

STORAGE NAME: h1585.ccc

DATE: March 21, 1997

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

BILL #: HB 1585 (formerly PCB CCCP 97-05)

RELATING TO: Postsecondary Readiness

SPONSOR(S): Committee on Community Colleges & Career Prep and Representatives Sindler, Fasano, and others

STATUTE(S) AFFECTED: Amends ss. 229.595, 229.601, 239.117, 239.301, 240.1161, 240.117 and 240.321, F.S.
Creates ss. 232.2466 and 240.124, F.S.

COMPANION BILL(S): SB 1404 by Senator Grant and SB 460 by Senator Kirkpatrick

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

(1)	COMMUNITY COLLEGES & CAREER PREP	YEAS 10	NAYS 1
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(5)			

I. SUMMARY:

This bill complements the K-12 education standards bill in addressing problems associated with student readiness for postsecondary education and postsecondary remediation.

The bill requires the involvement of public schools to provide additional information to parents and students for decision-making purposes. It also requires local-level public school and community college officials to implement strategies for reducing the incidence of postsecondary remediation and for promoting "tech prep" instruction. Standards for the "college-ready" diploma are identified.

Testing requirements associated with the college placement test are changed to require the administration of a test to 10th grade students, and to require the administration of institutionally-developed exams as "exit" exams from remedial instruction.

Specific provisions in the bill require students that repeat a postsecondary remedial class to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction for continuous enrollment in the same class. The bill also requires students enrolled in the same college-credit class more than twice to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction. The provisions in no way adversely affect students that succeed in course work or hinder a student's opportunity to try a course for the first time.

Admission standards for community college associate degree programs are changed. Provisions codify current rules related to degree program admission requirements. Alternative ways of meeting the requirement that students must have a high school diploma or its equivalent are established. The bill also requires the establishment of institutional policies regarding the identification of alternatives to traditional college-preparatory instructional methods, including those produced by private providers.

The state could realize an indeterminate fiscal benefit of over \$20 million annually, and individual students could realize a corresponding fiscal cost, due to provisions requiring students to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction only when postsecondary remedial classes are repeated, or when college-credit classes are repeated more than twice. The Department of Education could incur an additional annual cost of approximately \$675,000 for the administration of the college placement test to all of Florida's tenth grade public school students, until such time as an equivalent statewide exam is available.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. PRESENT SITUATION:

Access to Postsecondary Education

Historically, Florida's community colleges have operated under an admissions process that is best described as an "open door" policy. Access to postsecondary education is guaranteed to all citizens through the community college system. Each community college board of trustees is authorized to make rules governing the admission of students. Section 240.321, F.S., establishes minimum requirements for admission to Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Science (AS) degree programs at community colleges. Students needing preparation to meet basic communication and computation skills are required to enroll in remedial education but are permitted to take courses concurrently in other curriculum areas for which they are qualified.

Defining "remedial education"

Within Florida's postsecondary educational system, "remedial education" is synonymous with "college-preparatory instruction". Section 239.105, F.S., defines "college-preparatory instruction" as "courses through which a high school graduate who applies for a degree program may attain the communication and computation skills necessary to enroll in college credit instruction." "Vocational-preparatory instruction" is similar in that it means "instruction through which persons attain academic skills at the level of functional literacy or higher so that such persons may pursue certificate career education [previously known as postsecondary adult vocational] or higher-level career education."

To assess communication and computation skills of students who intend to enter a degree program, community colleges and state universities are authorized to administer a college placement test (CPT), as adopted by the State Board of Education. At a minimum, the test includes: the capacity to diagnose basic competencies in the areas of English, reading, and mathematics which are essential to perform college-level work and prerequisite skills which relate to the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST). The CPT assesses a wide range of skill levels with minimum passage scores set in rule.

Student preparedness for postsecondary education

Section 240.118, F.S., requires the Commissioner of Education to provide an annual report, based on the results of placement test scores, on the performance of Florida's previous-year public high school graduates who enroll in public postsecondary institutions. The recently published 1995-96 "Readiness for College Report" indicates that the percentage of students ready for college has dropped from 57.1% to 54.1% since the last report. In other words, about 46% of Florida's previous-year public high school graduates who enrolled as degree seeking students for the first time in a Florida public postsecondary institution required at least one course in remedial math, reading, or writing. When analyzed across institutional levels, over 63% of the previous-year public high school graduates attending a community college, and about 8% of the similar students attending a state university required remediation.

