By the Committee on Education Postsecondary; and Senator Grall

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to higher education; amending s. 1001.706, F.S.; revising requirements in the Board of Governors duties relating to the mission of each state university; revising requirements for the Board of Governors’ strategic plan relating to the goals and objectives of the State University System; requiring the Board of Governors to annually require each state university to include certain information in its economic security report; authorizing a Board of Governors regulation to include a post-tenure review of state university faculty at any time, with cause; amending s. 1001.7065, F.S.; requiring each state university to annually report certain research expenditures of a specified amount; creating s. 1001.725, F.S.; providing that each state university board of trustees is responsible for hiring full-time faculty; authorizing the board to delegate hiring authority to the president; prohibiting the president from delegating hiring authority except as specified; prohibiting a university from using specified methods in its admissions or personnel processes; requiring each state university board of trustees to confirm specified employee reappointments and contracts; requiring each state university president to annually present specified performance evaluations and salaries to the board of trustees; amending s. 1004.06, F.S.; expanding definition of discrimination; prohibiting specified educational institutions from expending...
funds to promote specified concepts; providing exceptions; requiring the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to adopt rules and regulations, respectively; amending s. 1004.6496, F.S.; authorizing the Board of Trustees of the University of Florida to use funds to establish and fund the Hamilton College for Classical and Civic Education; revising the goals of the college; providing powers of the college; amending s. 1004.6499, F.S.; renaming the Florida Institute of Politics at the Florida State University as the Florida Institute for Governance and Civics; providing the goals of the institute; amending s. 1004.64991, F.S.; authorizing the Adam Smith Center for the Study of Economic Freedom to perform certain tasks in order to carry out its established purpose; amending s. 1007.25, F.S.; revising how general education core courses are established; requiring the Commissioner of Education and Chancellor of the State University System to consider approval of certain courses; requiring faculty committees to review and submit recommendations to the Articulation Coordinating Committee and the commissioner relating to certain courses by a specified date and every 3 years thereafter; prohibiting general education core courses from teaching certain topics or presenting information in specified ways; providing requirements for general education core courses; requiring specified educational institutions to offer certain courses; prohibiting public postsecondary educational
institutions from requiring students to take certain
additional general education core courses; creating s.
1007.55, F.S.; providing legislative findings;
requiring the Articulation Coordinating Committee to
submit an annual report to specified entities relating
to courses that have been approved as meeting
specified requirements to be used by public
postsecondary educational institutions; providing
requirements for general education courses; requiring
public postsecondary educational institution boards of
trustees and presidents to annually review and approve
general education requirements; providing a penalty
for failing to meet such review and approval
requirements; requiring public postsecondary
educational institutions to report certain courses to
the department; prohibiting public postsecondary
educational institutions from requiring students to
take certain additional general education courses;
requiring the State Board of Education and the Board
of Governors to adopt rules and regulations,
respectively; amending s. 1008.47, F.S.; specifying a
one-time limit on the requirement to change
accrediting agencies; amending s. 1009.26, F.S.;
providing that certain postsecondary fee waivers
continue until specified criteria are met; providing
an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
Section 1. Paragraphs (a) through (d) of subsection (5) and paragraph (b) of subsection (6) of section 1001.706, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1001.706 Powers and duties of the Board of Governors.—

(5) POWERS AND DUTIES RELATING TO ACCOUNTABILITY.—

(a) The Legislature intends that the Board of Governors shall align the missions of each constituent university with the academic success of its students; the existing and emerging economic development needs of the state; the national reputation of its faculty and its academic and research programs; the quantity of externally generated research, patents, and licenses; and the strategic and accountability plans required in paragraphs (b) and (c). The Board of Governors shall periodically review the mission of each constituent university and make updates or revisions as needed. Upon completion of a review of the mission, the board shall review existing academic programs to ensure alignment with the mission. The board shall include in its review direction to each constituent university to examine its programs for any violation of s. 1000.05(4)(a).

The mission alignment and strategic plan shall consider peer institutions at the constituent universities. The mission alignment and strategic plan shall acknowledge that universities that have a national and international impact have the greatest capacity to promote the state’s economic development through: new discoveries, patents, licenses, and technologies that generate state businesses of global importance; research achievements through external grants and contracts that are comparable to nationally recognized and ranked universities; the creation of a resource rich academic environment that attracts...
high-technology business and venture capital to the state; and
this generation’s finest minds focusing on solving the state’s
economic, social, environmental, and legal problems in the areas
of life sciences, water, sustainability, energy, and health
care. A nationally recognized and ranked university that has a
global perspective and impact shall be afforded the opportunity
to enable and protect the university’s competitiveness on the
global stage in fair competition with other institutions of
other states in the highest Carnegie Classification.

