

2006 LEGISLATIVE ISSUE FORM

BOG/SUS ISSUE: Technology Funding



PROPOSED STATUTORY LANGUAGE: Attached

1. Change Needed: Section 1009.24(12), Florida Statutes

Due to limited resources for the upcoming fiscal year, other sources of revenue must be identified in order to meet the technological needs associated with higher education. The 2006-2007 Legislative Budget Request includes \$5.9 million for technology. These funds would address a portion of the backlog of technology needs, but is insufficient to fund all of the current need. Additionally, 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. Such a source could be a fee paid by students that universities could use to address technology needs at each campus.

2. Current Condition:

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

Factors creating the demand for technology funding 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.

The 2006-2007 legislative budget request approved in July, 2005 included a technology issue that would provide \$5.9 million. These funds would be utilized for technology

issues as determined by the 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. Rationale for Change:

The proceeds of this fee will allow each university the flexibility to meet future technology needs. It is further proposed that this fee remain outside of Bright Futures. The establishment of and any subsequent increase in the technology fee would be recommended by a technology fee 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.

4. Fiscal Impact:

There will be approximately 7 million student credit hours (SCH) generated in the 2005-2006 school year. Thus for every \$1 per SCH technology fee, \$7 million would be generated.

(Note: Section 1009.23(10), Florida Statutes, authorizes the Community Colleges to establish a technology fee that cannot exceed \$1.80 per SCH for resident students and not more than \$5.40 per SCH for non-resident students.)

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

The Board of Governors recognizes the importance of having adequate technology and has included a line item request for technology funding in its 2005-2006 Legislative Budget Request. 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.

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to higher education finance policy; amending s. 1009.24, F.S.; authorizing a technology fee for state universities; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. A new paragraph (s) is added to section 1009.24, subsection (12) to read:

1009.24 State university student fees.--

(12) Each university board of trustees is authorized to establish the following fees:

(s) A technology fee. The amount of the initial fee and any subsequent increase in the technology fee must be recommended by a technology fee committee, at least one-half of whom are students appointed by the student body president. The remainder of the committee shall be appointed by the university president. A chairperson, appointed jointly by the university president and the student body president, shall vote only in the case of a tie. The recommendations of the committee shall take effect only after approval by the university president, after consultation with the student body president, with final approval by the university board of trustees. An increase in the technology fee may occur only once each fiscal year and must be implemented beginning with the fall term. The technology fee shall not be included in any award pursuant to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program as set forth in s. 1009.531, F.S.

Section 2. Except as otherwise provided, this act shall take effect July 1, 2006.