Tallahassee Update
2021 Legislative Session
Sine Die

The 2021 Florida Legislature adjourned *sine die* (with no appointed date for resumption) at 2:40 pm on Friday, April 30th. And it was a dramatic finish. The drama didn't surround the final vote to approves the historic $101.5 billion state budget for FY 2021-22, but around the implementation date for legislation passed in the 2020 session regarding revenue generated by the commercialization of the name, image and likeness of intercollegiate athletes, the rights of transgender athletes, and university membership in the NCAA.

After 3,140 bills and proposed committee bills were filed, 2,632 amendments filed, 3,788 votes taken, and 39 floor session, the 2021 session saw 275 bills pass both chambers. As of the date of this report, Governor DeSantis has already signed 7 bills and has SB 2006 Emergency Management on his desk.

UCF Trustees Confirmed

On the penultimate day of the 2021 session, the Senate confirmed five UCF Trustees including Trustees Tiffany Altizer, William Christy, Jeffrey Condello, Joseph Conte, and Harold Mills.

Governor DeSantis appointed Trustee Alex Martins on March 12 and he will serve on the UCF Board with full authority with confirmation in the 2022 session which begins on January 11, 2022.

State Budget Highlights

The $101.5 billion state budget includes $36.3 billion in General Revenue. For comparison, the current year's $92.2 billion budget was built with $34.7 million in General Revenue.

Florida is slated to receive $10 billion in Federal Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Funds, and the FY 2021-22 budget spends $6.7 billion of those funds on emergency response, infrastructure improvements, water quality and the environment, economic development and a $350 million pot for a deferred maintenance program for state, college, and university facilities.

What's Next: The budget will go to DeSantis for his approval or vetoes, and lawmakers will return to Tallahassee during the week of May 17 to consider a proposed gambling deal that Governor DeSantis reached with the Seminole Tribe of Florida. That deal, which would include allowing sports betting in Florida, could bring in $2.5 billion for the state over the next five years.

Higher Education Budget Issues

Bright Futures: $623.3 million maintains student awards at levels consistent with current law (100% of tuition and fees for Florida Academic Scholars and 75% for Florida Medallion Scholars), but eliminates funding for the textbook stipend, which has been provided at $300 each fall & spring semester for Florida Academic Scholars. This program began in the 1997-98 academic year with almost $44 million disbursed.

Dual Enrollment Scholarship: $15.5 million reimburses eligible postsecondary institutions for tuition and related costs for dual enrollment courses taken by certain high school students.

Randolph Bracy Ocoee Scholarship Program: $305,000 provides up to 50 scholarships for students who are direct descendants of victims of the Ocoee Election Day Riots in November 1920 and for current African-American residents of Ocoee. Sen. Bracy is a UCF alum.

Honorably Discharged Graduate Assistance Program
$1,000,000 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is provided for the Honorably Discharged Graduate Assistance Program, which is a recurring base appropriations project. Such funds are provided for supplemental need-based veteran educational benefits and shall be used to assist in the payment of living expenses during holiday and semester breaks for active duty and honorably discharged members of the Armed Forces who served on or after September 11, 2001. To ensure students in both public and private institutions have an opportunity to receive funding, allocations to institutions shall be prorated based on the number of total eligible students at eligible institutions.

Private Colleges & Universities: While the SACSCOC-accredited nonprofit postsecondary institutions will maintain current funding for "EASE Grants" providing an award of $2,841 per student, these institutions will be required to submit an annual accountability report including specific performance metrics. The ABLE Grants previously provided to certain for profit institutions was eliminated in the FY 21-22, and the specialty license plate program for these institutions was also eliminated.

State University System Budget & UCF
Good News: the 6% of general revenue "held back" by action of Governor DeSantis at the start of the current fiscal year will be returned in the coming weeks. This represents about $22 million for UCF.

SUS Performance Funds: The $265 million in "state investment" was funded as it has been at this level since 2018, and no proposed changed to the allocation method were successful in the end. However, the funding was made nonrecurring for FY 21-22.

Budget proviso: "$560,000,000 is provided for State University System Performance Based Incentives. The funds available for allocation to the universities based on the performance funding model shall consist of the state's investment of $265,000,000 in nonrecurring funds, plus an institutional investment of $295,000,000 in recurring funds to be redistributed from the base funding of the State University System. The Board of Governors shall allocate all appropriated funds for State University System Performance Based Incentives based on the requirements in section 1001.92, Florida Statutes."

