

2007 LEGISLATIVE ISSUE FORM

BOG ISSUE: Student Technology Advancement Program



PROPOSED STATUTORY LANGUAGE: Draft Statutory Language Complete

1. Need for Change: Section 1009.24, Florida Statutes

In order to provide the highest quality education in a global economic marketplace that is dependent on knowledge and the use of technology, students in our public universities must have access to relevant technologies and the attendant infrastructure. Because of insufficient state funding and one of the lowest tuition rates in the country the ability of the public universities to meet the technological needs of the students is seriously compromised. Each year, university technology infrastructure lags further behind, providing an impediment to the education of our students in this globally competitive world. Florida's public universities require a reliable and consistent means of ensuring that technology needed to educate Florida's students is available. The Student Technology Advancement Program, not included in Bright Futures, would provide students with technology necessary to be competitive in the innovation economy.

2. Current Condition:

Funding requirements for the class size amendment and slowed growth in state lottery receipts are primary factors that diminish educational funds available to public universities. However, universities are experiencing tremendous demand for student access and services.

Factors creating the demand for improved technology include:

- The demands of a post 9-11 world for information and research security.
- Sharp increases in unfunded enrollment added to the university system over the past several years, and even more student enrollment increases predicted for the next few years, place a great strain on technology facilities, support and services.
- Demands for instructional infrastructure and upgrades are essential for high quality educational services.
- Constant upgrading of technology tools and support are essential to keep pace and maintain alignment with the state's needs.

- The business community demands current, high tech training to help them maintain their competitive edge in the global economy.
- Students demand high-skill job training, which enables them to obtain high wage jobs; this requires universities to maintain best practices in technology access and support.

A technology improvement plan would be implemented by boards of trustees. Examples of technology improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Complete the Wireless Campus initiative so that all outdoor and indoor spaces are covered by a wireless LAN
- Facilitate academic units that have an emphasis on laptop and portable computing and provide infrastructure to support the power of broadband access
- Provide Schedule of Courses, the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogues, and other key university publications in web-friendly formats
- Design and construct a Technology Center (a “Virtual Union”) in an existing building, with an expanded Help Desk facility, work group environments for collaborative learning, private study carrels, and close proximity or access to a food service facility
- Design and construct satellite Technology Centers throughout campus – in locations that would include residence halls, the Health Sciences Center, Libraries, recreation centers, and existing computing labs
- Continue expansion of bandwidth capabilities throughout campus and off campus sites to support video streaming and video conferencing
- Seek private/public partnerships to provide low cost or discounted broadband access to students in their local service areas
- Create and support a web based, campus-wide common calendar to facilitate scheduling of academic and extracurricular obligations
- Improve and support course management software with a full-scale training program for faculty implementing this service in all their classes.

3. Effect of the Change:

The Student Technology Advancement Program will provide each university with a mechanism to more effectively meet future technology needs. It is further proposed that this program remain outside of Bright Futures. The establishment of and any subsequent increase in technology funding would be recommended by a committee at each university, at least one-half of whom would be students

appointed by the student body president. The remaining committee members would be appointed by the university president.

Students would have a major role in determining the expenditure of any funds raised pursuant to this program, should it be authorized by the legislature. A copy of the university's technology improvement plan would be submitted by the university to student body president who could provide input and advice on the plan to the university president. The university president and the student body president must jointly approve the plan before a final decision is made by the board of trustees.

4. Fiscal Impact:

Based on the approximately 7 million student credit hours (SCH) generated in the 2005-2006 school year every \$1 per SCH would generate \$7 million for the Student Technology Advancement Program.

5. Justification for BOARD OF GOVERNOR'S Priority (if applicable):

The Board of Governors recognizes the importance of having adequate technology to educate students in a manner that makes them competitive in a global marketplace. This change would provide a reliable source of funding for university technology needs.

6. Link to BOG Strategic Plan:

This issue addresses Goal D, building world class academic programs and research capacity. Having adequate technology resources is crucial for establishing and maintaining world class academic programs.