

By Representative Bilirakis

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to higher education; providing
3 Legislative intent; redesignating St.
4 Petersburg Junior College as "St. Petersburg
5 College and University Center"; requiring
6 accreditation; providing a mission; providing
7 conditional authority to offer
8 baccalaureate-degree-level programs;
9 authorizing certain baccalaureate-degree
10 programs and a process for increasing their
11 number; establishing a governing board and a
12 coordinating board; providing for dispute
13 resolution; providing for certain employment
14 classifications; providing for the acquisition
15 of land, buildings, and equipment; authorizing
16 the power of eminent domain; providing for
17 state funding; requiring a cost-accounting
18 process; providing an appropriation; providing
19 an effective date.

20
21 WHEREAS, in the past 10 years, Florida has aggressively
22 pursued strategies to increase the number of citizens who
23 complete a high-quality baccalaureate degree program,
24 including the allocation of over \$575 million to build a new
25 university, add branch campuses and centers for existing
26 universities, create joint-use facilities in cooperation with
27 community colleges, and increase the use of technology, and

28 WHEREAS, despite these efforts, Florida continues to
29 rank among the lowest in the nation in the production of
30 baccalaureate degrees, especially in the fields experiencing
31 the greatest workforce demand, and

1 WHEREAS, these high-demand fields include teachers,
2 health care professionals, and qualified managers for private
3 firms and public service agencies, including agencies that
4 protect public safety, and

5 WHEREAS, Pinellas County is Florida's most densely
6 populated county and is experiencing great need for these
7 professionals, and it has no free-standing state university,
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Pinellas County is home to more than twice as
10 many college-age citizens as the number who live in four of
11 the counties that have free-standing state universities, and

12 WHEREAS, enrollment at the College University Center at
13 St. Petersburg Junior College has increased to 725 students in
14 only 1 year of operation, providing positive proof that the
15 area can benefit from innovative access to
16 baccalaureate-degree education that is affordable and
17 convenient to students who are working full time, NOW
18 THEREFORE,

19

20 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

21

22 Section 1. Legislative intent.--The Legislature
23 intends to create an innovative means to increase access to
24 baccalaureate-degree-level education in populous counties that
25 are underserved by public baccalaureate-degree-granting
26 institutions. This education is intended to address the
27 state's workforce needs, especially the need for teachers,
28 nurses, and business managers in agencies and firms that
29 require expertise in technology.

30

31 Section 2. St. Petersburg College and University
Center; mission.--St. Petersburg Junior College is

1 redesignated as St. Petersburg College and University Center.
2 The college shall immediately seek accreditation from the
3 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as a
4 baccalaureate-degree-granting college.

5 (1) The primary mission of St. Petersburg College and
6 University Center is to provide high-quality undergraduate
7 education at an affordable price for students and the state.
8 The purpose is to promote economic development by preparing
9 people for occupations that require a bachelor's degree and
10 are in demand by existing or emerging public and private
11 employers in this state.

12 (2) The college is to maintain the mission and
13 policies of a Florida community college, including the
14 open-door admissions policy and the authority to offer all
15 programs consistent with a public community college's
16 authority.

17 (3) St. Petersburg College and University Center shall
18 maintain the distinction between the college and its
19 university center. St. Petersburg College and University
20 Center is limited to community college programs and to
21 selected baccalaureate-degree-level programs that meet
22 community needs and are authorized as provided by this act.
23 The University Center may make available more diverse program
24 offerings, but those programs are offered by a participating
25 college or university and are not to be classified or funded
26 as a program of St. Petersburg College and University Center.

27 (4) The academic policies of the upper-division
28 program at St. Petersburg College and University Center must
29 be in accordance with policies of the State University System.

30 (5) Sections 240.293 and 240.2945, Florida Statutes,
31 apply to St. Petersburg College and University Center.

