


March 28, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members of the Florida Board of Education

**FROM:** Philip E. Morgaman, Chairman   
Council for Policy, Research and Improvement

**SUBJECT: Community College Baccalaureate Degree Proposals and Council Recommendations**

Section 240.3836, F.S., provides that "a community college may be authorized by the Florida Board of Education to offer a limited number of baccalaureate degrees designed to meet local workforce needs." The law further provides that any such baccalaureate proposal must be submitted to the Council for Education Policy, Research and Improvement for review and comment. In addition to the Proposal Process and Review Procedures adopted by the Council at its September 13 meeting, the Council adopted a criteria matrix on February 12. Information submitted by the community colleges has been supplemented with information obtained through surveys of existing four-year institutions, contact with workforce development boards and other sources to assist in determining if the proposals deal with significant unmet needs which cannot be addressed more effectively through another method.

Each proposal was reviewed on its own merit. While the criteria adopted for reviewing the proposals were used for each review, it was impractical, due to the varying circumstances of each proposal, to establish a weighting system for each of the criteria. For example, geographic isolation, as in the Chipola proposals, should be of a higher "weight" for them than the demonstration of a very large numerical need, which should be of a higher "weight" for an institution in an urban setting served by a number of baccalaureate providers.

The Council for Education Policy, Research and Improvement, at its March 12, 2002, meeting at Hillsborough Community College, unanimously adopted the following recommendations for the proposals submitted by Chipola Junior College, Miami-Dade Community College, and Edison Community College:

**Chipola Junior College**

The college has requested a total of \$343,999 for the first year development of these programs and \$427,224 for the initial year of enrollment.

### **BS in Business Administration**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** A large, unmet need could not be established for either the students or by the community for jobs requiring these degrees. A cooperative program with other potential public and independent providers should be pursued with the assistance of the Division of Colleges and Universities, and if not achieved within one year, this proposal should be resubmitted.

### **BS in Secondary Education**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** The subject areas of science, math, engineering, and technology are recognized as critical shortage areas statewide. However, the magnitude of the need in Chipola's service area does not warrant establishment of a new program at this time. Further, to the extent the need does exist, the vacancies in Chipola's service area are a function of the lack of wage competitiveness by the local schools and not the supply of BS degrees. Thus the production of these degrees will not address the need that is present. A cooperative program with FSU's Panama City Branch and other potential public and independent providers should be pursued with the assistance of the Division of Colleges and Universities, and if this is not achieved in one year, this proposal should be resubmitted.

### **BS in Nursing**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** A BS in nursing is currently available at Chipola from FSU via distance learning. Further, the BSN degree will not supplement the nursing instructor pool on other than a temporary basis since the MSN degree is required to teach in the associate degree nursing programs by the State Board of Nursing. Therefore, given the foregoing, Chipola Junior College did not establish a significant need for this program. The Council does recognize that efforts to include a rural health care track within the current cooperative program with FSU should be examined. In addition, improvements in advising and mentoring within the current program need to be addressed by both institutions.

**The Council recognizes the challenges faced by Chipola and its community as the only academic postsecondary institution in its five-county region. The Council plans to conduct an in-depth examination of this area and the most appropriate strategies for addressing its education needs in the context of Florida's new K-20 system.**

### **Miami-Dade Community College**

Miami-Dade Community College has requested \$1,913,400 for the first year development of the programs and \$1,787,564 for the initial year of enrollment.

### **BS/BA in Secondary Education**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** There appears to be no need shown that cannot be more than adequately addressed by existing public and private capacity. It is also apparent that this can be done in

ways that meet the needs of the entire potential student population with a structure and cost that meets or exceeds the accessibility offered by the proposed MDCC program, if only the institutions work together to accomplish that end and consider innovative approaches to considerations such as FRAG grant increases for critical need areas, tuition policies, and creative joint-use arrangements. Currently there are programs at Florida International University, Barry University, Palm Beach Atlantic College, Nova Southeastern University, St. Thomas University, and the University of Miami that have excess capacity.

In addition, it was unclear to the Council as to the target market for this program since eighty-five percent of the students graduating with an associate in arts degree from Miami-Dade Community College programs already transfer to a four-year program. Also, it is difficult to forecast the effect of MDCC's proposed program on existing programs in the area and whether there will be an actual increase in students enrolled in these programs in Miami-Dade County.

### **BS/BA in Elementary Education**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** Elementary education is not a critical shortage area for the State of Florida or Miami-Dade School District. Local school district staff and state-level staff have emphasized that elementary teachers are in over-supply. There are more qualified applicants than available positions in the local school district.

### **BS in Early Childhood Education**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** There appears to be no need shown that cannot be more than adequately addressed by existing public and private capacity. It is also apparent that this can be done in ways that meet the needs of the entire potential student population with a structure and cost that meets or exceeds the accessibility offered by the proposed MDCC program, if only the institutions work together to accomplish that end and consider innovative approaches such as FRAG grant increases for critical need areas, tuition policies, and creative joint-use arrangements. Currently there are programs at Florida International University and Barry University that have excess capacity.

