

Institutions participating in a special program for students from disadvantaged backgrounds pursuant to 20 U.S.C., ss. 1070d et seq. may submit proposals to the Department of Education (DOE) if they wish to participate in CROP. The State Board of Education (SBE) is charged with determining which proposals should be implemented. Institutions participating in the program must provide procedures for continuous contact with students from the time of selection to the time the student enrolls in a postsecondary institution. The student must be provided with academic and admissions guidance, including summer on-campus activities, in addition to opportunities to interact with college students acting as mentors, tutors, or role models. They must also be provided the opportunity to live on campus. In selecting institutions, the SBE must give preference to institutions meeting criteria which includes: joint submission with another eligible institution; use of institutional, federal, or private resources to augment state appropriations; demonstrated success with similar programs; use of innovative approaches; and an interest in cultural diversity.

Selected proposals are funded competitively. Eighty percent of appropriated funds must be distributed to programs that include, at a minimum, a summer residency program of at least one week in duration, and a minimum number of hours of instructional and developmental activities, career counseling, and personal counseling. Subject to legislative appropriations, rates of funding to continuing programs meeting minimum criteria are increased each year to accommodate inflation. A project funded for three consecutive years should have a cumulative institutional cash match of not less than 50 percent of the total cost of the project over the 3-year period, otherwise, it will not be considered for continued funding. The remaining 20 percent of appropriated funds must be distributed on the basis of initiatives and performance. Financial incentives are to be awarded to projects that exceed the minimum standards when they demonstrate improved success rates regarding program dropouts, admissions to colleges and universities, at least 50 percent parental involvement, provision of innovative services, summer residencies in excess of one week in duration, and provision for student and parent transportation. A ten-member advisory council is charged with reviewing proposals and with making recommendations to the SBE regarding funding priority.

On or before February 15 of each year, participating institutions must submit interim reports containing program expenditures and participant information, as required by SBE rules, to the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (PEPC). On or before October 15 of each year, the institutions must submit end-of-the-year reports on the effectiveness of program participation. The report must include: expenditures; a list of students by grade level, sex, and race; a statement of how the program addresses specified program goals, a description and analysis of program characteristics and activities deemed critical for success; a description of cooperation received from other units or organizations; and an explanation of program outcomes, including data related to student performance.

By January 15 of each year, PEPC must submit a report on the effectiveness of CROP to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Commissioner of Education, and the Governor. The evaluation must include longitudinal cohort assessments of program participants from their entry into the program through graduation from a postsecondary

institution, and if feasible, a comparison with comparable cohort populations in public schools and postsecondary education.

Funding for the program is provided in the General Appropriations Act, with an allocation to PEPC for annual program evaluations.

Undergraduate Enhancement Programs

Section 240.154, F.S., as enacted in ch. 89-381, Laws of Florida (L.O.F.), requires public community college and university presidents to submit proposals for undergraduate enhancement grants to the State Board of Community Colleges, or to the Board of Regents (BOR), as appropriate. Programs selected for funding by the boards must be designed to increase the quality and amount of academic and career advisement, and to improve undergraduate instruction. Programs must be funded competitively, including a reward system for excellence in undergraduate instruction and advising. Each March 1, participating institutions must submit to their respective boards a report on program effectiveness. The report must include expenditures and funds, the number of participating students by grade, age, sex, and race, a description of program objectives, a statement of how the program enhances advisement services and rewards teaching excellence, and a description of efforts to institutionalize program goals through modifications to tenure, promotion policies, and other means. The boards must include funding requests for proposals in their respective legislative budget requests.

Quality Assurance Program

Section 240.278, F.S., as enacted in ch. 63-347, L.O.F., establishes the Quality Assurance Fund, together with a required course program, to be administered and distributed by BOR. The funds available under the program are intended for distribution within the State University System for the purpose of establishing additional class sections during the summer of required courses that are filled.

East Central Florida University or Branch

Section 240.521, F.S., as enacted in ch. 91-77, L.O.F., authorizes SBE to establish a state university and/or branch of an existing state university in the East Central section of Florida (Counties of Flagler, Orange, Seminole, Lake, Brevard, Volusia, Osceola, Indian River, and St. Lucie). The section also authorizes and directs the establishment of an extension of the University of Florida Engineering College to provide graduate studies at the masters and doctorate level, and science and engineering research facilities, also located in East Central Florida.

Southwest Florida University

Section 240.522, F.S., as enacted in ch. 91-55, L.O.F., establishes a state university in Southwest Florida (defined as Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee Counties). The BOR is charged with all actions necessary to implement the establishment of the university, including any transfers

of positions and resources. The section authorizes the establishment of a foundation to serve a direct support organization. It also authorizes the acquisition and donation of lands, buildings, and equipment. Upon appropriation by the Legislature, the Southwest Florida Site Selection Committee was to be established, and with the assistance of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, was to determine the most feasible site for the new university. A site was to be recommended to the BOR by January 1, 1992. The Ft. Myers branch of the University of South Florida would have been assimilated into the new university.

College in Dade County

Section 240.523, F.S., as enacted in ch. 65-297, L.O.F., authorizes the SBE and the BOR to establish a degree-granting four-year college in Dade County, and to perform a feasibility study regarding such action.

Duval County State University or Branch

Section 240.525, F.S., as enacted in ch. 65-308, L.O.F., authorizes the SBE to establish a state university or a branch of an existing state university or college in Duval County, and to perform a feasibility study regarding such action.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The committee substitute revises the conditions under which an educational institution may submit a proposal to participate in the college reach-out program; such institutions will no longer have to participate in a special federal program for students from disadvantaged backgrounds in order to apply.

The committee substitute revises s. 240.61, F.S., regarding the due date for the PEPC annual evaluation report on CROP from January 15 to February 15. Data necessary for the report is often not received until January. This change in the due date will give PEPC a more reasonable time frame for preparing the report. The committee substitute eliminates the requirement for including longitudinal cohort assessments in the evaluation. PEPC feels that longitudinal cohort assessments are no longer necessary. Such extensive assessments have been conducted and reported since 1990-91, and, according to PEPC, have demonstrated that the CROP program is successful. Any further studies in this regard would require that a new cohort be examined since the first group is now part of the work force.

The committee substitute repeals s. 240.154, F.S., thereby eliminating certain undergraduate enhancement programs. It also repeals s. 240.278, F.S. regarding the Quality Assurance Fund and corresponding program. Although a variety of enhance programs are being funded, these particular programs have not been funded.

The committee substitute repeals ss. 240.521, 240.522, 240.523, and 240.525, F.S., thereby rescinding obsolete language concerning authorization to establish universities or university

branches in East Central Florida or Southwest Florida, a 4-year college in Dade County, and a state university, or branch of an existing university or state college in Duval County, respectively. These universities now exist.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Negligible.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