1 Section 3. St. Petersburg College and University
2 Center; students.--

3 (1) St. Petersburg College and University Center shall
4 maintain separate records for students who are enrolled in
5 courses classified in the upper division and lower division of
6 a baccalaureate program, according to the Common Course
7 Numbering System. A student shall be reported as a community
8 college student for enrollment in a lower-division course and
9 as a baccalaureate-degree-program student for enrollment in an
10 upper-division course.

11 (2) The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College
12 and University Center shall establish the level of
13 matriculation, tuition, and other authorized student fees.

14 (a) For each credit hour of enrollment in a
15 certificate-level course or lower-division-level college
16 credit course, matriculation and tuition fees must be within
17 the range authorized in law and rule for a community college
18 student at that level.

19 (b) For each credit hour of enrollment in an
20 upper-division-level course, matriculation and tuition fees
21 must be in an amount established by the Board of Trustees of
22 St. Petersburg College and University Center. However, fees
23 for upper-division students must reflect the fact that the
24 college does not incur the costs of major research programs.
25 Therefore, the board shall establish fees for upper-division
26 students within a range that is lower than the fees
27 established for students at a public university but higher
28 than the fees for community college students.

29 (c) Other mandatory fees and local fees must be at the
30 same level for all students, regardless of program enrollment
31 or level. However, students in workforce development education

1 courses maintain the authorized fee exemptions described in
2 section 239.117, Florida Statutes, and may be exempt from
3 local fees imposed by the Board of Trustees, at the board's
4 discretion.

5 Section 4. St. Petersburg College and University
6 Center; degrees.--

7 (1) In addition to the certificates, diplomas, and
8 degrees authorized in section 240.301, Florida Statutes, St.
9 Petersburg College and University Center may offer selected
10 baccalaureate degrees. Initially, the college may offer
11 programs that lead to a baccalaureate degree in the following
12 fields:

13 (a) Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This program must
14 be designed to articulate with the Associate in Science Degree
15 in nursing. St. Petersburg College and University Center shall
16 continue to offer the Associate in Science degree in nursing.

17 (b) Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in
18 Elementary Education.

19 (c) Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in
20 Special Education.

21 (d) Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in
22 Secondary Education.

23 (e) Bachelor of Applied Science in fields selected by
24 the Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College and University
25 Center. The board shall base the selection on an analysis of
26 workforce needs and opportunities in the following counties:
27 Pinellas, Pasco, Hernando, and other counties approved by the
28 Florida Department of Education. For each program selected,
29 St. Petersburg College and University Center must offer a
30 related Associate-in-Science or Associate-in-Applied-Science
31 degree program, and the baccalaureate-degree-level program

1 must be designed to articulate fully with at least one
2 Associate-in-Science degree program. The college is encouraged
3 to develop articulation agreements for enrollment of graduates
4 of related Associate-in-Applied-Science degree programs.

5 (2) St. Petersburg College and University Center may
6 offer courses at any level which enable teachers to qualify
7 for recertification as required by law or rule.

8 (3) The college may offer programs to provide
9 opportunities for a person who holds a baccalaureate degree,
10 but is not certified to teach, to obtain any additional
11 courses required for teacher certification.

12 (4) Masters-degree-level programs and doctoral
13 programs may be provided by agreement with a college or
14 university participating in the College University Center of
15 St. Petersburg College and University Center.

16 Section 5. St. Petersburg College and University
17 Center; boards.--

18 (1) The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg Junior
19 College is renamed the Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg
20 College and University Center and serves as its governing
21 board. The Governor shall appoint members as provided in
22 section 240.313, Florida Statutes, and the board has the
23 duties and authorities granted in sections 240.315 and
24 240.319, Florida Statutes, and by rules of the State Board of
25 Education.

26 (2) The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College
27 and University Center may authorize direct support
28 organizations as authorized in sections 240.299 and 240.331,
29 Florida Statutes.

30 (3) The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College
31 and University Center may continue to award degrees, diplomas,

1 and certificates as authorized for St. Petersburg Junior
2 College, and in the name of St. Petersburg Junior College,
3 until St. Petersburg College and University Center receives
4 its accreditation.

