

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 1401 Articulation Agreements

SPONSOR(S): Postsecondary Education & Workforce Subcommittee, Michael and others

TIED BILLS: None. **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 750

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Postsecondary Education & Workforce Subcommittee	16 Y, 0 N, As CS	Wolff	Kiner
2) Education & Employment Committee	19 Y, 0 N	Wolff	Hassell

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

To improve access to baccalaureate degrees for Florida's postsecondary students as well as to simplify and streamline existing articulation agreements, the bill provides for the review and modification, as needed, of statewide articulation agreements, the statewide course numbering system, transfer credit processes, and the Common Prerequisite Manual.

The bill requires the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) to convene a workgroup to develop statewide "2+2" Associate in Science (AS) degree to baccalaureate degree articulation agreements in high-demand fields. State universities must establish at least one local "2+2" AS degree to baccalaureate degree articulation agreement with one or more Florida College System (FCS) institutions. Additionally, the bill requires the ACC to convene a workgroup to strengthen educator preparation programs in the state and provide seamless pathways to continued educational opportunities.

The bill requires institutions to award transfer credit toward institutional and program-specified requirements before it is applied as elective credit. To provide for consistent application of this requirement, the bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt rules for the collection and review of course information. The SBE and the Board of Governors (BOG) of the State University System must provide recommendations on a process to review and approve the existing statewide course numbering system.

The Department of Education and BOG must collaborate on a review of the Common Prerequisite Manual as well as a redevelopment of the Common Prerequisite database. Once this database is updated, the bill requires that state universities and FCS institutions provide access to the database to students through their admissions and program websites.

The bill creates an Associate in Arts specialized transfer degree to allow students to complete required lower-level coursework at a FCS institution in preparation for transfer to a baccalaureate degree program, and requires the SBE to establish criteria for the review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees.

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2023.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Associate in Arts Degree

The Associate in Arts degree (AA) is designed for students who plan to transfer from a Florida College System (FCS) institution to a baccalaureate degree program, either at a FCS or state university system (SUS) institution.¹

The AA degree requirements consist of 60 total credit hours and include 36 credit hours of general education and 24 credit hours of electives. Students should choose elective courses required for admission to their intended program of study or major at the desired college or university. The Common Prerequisites Manual² is a catalog of lower-level courses that are prerequisites for entrance into baccalaureate programs offered by FCS and SUS institutions. Students are encouraged to discuss their intended program of study with an academic advisor at their college to ensure they are meeting all requirements to transfer upon completing their AA degree.³

A baccalaureate degree must be no more than 120 semester hours of college credit, unless prior approval has been granted by the Board of Governors (BOG) or the State Board of Education (SBE), as applicable, and include 36 semester hours of general education coursework.⁴

Associate in Science Degree

The Associate in Science (AS) degree is offered by each FCS institution. The AS degree is intended to provide programs of career and technical instruction consisting of lower division college credit courses to prepare for entry into employment. The AS degree is also a transfer degree and a basis for admission to a related bachelor's degree. The AS degree is awarded upon satisfactory completion of a planned program of instruction comprised of the standard credit hour length established, after demonstration of the attainment of predetermined and specified performance requirements. The standard credit hour length of all associate in science degree programs is defined in SBE rule,⁵ and must include a minimum of 15 college credits of general education coursework.⁶ Courses taken as a part of the AS degree to meet the 36-hour general education requirement will transfer and apply to the baccalaureate degree.⁷

General Education Core Courses

Students initially entering a FCS or SUS institution in 2015-2016 and thereafter, are required to complete at least one identified general education core course in each of the subject areas of communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences. All public postsecondary educational institutions are required to accept these courses as meeting general education core course requirements.⁸ Beginning in 2022-2023, the general education core course

¹ Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *Academics*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/academics/> (last visited March 20, 2023).

² Florida Shines, *Common Prerequisites Manual*, <https://cpm.flvc.org/advance-search> (last visited March 20, 2023).

³ Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *Academics*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/academics/> (last visited March 20, 2023).

⁴ Section 1007.25(10), F.S. and Board of Governors Regulation 6.017

⁵ Rule 6A-6.0571, F.A.C.

⁶ Rule 6A-14.030(4), F.A.C.

⁷ Rule 6A-10.024(6), F.A.C.