In addition, it was unclear to the Council as to the target market for this program since eighty-five percent of the students graduating with an associate in arts degree from Miami-Dade Community College programs already transfer to a four-year program. Also, it is difficult to forecast the effect of MDCC's proposed program on existing programs in the area and whether there will be an actual increase in students enrolled in these programs in Miami-Dade County.

### **BS/BA in Exceptional Student Education**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** There appears to be no need shown that cannot be more than adequately addressed by existing public and private capacity. It is also apparent that this can be done in ways that meets the needs of the entire potential student population with a structure and cost that meets or exceeds the accessibility offered by the proposed MDCC program, if only the institutions work together to accomplish that end and consider innovative approaches such as

FRAG grant increases for critical need areas, tuition policies, and creative joint-use arrangements. Currently there are programs at Florida International University, Barry University, Palm Beach Atlantic College, Bethune-Cookman College, and the University of Miami that have excess capacity.

In addition, it was unclear to the Council as to the target market for this program since eighty-five percent of the students graduating with an associate in arts degree from Miami-Dade Community College programs already transfer to a four-year program. Also, it is difficult to forecast the effect of MDCC's proposed program on existing programs in the area and whether there will be an actual increase in students enrolled in these programs in Miami-Dade County.

### **Edison Community College**

The college has requested a total of \$1,026,000 for two baccalaureate programs for the first two budget years, including a planning budget of \$600,000 for the initial year and \$120,000 for the second year. Initial year operating budgets of \$162,950 for public services management and \$143,050 for computer technology are requested.

#### **BS in Public Services Management**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** This review failed to identify an unmet need for employees in public services positions that require a bachelor's degree. Edison Community College and Florida Gulf Coast University should jointly convene all interested public and independent postsecondary institutions to establish a cooperative baccalaureate program in public services management for delivery in Southwest Florida. Barry University offers a BS in public administration in Fort Myers, with 60 unfilled student slots in its program. International College offers a BS in management with a concentration in public administration at the Edison College Center through an articulation agreement with Edison. Florida Gulf Coast University offers a track in public management through its BS degree program in criminal justice.

#### **BS in Computer Technology**

**The Council recommends that the Florida Board of Education not approve this program.** This review failed to identify an unmet need for employees in computer technology positions that require a bachelor's degree. Florida Gulf Coast University offers a full spectrum of bachelor's degree programs in computer information/computer science. These programs are growing and have large capacity with a significant amount of available student slots. Edison Community College should collaborate with Florida Gulf Coast University to develop and deliver a baccalaureate program in computer technology that will meet the workforce needs of Southwest Florida. In addition, Edison Community College is involved in a 2+2 distance learning initiative with Florida State University for the delivery of the BS in computer and information science.

## **Additional Conclusions and Recommendations**

In light of the extensive discussions the Council had on the nine proposals considered, the Council believes it is important to forward the following conclusions and recommendations to the Florida Board of Education:

### **Conclusions**

- ✎✎ Given that no proposal presented a clear and convincing argument based on the Council's review process and criteria, the Council was reluctant to recommend moving forward on these particular community college baccalaureate initiatives, since such a substantial change without compelling need would have major systemwide implications.**
  
- ✎✎ Since the education governance reorganization is still in transition with completion targeted for January 2003, absent a clear and convincing case meeting the Council's adopted criteria, now is not the time to be making significant institutional changes that have the potential to be addressed in a variety of ways under this new governance structure, including, but not limited to, giving the new University Boards of Trustees the opportunity to address service needs in their areas.**
  
- ✎✎ At the same time, the Council believes that allowing community colleges to offer select baccalaureate degrees must be kept as an option in an effort to give the Florida Board of Education all the tools necessary to address underserved needs for baccalaureate education. If collaborative efforts do not expand within the coming year in the regions served by the three community colleges whose proposals the Council received, those proposals can be revisited.**

### **Recommendations**

- ✎✎ The boards of trustees of all community colleges and universities in each region should jointly conduct a baccalaureate degree needs analysis. The needs analysis and plan to address identified needs should be submitted to the Florida Board of Education, with copies sent to the Council for Education Policy, Research and Improvement, by December 31, 2002. Development of the needs analysis and plan should involve representation from the business community, workforce boards, chambers of commerce, economic development councils, and independent colleges and universities.**
  
- ✎✎ The Council supports funding for baccalaureate access in the 2002-2003 budget. The Florida Board of Education should use this funding to permit community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees when approved, target additional funding to private institutions to add slots in critical need areas by increasing the value of the FRAG in those programs, provide seed money to assist community colleges and universities in developing cooperative programs to improve baccalaureate access, fund 2+2 program coordinators,**

**and other cooperative educational endeavors. To this end, the Council strongly encourages the Senate and the House of Representatives to include funds in the 2002 General Appropriations Act for baccalaureate degree access and for the Office of the Governor to support this funding initiative.**

Copies of each proposal, the staff analysis, and all other materials submitted for consideration on these proposals, as well as the minutes of the March 12 Council meeting, are included with this transmittal memorandum.

If we can provide you with additional information or assistance in this area, please let us know.

/dca

cc: Secretary Jim Horne