

New College of Florida
Response to 2004-2005 Governor Recommended Policies
Presented to Chancellor Austin
March 1, 2004

● ***Targeted Incentive Program***

- *The Board of Governors shall allocate \$10,000,000 as incentive awards to individual university boards of trustees for establishing programs, policies, and procedures which lead to increased degree production in academic discipline areas deemed critical to Florida's future job growth needs.*
- *For fiscal year 2004-2005, the targeted critical career areas shall be defined as: Teaching, Nursing, Engineering, and Information Technology. The Florida Board of Governors, in conjunction with the individual university boards of trustees, shall identify the specific academic disciplines and the related, upper-division and graduate level academic courses which link to the targeted critical career areas.*
- *For allocating the incentive awards, the Florida Board of Governors shall establish a base from the 2003-2004 FTE enrollments in the targeted upper-division and graduate level academic courses taken by students who are majoring in the targeted academic disciplines. Incentive awards shall be determined at the end of each semester based on the prorated share of the FTE growth above the base year. The Florida Board of Governors shall determine the incentive award amount for each additional FTE by August 1, 2004. Any funds in Specific Appropriation 157 for incentives that are not awarded by June 30, 2005, shall revert to General Revenue unallocated.*
- *By October 1, 2004, the Florida Board of Governors, in consultation with the Agency for Workforce Innovation, Workforce Florida Inc., and Enterprise Florida shall develop a multi-year forecasting mechanism for identifying occupations to target for increased degree production. Such forecasting shall identify occupations with the largest unmet growth rates and/or highest wage potential for subsequent years. By November 1, 2004, the Florida Board of Governors shall develop a proposal for providing incentive awards beginning with the 2005-2006 fiscal year based on increasing degree production in academic disciplines linked to the occupations determined by the forecast. By December 1, 2004, the Florida Board of Governors shall report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the details regarding targeted occupations which meet the guidelines of the forecast, the incentive award proposal, and any university successes or barriers to implementing this proposal.*

New College's honors liberal arts and sciences focus does contribute to the Florida workforce in the targeted growth areas. However, the proposed baccalaureate degree production criteria may not accurately track those New College students who pursue careers in the targeted occupations. Although the College currently does not offer programs in education, nursing, engineering, and information technology, many of our graduates do pursue postgraduate degrees

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and training in these areas and eventually enter the Florida workforce. New College acts as a feeder school for graduate programs in the targeted areas.

NCF Projected Impact: In order for New College to participate in the Targeted Incentive Program, it may be necessary to follow the post-graduate studies of its graduates. Otherwise, New College may be the only SUS institution not eligible to participate in the targeted incentive program.

NCF Recommendations: New College should not be penalized because of its liberal arts curriculum. The College should work with Board of Governor's staff to identify an appropriate niche within the College's curriculum such that it is eligible to participate in the targeted incentive program.

- ***Universities Can Establish Block Tuition***

- *Individual university boards of trustees are authorized to establish block tuition and fee policies for undergraduate full-time students based on a course load of 15 credit hours beginning with the 2004-2005 academic year. The Board of Governors shall review and approve such policies prior to their implementation. Such policies shall not increase costs to students or the state regarding state supported student financial aid programs or the Florida Prepaid College Tuition Program.*

In a sense, New College has something very much resembling a block tuition program now, but tuition and fee costs are based on 16 credit hours or 20 credit hours per semester, not 15. All New College students are full time undergraduates. Under the College's unique "contract system" used to establish student course schedules each semester, every student's contract equates to a minimum course load of 16 credit hours in both the fall and spring semesters. In addition, approximately 80% of the College's enrollment in any given fall semester participates in the College's special January interterm, these Independent Study Projects (ISPs) equate to an additional 4 credit hours (a total of 20 credit hours for fall semester). At present, New College requires successful completion of a minimum of 7 contracts, 3 ISPs, a senior thesis and a comprehensive oral baccalaureate exam for a student to be eligible for their baccalaureate degree. This is the equivalent of 7 semesters (3.5 academic years) of intense study.

