—

158 (2) A Florida Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in a
159 certificate, diploma, ~~associate~~, or baccalaureate degree program
160 at a public or nonpublic postsecondary education institution is
161 eligible, beginning in the fall 2018 semester, for an award
162 equal to the amount necessary to pay 75 percent of tuition and
163 fees established under ss. 1009.22(3), (5), (6), and (7);
164 1009.23(3), (4), (7), (8), (10), and (11); and 1009.24(4), (7)-
165 (13), (14)(r), and (16), as applicable, to assist with the
166 payment of educational expenses.

167 (3)(a) Beginning with students initially eligible for an
168 award in the fall 2021 semester and thereafter, a Florida
169 Medallion Scholar who is enrolled in an associate degree program
170 at a Florida College System institution is eligible for an award
171 equal to the amount necessary to pay 100 percent of tuition and
172 fees listed under subsection (2).

173 (b) Upon completion of his or her associate degree at a
174 Florida College System institution, the student may transfer to
175 a state university or other eligible public or nonpublic

176 postsecondary education institution or remain at the Florida
177 College System institution and enroll in a baccalaureate degree
178 program to continue receiving his or her award.

179 (4) If a Florida Medallion Scholar under subsection (3)
180 earns an associate degree from a Florida College System
181 institution with:

182 (a) A cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a
183 4.0 scale, he or she is eligible for an award equal to the
184 amount necessary to pay 100 percent of the tuition and fees
185 listed under subsection (2) upon enrolling in a baccalaureate
186 degree program at an eligible public or nonpublic postsecondary
187 education institution.

188 (b) A cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or higher on
189 a 4.0 scale, but below a 3.5, he or she is eligible for an award
190 equal to the amount necessary to pay 75 percent of tuition and
191 fees listed under subsection (2) upon enrolling in a
192 baccalaureate degree program at an eligible public or nonpublic
193 postsecondary education institution.

194 Section 11. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this
195 act, this act shall take effect July 1, 2020.