

STORAGE NAME: h1579.ccc
DATE: March 20, 1997

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNITY COLLEGES & CAREER PREP
BILL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

BILL #: HB 1579 (formerly PCB CCCP 97-01)
RELATING TO: Postsecondary Education (Articulation)
SPONSOR(S): Committee on Community Colleges & Career Prep and Representatives Sindler, Fasano, and others

STATUTE(S) AFFECTED: Amends ss. 229.551, 240.107, and 240.1163, F.S.

COMPANION BILL(S): SB 112 by Senator Kirkpatrick

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

(1)	COMMUNITY COLLEGES & CAREER PREP	YEAS 10	NAYS 0
(2)			
(3)			
(4)			
(5)			

I. SUMMARY:

This bill changes provisions related to three areas: Associate in Science degree course requirements, sophomore-level testing requirements, and dual enrollment courses.

The bill addresses a glitch in the law relating to the implementation of "Time-to-Degree" language to exempt Associate in Science degree courses from the requirement that all courses be "leveled" and assigned to either the lower level (freshman & sophomore) or upper level (junior & senior).

The alternative to the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) regarding the use of high school grade point average is deleted. The bill leaves intact the other two options to the CLAST.

This bill provides a provision that prohibits dual enrollment courses from being weighted differently from other classes (such as honors and advanced placement) when grade point average calculations are made. The Commissioner of Education is allowed to approve dual enrollment agreements for limited course offerings with statewide appeal and are limited to a single site with multiple county participation.

Provisions in the bill would have no state-level or local-level fiscal impact.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. PRESENT SITUATION:

Guaranteed articulation between community colleges and state universities

Florida's postsecondary education structure is unique in that it supports a two-plus-two system of advancement. Generally, the majority of graduates from Florida's ten state universities begin as students at one of the state's 28 community colleges. Degree-seeking students study for two years at a community college, and then transfer to one of the state universities to complete the last two years of their baccalaureate degree program. This transfer, or articulation, is guaranteed in s. 240.115, F.S., provided students meet certain requirements.

The College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)

The CLAST is a statewide exam designed to assess basic communication and computation skills which students should have received during their first two years of postsecondary study. Students are required to pass the CLAST in order to receive an Associate in Arts or baccalaureate degree.

The 1995 Legislature passed legislation to provide students with alternatives for demonstrating academic proficiency in college-level communication and computation skills. Students earning an Associate in Arts degree or baccalaureate degree are permitted to either pass the CLAST or satisfy academic proficiency requirements through one of the following alternatives:

1. Achieves a score that meets or exceeds a minimum score on a nationally standardized examination (such as the SAT or the ACT), as established by the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC).
2. Achieves a passing score on the college placement test and a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above, on a 4.0 scale, in college-preparatory high school coursework identified by the ACC.
3. Achieves a passing score on the college placement test and a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or above, on a 4.0 scale, in postsecondary-level coursework identified by the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (PEPC).

"Time-to-Degree" requirements

The 1995 Legislature passed legislation known as the "Time-To-Degree" bill. The bill had these main components:

1. General Education core requirements were established at 36 semester hours, transferrable between community colleges and state universities. (Requirements within the subject areas of communication, mathematics, social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences.)
2. Associate in Arts (AA) degree programs were established at 60 semester hours and baccalaureate degree programs at 120 semester hours, with exceptions granted by the Board of Regents (for baccalaureate degree programs).
3. Courses were identified by their common course code number as either a lower level or an upper level course -- a process referred to as "course leveling". Provisions did not address situations where courses may be classified as both upper and lower level.
4. Common prerequisites were established in program majors, with some allowances for program individuality through course substitutions.

Dual enrollment courses

In order for community colleges and universities to provide dual enrollment credit for a course of study, they have to acquire agreements from each of the 67 school districts in the state. In addition, students may or may not receive a weighted grade, similar to the practice for honors courses, for a dual enrollment course.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Provides flexibility in offering certain courses

A provision in the bill would exempt institutions from the leveling requirement with regard to classes within the Associate in Science degree program. This change would permit students to stay on the community college campus in order to complete Associate in Science degree course work beyond 60 hours of credit.

