

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 4177 Public Postsecondary Education

SPONSOR(S): Metz and others

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 632

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) K-20 Innovation Subcommittee	13 Y, 0 N	Guilford	Sherry
2) Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill repeals a statutory exemption to the Board of Governors of the State University System regulation which requires all students entering a state university with fewer than 60 semester hours of credit to earn at least nine semester hours during one or more summer terms. Florida law provides an exemption from the summer term enrollment requirement for students who have earned nine or more credits through articulated acceleration mechanisms. Articulated acceleration mechanisms include dual enrollment, early admission, advanced placement, College Level Examination Program, International Baccalaureate, or Advanced International Certificate of Education.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2011.

See Fiscal Comments.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Current Situation

The regulations of the Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG) require all students entering a state university with fewer than 60 semester hours of credit to earn at least nine semester hours prior to graduation by enrollment during one or more summer terms. University presidents are authorized to grant hardship waivers to this requirement.¹

Florida law provides an exemption from the summer enrollment requirement for students who have earned nine or more credits in one or more articulated acceleration mechanisms.² Articulated acceleration mechanisms include dual enrollment, early admission, advanced placement, College Level Examination Program, International Baccalaureate, or Advanced International Certificate of Education.³

Effect of Proposed Changes

Universities have increased utilization of the summer term due to increasing student access demands and greater competition. Utilization of the summer term also shortens the time necessary for students to complete their degree.⁴ Currently, students who earn nine or more credit hours through articulated acceleration mechanisms are statutorily exempted from BOG regulations requiring all students entering a state university with fewer than 60 semester hours of credit to earn at least nine semester hours during a summer term. The bill repeals this exemption, thereby allowing a state university to require all students to attend at least one summer term. This change will provide state universities with more flexibility regarding course scheduling and utilization of facilities and faculty. Increasing summer term enrollment may shorten the time it takes for students to complete their degrees, which will create more openings for prospective students.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Repealing s. 1007.27(10), F.S.; relating to Articulated Acceleration Mechanisms; repealing an exemption.

Section 2: Providing an effective date of July 1, 2011.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

¹ Regulation 6.016, Board of Governors.

² Section. 1007.27(10), F.S.

³ Sections 1007.271 and 1007.27(5)-(8), F.S.

⁴ Interview with Board of Governors Staff (March 18, 2011).

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

Many students who are eligible for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program graduate from high school with credit earned through articulated acceleration mechanisms. Bright Futures Scholarships may be used in the summer term if funds are available, but the Legislature has not funded summer term enrollment.⁵ Scholarship recipients who would normally qualify for the exemption may be required to find an additional funding source to pay for summer term enrollment. The existing BOG regulation authorizes each university president to grant hardship waivers of the summer term attendance requirement.⁶

In the 2009-10 academic year, approximately 21,900 students who received a standard high school diploma had earned nine or more credits through articulated acceleration mechanisms.⁷ However, not all of these students attended a state university in Florida. Thus, the total number of students impacted by the bill is likely smaller. Furthermore, nothing in current law prohibits a student who is eligible for the repealed exemption from voluntarily enrolling in a summer term.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

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

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

The bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax sharing with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

⁵ Section 1009.53(9), F.S.

⁶ Regulation 6.016, Board of Governors.

⁷ Email, Staff of the Florida Senate (March 18, 2011).

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

Not applicable.