



Overview of Consultant's Report on a Blueprint for Higher Education in Florida

The report:

- ✓ Is the beginning of a dialogue regarding statewide higher education policy that includes the SUS, community colleges and independent colleges & universities.
- ✓ Reflects only the consultant's view
- ✓ Will be presented on January 24 to the BOG's Academic Programs/Strategic Planning Committee

Next steps:

- ✓ After the presentation, the Chancellor will propose to the Committee an action plan for beginning discussions surrounding the issues included in the report.
- ✓ The action plan will include a public hearing and workshop to be held on February 27 in Orlando.

Excerpts from the report

Observations:

1. The demand for additional access to higher education in Florida has not yet been fully documented. (p. 3)

- Florida will continue to have population growth far in excess of the national average between 2004 and 2014 (19.5% vs. 8.9%), but that growth will be slower than in the last decade (24.6%). More importantly, the age distribution and the ethnic composition will change dramatically, with potentially severe impacts on the rate of higher education enrollment growth.
- [The recommendation is for the BOG to] establish a working group of experts.... to develop and maintain a sophisticated, 10-year enrollment projection model for individual institutions and statewide higher education.

2. The State University System of Florida has significantly increased degree production and has emphasized high demand degrees; however, graduate and professional programs have grown at a faster rate than undergraduate degrees and there are significant K-12 pipeline issues. (p. 4)

-more emphasis should be placed on increasing bachelor degrees.
- The emphasis on STEM [science, technology, engineering, math] fields and other areas of high state need is also commendable but raises issues of the available pipeline. Math and Science scores in the K-12 system do not indicate a robust pipeline. Furthermore, when those scores are disaggregated by race, the achievement (and interest) gap is stark.
- [The recommendation is for the BOG to] establish a working group...to examine the general education programs in the SUS to insure their currency for preparing students for a global society.

3. The conditions for success do not yet exist for the implementation of a long-term master plan for Higher Education in Florida. (p. 6)

- These conditions include:

A Very Unclean Slate: (p. 6)

[Florida has] very few universities for the size of the state...[but] it has a myriad of higher education sites. These sites are not coherent as some universities favor branch campuses, others regional campuses, and others joint-use facilities. In their present form, these sites are undersized and overly expensive.

Mission Leap not Creep. (p. 6)

[The decision to open three new medical schools since 2001] will either prove that Florida was more visionary than any other state or more undisciplined.

At a time when federal research funding growth is slowing dramatically...., a majority of Florida's current universities have major research university ambitions....

...mission leap is not limited to the universities. A number of community colleges have begun to offer limited baccalaureate programs.

[Florida] has to pay attention to the possible dilution of emphasis on the traditional community college mission.

...Florida will need its community colleges to be highly focused on two-year programs that transfer effectively (an area where Florida has been a national leader) and that prepare students for basic employment.

Major Resource Constraints (p. 8)

...Florida is a very low tuition state...Without increased flexibility with tuition for the SUS institutions...or major new state investments, no blueprint or long-term master plan can possibly begin to even take shape.

...the current funding system (an enrollment formula) rewards quantity over quality...[It] does not incentivize the development of a coherent blueprint or long-term master plan for higher education; it encourages the status quo.

...Bright Futures and the Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Program should be recognized as innovative, [but] they bring with them some particular long-term challenges.

Indeed, all of these economic decisions, while fueled in many ways with good intentions, will bankrupt the state's higher education system if these fundamental policy issues are not revisited in a timely manner.

Seamless in Name Only (p. 9)

[Statutes should be modified to reflect the agreement reached between the BOG and the DOE regarding nursing, teaching, and the Bachelor of Applied Science as being the appropriate degrees for community colleges to offer.]

[There should be a greater sense of partnership between the Board of Governors and the boards of trustees.]

Planning without Implementing (p. 10)

While Florida has an extensive and often impressive planning framework and environment, there's little evidence that many of these plans ever get off the shelf.

Implementing without Planning (p. 11)

[The state] does not appear to have a strategic plan for economic development that links to the strengths and assets of its universities.

An Inexperienced Governance and Support Enterprise (p. 11)

[There is] a governance and management mire that needs additional, intentional sorting out.