The finding of the Readiness Report corroborates the findings of the 1996 interim study completed by the Committee on Higher Education and the Committee on Education. Through further investigation of the data, the interim study revealed a high correlation between readiness for college and high school course-taking patterns, with students who take algebra, geometry, and college-prep English having a much higher rate of passing the CPT than other students.

Current associate degree program admission requirements

Statutes do not identify curricular, grade point average (GPA), or testing requirements (other than passing scores on college entrance exams) for admission into an AA or AS degree program. Statutes, however, clearly establish admission requirements for the AA and AS degree programs.

Associate in Arts degree program admission requirements include:

- a high school diploma or its equivalent (e.g., General Education Diploma (GED)),
- a demonstrated level of achievement of college-level communication and computation skills, and
- any other requirements established by the board of trustees for admission to an AA degree program.

Educational requirements for admission to an AS program and other programs within a community college are established by each community college's board of trustees.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Establishes a "College-Ready Diploma"

Standards for the "college-ready" diploma would be established. School districts could award a college-ready diploma to students who meet the following criteria:

- among the 24 credits required for graduation, the student must complete courses in algebra, geometry, biology, chemistry, physics, or their equivalents, and foreign language. American sign language or a student's native language, if other than English, could qualify for the foreign language requirement. Applied mathematics or applied technology could qualify for the mathematics and science requirements.
- pass the postsecondary education college placement test, or an equivalent exam, before graduation.

The college-ready diploma would entitle a student to admission without additional placement testing into a public associate degree program or a certificate career education program. This privilege would be valid for two years following high school graduation.

The bill would require the Department of Education to form a task force to identify and create additional incentives for students to strive toward achieving the college-ready diploma.

The opportunity to receive this diploma status may encourage more high school students to participate in high school course work that would prepare them for success in postsecondary education, thus diminishing their potential need for postsecondary remedial education.

Provides flexibility with regard to community college degree program admission requirements and remedial education instruction

Institutionally-developed tests, rather than the re-administration of the CPT as a statewide exam, could be used as "exit" exams from remedial instruction. Consequently, remedial exit standards could vary across institutions. Home-schooled students could be admitted to degree programs without being required to take the GED, provided a parent submits a signed affidavit attesting that the student has completed a home education program. Students that enter postsecondary education within two years of high school graduation with a "college-ready" diploma would be exempted from meeting the communication and computation skills testing portion of the degree program admission requirements. Institutional policies would be developed that would provide students with information about alternatives to traditional college-preparatory instruction as offered by community colleges, including opportunities produced by private providers. Application of the current statutorily-required AA degree program admission requirements to the AS degree program would ensure that AS students are at least as prepared as their AA degree counterparts to enter college-level work.

Requires personal accountability for courses that are repeated

Students who repeat a postsecondary remedial class would be required to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction for continuous enrollment in the same class. Both community college and state

university system undergraduate students enrolled in the same college-credit class more than twice would be required to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction. Current law provides for exceptions to the assessment of increased fees for repeated remedial course work, in financial hardship cases. The Board of Regents and the State Board of Community Colleges would identify exceptions to the assessment of increased fees for repeated college-credit courses. In effect, students would no longer receive state funding for continuous enrollment (i.e., more than twice) in the same college-credit class due to previous failures, or attempts to raise grade point averages, without being assessed an increased fee. Opponents to the fee increase provisions claim that the increased financial burden for repeat classes could, in effect, prohibit students that do not have the financial means to cover the full cost of instruction from continuing their postsecondary education. Opponents also claim that this increased fee would disproportionately harm economically-disadvantaged students and students that were never exposed to the course material during high school years. Proponents advocate personal responsibility and savings of taxpayer dollars since the provisions would in no way adversely affect students that succeed in course work or hinder a student's opportunity to try a course for the first time.

Facilitates guidance efforts and encourages collaboration in addressing remedial problems

Within the public school system, students and parents would be notified, through handbooks, manuals, career education instructional materials, and other similar documents, about recommended high school course work that prepares students for success in college-level work. School districts and community colleges would be encouraged to work together to provide accurate and timely information regarding financial aid programs. Such information could provide guidance and direction in planning students' curricular future.