⁸ Section 1007.25, F.S.

requirement is extended to students in an associate in applied science (AAS) and associate in science (AS) degree program.⁹

General education core course options consist of a maximum of five courses in each identified subject area, but may exceed that limit with the approval of the SBE or the BOG. The general education core courses are established in SBE rule¹⁰ and BOG regulation.¹¹

Transfer of General Education Courses

Each public postsecondary institution must accept transfer general education core courses taken at another institution. After completing the general education core course requirements, the remaining courses and credits that fulfill the total 36-hour general education requirement for an associate in arts or baccalaureate degree are at the discretion of the FCS or SUS institution.¹²

General education programs in Florida, while consistent at the general education core requirements and the total of 36 hours for completion, vary in the selection of institutionally-required courses. Students who transfer with an AA or AS degree, or who have completed their block of 36 general education hours do not have to meet the receiving institution's general education program requirements. If a student does not complete the total 36-hour general education curriculum prior to transfer, each course, outside of courses taken as general education courses, will be reviewed individually to determine if it meets the general education requirements of the new institution.¹³

Articulation Coordinating Committee

The Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the Chancellor of the SUS, establishes the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC), whose primary role is to recommend statewide articulation policies.¹⁴ Specifically, the ACC must monitor articulation between education systems, propose guidelines for articulation agreements, publish lists of general education and common prerequisite courses, establish dual enrollment course equivalencies to high school credit, and annually review the Statewide Articulation Agreement.¹⁵ The Office of K-20 Articulation within the Department of Education (DOE) provides administrative support to the ACC.¹⁶

Statewide Articulation Agreements

Each state university board of trustees, FCS board of trustees, and district school board must plan and adopt policies and procedures to provide articulated programs so that students can proceed toward their educational objectives as rapidly as their circumstances permit.¹⁷

Statewide articulation agreements help facilitate the seamless transition of students across and among Florida's educational entities. This supports the DOE's focus to expand opportunities for postsecondary degrees and certificates. These agreements are intended to be a minimum guarantee of articulated credit and do not preclude institutions from granting additional credit based on local agreements.¹⁸

2+2 Articulation in Florida

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Rule 6A-14.0303, F.A.C.

¹¹ Board of Governors Regulation 8.005.

¹² *Id.* and r. 6A -14.0303(5), F.A.C.

¹³ Florida Department of Education, *Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual* (Jan. 2021), at 15, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/Statewide-Articulation-Manual.pdf>. See also r. 6A-10.024(2)(c), F.A.C.

¹⁴ Section 1007.01(3), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1007.01(3)(a) and (b), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1007.01(3), F.S.; s. 20.15(3)(h), F.S.

¹⁷ Rule 6A-10.024(1), F.A.C.

¹⁸ Florida Department of Education, Career & Adult Education, *Statewide Articulation Agreements*, <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/> (last visited March 20, 2023).

The SBE and the BOG are required to enter into a statewide articulation agreement which the SBE must adopt by rule. The agreement must preserve Florida's "2+2" system of articulation and facilitate the seamless articulation of student credit across and among Florida's educational entities.¹⁹

The Florida Statewide Articulation Agreement²⁰ is the most comprehensive articulation agreement in the nation. Critical components of the statewide articulation agreement include:²¹

- Defining the AA degree as the transfer degree.
- Establishing requirements for awarding degrees and degree definitions.
- Guaranteeing transfer of the general education block of credit.
- Creating the ACC, its purpose, role, and membership.
- Guaranteeing transfer of credit via the State Course Numbering System (SCNS).
- Establishing a process for determining credit-by-examination equivalencies.
- Providing for AS degree articulation.
- Establishing a common college transcript.

Students who graduate from an institution within the FCS with an AA degree are guaranteed the following rights under the Statewide Articulation Agreement:²²

- Admission to an upper-division program at a SUS or FCS institution if it offers baccalaureate degree programs, except for limited-access programs.²³
- Acceptance of at least 60 semester hours by the SUS and FCS baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.
- Adherence to the university or college requirements and policies, based on the catalog in effect at the time the student first enters the FCS institution, provided the student maintains continuous enrollment.
- Transfer of equivalent courses under the SCNS.
- Acceptance by the SUS and baccalaureate degree-granting FCS institutions of credits earned in accelerated programs (e.g. Dual Enrollment, CLEP, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Advanced International Certificate of Education).
- No additional general education core or general education institutional requirements.
- Advance knowledge of selection criteria for limited access programs.
- Equal opportunity for native university students to enter limited-access programs.

