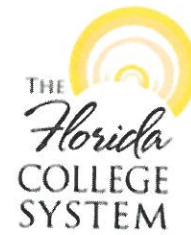




STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
SYSTEM  
of FLORIDA  
Board of Governors



December 19, 2014

The Honorable Tom Lee, Chair  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
418 Senate Office Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

The Honorable Richard Corcoran, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
221 The Capitol  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Senator Lee and Representative Corcoran:

Section 1006.735(e), Florida Statutes, requires us to propose to you the need for a differentiated tuition and fee structure for the development and delivery of distance learning courses in Complete Florida programs. We recognize the value and potential of distance learning and want to ensure that institutions are offering such courses and programs in a manner that is both cost-efficient and cost-effective.

After reviewing the attached report submitted to us by Dr. Pamela Northrup on behalf of Complete Florida, we respectfully submit the following proposals to you:

1. Allow flexibility in the assessment and payment of fees not directly benefitting students who enroll fully in distance learning coursework.

Students should not be required to pay for those campus services and activities which provide no benefit to them; instead, colleges and universities should be able to identify discretionary fees for Complete Florida students and Complete Florida students should be given the option to pay fees for those campus activities and services from which they could benefit.

Most Complete Florida institutions in both the Florida College System and the State University System charge fully online students the same fees as those paid by students taking courses on campus. Such fees may include, but not be limited to, Parking, Transportation, Health, Athletic, Activity and Service, Capital Improvement Trust Fund, and Green Fees.

Students simultaneously enrolled in both online and face-to-face courses will be taking advantage of campus activities and services and should continue to pay the same fees as students taking only face-to-face courses.

Senator Tom Lee  
Representative Richard Corcoran  
December 19, 2014  
Page 2 of 2

2. Research the potential for charging fixed or block tuition for competency-based programs.

Complete Florida recommended a fixed cost approach for competency-based programs. Competency-based programs have begun to be developed and implemented in various institutions throughout the country; while not common, they are gaining traction. Additional research needs to be conducted to obtain a better understanding of their cost structure and implementation requirements. Our offices will work with Complete Florida to further delve into this approach.

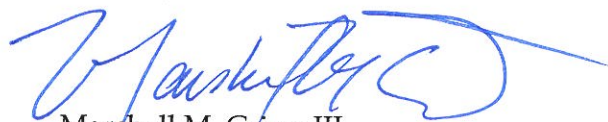
3. Plan for the development and delivery of shared distance learning programs for Complete Florida.

The concept of developing and offering shared programs holds great potential for cost efficiencies and deserves further research and consideration. Shared or joint programs could be developed and delivered by Complete Florida partner institutions. In addition to identifying program(s) that should be developed, the economic model needs to be thoughtfully determined to provide incentives for contribution and participation. Our offices will work with Complete Florida to further research this approach. Meanwhile, the Board of Governors' Task Force for Strategic Planning for Online Education will be addressing shared programs. The charge to the Task Force includes the following statement related to the joint development of online programs:

The Plan should outline strategies for reducing costs to students and for achieving efficiencies that will reduce costs to institutions and the system, but not impair quality. These efficiencies should include collaborative ventures among institutions, such as resource sharing and joint development of online programs.

We agree that Complete Florida affords an opportunity to explore high quality, cost saving models in distance learning with the potential for statewide replication. If you have any questions, please let us know.

Sincerely,



Marshall M. Criser III  
Chancellor  
State University System of Florida



Randy Hanna  
Chancellor  
The Florida College System