



Item: AS: I-4

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS
Wednesday, December 14, 2011

**SUBJECT: REQUEST TO THE BOG TO ANALYZE THE COMPARABLE
STATISTICS OF THE PREDICTIVE GRADUATION RATE**

PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION

No action required. Information item.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

N/A

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE

N/A

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

November 16, 2011

The Honorable Dean Colson
Colson Hicks Eidson
255 Alhambra Circle, Penthouse
Coral Gables, FL 33134

The Honorable Frank T. Brogan
Chancellor, State University System of Florida
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1614
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400

Dear Governor Colson and Chancellor Brogan:

One of the ways in which Florida evaluates the success of its public university system in graduating students is by reporting the six-year graduation rate of a specific cohort, "first-time-in-college freshmen" (FTIC). As the State University System of Florida moves toward more precise accountability measures, we suggest that consideration be given to modifying this reporting practice. Many states have adopted a process that compares the actual system-wide (or individual university) six-year bachelor's degree completion rate to a "predicted" rate.

The prediction method estimates the graduation probabilities of students with varying characteristics. This allows a determination of whether the system is doing a good job in promoting the success of all students rather than just those who have financial and academic advantages. These prediction models commonly include such factors as Pell grant eligibility, ACT and/or SAT scores, age, first in family to attend college, race/ethnicity, on-campus residency, rank in high school graduating class, high school GPA, merit-based financial aid status, and gender. The *U.S. News and World Report* graduation rate performance indicator is based on a linear regression equation controlling for student aptitude and institutional expenditures.

Since so many students migrate from one state institution to another, this system has the additional advantage of providing a more comprehensive context for the analysis of graduation rates. A positive relationship between the actual rate and the predicted rate (when the actual rate exceeds the predicted rate) will indicate that the universities are doing a good job of promoting the success of all students, regardless of the initial disadvantages that some of them may have.

In addition, many of Florida Atlantic University's successful graduates entered the State University System via the 2+2 articulation pathway from our partner state colleges. Capturing and publicizing the success of these students is just as important as reporting FTIC graduation rates.

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Chancellor Brogan
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We request that the Board of Governors' staff consider compiling the data necessary to analyze expected vs. actual graduation rates, and to factor in transfers among the state universities and state colleges in student success statistics.

Thank you for your consideration of this suggestion, which we believe has the ability to help us best serve distinct groups of students through an understanding of whether the students in such groups are graduating in the predicted timeframe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end of the word.

Robert J. Stilley
Chair, FAU Board of Trustees