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DFC Memo: 2020-08

Contact: Caleb Hawkes

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Florida College System Presidents

FROM: Kathy Hebda 

DATE: June 29, 2020

SUBJECT: HB 171 – Postsecondary Education for Certain Military Personnel

House Bill (HB) 171 amends section (s.) 1004.096, Florida Statutes (F.S.), to require the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) to create a process for the uniform awarding of postsecondary credit or career education clock hours to certain service members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

The legislation creates a timeline of required actions:

- By July 15, 2020: The ACC shall convene a workgroup to develop the process determining postsecondary course equivalencies and minimum postsecondary credit or career clock hours awarded for military courses taken and occupations held.
- By December 1, 2020: The workgroup shall provide recommendations to the Board of Governors (BOG) and State Board of Education (SBOE) for approval regarding the process of determining equivalencies.
- Following board approval of the process: The ACC will facilitate the review of military courses and occupations.
- Within one year after board approval of the process: A prioritized list of postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary creditor clock hours is to be approved by the ACC and adopted by the BOG and SBOE at the next publicly-noticed meeting of each board.
- Once equivalencies are adopted: Florida College System institutions and state universities must award credit/clock hours in accordance with equivalencies adopted by the ACC and respective boards, if the credit or clock hours are applicable toward the student's degree or certificate.

As institutions will be required to award credit or clock hours (if applicable) to the student's degree or certificate, institutions should expect follow-up guidance after equivalencies are developed and adopted. The Department's Office of Articulation, which administratively supports the ACC, will be providing additional implementation procedures in the future regarding this portion of the legislation.

KATHRYN S. HEBDA
FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM CHANCELLOR

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HB 171 also amends s. 1009.26, F.S., requiring Florida's postsecondary institutions to waive the transcript fee of active duty members or honorably discharged veterans, including his/her spouse and dependents. The SBOE will adopt rules to administer this provision. Institutions must begin waiving the transcript fee for this population as of the date the bill is signed into law.

Institutions should also document the number and value of fee waivers granted for annual reporting purposes.

KH/chh

Attachment

cc: Rod Duckworth, Director, Office of Articulation
FCS Council of Instructional Affairs
FCS Council of Student Affairs

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2020 Legislature

1
2 An act relating to postsecondary education for certain
3 military personnel; amending s. 1004.096, F.S.;
4 requiring the Board of Governors and the State Board
5 of Education, in consultation with the Department of
6 Veterans' Affairs, to create a process for the uniform
7 award of postsecondary credit or career education
8 clock hours to certain servicemembers and veterans of
9 the United States Armed Forces; requiring the
10 Articulation Coordinating Committee to convene a
11 workgroup by a specified date; providing for
12 membership and duties of the workgroup; providing
13 administrative support for the workgroup; requiring
14 the workgroup to provide recommendations to the Board
15 of Governors and the State Board of Education by a
16 specified date; requiring the Board of Governors and
17 the State Board of Education to approve the
18 recommendations; requiring the Articulation
19 Coordinating Committee to facilitate the review of
20 courses taken and occupations held by individuals
21 during their service in the military for postsecondary
22 credit and career education clock hours; requiring the
23 Articulation Coordinating Committee to approve and the
24 Board of Governors and the State Board of Education to
25 adopt a specified list within a specified timeframe;

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26 requiring delineation of credit and career education
 27 clock hours in the statewide articulation agreement;
 28 requiring certain postsecondary institutions to award
 29 uniform postsecondary credit or career education clock
 30 hours for specified courses taken and occupations held
 31 by individuals during their service in the military;
 32 authorizing the award of additional credits or career
 33 education clock hours; requiring certain credits and
 34 career education clock hours to transfer between
 35 specified postsecondary institutions; amending s.
 36 1009.26, F.S.; requiring specified postsecondary
 37 institutions to waive the transcript fee for active
 38 duty members of the United States Armed Forces,
 39 certain veterans, and their spouses and dependents;
 40 providing reporting requirements for such fee waivers;
 41 requiring the Board of Governors and the State Board
 42 of Education to adopt regulations and rules,
 43 respectively; providing an effective date.

