

**Florida College System Task Force**  
Becoming A State College:  
Characteristics Which Define A State College and Transition Criteria

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**Definition/Characteristics of a State College**

**Option 1 (Recommended)**

- A state college is a member of the Florida College System that has been approved by the SBOE for one or more baccalaureate degree programs and has been approved by SACS as a level II institution. An institution which meets this criteria is eligible, *but not required*, to use the term “state college” in its name. \*
  - Once eligible, the Board of Trustees may act upon a proposed name change for their college and submit it to the Legislature for consideration at its next Regular Session.\*
- The actual name of a college within the Florida College System is determined by vote of the Board of Trustees with the concurrence of the Legislature.\*
  - *\*Note: It is recommended that the Legislature clarify the process for, and requirements which, all institutions within the Florida College System must follow when seeking a name change. This should include:*
    - *A name change from community and/or junior college to college— with or without the addition of baccalaureate degrees to their program mix;*
    - *A name change from community and/or junior college OR college to state college.*
- A state college retains all of the traditional missions of a community college as it adds baccalaureate degrees: open admissions for lower division; affordability, outreach to underserved populations, a commitment to 2 + 2 articulation, and meeting the economic and employment needs of the constituency it serves.
- State colleges, regardless of name, that propose new baccalaureate degrees to meet employment needs outside their local service district (regional or statewide) are responsible for communicating and coordinating with appropriate colleges and universities, both public and private, in planning for baccalaureate program expansion. Coordination implies dialogue that focuses on state efficiencies which avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and expense when providing higher

education opportunities. Data supporting demonstrated need and demand is a criteria for initial and subsequent baccalaureate degree program approval.

If an institution meeting the criteria of a State College proposes a baccalaureate program to meet a regional or statewide employment need, the Board of Trustees must establish a planning process that involves all appropriate constituents and institutions. The planning process at the local level should adhere to the same program approval criteria currently adopted by the State Board of Education for initial baccalaureate approval.

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**Option (Not Recommended)**

- The Legislature could designate the specific institutions which become “State Colleges” (rather than leaving this a Board of Trustees’ decision)

**Advantages:**

- Clarity and control of naming.

**Disadvantages:**

- It may inhibit a college from meeting the employment/economic needs in their area, even though they may be well positioned to do so, if they are not designated a “state college.”
- It erodes Board of Trustees’ control of the college’s name.
- It opens the colleges to arbitrary/political decisions.