State University System Reduction: After the opening budget proposals sought to reduce the state universities' base budget funding by more than $570 million, the final FY 2021-22 state budget bill contains one $18.5 million reduction for the SUS. The impact to UCF is a loss of $3,846,946 in recurring state funding.

This is a reduction in state funds used to compensate faculty over $200,000 (current limit for administrators) except for teaching faculty in instructional programs classified as:
• Computer Information Sciences and Support Services;
• Engineering; Engineering Technologies and Engineering-Related Fields;
• Florida Mental Health Institute;
• Health Professions and Related Programs;
• Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Fields;
• Mathematics;
• Nursing;
• Physical Sciences; or
• Medical school faculty or staff (current law).

The above list was developed by the House and included in the budget "conforming bill" HB 5601. The universities worked throughout the session to broaden this list without success.

An additional reduction to the state universities comes in the form of an increase in the employer's contribution to state retirement benefits mandated by the Legislature. We know that the impact to the SUS is estimated to reach $40.9 million.

UCF Lottery Base Funding **UCF E&G Base Funding**	**$65,359,993** **$194,175,216***
***UCF Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinic of Florida Veterans and First Responders**	**$1,050,000**
UCF Student & Other Fees Trust Fund Authority	**$318,133,474**
UCF COLLEGE OF MEDICINE **E&G** **Student & Other Fees Trust Fund** ****Crohn's & Colitis Research**	 **$31,104,247**** **$18,346,940** **$337,000**
CITF Fee Allocation	**$9,302,309**
Student Financial Assistance A minimum of 75% of the funds shall be allocated for need-based financial aid.	**$858,405**
UCF Autism Program	**$1,721,639**
Community School Grant Program Funds are provided to DOE to support the planning and implementation of community school programs pursuant to section 1003.64, F.S.	**$7,180,571**
Public Broadcasting Public Television Stations, $320,400 shall be allocated to each public television station recommended by the Commissioner of Education. Public Radio Stations shall be allocated $100,000 per station.	**$320,400** **$100,000**

Flexibility and Opportunity for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

The FY 2021-22 state budget "implementing bill" (**SB 2502**) includes additional authority for the upcoming new fiscal year as follows:

216.181 Approved budgets for operations and fixed capital outlay. —

(11)(f) Notwithstanding paragraph (b) and paragraph (2)(b), and for the 2021-2022 fiscal year only, the Legislative Budget Commission may increase the amounts appropriated to state agencies for fixed capital outlay projects using funds provide to the state from the General Revenue Fund. The projects must be for deferred maintenance needs in state, college, or university facilities and must be specifically identified in a funding plan submitted to the Legislative Budget Commission for approval. This paragraph expires July 1, 2022.

Deferred Maintenance Pot – From Federal Stimulus Finds

The nonrecurring sum of $350,000,000 is appropriated to Administered Funds to address negative economic impacts to the state resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic by investing in deferred maintenance needs in state, college, and university facilities. The funds shall be held in reserve. State agencies and the judicial branch are authorized to develop and submit to the Executive Office of the Governor a list of maintenance, repair, and renovation projects that will improve the health and safety of such facilities. Eligible projects include those which improve air quality to reduce the risk of viral and environmental health hazards; correct critical life safety issues; improve water and sewer infrastructure; mitigate environmental deficiencies; ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; or ensure compliance with building codes. The Executive Office of the Governor shall review the submitted project lists and develop a statewide funding plan. The funding plan shall be submitted to the Legislative Budget Commission no later than September 1, 2021, for approval. After the funding plan is approved by the Commission, 20 percent of the funds shall be released immediately. Budget amendments may be submitted for the additional release of funds pursuant to the provisions of chapter 216, Florida Statutes.

Tuition & Fee Waiver Legislation

HB 1261 was amended to conform to policy agreements between the chambers and the bill passed on Tuesday, April 27th. Below is a summary of the new tuition and fee waiver policy contained in HB 1261.

BOGO: Beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year, for every course in one of eight Programs of Strategic Emphasis in science, technology, engineering, or math, as adopted by the BOG, in which a student is enrolled, a state university must waive 100 percent of the tuition and fees for an equivalent course in such program for a student who: (1) is a resident for tuition purposes; (2) has earned at least 60 semester credit hours towards a baccalaureate degree within 2 academic years after initial enrollment at a Florida public postsecondary institution, and (3) enrolls in one of eight Programs of Strategic Emphasis.