(b) The Board of Governors shall develop a strategic plan
specifying goals and objectives for the State University System
and each constituent university, including each university’s
contribution to overall system goals and objectives. The
strategic plan must:

1. Include performance metrics and standards common for all
institutions and metrics and standards unique to institutions
depending on institutional core missions, including, but not
limited to, student admission requirements, retention,
gr graduation, percentage of graduates who have attained
employment, percentage of graduates enrolled in continued
education, licensure passage, nondegree credential attainment,
average wages of employed graduates, average cost per graduate,
excess hours, student loan burden and default rates, faculty
awards, total annual research expenditures, patents, licenses
and royalties, intellectual property, startup companies, annual
giving, endowments, and well-known, highly respected national
rankings for institutional and program achievements.

2. Consider reports and recommendations of the Florida
Talent Development Council under s. 1004.015 and the
Articulation Coordinating Committee under s. 1007.01.

3. Include student enrollment and performance data delineated by method of instruction, including, but not limited to, traditional, online, and distance learning instruction.

4. Include criteria for designating baccalaureate degree and master’s degree programs at specified universities as high-demand programs of emphasis. The programs of emphasis list adopted by the Board of Governors before July 1, 2021, shall be used for the 2021-2022 academic year. Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, the Board of Governors shall adopt the criteria to determine value for and prioritization of degree credentials and degree programs established by the Credentials Review Committee under s. 445.004 for designating high-demand programs of emphasis. The Board of Governors must review designated programs of emphasis, at a minimum, every 3 years to ensure alignment with the prioritization of degree credentials and degree programs identified by the Credentials Review Committee.

5. Include criteria for nondegree credentials.

(c) The Board of Governors shall develop an accountability plan for the State University System and each constituent university. The accountability plan must address institutional and system achievement of goals and objectives specified in the strategic plan adopted pursuant to paragraph (b) and must be submitted as part of its legislative budget request. Each university shall submit, as a component of the university’s annual accountability plan:

1. Information on the effectiveness of its plan for improving 4-year graduation rates; and

2. The level of financial assistance provided to students
pursuant to paragraph (h).

(d) Beginning in the 2014-2015 academic year and annually thereafter, the Board of Governors shall require a state university prior to registration to provide each enrolled student electronic access to the economic security report of employment and earning outcomes prepared by the Department of Economic Opportunity pursuant to s. 445.07. In addition, the Board of Governors shall require a state university to provide each student electronic access to the following information each year prior to registration using the data described in s. 1008.39:

1. The top 25 percent of degrees reported by the university in terms of highest full-time job placement and highest average annualized earnings in the year after earning the degree.

2. The bottom 10 percent of degrees reported by the university in terms of lowest full-time job placement and lowest average annualized earnings in the year after earning the degree.

(6) POWERS AND DUTIES RELATING TO PERSONNEL.—

(b) The Board of Governors may adopt a regulation requiring each tenured state university faculty member to undergo a comprehensive post-tenure review every 5 years. The regulation must include a process and criteria for each university to initiate a post-tenure review of a faculty member at any time, with cause. The board may include other considerations in the regulation, but the regulation must address:

1. Accomplishments and productivity;

2. Assigned duties in research, teaching, and service;

3. Performance metrics, evaluations, and ratings; and
4. Recognition and compensation considerations, as well as improvement plans and consequences for underperformance.

Section 2. Paragraph (m) is added to subsection (2) of section 1001.7065, Florida Statutes, to read:

1001.7065 Preeminent state research universities program.—
(2) ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE STANDARDS.—The following academic and research excellence standards are established for the preeminent state research universities program and shall be reported annually in the Board of Governors Accountability Plan:

(m) Total annual research expenditures of $50 million or more benefiting STEM-related occupations, businesses, or industry partners located in this state and currently employing, or seeking to employ, residents of this state.

Section 3. Section 1001.725, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

1001.725 University boards of trustees; personnel.—
(1) Each university board of trustees is responsible for hiring full-time faculty. The president may provide hiring recommendations to the board. The president and the board are not bound by recommendations or opinions of faculty or other individuals or groups.

(a) The board may delegate its hiring authority to the president; however, the president may not delegate hiring authority to anyone outside the executive management team within the president’s office.