A student who completes an AA degree may continue to earn additional credits at a FCS institution if courses to be completed are listed in the university catalog as required for the degree or as prerequisite to a course required for the degree.²⁴ However, in order to be eligible for federal financial aid, a student must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student in an eligible degree or certificate program.²⁵ Therefore, a student who completes an AA but needs additional courses for university requirements may not be eligible for additional federal student aid.

Targeted 2+2 Pathway Articulation Agreements

To strengthen Florida's "2+2" system of articulation and improve student retention and on-time graduation, each FCS institution was required to, by the 2019-2020 academic year, execute at least one "2+2" targeted pathway articulation agreement with one or more state universities, and each state

¹⁹ Section 1007.23(1), F.S.

²⁰ Section 1007.23, F.S., r. 6A-10.024, F.A.C, and Board of Governors, *Articulation Resolution*, available at <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/ArticulationRegulation.pdf>.

²¹ Florida Department of Education, *Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual* (Jan. 2021), at 14, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/Statewide-Articulation-Manual.pdf>.

²² *Id.*

²³ Board of Governors Regulation 8.013. Limited-access programs are degree programs may include additional admission requirements (e.g., higher grade point average and/or higher test scores, additional courses or prerequisites, or auditions and/or portfolios).

²⁴ Section 1007.25(12), F.S.

²⁵ Federal Student Aid, *Eligibility Requirements*, <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/eligibility/requirements> (last visited Mar. 20, 2023).

university was required to execute at least one such agreement with one or more FCS institutions to establish “2+2” targeted pathway programs. The agreements were established to provide students who graduate with an associate in arts degree and who meet specified requirements guaranteed access to the state university and a degree program at that university, in accordance with the terms of the “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement. To participate in a “2+2” targeted pathway program, a student must:²⁶

- Enroll in the program before completing 30 credit hours, including, but not limited to, college credits earned through articulated acceleration mechanisms.²⁷
- Complete an AA degree.
- Meet the university’s transfer requirements.

State universities were required to, as a part of the “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement:²⁸

- Establish a 4-year, on-time graduation plan for a baccalaureate degree program, including, but not limited to, a plan for students to complete an associate in arts degree programs, general education courses, common prerequisite courses, and elective courses.
- Advise students enrolled in the program about the university’s transfer and degree program requirements.
- Provide students who meet the requirements under this paragraph with access to academic advisors and campus events and with guaranteed admittance to the state university and a degree program of the state university, in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

Some examples of the “2+2” targeted pathway agreements are DirectConnect to UCF²⁹, FUSE at the University of South Florida³⁰, and Connect4Success at Florida International University.³¹

Statewide Career Pathways Articulation Agreements

Statewide career pathways articulation agreements help to facilitate the seamless transition of students across and among Florida’s educational entities. These agreements are intended to be a minimum guarantee of articulated credit and do not preclude institutions from granting additional credit based on local agreements.³²

Associate in Science to Bachelor of Science Degree Articulation Agreements

The SBE and the BOG authorize several provisions for statewide articulation from an AS to a baccalaureate degree. The DOE, in consultation with institutions, periodically review, as necessary, the provisions of the state articulation agreements and the prescribed curricula to ensure the continued effectiveness of the articulation between the AS and baccalaureate degree programs. In addition, the AS degree is considered fully transferable within the FCS, and many FCS baccalaureate degree programs are directly aligned with related AS degrees.³³

There are currently nine approved statewide AS degree to baccalaureate degree articulation agreements.³⁴

²⁶ Section 1007.23(8), F.S.

²⁷ Section 1007.27, F.S.

²⁸ Section 1007.23(8), F.S.

²⁹ University of Central Florida, *DirectConnect to UCF*, <https://directconnect.ucf.edu/> (last visited March 20, 2023).

³⁰ University of South Florida, *FUSE*, <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/transfer-student-success/fuse/> (last visited March 20, 2023).

³¹ Florida International University, *Connect4Success, Overview*, <https://admissions.fiu.edu/how-to-apply/connect4success/index.html> (last visited March 20, 2023).