The programs identified by the BOG must reflect the priorities of the state and be offered at a majority of state universities. A waiver granted under this subsection is applicable only for upper-level courses and up to 110 percent of the number of required credit hours of the baccalaureate degree program for which the student is enrolled.

Upon enrollment in a program of strategic emphasis, the tuition and fees waived under this subsection must be reported for state funding purposes under and must be disbursed to the student. The amount disbursed to the student will be equal to the award amount the student has received as a Florida Academic Scholar (100% of tuition and fees), and as a Florida Medallion Scholar (75% of tuition and fees). Each state university reports the number and value of all waivers granted annually to the BOG, and may earn incentive funding, subject to appropriation ($25 million provided for FY 21-22).

Free Seat Program: Veterans and active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces, active drilling members of the Florida National Guard, and nontraditional students (defined as not having been enrolled in a postsecondary institution for more than five years) are eligible for a tuition and fee waiver for one online course.

For all other courses in the program, a state university may not charge the student more than 75% of the tuition rate as specified in s. 1009.24(4) and 75% of the tuition differential pursuant to s. 1009.24(16), if the student remains enrolled at least part-time in the program during each academic year.

The student who qualifies for this tuition discount is eligible to receive the discount for up to 110 percent of the number of required credit hours of the degree program for which the student is enrolled.

The student must be a Florida resident, must not have previously earned a bachelor's degree, and must be enrolled in an online baccalaureate degree program. Fee waivers granted under this provision may not exceed 1,000 students systemwide each academic year.

Grandparents Waiver: Beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, a state university must waive the out-of-state fee for a student who:

(1) Has a grandparent who is a legal resident as defined in s. 1009.21(1).
(2) Earns a high school diploma comparable to a Florida standard high school diploma, or its equivalent, or completes a home education program.
(3) Achieves an SAT combined score no lower than the 89th national percentile on the SAT or achieves an ACT score concordant to the required SAT score using the latest published national concordance table developed jointly by the College Board and ACT, Inc. or if a state university accepts the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admission purposes, achieves a CLT score concordant to the required SAT score specified in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published scoring comparison developed by Classic Learning Initiatives.
(4) Beginning with students who initially enroll in the 2022 fall academic term and thereafter, enrolls as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.

This waiver is applicable for up to 110 percent of the number of required credit hours of the degree program for which the student is enrolled.

Before waiving the out-of-state fee, the state university shall require the student or the student's parent, if the student is a dependent child, to provide a written declaration pursuant to s. 92.525(2) attesting to the student's familial relationship to a grandparent who is a legal resident and any other corroborating documentation required by BOG regulation (a state university is not required to independently verify the statements contained in each declaration if the signatory declares it to be true under the penalties of perjury as required by s. 92.525(2). However, the state university may refer any signed declaration suspected of containing fraudulent representations to law enforcement.

Each state university must annually report to the BOG the number and value of all fee waivers granted under this law during the previous 12-month period. Beginning with students who initially enroll for the 2022-2023 academic year or thereafter, a state university must, within the nonresident student enrollment systemwide, prioritize the enrollment of a student who is granted a fee waiver under this subsection over an out-of-state student who is not eligible for an out-of-state fee waiver if the students have substantially similar academic and other credentials used in determining admission to the state university. Fee waivers granted pursuant to this program may not exceed 350 students systemwide each academic year.

For this purpose, "grandparent" means a person who has a legal relationship to a student's parent as the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of the student's parent.

Termination of an Out-of-State Fee Waiver
Benacquisto Scholarship Program: **HB 1261** provides that the 2021-2022 academic year is the last year of initial enrollment in a baccalaureate degree program for non-residents to be eligibility for in-state tuition.

State University Career Planning and Information
HB 1261 requires the Board of Governors to publicly publish an online dashboard presenting data, by academic discipline, of graduates of state universities, including specified information to include: (a) post-graduation median salary 1, 5, and 10 years after graduation, (b) median student loan debt, (c) debt-to-income ratio, (d) estimated monthly loan payment as a percentage of gross monthly income, and (e) the percentage of graduates who have continued their education beyond the baccalaureate level. The online dashboard must be available by January 1, 2022. A link to the dashboard must be prominently displayed on each state university's office of admissions website.