NCF Projected Impact: In the case of New College and its contract system, block tuition based on a course load of 15 credit hours would not have the intended consequence of encouraging students to take a heavier course load. New College students are already enrolling in a heavier load than 15 hours. The proposed block tuition would have the very significant adverse consequence of reducing the College's student credit hours generated by approximately 15% over the course of an academic year. This would be

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devastating to the College in terms of lost tuition and fee revenue, amounting to as much as \$500,000 annually (based on current enrollment) in lost matriculation fees and non resident fees before applying waivers, plus another \$100,000 annually in lost student financial aid fees, building fees, capital improvement fees, activity and service fees and health fees.

NCF Recommendation: We have no objections to the permissive nature of the block tuition language, as long as the Board of Governors or Governor/Legislature does not mandate that the College charge the equivalent of 15 credit hours for block tuition. If this were mandated (rather than the existing New College 16/20 program), there would be a significant adverse impact on the College's tuition and fee revenue, requiring a significant reduction in the operating budget, if the lost funding was not replaced.

- **University Billing Statements**

- *All students who are charged tuition and fees must receive a tuition bill which clearly identifies the amount of funding paid by the state on the student's behalf to reflect the true costs of the student's education and identify the entities which are bearing that cost. State funding to universities and state student financial aid shall be itemized. The Board of Governors shall review and approve a sample of each university's bill format prior to August 15, 2004.*

New College currently provides students a printed tuition bill. Including the additional language that clearly identifies the amount of funding paid by the state on the student's behalf can easily be accomplished on the printed bill.

However, we desire to eventually transition to a paperless "on line" billing system whereby students access a web page to view their bill. It is our understanding that costly programming would have to be accomplished to add the additional language and calculations to the web page at this time.

NCF Projected Impact: This recommended policy can be easily accomplished with minimal cost impact under our current policy of providing students printed tuition and fee bills. Further review will be needed to determine the extent of programming and associated costs needed to provide such wording and calculations via a paperless "on-line" billing system.

NCF Recommendations: Allow additional time beyond the August 15, 2004 deadline for institutions currently supporting or transitioning to on-line billing systems, taking into consideration that there may be significant costs involved in programming software to make this information available on-line.

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- *Excess Credit Hours*
 - *University boards of trustees shall establish policies which require students who are in excess of the number of hours needed to graduate by more than ten percent or who are not enrolled as degree-seeking to pay the out-of-state fee per credit hour.*

All New College students are full-time, degree-seeking students. The minimum 7 contracts and 3 Independent Study Projects (ISPs) required to earn the New College bachelor of arts degree is the equivalent of 124 credit hours, as opposed to 120 credit hours for most other baccalaureate degrees awarded at other SUS institutions. However, given the rigorous curriculum, including a required senior thesis, approximately 85% of New College graduates take 140 credit hours (8 contracts equaling 128 credit hours and 3 ISPs equaling 12 credit hours) or more to earn their baccalaureate degree.

Current Bright Futures eligibility requirements allow New College students to take up to 154 credit hours of instruction paid through Bright Futures, as opposed to a maximum of 132 credit hours available for students attending other SUS institutions. The Excess Credit Hours proposal would limit the number of New College in-state credit hours to 136. For the purposes of this response, it is assumed that Bright Futures funding would also be reduced to a maximum of 136 credit hours.

NCF Projected Impact: The proposal would have an adverse “out-of-pocket” financial impact (between \$1,800 for in-state students taking 140 credit hours to over \$8,250 for in-state students taking 154 credit hours) and would, over time, possibly result in fewer in-state students seeking enrollment at New College and completing their baccalaureate degrees. The net effect of this proposal would result in a significant increase in tuition and fees for the majority of in-state New College students over and above any other increases that may be mandated by the Governor/Legislature, Board of Governors or College Board of Trustees.

NCF Recommendations: It is recommended that New College in-state students remain eligible to take up to 154 credit hours toward completion of baccalaureate degree requirements, as has been the case in the past. If need be, the out-of-state tuition rate could be mandated for those students taking in excess of 154 credit hours.