³² Section 1007.23, F.S. Florida Department of Education, Career & Adult Education, *Statewide Articulation Agreements*, <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/> (last visited March 21, 2023).

³³ Florida Department of Education, *Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual* (Jan. 2021), at 20, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/Statewide-Articulation-Manual.pdf>. Florida Department of Education, Office of Articulation, *Career Ladder Agreements*, available at https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7525/urlt/astobaccalaureate_agreements.pdf.

³⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Career Ladder Agreements*, available at https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7525/urlt/astobaccalaureate_agreements.pdf.

Early Childhood Education Articulation Agreements

The Early Childhood Education articulation agreement guarantees the award of course credits toward a postsecondary degree in early childhood education programs approved by the SBE and BOG which award a child development associate credential issued by the National Credentialing Program of the Council for Professional Recognition or award an approved credential³⁵ as being equivalent to the child development associate credential, and include training in emergent literacy which meets or exceeds the minimum standards³⁶ for training courses for prekindergarten instructors of the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program.

Career Articulation Agreements

Florida has additional statewide articulation agreements that allow students to transfer clock hours, credits, or industry certifications to college credit degree programs. These include:

- Applied Technology Diploma to AS/AAS Articulation Agreements, consisting of a course of study that is part of an AS or an AAS degree, is less than 60 credit hours, and leads to employment in a specific occupation.³⁷
- Career Certificate to Associate Degree Articulation, formerly known as the Postsecondary Adult Vocational (PSAV) certificate, is a course of study consisting of clock hours designed to prepare students for employment. These programs are of varying lengths. Students who complete designated programs can articulate credits into related AS/AAS degree programs.³⁸
- Gold Standard Career Pathways Articulation Agreements, annually adopted by the SBE, and guaranteeing the award of an identified number of college credits to students who have earned a specified industry certification and are enrolled in a designated AS or AAS degree program at a FCS institution.³⁹

Statewide Course Numbering System

The Florida SCNS is a taxonomy of courses offered by participating postsecondary institutions in order to improve program planning and communication among all delivery systems, and facilitate student acceleration and the transfer of students and credits between public school districts, public postsecondary educational institutions, and participating nonpublic educational institutions.

Any student who transfers among participating postsecondary educational institutions must be awarded credit by the receiving institution for equivalent courses satisfactorily completed at the previous institution. Courses are considered equivalent if they are judged by the appropriate SCNS faculty committees to be academically equivalent, and are then assigned an equivalent course number. Credits awarded for equivalent courses must satisfy institutional requirements on the same basis as credits awarded to native students.⁴⁰

Additionally, participating postsecondary institutions receiving transfer course credit must accept and apply general education courses and credit, including credit earned through dual enrollment, course equivalencies, and other acceleration mechanisms, as first satisfying general education core course credit requirements and other general education subject area course credit requirements before applying the course credit as elective credit.⁴¹

³⁵ Section 1002.55(3)(c)1.b., F.S., or s. 402.305(3)(c), F.S.

³⁶ Section 1002.59, F.S.

³⁷ Florida Department of Education, Career & Technical Education, *ATD to AS/AAS Statewide Articulation Agreements*, <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-tech-edu/atd-as.stml> (last visited March 20, 2023).

³⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual* (Jan. 2021), at 21, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/Statewide-Articulation-Manual.pdf>.

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ Section 1007.24(7), F.S. See also r. 6A-10.024(2)(c), F.A.C.

⁴¹ Section 1007.24(8), F.S.

All 12 of Florida's state universities, 28 FCS institutions, 40 participating nonpublic postsecondary institutions, and 44 career education centers participate in the SCNS.⁴²

Effect of Proposed Changes

Articulation Agreements

Associate in Science to Baccalaureate Articulation Agreements

The bill requires the ACC to, by September 1, 2024, convene a workgroup composed of faculty of SUS and FCS institutions, and district career centers to facilitate the seamless transfer of the AS degree and reduce time to credential completion.

The bill requires the workgroup to develop a minimum of four statewide "2+2" AS degree to baccalaureate degree articulation agreements in high-demand fields. The agreements must be developed for programs widely offered at FCS institutions and a majority of SUS institutions and must guarantee the transfer, acceptance, and credit application of the full AS degree toward the baccalaureate degree program requirements. The workgroup must also develop recommendations for the inclusion of up to 24 credit hours of general education courses in the "2+2" associate in science degree, the demonstration of competency in a foreign language, and the acceptance of general education and program-specific courses as transfer course credits.