5 (4) A coordinating board shall assist the Board of
6 Trustees in its deliberations concerning issues that affect
7 the upper division of the college. The coordinating board
8 consists of the President of the University of South Florida,
9 the President of St. Petersburg College and University Center,
10 and the chairpersons of the boards of trustees of those
11 institutions.

12 (5) Beginning 4 years after the college receives
13 accreditation to offer baccalaureate degrees, the Board of
14 Trustees of St. Petersburg College and University Center may
15 determine additional programs to be offered, with the approval
16 of the coordinating board. The determination must consider
17 community needs and economic opportunities.

18 (6) The coordinating board shall meet at the request
19 of the President of the University of South Florida or the
20 President of St. Petersburg College and University Center.

21 (7) If the coordinating board cannot decide an issue
22 of importance to the programs designed for upper-division
23 students, the chief educational officer of this state shall
24 resolve the issue.

25 Section 6. St. Petersburg College and University
26 Center; employees.--

27 (1) Employment at St. Petersburg College and
28 University Center is governed by the same laws that govern
29 community colleges, except that upper-division faculty are
30 eligible for continuing contract upon the completion of the
31 fifth year of teaching.

1 (2) Employee records for all personnel shall be
2 maintained as required by s. 240.337, Florida Statutes.

3 (3) St. Petersburg College and University Center may
4 reemploy retired career service, administrative and
5 professional, professional, and faculty personnel immediately
6 upon retirement, without a penalty and without imposing a
7 waiting period.

8 Section 7. St. Petersburg College and University
9 Center; facilities.--The St. Petersburg College and University
10 Center may request funding from the Public Education Capital
11 Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund as a community college and
12 as a university. The municipalities of Pinellas County, the
13 Board of County Commissioners of Pinellas County, and all
14 other governmental entities are authorized to cooperate with
15 the Board of Trustees in establishing this institution. The
16 acquisition and donation of lands, buildings, and equipment
17 for the use of St. Petersburg College and University Center
18 are authorized as a public purpose. The Board of County
19 Commissioners of Pinellas County and all municipalities in
20 Pinellas County may exercise the power of eminent domain to
21 acquire lands, buildings, and equipment for the use of St.
22 Petersburg College and University Center, regardless of
23 whether such lands, buildings, and equipment are located in a
24 community redevelopment area.

25 Section 8. St. Petersburg College and University
26 Center; state funding.--

27 (1) The Legislature intends to fund St. Petersburg
28 College and University Center as a community college for its
29 workforce development education programs and for its
30 lower-division-level college credit courses and programs.

31

1 (2) The Legislature intends to fund St. Petersburg
2 College and University Center as a baccalaureate-degree-level
3 institution for its upper-division-level courses and programs.

4 (3) During the 2001-2002 fiscal year, St. Petersburg
5 College and University Center shall estimate the appropriate
6 level of funding for these programs. By March 1, 2002, the
7 college shall complete a cost study and shall submit to the
8 Legislature a proposal for cost accounting and legislative
9 budget requests designed to acknowledge its unique
10 classification. The cost study must indicate actual costs
11 projected for the first 4 years of operation as a
12 baccalaureate-level institution, with the first students
13 expected to enroll in the upper division in fall semester of
14 2002.

15 Section 9. To fund the necessary improvements,
16 personnel, and acquisitions required for accreditation as a
17 baccalaureate-degree-level institution, the sum of _____ is
18 appropriated to the Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg Junior
19 College.

20 Section 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

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23 SENATE SUMMARY

24 Redesignates St. Petersburg Junior College as "St.
25 Petersburg College and University Center." Requires
26 accreditation. Provides for the center's mission.
27 Provides conditional authority to offer
28 baccalaureate-degree-level programs. Authorizes certain
29 baccalaureate-degree programs and provides a process for
30 increasing the number of such programs. Establishes a
 governing board and a coordinating board. Provides for
 dispute resolution. Provides for certain employment
 classifications. Provides for the acquisition of land,
 buildings, and equipment. Authorizes the power of eminent
 domain. Provides for state funding. Requires a
 cost-accounting process. Provides an appropriation.