(b) A university is prohibited from using diversity, equity, and inclusion statements, critical race theory, or other forms of political identity filters that violate s.
1000.05(4)(a) in any university admissions, hiring, promotion, tenure, or evaluation process.

(2) Each university board of trustees shall confirm its president’s selection and reappointment of the university’s executive management team members and their respective contracts and annual salaries, in accordance with the university’s personnel program established by the Board of Governors. Contracts and responsibilities of the president and executive team members, including, but not limited to, provost positions, must explicitly delineate that the duties of positions, other than the president, are limited to administrative oversight and operational supervision of curricular, instructional, and research affairs, as applicable to the position.

(3) Each university president shall annually present to his or her board of trustees for review the results of performance evaluations and associated salaries of all evaluated personnel earning an annual compensation of $200,000 or more, regardless of fund source.

Section 4. Section 1004.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1004.06 Prohibited expenditures.—

(1) No Florida College System institution, state university, Florida College System institution direct-support organization, or state university direct-support organization shall expend any funds, regardless of source, to purchase membership in, or goods and services from, any organization that discriminates on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or religion.

(2)(a) No Florida College System institution, state
university, Florida College System institution direct-support organization, or state university direct-support organization may expend any funds, regardless of source, to promote, support, or maintain any programs or campus activities that violate s. 1000.05(4)(a).

(b) Programs required for compliance with federal regulations, or access programs for military veterans, Pell Grant recipients, first generation college students, nontraditional students, “2+2” transfer students from the Florida College System, students from low-income families, or students with unique abilities, are not prohibited by this subsection.

(3) The State Board of Education and the Board of Governors shall adopt rules and regulations, respectively, to implement this section.

Section 5. Section 1004.6496, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1004.6496 Hamilton College Center for Classical and Civic Education.—

(1) By July 1, 2024, the Board of Trustees of the University of Florida may use funds as provided in the General Appropriations Act and charitable donations to establish and fund the Hamilton College Center for Classical and Civic Education as an academic unit within the University of Florida. The purpose of the College Center is to support teaching and research concerning the ideas, traditions, and texts that form the foundations of Western and American civilization.

(2) The goals of the College Center are to:

(a) Educate university students in core texts and great
debates of Western civilization and the Great Books.

(b) Educate university students in the principles, ideals, and institutions of the American political order.

(c) Educate university students in the foundations of responsible leadership and informed citizenship.

(d) Provide programming and training related to civic education and the values of open inquiry and civil discourse to support the K-20 system.

(e) Coordinate with the Florida Institute for Governance and Civics of Politics created pursuant to s. 1004.6499 and the Adam Smith Center for the Study of Economic Freedom created pursuant to s. 1004.64991 and assist in the curation and implementation of Portraits in Patriotism created pursuant to s. 1003.44.

(3) In order to carry out the purposes set forth in subsection (2), the college is authorized to:

(a) Hire necessary faculty and staff pursuant to s. 1001.725;

(b) Enroll students;

(c) Develop curriculum and offer new courses, including honors courses, certificates, and major and minor programs;

(d) Award degrees;

(e) Hold events, including fundraisers;

(f) Fulfill other actions approved by the president of the university; and

(g) Generate resources based on student credit hour enrollment, in the same manner as any other college within the institution.

(4) The president of the university may hire a dean for the
college, subject to the approval of the board of trustees.

(a) If at any time the position of dean becomes vacant, the
president of the university may appoint a faculty member of the
college to serve as the acting dean. The president of the
university may remove the dean in accordance with the policies
and procedures established at the university.

(b) The dean of the college must report directly to the
president of the university.

(c) The dean of the college has the same delegated
authority, in the same manner, as any other dean at the
university.

(5) Faculty of the college may be awarded tenure subject to
the tenure policies of the university.

(6) Funds appropriated specifically to the college may not
be used for any other purpose at the university; however, the
university can provide additional funding as available to the
college.

Section 6. Section 1004.6499, Florida Statutes, is amended
to read:

1004.6499 Florida Institute for Governance and Civics of
Politics—

(1) The Florida Institute for Governance and Civics of
Politics is established at the Florida State University within
the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy. The purpose of
the institute is to provide the southeastern region of the
United States with a world class, bipartisan, nationally
renowned institute of politics.

