

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
June 22, 2023

SUBJECT: Programs of Strategic Emphasis Tuition and Fee Waiver: Eligible Programs 2023-24 Academic Year

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Consider approval of two state-approved teacher preparation programs for which a student may be eligible to receive a tuition and fee waiver per section 1009.26, Florida Statutes.

AUTHORITY FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS ACTION

Article IX, Section 7, Florida Constitution; section 1009.26, Florida Statutes

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Section 1009.26, Florida Statutes, requires the Board of Governors to select academic programs that allow eligible students to receive a Programs of Strategic Emphasis waiver. The waiver requires that for every course in a qualifying Program of Strategic Emphasis in which a student is enrolled, a state university must waive 100 percent of the tuition and fees for an equivalent course in such a program. Eligible students must be in-state residents, earn at least 60 semester credit hours towards a baccalaureate degree within two academic years after initial enrollment at a Florida public postsecondary institution, and be enrolled in one of the eligible Programs of Strategic Emphasis selected by the Board of Governors. The tuition and fee waiver is applicable only for upper-level courses and for up to 110 percent of the required credit hours of the degree program for which the student is enrolled. Florida Statute also requires that a student receiving a Bright Futures Scholarship will receive a disbursement for the tuition and fees waived that is equal to his or her award amount.

In June 2021, the Board of Governors selected eight Programs of Strategic Emphasis from the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) category. The programs selected were Computer and Information Sciences, Information Technology, Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, and Management Information Systems. The 2022 Legislature amended the statute to require the Board to select two programs in the critical workforce gap analysis category, and the Board selected Accounting and Finance in June of 2022.

The 2023 Legislature further amended the statute requiring the Board to select two state-approved teacher preparation programs beginning in the 2023-24 Academic Year. Students enrolling in these two education programs must meet the same requirements as the STEM and gap analysis programs selected by the Board in 2021 and 2022.

Board staff identified three potential teacher education programs that meet the requirements in section 1009.26, Florida Statutes.

The 2023 Legislature also allocated \$38,485,298 in incentive funding for this waiver in the upcoming fiscal year, pending the Governor's approval of the 2023-2024 General Appropriations Act. Board staff estimated the fiscal impact of the waivers for the upcoming fall term by program and institution.

If approved by the Strategic Planning Committee, the two education programs selected for the waiver will be forwarded to the full Board for consideration.