

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Action Item**

February 12, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Approval of Request from St. Petersburg College for a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Cybersecurity

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

For Approval

**AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION**

Section 1007.33, Florida Statutes

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

St. Petersburg College submitted a Notice of Intent followed by a proposal to the Department of Education for this proposed board action. Appropriate notification of intent was provided to the Board of Governors, Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida and the Commission for Independent Education, as required in section 1007.33, Florida Statutes. An extensive review of criteria was conducted for the proposal submitted, and written comments and recommendations were provided to the college. The final submission was subsequently received and is being submitted to the State Board of Education for approval.

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**Supporting Documentation Included:** Summary of St. Petersburg College's Proposal for a Bachelor of Applied Science in Cybersecurity; Full Proposal (under separate cover)

**Facilitators/Presenters:** Chancellor Kathy Hebda, Florida College System; President Tonjua Williams, St. Petersburg College; and guests

**Baccalaureate Degree Program Proposal**  
**St. Petersburg College (SPC)**  
**Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Cybersecurity Summary**

The proposed new baccalaureate degree program is an opportunity to provide citizens of Florida greater access to higher education.

- The highly specialized body of skills and technical knowledge acquired by the students who complete the BAS in cybersecurity will prepare them to pursue careers related to cybersecurity and technology that align with the NICE cybersecurity Workforce Framework.
- Typical job titles include Systems Security Analyst, Security Control Assessor, Vulnerability Assessment Analyst, Cyber Defense Analyst, and Security Architect. Other potential roles include senior positions such as Information Security Officer, Director Information Security, Chief Information Security Officer, and Principle Cybersecurity Practice Manager.
- The BAS in cybersecurity has not been designated as a \$10,000 degree; eligible students will be able to complete the program for a total cost of no more than \$14,067 in tuition and fees. However, compared to the other state and nonpublic institutions in SPC's service area, the cost of the degree is significantly lower. Baccalaureate degrees at the University of South Florida cost \$25,342, at the University of Tampa \$71,520, and at Eckerd College \$181,808.
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) workforce data and projections indicate a 26.6% increase in demand and project more than 2,172 cybersecurity job openings in SPC's service area over the next eight years, for an average of 271 job openings per year.
- The University of Tampa (UT) is a private institution that offers a cybersecurity major within the College of Business, but SPC's proposed program would be significantly different. UT has only produced 29 graduates in the last two years. The University of South Florida (USF) offers a Bachelor of Science Degree in Cybersecurity; however, the current supply of qualified graduates is not sufficient to meet the demand. Eckerd College does not offer a degree in cybersecurity. These institutions had no objection to the proposed program.
- A number of industry organizations, businesses, and educational institutions in SPC's service area support the proposal and indicated a need for four-year cybersecurity degrees, including USF, the Center for Systems Security and Information Assurance (CSSIA), CISCO, CISCO Networking Academy, and ReliaQuest.
- Admission to the BAS in cybersecurity program will use the state's 2+2 model, and will be open to all applicants who have completed an associate in science (AS) or at least 60 transferable credit hours in a related field.
- Graduates will acquire a wide array of skills that align with multiple industry certifications related to computer networking, digital forensics, and computer security with an upper division curriculum focusing on information security, risk assessment and mitigation compliance, disaster planning and recovery, advanced forensics, information assurance, and defense against cyber-attack.