(2) The goals of the institute are to:

(a) Provide students with access to an interdisciplinary
hub that will develop academically rigorous scholarship and coursework on the origins of the American system of government, its foundational documents, its subsequent political traditions and evolutions, and its impact on comparative political systems. Motivate students throughout the Florida State University to become aware of the significance of government and civic engagement at all levels and politics in general.

(b) Encourage civic literacy in this state through the development of educational tools and resources for K-12 and postsecondary students which foster an understanding of how individual rights, constitutionalism, separation of powers, and federalism function within the American system. Provide students with an opportunity to be politically active and civically engaged.

(c) Model civic discourse that recognizes the importance of viewpoint diversity, intellectual rigor, and an evidence-based approach to history. Nurture a greater awareness of and passion for public service and politics.

(d) Plan and host forums to allow students and guests to hear from exceptional individuals who have excelled in a wide range of sectors of American life, to highlight the possibilities created by individual achievement and entrepreneurial vision and interact with experts from government, politics, policy, and journalism on a frequent basis.

(e) Become a national and state resource on using polling instruments and other assessments to measure civic literacy and make recommendations for improving civic education information and survey methodology.
(f) Provide fellowships and internship opportunities to students in government, nonprofit organizations, and community organizations.

(g) Create through scholarship, original research, publications, symposia, testimonials, and other means a body of resources that can be accessed by students, scholars, and government officials to understand the innovations in public policy in this state over a rolling 30-year time period. Provide training sessions for newly elected state and local public officials.

(h) Organize and sponsor conferences, symposia, and workshops throughout this state to educate and inform citizens, elected officials, and appointed policymakers regarding effective policymaking techniques and processes.

(i) Create and promote research and awareness regarding politics, citizen involvement, and public service.

(j) Collaborate with related policy institutes and research activities at the Florida State University and other institutions of higher education to motivate, increase, and sustain citizen involvement in public affairs.

Section 7. Subsection (3) is added to section 1004.64991, Florida Statutes, to read:

1004.64991 The Adam Smith Center for the Study of Economic Freedom.—

(3) In order to carry out the purpose set forth in this section, the institute is authorized to:

(a) Hire necessary faculty and staff pursuant to s. 1001.725;

(b) Enroll students;
(c) Develop curriculum and offer new courses, including honors courses, certificates, and major and minor programs;

(d) Award degrees;

(e) Hold events, including fundraisers;

(f) Fulfill other actions approved by the president of the university; and

(g) Generate resources based on student credit hour enrollment, in the same manner as any other college within the institution.

Section 8. Subsection (3) of section 1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites; other degree requirements.—

(3) The chair of the State Board of Education and the chair of the Board of Governors, or their designees, shall jointly appoint faculty committees to review and recommend to the Articulation Coordinating Committee for approval by the Commissioner of Education and Chancellor of the State University System identify statewide general education core course options for inclusion in the statewide course numbering system established under s. 1007.24. Faculty committees shall, by December 1, 2023, and by December 1 every 3 years thereafter, review and submit recommendations to the Articulation Coordinating Committee and the commissioner for the removal, alignment, realignment, or addition of general education core courses that satisfy the requirements of this subsection.

(a) General education core course options shall consist of a maximum of five courses within each of the subject areas of communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and
natural sciences. The core courses may be revised, or the five-course maximum within each subject area may be exceeded, if approved by the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors, as recommended by the subject area faculty committee and approved by the Articulation Coordinating Committee as necessary for a subject area.

(b) Each general education core course option must contain high-level academic and critical thinking skills and common competencies that students must demonstrate to successfully complete the course.

(c) General education core courses may not distort significant historical events or include a curriculum that teaches identity politics, violates s. 1000.05(4)(a), or defines American history as contrary to the creation of a new nation based on universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence.

(d) General education core courses must meet the following standards:

1. Communication courses must afford students the ability to communicate effectively, including the ability to write clearly and engage in public speaking.

2. Humanities courses must afford students the ability to think critically through the mastering of subjects concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy, and must include selections from the Western canon.

3. Social science courses must afford students an understanding of the basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavior and
past and present social, political, and economic issues.

4. Natural science courses must afford students the ability to critically examine and evaluate the principles of the scientific method, model construction, and use the scientific method to explain natural experiences and phenomena.

5. Mathematics courses must afford students a mastery of foundational mathematical and computation models and methods by applying such models and methods in problem solving.

(e) Beginning with students initially entering a Florida College System institution or state university in 2015-2016 and thereafter, each student must complete at least one identified core course in each subject area as part of the general education course requirements. Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year and thereafter, students entering a technical degree education program as defined in s. 1004.02(13) must complete at least one identified core course in each subject area as part of the general education course requirements before a degree is awarded.