Removes an alternative to the CLAST

By deleting the alternative to the CLAST related to high school grades, students would be required to either pass the CLAST exam, make certain minimum scores on nationally-standardized exams (such as the ACT or SAT), or achieve a certain grade point average on postsecondary-level courses. Students would not be required to achieve a passing score on the college placement test in order to use the postsecondary-level course alternative.

Authorizes grading limitations and course approvals for dual enrollment

Grade point averages in dual enrollment courses would be calculated in a fashion similar to honors or advanced placement. In addition, the Commissioner of Education would be able to approve limited course offerings for dual enrollment that have statewide appeal and are offered at a single site with multiple county participation (e.g., Girls State or Boys State). This would eliminate the need for approval to be given by the 67 school superintendents before the dual enrollment credit is granted.

C. APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES:

1. Less Government:

a. Does the bill create, increase or reduce, either directly or indirectly:

(1) any authority to make rules or adjudicate disputes?

Yes. The bill allows the Commissioner of Education to approve dual enrollment courses for limited course offerings having statewide appeal and conducted at a single site.

(2) any new responsibilities, obligations or work for other governmental or private organizations or individuals?

Yes. Should the Commissioner of Education choose to review and approve any limited dual enrollment courses.

(3) any entitlement to a government service or benefit?

No.

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b. If an agency or program is eliminated or reduced:

(1) what responsibilities, costs and powers are passed on to another program, agency, level of government, or private entity?

N/A

(2) what is the cost of such responsibility at the new level/agency?

N/A

(3) how is the new agency accountable to the people governed?

N/A

2. Lower Taxes:

a. Does the bill increase anyone's taxes?

No.

b. Does the bill require or authorize an increase in any fees?

No.

c. Does the bill reduce total taxes, both rates and revenues?

No.

d. Does the bill reduce total fees, both rates and revenues?

No.

e. Does the bill authorize any fee or tax increase by any local government?

No.

3. Personal Responsibility:

a. Does the bill reduce or eliminate an entitlement to government services or subsidy?

No.

b. Do the beneficiaries of the legislation directly pay any portion of the cost of implementation and operation?

No.

4. Individual Freedom:

a. Does the bill increase the allowable options of individuals or private organizations/associations to conduct their own affairs?

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No. Local school districts, community colleges, and state universities would need to follow the policies established by the Commissioner of Education in regard to dual enrollment credit for approved courses.

- b. Does the bill prohibit, or create new government interference with, any presently lawful activity?

No.

5. Family Empowerment:

- a. If the bill purports to provide services to families or children:

- (1) Who evaluates the family's needs?

N/A

- (2) Who makes the decisions?

N/A

- (3) Are private alternatives permitted?

N/A

- (4) Are families required to participate in a program?

N/A

- (5) Are families penalized for not participating in a program?

N/A

- b. Does the bill directly affect the legal rights and obligations between family members?

No.

- c. If the bill creates or changes a program providing services to families or children, in which of the following does the bill vest control of the program, either through direct participation or appointment authority:

- (1) parents and guardians?

N/A

- (2) service providers?

N/A

- (3) government employees/agencies?

N/A

D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

- Section 1. Amends s. 229.551, F.S., 1996 Supplement, related to educational management.
- Section 2. Amends s. 240.107, F.S., related to the college-level communication and computation skills examination.
- Section 3. Amends s. 240.1163, F.S., related to dual enrollment instruction.
- Section 4. Reenacts s. 239.213, F.S., related to vocational-preparatory instruction and the college-level communication and computation skills examination.
- Section 5. Provides an effective date of July 1, 1997.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE AGENCIES/STATE FUNDS:

1. Non-recurring Effects:

None.

2. Recurring Effects:

None.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None.

4. Total Revenues and Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS A WHOLE:

1. Non-recurring Effects:

Community colleges and public schools would realize an indeterminate positive benefit associated with no longer being responsible for analyzing a student's high school transcripts and calculating respective grade point averages.

2. Recurring Effects:

None.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

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1. Direct Private Sector Costs:

None.

2. Direct Private Sector Benefits:

None.

3. Effects on Competition, Private Enterprise and Employment Markets:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:

This bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or to take an action requiring the expenditure of funds.

B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:

This bill does not reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:

This bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. COMMENTS:

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY COLLEGES & CAREER PREP:

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