

FLORIDA BOARD OF EDUCATION

February 26, 2002

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for new Baccalaureate Degree Programs to be offered by Community Colleges

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Discussion of activities related to access to baccalaureate degree instruction, including options and opportunities.

Discussion and adoption of community college baccalaureate degree proposal evaluation guidelines. These guidelines will be used to guide Florida Board of Education consideration and assessment of community college proposals to grant baccalaureate degrees pursuant to section 240.3836, F.S., (Florida Statutes).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To provide context for discussions about access, attached is a background paper entitled “Access to Baccalaureate Degree Instruction in Florida – Options and Opportunities” that describes recent history, options, and analyses of alternatives (prepared by staff of the Division of Community Colleges with input from the Division of Colleges and Universities).

Florida ranks 46th in the nation in producing baccalaureate degree graduates. For Florida to compete with other states and nations, and to re-engineer its economy into a new model based on “knowledge workers” rather than unskilled and skilled workers, the production of baccalaureate degrees must increase, particularly in critical shortage areas central to economic viability.

Activities related to increasing baccalaureate access are occurring across the nation as states test alternatives to traditional baccalaureate degree education. Florida is no different. As identified in the 1998 Postsecondary Education Master Plan, Florida has many options available to address this policy concern, including: expanded enrollment at public and private universities; expanded community college concurrent and joint-use partnerships; baccalaureate degrees granted by community colleges; and, the creation of a state college system focused primarily on baccalaureate degree instruction. All of these options to some extent are being implemented to address this access issue.

Most recently, as provisions in Senate Bill 1162, the 2001 Florida Legislature made two moves in the direction of expanding access to baccalaureate degrees through community colleges. First, St. Petersburg College became the first community college in Florida authorized to grant targeted baccalaureate degrees (in nursing, teaching and information technology). Second, the “Site-determined baccalaureate degree access” statute was created as a mechanism for other community colleges to seek Florida Board of Education approval to grant a limited number of baccalaureate degrees designed to meet local workforce needs (s. 240.3836, F.S.).

The site-determined process requires interested community colleges to submit a proposal to the Council for Education Policy Research and Improvement (CEPRI) for review and comment. Part of that process involves input from the Department of Education. The statute authorizes the Florida

Board of Education to consider and approve or not approve specific degree programs as proposed. Proposals must include the following information:

1. Demand for the baccalaureate degree program is identified by the workforce development board, local businesses and industry, local chambers of commerce, and potential students.
2. Unmet need for graduates of the proposed degree program is substantiated.
3. The community college has the facilities and academic resources to deliver the program.

Since passage of the bill, several activities have occurred:

- Fall 2001 -- To meet their requirements in law, CEPRI adopted initial proposal guidelines. Three community colleges responded with proposals in accordance with those guidelines – Chipola Junior College, Edison Community College, and Miami-Dade Community College.
- November 2001 – Florida Board of Education adopted guidelines for use by state university boards of trustees when establishing baccalaureate degree programs.
- December 2001 -- CEPRI requested input from the Department of Education on submitted proposals. Department of Education responses reflected an intention to review proposals in light of new FBOE guidelines.
- January and February 2002 – CEPRI met to review proposals and consider proposal evaluation guidelines, which have been restructured to incorporate FBOE goals, principles and guidelines.

The attached “Community College Baccalaureate Degree Proposal Evaluation” guidelines were approved at the February 12, 2002 CEPRI meeting. They are being brought before the Florida Board of Education for review, discussion and adoption as the mechanism that will be used to assess community college proposals.

Supporting Documentation Included: Background paper and evaluation guidelines attached

Facilitators/Presenters: David Armstrong, John Winn and CEPRI representation