44

45 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

46

47 Section 1. Section 1004.096, Florida Statutes, is amended
 48 to read:

49 1004.096 College credit for military training and
 50 education courses.—

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51 (1) In consultation with the Department of Veterans'
 52 Affairs, the Board of Governors shall adopt regulations and the
 53 State Board of Education shall adopt rules that create a process
 54 that enables ~~enable~~ eligible servicemembers or veterans of the
 55 United States Armed Forces to earn uniform postsecondary
 56 ~~academic college~~ credit across all Florida ~~at~~ public
 57 postsecondary educational institutions for college-level
 58 training and education acquired in the military. The regulations
 59 and rules shall include procedures for credential evaluation and
 60 the uniform award of postsecondary ~~academic college~~ credit or
 61 career education clock hours, including, but not limited to,
 62 equivalency and alignment of military coursework with
 63 appropriate postsecondary ~~college~~ courses and, course
 64 descriptions, ~~type and amount of college credit that may be~~
 65 ~~awarded, and transfer of credit.~~

66 (2) The Articulation Coordinating Committee shall convene
 67 a workgroup by July 15, 2020, which is responsible for
 68 developing a process for determining postsecondary course
 69 equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career
 70 education clock hours that must be awarded for courses taken and
 71 occupations held by individuals during their service in the
 72 military.

73 (a) The workgroup shall be composed of the following 13
 74 members:

75 1. The chair of the Articulation Coordinating Committee,

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76 | or his or her designee, who shall serve as chair.

77 | 2. Four members representing academic affairs
 78 | administrators and faculty from state universities, appointed by
 79 | the chair of the Board of Governors.

80 | 3. Four members representing academic affairs
 81 | administrators and faculty from Florida College System
 82 | institutions, appointed by the chair of the State Board of
 83 | Education.

84 | 4. Two members representing faculty from career centers,
 85 | appointed by the State Board of Education.

86 | 5. Two members representing veterans, appointed by the
 87 | executive director of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

88 | (b) The Office of K-20 Articulation shall provide
 89 | administrative support for the workgroup.

90 | (c) The workgroup shall establish a process for
 91 | prioritizing and determining postsecondary course equivalencies
 92 | and the minimum postsecondary credit or career education clock
 93 | hours that must be awarded for courses taken and occupations
 94 | held by individuals during their service in the military. The
 95 | workgroup shall provide recommendations to the Board of
 96 | Governors and the State Board of Education by December 1, 2020,
 97 | for approval at the next meeting of each board to allow for
 98 | adequate public notice.

99 | (d) Upon approval of the workgroup's recommendations by
 100 | the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education, the

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101 Articulation Coordinating Committee shall facilitate the review
102 of courses taken and occupations held by individuals during
103 their service in the military for postsecondary course
104 equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary credit or career
105 education clock hours that must be awarded in accordance with
106 the approved process.

107 (e) Within 1 year after approval of the workgroup's
108 recommendations by the Board of Governors and the State Board of
109 Education pursuant to paragraph (c), the Articulation
110 Coordinating Committee shall approve a prioritized list of
111 postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum postsecondary
112 credit or career education clock hours that must be awarded for
113 courses taken and occupations held by individuals during their
114 service in the military. The list must be updated annually. The
115 Board of Governors and the State Board of Education shall timely
116 adopt the list approved by the Articulation Coordinating
117 Committee at the next meeting of each board to allow for
118 adequate public notice. For the purpose of statewide
119 application, postsecondary course equivalencies and the minimum
120 postsecondary credit or career education clock hours that must
121 be awarded for courses taken and occupations held by individuals
122 during their service in the military shall be delineated by the
123 State Board of Education and the Board of Governors in the
124 statewide articulation agreement required by s. 1007.23(1).

125 (f) State universities, Florida College System

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126 institutions, and career centers must award postsecondary credit
 127 or career education clock hours for courses taken and
 128 occupations held by individuals during their service in the
 129 military based on the list adopted by the Board of Governors and
 130 the State Board of Education pursuant to paragraph (e) if the
 131 credit or career education clock hours are applicable toward the
 132 student's degree or certificate. Institutions may award
 133 additional postsecondary credit or career education clock hours
 134 if appropriate. Credit or career education clock hours awarded
 135 in accordance with minimum postsecondary credit and clock hour
 136 requirements, respectively, are guaranteed to transfer to other
 137 state universities, Florida College System institutions, and
 138 career centers.

139 Section 2. Subsection (17) is added to section 1009.26,
 140 Florida Statutes, to read:

141 1009.26 Fee waivers.—

142 (17) (a) Each state university, Florida College System
 143 institution, career center operated by a school district under
 144 s. 1001.44, and charter technical career center under s. 1002.34
 145 shall waive the transcript fee for a person who is an active
 146 duty member or an honorably discharged veteran of the United
 147 States Armed Forces and his or her spouse and dependents.

148 (b) Each state university, Florida College System
 149 institution, career center operated by a school district under
 150 s. 1001.44, and charter technical career center under s. 1002.34

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151 | shall report to the Board of Governors and the State Board of
 152 | Education, respectively, the number and value of fee waivers
 153 | granted annually under this subsection.

154 | (c) The Board of Governors and the State Board of
 155 | Education shall adopt regulations and rules, respectively, to
 156 | administer this subsection.

157 | Section 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.