The bill requires the workgroup to provide its proposed articulation agreements to the ACC by March 1, 2025. If the proposed articulation agreements are approved by the ACC, the SBE and the BOG, state universities and FCS institutions must accept and apply articulated credit as stipulated in the final articulation agreements.

Institution 2+2 Articulation Agreements

The bill requires each state university, by the start of the 2025-2026 academic year, to adopt a minimum of one "2+2" AS degree program to baccalaureate degree agreement with one or more FCS institutions. The agreements must guarantee transfer, acceptance, and credit application of the full AS degree program of study toward the baccalaureate program requirements. The bill requires each state university to, by August 1, 2025, submit the local "2+2" AS degree to baccalaureate degree articulation agreement to the Department of Education.

Educator Preparation Articulation Agreements

The bill further requires the ACC to convene a workgroup composed of faculty of state universities, FCS institutions, and district career centers to, by September 1, 2023, develop recommendations for the seamless transfer from one educational level to the next in teacher preparation programs for education paraprofessionals and individuals who have earned the child development associate credential. The bill requires the workgroup to also develop recommendations for the seamless transfer of teacher apprentices for the completion of their baccalaureate degree.

The bill requires the workgroup to review existing statewide, regional, and interinstitutional agreements to identify seamless pathways and course sequences through the attainment of a baccalaureate degree and develop a statewide articulation agreement that includes articulated postsecondary credit for the child development associate credential and college-level training, experience, and education acquired while serving as an education paraprofessional and a teacher apprentice to include the award of credit toward a baccalaureate degree for experience acquired in the teacher apprenticeship program.

The bill requires the workgroup to provide its recommendation and proposed articulation agreement to the ACC by March 1, 2024. If the proposed articulation agreement is approved by the ACC, the SBE

⁴² Florida Department of Education, *Statewide Postsecondary Articulation Manual* (Jan. 2021), at 3, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5421/urlt/Statewide-Articulation-Manual.pdf>.

and the BOG, state universities and FCS institutions must accept and apply articulated credit as stipulated in the final articulation agreement.

Statewide Course Numbering System

The bill clarifies that existing requirements related to applying transfer course credits to general education core course credit requirements and other general education subject areas apply only as set forth in current law. Additionally, the bill requires transfer course credit that is not applied to satisfy general education requirements to be applied as satisfying institution and program-specific requirements before being applied as elected credit.

Finally, the bill requires the DOE, following consultation with the BOG, to provide recommendations on a process to review and improve the SCNS, which must specifically address:

- identification of institutional usage of and compliance with the existing statewide course numbering system;
- an analysis of the extent to which courses have similar learning outcomes as other courses;
- the involvement of discipline committees to modify or eliminate duplicative courses;
- a communication process to regularly inform institutions of changes; and
- a cyclic review process.

The DOE recommendations must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education and the Chancellor of the BOG by July 1, 2024.

Common Prerequisite Manual

The bill requires the DOE and the BOG to review the Common Prerequisite Manual and propose changes through the ACC to reduce duplication, improve students' access to baccalaureate degrees, and simplify admissions requirements. The Florida Virtual Campus must provide the DOE and BOG data on all existing approved common prerequisites by July 20, 2023. The review must examine the extent to which:

- courses identified as prerequisites for program admission also have course-level prerequisites that require additional coursework;
- common prerequisite courses and their alternatives are widely available at Florida College System institutions and state universities; and
- all prerequisites listed for a given degree program, including those that are exceptions or additions, are necessary for admission into the baccalaureate degree program, in partnership with Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) discipline committees.

Following this initial review, the bill requires the DOE and the BOG to establish a cyclical review process for the Common Prerequisite Manual, which must involve the CIP discipline committees.

To modernize and simplify the Common Prerequisite Manual database, the Commissioner of Education and Chancellor of the BOG must designate an entity to redesign the Common Prerequisite Manual database with an interactive, student-friendly interface and an administrative portal. Once the database has been updated, the bill requires FCS institutions and state universities to link to the database on their admissions and program websites.

Associate in Arts Specialized Transfer Degree

The bill creates an AA specialized transfer degree to include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and 60 semester hours or more of college credit.