High school students would be assessed in the 10th grade for the purpose of obtaining information useful in counseling and placement purposes, therefore permitting them time to remedy deficiencies while still enrolled in high school and prior to enrollment in postsecondary education. Community colleges would work with public high schools in the development of interinstitutional articulation agreements aimed at reducing the incidence, demands, and costs associated with postsecondary remedial education. Strategies for promoting "tech prep" programs of study would also be developed.

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?

No.

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

The bill would require local-level community college and public school officials to develop strategies for reducing postsecondary remedial education needs and promoting "tech prep" programs of study.

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

No.

- 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?

In some arenas, an increase in student fees has been interpreted as an increase in taxes to students. This bill does raise the amount of matriculation fees paid by only those students that repeat the same postsecondary remedial class, or those undergraduate students that repeat the same college-credit class more than twice.

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

As stated above, the bill does authorize an increase in matriculation fees for only those students that repeat the same postsecondary remedial class, or those undergraduate students that repeat the same college-credit class more than twice.

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

The state would incur an indeterminate fiscal benefit that corresponds with the costs incurred by individual students.

- 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?

Community colleges and universities would be authorized to assess students additional costs associated with repeating the same postsecondary remedial or college-credit classes.

3. Personal Responsibility:

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

The state would no longer contribute funds to support the continuous enrollment of a student after such student repeats the same postsecondary remedial class, or repeats the same college-credit class more than twice. The student would be required to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction in both situations, with no state funding support.

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

Indeterminate. An indeterminate number of public high school students that desire to earn a "college-ready" diploma may incur the cost of taking the CPT as a prerequisite to receipt of the diploma.

Students would be required to pay a higher cost for repeat enrollment in the same postsecondary remedial class, or continuous enrollment in the same college-credit class.

4. Individual Freedom:

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

Yes. To facilitate informed decision making efforts, high school students and their parents would be informed about financial aid opportunities and about recommended course work that would prepare a student for success in postsecondary education. Additionally, community colleges would be required to notify students about instructional programs that provide students with alternatives to traditional college-preparatory instruction, including private provider instruction.

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

To the contrary, the bill would permit home-schooled students to meet an admission requirement of community college degree programs without requiring said students to submit to General Education Diploma requirements.

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. 229.595, F.S., pertaining to information provided to parents and students.
- Section 2. Amends s. 229.601, F.S., related to the development of materials for use in career education.
- Section 3. Creates s. 232.2466, F.S., related to the "college-ready diploma" program.
- Section 4. Amends s. 239.117, F.S., 1996 Supplement, related to postsecondary student fees.
- Section 5. Amends s. 239.301, F.S., 1996 Supplement, pertaining to adult general education.
- Section 6. Amends s. 240.1161, F.S., pertaining to the contents of interinstitutional articulation agreements.
- Section 7. Amends s. 240.117, F.S., related to common placement testing for public postsecondary education.
- Section 8. Creates s. 240.124, F.S., related to funding for continuous enrollment in college-credit courses.
- Section 9. Amends s. 240.321, F.S., pertaining to rules for the admission of students to community colleges.
- Section 10. 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:

The State Board of Community Colleges would realize a minimal cost associated with the development of guidelines related to alternative degree program admission requirements.

2. Recurring Effects:

According to sources at the Department of Education, there are approximately 135,000 tenth grade students enrolled in the public school system. At \$5/administration/student (as estimated by the Department of Education), the Department would incur an annual cost of approximately \$675,000 for the statewide administration of the exam, until such time as an equivalent statewide exam is developed and correlated to the CPT. According to the Department, an equivalent exam, known as the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), would be available for full implementation during the spring of 1998.

The state could realize an indeterminate fiscal benefit of over \$20 million, and individual students could realize a corresponding fiscal cost, due to provisions requiring students to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction when the same postsecondary remedial class is repeated or when the same college-credit class is repeated more than twice. With regard to postsecondary remedial instruction, according to the Division of Community Colleges, approximately 15% of the nearly 200,000 students enrolled (*see note in comment section of analysis*) in postsecondary remedial instruction repeat the same class (this equals about 30,000 students, annually). Students currently pay about \$52/credit hour in direct instructional costs out of a total of approximately \$132/credit hour, according to the Division. Under the provisions of this bill, if a student repeats the same remedial class, and the class is three credits, the state could realize an annual savings of about **\$6.4 million** since there would be no state support for the continuous enrollment of those students in the same remedial class (this equals 30,000 students times \$72/credit hour for a three-hour class).