Additionally, each state university board of trustees must adopt procedures to connect undergraduate students to career planning, coaching, and related programs during the first academic year of the student's enrollment. Such procedures must be approved by the Board of Governors and include placing a hold on student registration before the end of the first year of each student's enrollment. To lift the hold and register for classes, each student must: register with the university's career center; complete a career readiness training module provided by the career center; be directed to the dashboard, and affirmatively indicate that he or she has been provided with the information required under this paragraph and is aware of the employment and wage prospects for his or her declared major. The Board of Governors of the State University System will review and approve each university's procedures by March 1, 2022.

New Duties Relating to State Financial Aid and Tuition Assistance Programs
HB 1261 creates a new section of law (s. 1009.46) setting out specific reporting, record-keeping and notification requirements. The new law also gives the DOE authority to suspend or revoke an institution's eligibility to participate in state-funded programs if the institution fails to provide the required audits, fails to resolve audit findings, or fails to timely provide statutorily required reports by established deadlines.

COVID-19 Liability & Prohibition Against Vaccine Mandates
COVID-19 Immunity for Educational Institutions: **HB 1261** which passed on April 27th contains additional COVID-19 liability protections for education, including the state universities and the Board of Governors. An

educational institution that has taken reasonably necessary actions in compliance with federal, state, or local guidance to diminish the impact or the spread of COVID-19 may not be held liable for, and shall be immune from, any civil damages, equitable relief, or other remedies relating to such actions.

In any action against an educational institution, the Board of Governors of the State University System, or the State Board of Education for the reimbursement of tuition or fees, invoices, catalogs, and general publications of an educational institution are not evidence of an express or implied contract to provide in-person or on-campus education and related services or access to facilities during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Prohibition Against Vaccine Mandates: The emergency management package, **SB 2006,** which has already been delivered to Governor DeSantis, contains a provision prohibiting educational institutions from requiring students or residents to provide any documentation certifying COVID-19 vaccination or post-infection recovery for attendance or enrollment, or to gain access to, entry upon, or service from such educational institution in this state. This provision does not otherwise restrict educational institutions from instituting screening protocols consistent with authoritative or controlling government-issued guidance to protect public health.

The Department of Health may impose a fine not to exceed $5,000 per violation. The prohibition does not apply to a health care provider as defined in s. 768.38; a service provider licensed or certified under s. 393.17, part III of chapter 401, or part IV of chapter 468; or a provider with an active health care clinic exemption under s. 400.9935. These references include clinical laboratories, health centers, health care practitioners and professionals, home health care aids, continuing care facilities, pharmacies, behavioral programs, medical transport services, radiological personnel, and health care clinics in nursing homes.

Foreign Influence

HB 7017 passed the Senate with no amendments on April 26th on a 39-0 vote, and the bill is on its way to the Governor's desk. Once signed, the bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

International Cultural Agreements

The bill prohibits participation in an agreement with a foreign country of concern by any state agency political subdivision, public school, state college, or state university that is authorized to expend state-appropriated funds or levy ad valorem taxes that:

- Constrains the freedom of contract of such public entity;
- Allows the curriculum or values of a program in the state to be directed or controlled by the foreign country of concern; or
- Promotes an agenda detrimental to the safety or security of the United States or its residents.

Prior to execution of any cultural exchange agreement with a foreign country of concern the substance of the agreement must be shared with federal agencies concerned with protecting national security or enforcing trade sanctions, embargoes, or other restrictions under federal law. If such federal agency provides information suggesting such agreement promotes an agenda detrimental to the safety or security of the United States or its residents, the public entity may not enter into the agreement.

The bill also prohibits any grant or donation conditioned upon participation in such program or endeavor. Each Florida institution or other public body will remain free to pursue the study of any language and culture apart from any such agreement or conditions.

Foreign Gifts and Grants to Education Institutions

The bill requires institutions of higher education to semiannually report, each January 31 and July 31, all foreign gifts, grants, and contracts valued at $50,000 or more. The requirement applies to all SUS institutions as well as separately governed branch campuses, centers, and institutes existing under the jurisdiction of the BOG.

Screening Foreign Research Staff

For institutions with a research budget in excess of $10 million, the bill requires the following applicants to be carefully screened with respect to past education, employment, and publication:

- Applicants seeking employment in research or research-related support positions.
- Graduate and undergraduate students applying for research or research-related support positions.
- Applicants for positions of visiting researcher who are citizens of a foreign country and who are not permanent residents of the United States or who are citizens or permanent residents of the United States who have any affiliation with an institution or program, or at least one year of prior employment or training, excepting employment or training by an agency of the United States government, in a foreign country of concern.