The bill specifies that transfer degrees are designed for FCS institution students who need to supplement lower-level coursework in preparation for transfer to the upper level. The bill requires the SBE to establish criteria for the review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees. The approval process must require:

- Each FCS institution to submit a notice of its intent to propose a new AA specialized degree program to the Division of Florida Colleges. The notice of intent:
 - Must include the recommended credit hours, rationale for the specialization, the demand for students entering the field, and the coursework being proposed to be included beyond the 60 semester hours or general transfer degree.
 - May be submitted by a FCS institution at any time.
- The Division of Florida Colleges to forward the notice of intent within 10 business days after receipt to the Chancellor of the SUS and all FCS institutions. State universities and FCS institutions have 60 days after receipt of the notice to submit comments.
- After submission of comments, the requesting FCS institution must submit a proposal that includes:
 - Evidence that the coursework for the AA specialized transfer degree includes demonstration of competency in foreign language and demonstration of civic literacy competency as provided in law.
 - Demonstration that all required coursework will count toward the AA degree or the baccalaureate degree.
 - An analysis of demand and unmet need for students entering the specialized field of study at the baccalaureate level.
 - Justification for the program length if it exceeds 60 credit hours, including references to the common prerequisite manual or other requirements for the baccalaureate degree. Including documentation of alignment between the exit requirements of a FCS institution and the admissions requirements of a baccalaureate degree program at a State University to which students would typically transfer.
 - Articulation agreements for graduates of the associate in arts specialized transfer degree.
 - Responses to comments received.

The bill requires the Division of Florida Colleges to review the proposal within 30 days of receipt, provide written notification to the FCS institution of any deficiencies, and provide it with an opportunity for correction. The Commissioner of Education must recommend approval or disapproval of the new specialized transfer degree to the SBE within 45 days following receipt of the completed proposal by the Division of Florida Colleges, and the SBE must consider the recommendation at its next meeting.

The bill authorizes the FCS to offer the AA specialized transfer degree once the SBE approves, and must report data on student and program performance as prescribed by the DOE. The bill requires the SBE to adopt rules to prescribe format and content requirements and submission procedures for notices of intent, proposals, and compliance reviews.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends s. 1007.23, F.S.; requiring the Articulation Coordinating Committee to convene a workgroup by a specified date to develop specified articulation agreements; providing requirements for the workgroups; requiring state universities and Florida College System institutions to adopt specified articulation agreements by a specified date.

Section 2: Amends s. 1007.24, F.S.; requiring Florida College System institutions to award transfer credit for certain courses; revising the application of transfer course credit; requiring the Department of Education and the Board of Governors to make recommendations to improve the statewide course numbering system.

Section 3: Amends s. 1007.25, F.S.; requiring a review of the Common Prerequisite Manual; providing for the scope and deadlines for such review; requiring the redevelopment of the Common Prerequisite Manual database; requiring state universities and Florida College System institutions to provide access to such database; providing requirements for an associate in arts specialized transfer degree; requiring the State Board of Education to establish criteria for the review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees; requiring the Division of Florida Colleges to review proposals and, in the event of deficiencies, to provide certain written notice to the Florida College System institution;

providing requirements for the approval process; providing that, upon approval of a new associate in arts specialized transfer degree, Florida College System institutions may offer the degree and shall report certain data; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules; conforming a provision to changes made by the act.

Section 4: Provides an effective date.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

None.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The bill requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to prescribe format and content requirements and submission procedures for notices of intent, proposals, and compliance reviews with respect to AA specialized transfer degrees.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On March 29, 2023, the Postsecondary Education & Workforce Subcommittee adopted a Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) and reported the PCS favorably as a committee substitute. The PCS differed from HB 1401 in the following ways:

- amended the development timeline and the required contents for the statewide “2+2” articulation agreements;
- clarified that if the articulation agreements recommended by the workgroups are approved by the ACC, SBE, and BOG, then all FCS institutions and state universities must comply with their terms;
- removed requirement that institutions accept certain transfer courses as well as the prohibition on requirements that transfer students repeat certain courses;
- required a review by the DOE and BOG of the SCNS;
- required a review of the Common Prerequisite Manual by the DOE and BOG; and
- required a redevelopment of the Common Prerequisite database.

The bill analysis is drafted to the committee substitute adopted by the Postsecondary Education & Workforce Subcommittee.