

VALENCIA COLLEGE

SESSION UPDATE

APRIL 23, 2014

▶ Fee Waivers for In-State Tuition

Legislative Priority: In order to make college more affordable and accessible for all students, Valencia strongly supports legislation that would provide authority to establish fee waivers for out of state fees to benefit veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces (including reserves) who were honorably discharged and physically reside in Florida while enrolled in classes, and for otherwise eligible undocumented immigrant students who have attended a Florida high school for three consecutive years, and who enroll in college within 24 months after high school graduation.

Update: The first bill to pass the 2014 Legislative Session was the Florida GI Bill (CS/CS HB 7015), with an effective date of July 1, 2014. The bill provides education and employment opportunities, and among other provisions, provides for public higher education institutions to waive out-of-state fees for honorably discharged veterans who reside in Florida while enrolled in the institutions.

The House and Senate have similar bills with respect to waiving undocumented student out of state fees. The House bill (CS/HB 851) has passed and is now in the Senate awaiting action. The Senate bill (CS/SB 1400) is now in the Senate Appropriations Committee and is not scheduled to be heard. At this stage, the bill would need to be withdrawn from the committee before a floor vote in the Senate could occur.

▶ Textbook Affordability

Update: Two bills have been filed, HB 355, Porter and SB 530, Flores, which would require colleges to add the adoption and pricing of “other” instructional materials to current textbook adoption policies and procedures; would change the required posting date for adopting textbooks, their costs, and other instructional materials from the current 30 days before the first day of class to 14 days before the first day of student registration (with some exceptions); and calls for additional required annual reports on the average costs of textbooks. HB 355 has passed the House and is in the Senate awaiting consideration. SB 530 is now in Senate Appropriations and is not scheduled to be heard.

▶ Florida College System (FCS) Baccalaureate Degrees

Update: The FCS Council of Presidents agreed to a one year moratorium on the approval of new baccalaureate degrees, as reflected in the Senate version of the Higher Education Conforming bill (HB 5101). Accordingly, the State Board of Education may not approve new baccalaureate degrees between now and May 31, 2015.

► Florida College System Budget Request

Funding Category	2013-14 Total Funds	House HB 5001	Senate SB 2500	House Offer 1 (4/21/14)
Program Fund (operations budget)	1,101,198,710	1,167,989,605	1,101,556,993	1,155,150,142
Performance Based Incentives	5,000,000	5,000,000	40,000,000	5,000,000
Commission on Community Service	433,182	433,182	433,182	433,182
Florida Virtual Campus	12,329,843	11,491,343	11,506,230	9,006,230
NW Regional Data Ctr	50,400	50,400	0	0
Total State Funds	1,119,012,135	1,184,964,530	1,153,496,405	1,169,589,554
\$ Increase Over Prior Year		65,952,395	34,484,270	50,577,419
% Increase Over Prior Year		5.9%	3.1%	4.5%
Tuition Increase	0%	0%	0%	0%

Budget Discussion

House Appropriations

The House adds \$15.5 million in “compression funding” to the FCS, providing additional funds to colleges that were funded at a lower rate than other colleges. The House adds \$20 million to the colleges’ operations budgets, also known as the program fund. They provide \$24.6 million to colleges for dual enrolled students who attended additional classes beyond the normal school day and/or during summer. The House provides \$5 million for performance (industry certifications).

Senate Appropriations

The Senate took a completely different approach, especially in the area of performance funding, which totals \$40 million. However, \$15 million of those funds were acquired from a cut of colleges’ base budgets from recurring general revenue funds. The Senate then added \$15 million in non-recurring funds to be distributed according to a new set of performance measures. An additional \$5 million was added for industry certifications (category funded at \$10 million). The Senate put \$10 million into compression funding, but did not provide any new funding to the program fund for college operations.

Differences are being resolved in the Budget Conference process.