

By the Committee on Education; and Senator Diaz

581-03261-21

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1 A bill to be entitled  
2 An act relating to the State University Free Seat  
3 Program; amending s. 1009.26, F.S.; creating the State  
4 University Free Seat Program; providing a purpose;  
5 providing an exemption from tuition and fees,  
6 including lab fees, for one online course at a state  
7 university for certain resident students; prohibiting  
8 a state university from charging such students more  
9 than a specified percentage of the tuition rate and  
10 the tuition differential under certain circumstances;  
11 providing a limitation on the application of such  
12 tuition discount; requiring each state university to  
13 report certain information regarding waivers under the  
14 program to the Board of Governors annually; requiring  
15 the board to adopt regulations; providing an effective  
16 date.

17  
18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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20 Section 1. Subsection (18) is added to section 1009.26,  
21 Florida Statutes, to read:

22 1009.26 Fee waivers.—

23 (18) The State University Free Seat Program is created to  
24 encourage veterans, active duty members of the United States  
25 Armed Forces, active drilling members of the Florida National  
26 Guard, and nontraditional students to enroll in an online  
27 baccalaureate degree program at a state university.

28 (a) A state university shall waive the tuition and fees,  
29 including lab fees, for one online course for a student who is a

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30 resident for tuition purposes under s. 1009.21 and enrolled in  
31 an online baccalaureate degree program, provided the student  
32 meets one of the following eligibility requirements:

33 1. Is a veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14);

34 2. Is an active duty member of the United States Armed  
35 Forces;

36 3. Is an active drilling member of the Florida National  
37 Guard; or

38 4. Has not been enrolled in a postsecondary institution for  
39 more than five years.

40 (b) For all other courses in the program, a state  
41 university may not charge a student specified in paragraph (a)  
42 more than 75 percent of the tuition rate as specified in s.  
43 1009.24(4) and 75 percent of the tuition differential pursuant  
44 to s. 1009.24(16), if the student remains enrolled in at least  
45 one online course during each academic year.

46 (c) A student who qualifies for the tuition discount under  
47 paragraph (b) is eligible to receive the discount for up to 110  
48 percent of the number of required credit hours of the degree  
49 program for which the student is enrolled.

50 (d) Each state university shall report to the Board of  
51 Governors the number and value of all fee waivers granted  
52 annually under this subsection.

53 (e) The Board of Governors shall adopt regulations to  
54 administer this subsection.

55 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.