(f) All public postsecondary educational institutions shall offer at least one general education core course in each of the identified subject areas and accept these courses as meeting general education core course requirements upon transfer, regardless of whether the receiving institution offers the identical general education core courses. The remaining general education course requirements shall be identified by each institution as approved in accordance with this section and listed in the statewide course numbering system and reported to the department by their statewide course number.

(g) A public postsecondary educational institution may not...
require a student to complete an additional course to meet a
subject area distribution requirement that was completed by the
student with a course that has since been removed as a general
education core course.

(h) The general education core course options shall be
adopted in rule by the State Board of Education and in
regulation by the Board of Governors.

Section 9. Section 1007.55, Florida Statutes, is created to
read:

1007.55 General education course principles, standards, and
content.—

(1) The Legislature finds it necessary to ensure that every
undergraduate student of a Florida public postsecondary
educational institution graduates as an informed citizen through
participation in rigorous general education courses that promote
and preserve the constitutional republic through traditional,
historically accurate, and high-quality coursework. Courses with
a curriculum based on unproven, speculative, or exploratory
content are best suited as elective or specific program
prerequisite credit, not general education credit.

(2) In performing its duties under ss. 1007.24 and 1007.25,
by July 1, 2024, and each July 1 thereafter, the Articulation
Coordinating Committee shall submit to the State Board of
Education and the Board of Governors courses that have been
approved to be used by public postsecondary educational
institutions as meeting the additional general education
requirements.

(3) General education courses must meet the following
criteria:
(a) Be in the general education core subject areas and meet the course standards as provided in s. 1007.25;

(b) Be offered by at least half of all public postsecondary educational institutions;

(c) Be identified as lower level in the statewide course numbering system; and

(d) Whenever applicable, provide instruction on the historical background and philosophical foundation of Western civilization and this nation’s historical documents, such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments, and the Federalist Papers.

(4) If a course is approved as a general education course, that course must be accepted as a general education course, in the same subject area and regardless of whether it is offered by the institution, by all public postsecondary educational institutions.

(5) Public postsecondary educational institution boards of trustees and presidents are responsible for annually reviewing and approving, at a public meeting, general education course requirements, as authorized and approved in accordance with ss. 1007.24 and 1007.25 and this section, at their respective institutions. Public postsecondary educational institutions that fail to comply with the requirements of this section are not eligible to receive performance-based funding pursuant to ss. 1001.66 and 1001.92.

(6) Public postsecondary educational institutions must report courses meeting institutional general education subject requirements to the department by their statewide course number.
(7) A public postsecondary educational institution may not require a student to take an additional course to meet a subject area distribution requirement that was completed by the student with a course that has since been removed as a general education course.

(8) The State Board of Education and the Board of Governors shall adopt rules and regulations, respectively, to implement this section.

Section 10. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section 1008.47, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1008.47 Postsecondary education institution accreditation.—

(2) ACCREDITATION.—

(a) By September 1, 2022, the Board of Governors or the State Board of Education, as applicable, shall identify and determine the accrediting agencies or associations best suited to serve as an accreditor for public postsecondary institutions. Such accrediting agencies or associations must be recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education. A public postsecondary institution may not be accredited by the same accrediting agency or association for consecutive accreditation cycles. In the year following reaffirmation or fifth-year review by its accrediting agencies or associations, each public postsecondary institution must seek and obtain accreditation from an accrediting agency or association identified by the Board of Governors or State Board of Education, respectively, before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date. The requirements in this section are limited to a one-time change in accreditation. The requirements of this subsection are not applicable to those professional,
graduate, departmental, or certificate programs at public
postsecondary institutions that have specific accreditation
requirements or best practices, including, but not limited to,
law, pharmacy, engineering, or other similarly situated
educational programs.

Section 11. Paragraph (b) of subsection (18) of section
1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.26 Fee Waivers.—

(18)

(b) A waiver granted under this subsection is applicable
only for upper-level courses and up to 110 percent of the number
of required credit hours of the baccalaureate degree program for
which the student is enrolled. **Student granted a waiver under**
this subsection shall continue receiving the waiver until the
student graduates, exceeds the number of allowable credit hours,
or withdraws from an eligible program, regardless of whether the
program is removed from the approved list of eligible programs
subsequent to the student’s enrollment.

Section 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.