

**THE  
FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM:**

**ASSURING POSTSECONDARY  
ACCESS THAT SUPPORTS**

**FLORIDA'S FUTURE**

**A Report of  
The Florida College System Task Force  
December 2008**

# Executive Summary

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## Recommendations (27)

### Articulation

1. The Task Force recommends amending s. 1007.23 F.S. to specifically include 2 + 2 transfer/admission guarantees between community colleges, public colleges, state colleges and state universities.

### Mission and Governance

2. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature assure that all institutions within the Florida College System retain open admissions for associate degrees and certificates, provide remedial education programs, outreach programs to underserved populations, policies and practices that enhance 2 + 2 articulation, and programs and services which serve the employment and economic development needs of their service districts.
3. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature reaffirm local Board of Trustees governance for all institutions in the Florida College System under the oversight of the State Board of Education (SBOE) and the Commissioner of Education.
4. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature amend into statute the service districts for each of the colleges in the Florida College System.
5. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature consolidate the statutory provisions regarding baccalaureate degrees so that the same provisions apply to all colleges in the Florida College System.
6. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature reserve the designation “state college” for those colleges which have completed the transition to baccalaureate degree granting status. Such institutions are eligible, but not required, to use the term “state college”.
7. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature affirm that Boards of Trustees may act upon proposed college name changes, subject to final legislative approval.
8. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature change all references in statute to the term Community College System to the term Florida College System to be consistent with language in s. 1001.60, F.S.

9. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature change all references in statute to the term Division of Community Colleges to the term Division of Florida Colleges to be consistent with language in s. 1001.60, F.S.
10. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature amend s. 1004.65(7)(a), F.S. to include “providing upper division instruction and awarding baccalaureate degrees as specifically authorized by law”, as part of the mission of state colleges within the Florida College System.
11. The Task Force recommends amending current statute to reflect one consistent process and legal framework for all institutions under the umbrella of the Florida College System requesting initial authorization to grant baccalaureate degrees/meet the definition of state college.
12. The Task Force recommends that s. 1007.33, F.S., “Site-determined baccalaureate degree access” be amended as follows:
  - a. Section 1007.33(3)(a), F.S.-Specify that an institution transitioning to state college status may develop a proposal to deliver specified baccalaureate degree programs to meet employment needs as identified by the institution, workforce advisory groups, business and industry, chambers of commerce, or other constituents/stakeholders.

### **Transition Process and Program Approval Criteria**

13. The Task Force recommends that the current State Board of Education process (adopted August 16, 2005), for transition to a baccalaureate-degree granting institution which includes the approval process for baccalaureate programs, per s. 1007.33, F.S., be maintained, and adopted in State Board Rule. The process includes the following steps:
  - Approval by district Board of Trustees for addition of baccalaureate programs to institutional mission;
  - Letter of Intent (LOI) from district Board of Trustees to the Commissioner and Chancellor and to regionally accredited public and private universities in college’s service area;
  - Copies of all LOIs received by DOE forwarded by the Chancellor of the FCS to the Chancellor of the SUS, the President of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF), and the Executive Director of the Council for Independent Education (CIE) within 15 business days of receipt.
  - Opportunity for consultation between Chancellor of Florida College System and Chancellor of State University System;

- Submission of fully developed program proposal(s) which meets all SBOE criteria to Department of Education (DOE) within 90 days of LOI;
- Proposal review by DOE (Division of Florida Colleges) staff within 60 days of receipt;
- Finalized proposal placed on SBOE agenda for approval at request of college and with recommendation to approve or deny from the Commissioner;
- SBOE takes action on request;
- Upon SBOE baccalaureate program approval, a SACS Level I college must request a SACS Level II Substantive Change, which must be granted in full prior to program implementation.
- Implementation must be limited to the level of baccalaureate FTE funding authorized by the Legislature. When available, colleges may utilize externally generated/private financial support to supplement appropriated state resources for new upper division programs.