The same principle applies to state savings realized from students paying for the full cost of instruction for continuous enrollment in the same college-credit class more than twice. The state currently contributes about 75% of the full cost of college-credit instruction with the student contributing the remaining 25%. Under the provisions of this bill, both community college and state university students that repeat the same college-credit class more than twice would be required to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction. According to the Division of Community Colleges, approximately 2.2% of the nearly 2 million students enrolled (*see note in comment section of analysis*) in college-credit classes within the community college system repeat the same class more than twice (this equals about 44,000 students at the community college-level, annually). With undergraduate matriculation at about \$30/credit hour at a community college, if students incur the full cost for repeating a class for the third time, the state would potentially realize an annual savings of about **\$11.8 million** since there would be no state support for the continuous enrollment of those students in the same college credit class beyond the second enrollment (this equals the state's contribution of 75% of \$360 per 3-credit class for about 44,000 students). This estimated savings to the state applies only to community college instruction. Data about university students that repeated college-credit classes were not available at the time this analysis was prepared.

State funds spent on postsecondary remedial courses should be reduced as a result of greater student preparedness required by the college-ready diploma.

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 would realize a minimal cost associated with the development of institutional policy with regard to alternative degree program admission requirements. Community colleges would also realize indeterminate costs associated with the development of institutional exams used by students to "exit" remedial instruction.

2. Recurring Effects:

Community colleges have the responsibility to administer, supervise, and fund the administration of the CPT to high school students that choose to take the exam in the 10th grade (State Board Rule 6A-10.0315). Some community colleges enter into agreements with school boards to establish specifications for implementing the CPT, which may include a small fee per student to cover test and scoring materials. However, if the number of students taking the CPT greatly increases due to the availability of the college ready diploma, it may cause an indeterminate fiscal impact on the community colleges.

Community colleges would be prohibited from claiming students that repeat the same remedial class, and community colleges and universities would be prohibited from claiming students that repeat the same college-credit class more than twice as full-time equivalent enrollments for funding purposes.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

1. Direct Private Sector Costs:

Individual students could realize a fiscal cost due to provisions requiring students to pay 100% of the full cost of instruction when the same postsecondary remedial class is repeated, or the same college-credit class is repeated more than twice.

Students repeating a postsecondary remedial course could be expected to pay an additional \$72/credit hour (or \$216 for a three-credit class). The total cost to a student for repeat enrollment in a postsecondary remedial class would then be about \$132/credit hour (\$64 plus \$68), or about \$396 for a three-credit class (compared to \$156 for a three-credit class for first-time enrollment). About 15% of students enrolled in postsecondary remedial education repeat the same class.

Both community college and state university system undergraduate students repeating a college-credit class more than twice could be expected to pay an additional \$90/credit hour (or \$360 for a three-credit class). The total cost to a student for repeating the same college-credit class more than twice would then be about \$120/credit hour (\$30 plus \$90), or about \$360 for a three-credit class (compared to \$90 for a three-credit class for first and second time enrollment). About 2.2% of community college students enrolled in college-credit classes enroll in the same class more than twice.

2. Direct Private Sector Benefits:

Better-prepared students may realize a cost benefit since they could advance directly to credit-earning course work and avoid spending money on remedial or adult education course work. To the extent that the "college-ready" diploma results in a student population better prepared to enter the workforce, the benefits to the private sector, while indeterminate, could be significant.

Foreign language is not required for high school graduation but is required for admission by state universities. By taking the foreign language courses in high school to earn the college-ready diploma, the student will not have to pay for the courses at the postsecondary level.

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

Better-prepared students contribute to better-prepared graduates and, consequently, better-prepared workers.

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:

Parts of this analysis are based on information provided in the report "*An Analysis of Postsecondary Student Preparedness and Remedial Education Needs*" which was published January 8, 1996, as a result of a joint interim project of the House Committee on Higher Education and the House Committee on Education (Legislative Catalog Number: HE-001.0196).

Several provisions in this bill passed out of the Committee on Higher Education as part of HB 2673 during the 1996 Legislative Session. The bill died on the House Calendar.

Note on fiscal statements: For the sake of clarity in the fiscal portions of this analysis, it was assumed that enrollment meant one student participating in one postsecondary remedial or college-credit course. It is likely, however, that one student may have been enrolled in more than one class. For example, what was presented as 200,000 students enrolled in one class each may actually have been 50,000 students enrolled in four classes each.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

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VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY COLLEGES & CAREER PREP:

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