Recommendations (p. 12)

1. The BOG should complete an inventory of existing SUS educational sites and categorize them according to existing Florida Classifications.
2. The BOG should conduct a mission review for each of its institutions and for the BOG itself. This should be conducted in partnership with the institutions and with external, independent guidance.
3. Florida must resolve its resource constraints.
 - (a) The BOG, Governor, and legislature should re-examine tuition policy and design a tuition strategy that increases institutional flexibility, yet which also actually increases access through major reinvestment in need-based aid.
 - (b) The Governor and legislature should form a Blue Ribbon Commission of Florida leaders to redesign Bright Futures and the Prepaid Tuition Plan to insure their long-term solvency and that neither program has the unintended consequence of inhibiting the expansion of Florida higher education quality or quantity.
 - (c) The BOG should forge a new covenant with the Governor and legislature that commits SUS to greater efficiency, productivity, and accountability in return for increased state allocations and expanded autonomy.
4. The new Governor should convene a summit of higher education leaders (SUS Chancellor, Presidents and Board Chairs; Community College Chancellor, Presidents, and Board Chairs; DOE Commissioner and Board Chair; ICUF leadership higher education and K-12 association heads; and legislative leadership) that has as its goal to bring about expanded collaboration among the groups and an elimination of existing “turf battles”.
5. The BOG should examine previous reports on expanding higher education opportunities, connect with the state and business leadership responsible for those reports, and enlist allies for actually implementing this report.
6. The BOG should create a position/office of Higher Education and the Economy in the Chancellor’s office to work with the state agency (agencies) responsible for economic development and state strategic planning to make SUS research (and education and public service) an integral component of the state’s long-term economic development strategy.
7. The BOG should undertake a review of its effectiveness and its governance role and committee structure in conjunction with a parallel review of the role and responsibilities of the eleven Boards of Trustees to ensure that the governance of the system is greater than the sum of its individual stewards. Subsequent to this review, the Board of Governors needs to assess the structure, staffing loads, and the effectiveness of the Office

of the Chancellor in order to support the ongoing implementation of the proposed blueprint and the development, over the long-term, of a master plan for higher education.

A Florida Blueprint (p. 13)

Recommendations

1. Establish a new system within the SUS with sole focus on bachelor degrees and with its own governance parameters within the BOG. This system should comprise:

- a. Any existing SUS campus that wishes to opt into the new subsystem. Significant financial incentives will need to be available.
- b. Any existing branch campuses that has reached 2,500 FTE* and has the data to demonstrate the ability to reach 7,500 FTE within 10 years.
- c. Any community college that wishes to produce more than 50% of its credit hours at the baccalaureate level (or 25% upper division) and that can reach (or has already reached) 2,500 FTE in total enrollment within 5 years and that can demonstrate the ability to reach 7,500 FTE in total enrollment within 10 years.
- d. Any independent college that wishes to become a public or quasi-public college which can meet the FTE requirements in (b) above and which can demonstrate the cost-benefit to the state.
- e. New campuses. These would only be built if responses to (a) through (d) above did not result in sufficient geographic access.

The new system institutions would become and be called state colleges. They would have local Advisory Boards; all governance would be through BOG.

2. Revise the funding approach for SUS institutions to encourage responsiveness to priority state needs:

- a. Funding formula revised to include a retention and graduation component.
- b. State to provide support above the base funding formula for high state need academic programs.
- c. State further invests in targeted areas of research and graduate study based on its economic development plan.

* *Note: All references to FTE reflect the national norm of 30 credits per FTE and not the Florida methodology.*

3. Expand access to distance education degrees, with special emphasis on internet-based courses, through the establishment of BOG Distance Education Consortium. The Board of Governors should:

- a. Create a Board of Advisors for Distance Education, primarily from institutional representatives.
- b. Facilitate and incentivize collaborative distance education degrees, with special emphasis on high state need programs.
- c. Be provided funding by the legislature to increase significantly the number of distance degrees available.
- d. Package and market all distance education programs in the SUS and in other participating institutions.
- e. Provide faculty development in distance education.
- f. Establish an e-learning tuition rate.

4. Include independent colleges/universities in certain initiatives that expand access. This support should be targeted to:

- a. Including independent colleges/universities in forgivable loan programs.
- b. Distance education programs that are part of SUS Distance Education Consortium.
- c. Capital needs that would increase access to Florida residents within certain parameters.

For further information, please contact Vice Chancellor Nancy McKee at (850) 245-9676 or Diane McCain, Director, External Relations, at (850) 245-9632.