



## II. Present Situation:

The Legislature has established mechanisms to facilitate coordination between public and private postsecondary education institutions and employment agencies to assist students in completing degree programs to meet the state's workforce needs.

### **Complete Florida Plus Program**

In 2012, the Legislature created the Complete Florida Plus Program<sup>1</sup> at the University of West Florida (UWF) for the purpose of:<sup>2</sup>

- Facilitating degree completion for the state's adult learners through the Complete Florida Degree Initiative.
- Providing information relating to and access to distance learning courses and degree programs offered by public postsecondary education institutions.
- Coordinating with the Florida College System (FCS) and the State University System (SUS) to identify and provide online academic support services and resources when the multi-institutional provision of such services and resources is more cost effective or operationally effective.
- Administering the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative<sup>3</sup> (Cooperative) and consulting with the chancellors of the FCS and the SUS regarding the Cooperative.

The UWF must submit annual reports to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives relating to the implementation and operation of the components of the Complete Florida Plus Program and the Cooperative.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Complete Florida Degree Initiative***

In 2014, the Legislature established the Complete Florida Degree Initiative (Initiative) within the Complete Florida Plus Program for the purpose of recruiting, recovering, and retaining the state's adult learners<sup>5</sup> and assisting them in completing an associate degree or a baccalaureate degree aligned to the state's high-wage, high-skill workforce needs.<sup>6</sup> The Initiative coordinates with FCS institutions, state universities, and private postsecondary institutions and partners with public and private job recruitment and placement agencies to identify associate, applied baccalaureate, and baccalaureate degree programs that meet the state's workforce needs.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The program was formerly established as the Degree Completion Pilot Project pursuant to s. 15, ch. 2012-34, L.O.F.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1006.735(1), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1006.73, F.S. The cooperative provides a single library automation system and associated resources and services for public postsecondary institutions to use to support learning, teaching, and research needs. *Id.* at (1).

<sup>4</sup> Sections 1006.73(4) and 1006.735(5), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 1006.735(2), F.S. Adult learners who are veterans or active duty members of the United States Armed Forces are given priority. *Id.* An "adult learner" is defined as "a student who has successfully completed college-level coursework in multiple semesters but has left an institution in good standing before completing his or her degree." *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Section 1006.735(2), F.S.; *see also*, s. 16, ch. 2014-56, L.O.F.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1006.735(2)(a), F.S.

Specifically, the Initiative must:<sup>8</sup>

- Give priority to degree programs using labor market data and projections, including data and projections included in the Board of Governor's gap analysis,<sup>9</sup> to identify the specific workforce needs and targeted occupations of the state.
- Provide adult learners with a single point of access to information and links to innovative online and accelerated distance learning courses, student and library support services, and electronic resources that will aid them in completing a postsecondary degree.
- Use existing or develop new competency-based instructional and evaluation tools to assess prior performance, experience, and education to award college credit and reduce the time required for adults to complete degrees.
- Develop and implement an evaluation process to collect and analyze appropriate data to report the effectiveness of the Initiative to the chancellors of the FCS and the SUS, the participating postsecondary education institutions, the chairs of the legislative appropriations committees, and the Executive Office of the Governor.
- Develop and implement a statewide student recruitment campaign targeted toward adult learners, particularly veterans and active duty members of the United States Armed Forces, for enrollment in degree programs offered through the Initiative.

### **Access to Resources & Support**

#### ***Statewide Internet-Based Catalog of Distance Learning Courses***

The Complete Florida Plus Program manages a statewide Internet-based catalog of distance learning courses, degree programs, and resources offered by public postsecondary education institutions to facilitate the institutions' efforts in developing a statewide articulation system that allows students to rapidly proceed toward their educational objectives and transfer between institutions.<sup>10</sup> Participating institutions must provide specific information regarding the distance learning courses and degree programs (*e.g.*, course numbers, availability, and costs).<sup>11</sup>

The Complete Florida Plus Program must establish operational procedures for the catalog and must review and frequently ensure that distance learning courses and degree programs comply with the operational procedures. The operational procedures must include:<sup>12</sup>

- Courses and degree programs that meet applicable accreditation standards and criteria.
- User-friendly search and retrieval options for finding courses in a variety of ways.
- An Internet-based analytic tool that analyzes and collects data relating to catalog use and requests.

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<sup>8</sup> Section 1006.735(2), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1001.706(5), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Section 1006.735(3), F.S.; *see also*, s. 1007.01, F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1006.735(3), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

### *Statewide Online Student Advising Services & Support*

The Complete Florida Plus Program must make available statewide online services and support in coordination with FCS institutions and state universities which include:<sup>13</sup>

- A streamlined online admissions application process for undergraduate transient students who enroll in courses offered by public postsecondary education institutions that are not the students' degree-granting institution.
- A K-20 statewide computer-assisted student advising system that supports K-12 career and education planning and the advisement, registration, and certification of postsecondary students for graduation, including a degree audit and an articulation component.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

SB 942 establishes the Rapid Response Education and Training Program within the Complete Florida Plus Program at the University of West Florida to recruit and retain employees through industry-specific education and training. Also, the bill requires that the Complete Florida Plus Program work directly with Enterprise Florida, Inc., in project-specific industry recruitment and retention efforts to offer credible education and training commitments to businesses.

The Complete Florida Plus Program and Complete Florida Degree Initiative currently assist in recruiting, recovering, and retaining individuals to meet the state's high-wage, high-skill workforce needs. The bill expands the Complete Florida Plus Program and further serves its purpose to include targeted education and training programs for industries and businesses in the state.

Specifically, the bill requires that the Rapid Response Education and Training Program:

- Award matching grants to public and private education and training providers.
- Submit to the Legislature periodic reports generated by an independent forensic accounting or auditing entity.
- Keep administrative costs to a minimum through the use of existing organizational structures.
- Work with businesses to recruit individuals for education and training.
- Give 30-days' notice before terminating a participating education and training program.
- Survey businesses regarding the effectiveness of the education and training programs.

Additionally, the bill requires that the Division of Career and Adult Education within the Department of Education analyze and assess the effectiveness of the education and training programs offered through the Rapid Response Education and Training Program in meeting labor market and occupational trends and gaps.

The award of matching grants to public and private education and training providers and partnerships with businesses may assist individuals in retaining and securing employment.

The bill provides for an effective date of July 1, 2015.

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<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at (4).

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

The bill substantially amends section 1006.735 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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