14. The Task Force recommends that the current SBOE criteria for baccalaureate program approval, should be maintained, and adopted in State Board Rule. These criteria require that all new baccalaureate proposals detail the following:

- Development Framework:
  - Planning process, including Advisory, Businesses/Industry, and Community input;
  - Implementation timeline;
  - Analysis of need, demand and supply;
  - Target populations, pipelines;
  - 2 + 2 and Graduate Articulation ;
  - Alignment with K20 Strategic Plan
  - Evidence of communication/dialogue with regionally accredited public and private postsecondary institutions (SUS, ICUF, CIE) during the program planning and development period;
  - Enrollment plan linked to program costs and anticipated financial support from state appropriations and externally generated private sources.
- Academic Requirements:
  - Major/ Minor/Concentrations & CIP Code Classification;
  - Program length;
  - Curriculum; Course sequence;
  - Admission requirements (including need for limited access status);
  - General Education Requirements;
  - Common course pre-requisite requirements;
  - Foreign Language requirements;
  - Learning Outcomes;
  - CLAST requirements; (\*See below)

- Clinical requirements/internships;
  - Faculty credentials and ratios;
  - Need for specialized accreditation;
  - Delivery systems;
  - Facilities, including classrooms, labs, and offices;
  - Equipment;
  - Library holdings and staffing;
  - Academic and Student Support Services.
15. The Task Force recommends that the CLAST requirement be uniformly applied for all lower and upper-division students enrolled in public postsecondary institutions in Florida per s. 1008.29 F.S. Specifically, retain s. 1008.29 F.S. in statute; amend Florida law to eliminate s. 1004.875(3)(c)2, F.S.
  16. The Task Force recommends replacing current proposal submission deadlines (e.g., LOI by June 1, Proposal by Sept. 1), with open “rolling” submissions, to maximize responsiveness and flexibility in planning in State Board Rule.
  17. The Task Force recommends adding a section to State Board Rule which requires colleges seeking initial baccalaureate authorization to provide a statement of “strategic vision” which encompasses the institution’s long-range goals.
  18. The Task Force recommends adding a section to State Board Rule replacing the “ex post facto” Memorandum of Agreement (required in SBOE approval process) affirming college’s commitment to historical community college mission after each program approval, with an “up front” statement of commitment from BOT /President to accompany initial request for baccalaureate authorization.

### **Funding Model**

19. The Task Force recommends the funding for upper division programs in the Florida College System (FCS) should be decoupled from State University System expenses and recommends the Legislature adopt a cost-plus method for FCS funding using an initial ratio of FCS lower division base funding plus 35 percent to establish upper division funding. Baccalaureate programs in the FCS should ensure continued substantial cost savings for both students and the state when compared to baccalaureate programs offered by the SUS.
20. The Task Force recommends that funding for established baccalaureate programs be calculated based upon an enrollment plan developed by the college(s) and approved by the State Board of Education.
  - a. The approved enrollment plan would be submitted by the Department of Education with its annual Legislative Budget Request.
  - b. The Legislature would enumerate funded enrollment for upper division programs in the General Appropriations Act.

- c. Colleges would be expected to operate/deliver approved baccalaureate programs within the enrollment plan funded by the Legislature. When available, colleges may utilize externally generated/private financial support to supplement appropriated state resources for new upper division programs.
21. The Task Force recommends that state funds and student fees for direct instructional costs for upper division programs continue to be accounted for separately. The Task Force further recommends that all state funding for both lower and upper division enrollments be rolled into the Community College Program Fund (CCPF) or its successor by 2013.
22. The Task Force recommends that new baccalaureate programs be funded on the projected FTE for the first three years of their existence. Beginning with the 4<sup>th</sup> year, colleges must operate these programs on the actual FTE enrollment funding, if less than the projection.
23. The Task Force recommends the establishment of a consistent level of start-up funding for upper division programs in the legislative appropriations process that is sensitive to both initial start-up costs for the first baccalaureate program at a college and subsequent but lower start-up costs for each additional upper division program.
24. The Task Force recommends previously appropriated start-up costs and initially authorized funding levels be accommodated for in the Florida College System funding allocation model as well as in the development of future legislative budget requests.
25. The Task Force recommends the Legislature annually set a standard tuition rate for all upper division enrollments in the FCS which continues substantial cost savings to students when compared to upper division tuition in the SUS.
26. The Task Force recommends that the Legislature authorize district boards of trustees to establish local tuition rates, mirroring the existing methodology in community college funding, where boards have the autonomy to set both lower and upper division tuition within a range between 10 percent below and up to 15 percent above the legislatively established standard tuition rates.
27. The Task Force recommends that the State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF) as well as applicable statutes and administrative rules guiding the planning and distribution of Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds be adjusted to recognize and include upper division enrollments in the determination of capital outlay FTE (COFTE) for all institutions in the Florida College System.