The screening must occur before interviewing the applicant or offering to the applicant a position of employment or of visiting researcher.

The bill requires the president or chief administrative officer of each state university to designate a research

integrity office (RSO) to review all submitted materials and take reasonable steps to verify all attendance, employment, publications, and contributions listed in a foreign applicant's application. The bill sets out actions which would be considered as "reasonable steps."

The state university or applicable entity may also direct the RSO to approve applicants for hire based on a risk-based determination considering the nature of the research and the background and ongoing affiliations of applicant. The bill requires an operational audit of the implementation of the screening requirements within the first three years after the effective date of the requirement.

Monitoring Foreign Travel and Foreign Activities of Research Staff

The bill requires every university with a research budget of $10 million or more to establish an international travel approval and monitoring program similar to the program established at UF. The bill requires preapproval and screening by an RSO for any employment-related foreign travel or employment-related foreign activities engaged in by all faculty, researchers, and research department staff.

Intellectual Freedom/Viewpoint Diversity

The Senate passed the House Bill (**HB 233**), and the bill is on its way to the Governor's desk. Once signed, the bill would take effect July 1, 2021. As previously reported, the bill

- Requires the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to select or create a survey to be administered by all Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities annually. Beginning September 1, 2022, the results of this survey are to be compiled by the SBE and the BOG, respectively, and published each September.
- Prohibits the SBE, the BOG, FCS institutions, and state universities from shielding students, faculty, or staff from protected free speech.
- Authorizes the recording, for specified purposes, of video and audio in classrooms at Florida's public institutions of higher education, while clarifying that the nonconsensual recording of video and audio in classrooms is permissible. Furthermore, faculty research, lectures, writings, and commentary, whether published or unpublished, are protected expressive rights. Any person injured by the unauthorized publishing of video and audio can seek civil remedy including injunctive relief and damages.
- Requires that state university student government associations provide elected or appointed officers a direct appeal, with no conditions precedent, to a senior university administrator of any discipline, suspension, or removal from office. Furthermore, all FCS institutions and state universities are required to adopt student codes of conduct that meet a set of minimum due process protections including, but not limited to, a presumption of innocence for accused students, a burden of proof that must be carried by the institution, and a right to an impartial hearing officer.

Bonuses for SUS Employees

The House approved **SB 52** on April 28 on an 83-32 vote. The bill has a July 1, 2021 effective date if approved by the Governor. The bill creates a new section of law, 1012.978, which authorizes a university board of trustees to implement a bonus scheme based on awards for work performance or employee recruitment and retention. The board of trustees must submit to the BOG the bonus scheme, including the evaluation criteria by which a bonus will be awarded. The BOG must approve any bonus scheme before its implementation.

Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program and Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities

SB 52 provides flexibility in how the Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program (FPCTP) grant funds can be awarded in order to better support existing programs. Specifically, the bill removes the restriction that Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program (FPCTP) grant funds be used only for start-up and enhancement costs; and removes the maximum value for such FPCTP grants, instead leaving the amounts to be as determined in the General Appropriations Act.

Athletics

On the penultimate day of the session, the House amended the "Fairness in Women's Sports Act" onto **SB 1028**, a charter school bill. The Senate then approved the bill. Another amendment on SB 1028 delayed the implementation date for Florida's NIL bill until July 1, 2022. On the last day of the session amendments were attached to HB 845 to return the implementation date for NIL rights to July 1, 2021.

Implementation of 2020's **SB 646** Intercollegiate Athlete Compensation and Rights

As provided in the original 2020 legislation, **HB 845** provides that the implementation date for SB 646 will remain July 1, 2021. Since Florida became the state with the earliest effective date for granting these rights, several states have now passed similar bills with a July 2021 effective date. As of April 29th, these states include Alabama, Arizona, Georgia, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island and Texas.

Fairness in Women's Sports Act

Interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural, or club athletic teams or sports that are sponsored by a public secondary school or public postsecondary institution must be expressly designated as one of the following based on the

biological sex at birth of team members: (1) Males, men, or boys; (2) Females, women, or girls; or (3) Coed or mixed, including both males and females.

Athletic teams or sports designated for males, men, or may be open to students of the female sex. Athletic teams or sports designated for females, women, or girls may not be open to students of the male sex. The bill creates multiple causes of action for students and the institutions.

Membership in Associations

In the last hours of the session, an amendment was added to **HB 845** to provide that state funds may not be used to join or maintain membership in an association whose decisions or proposed decisions are a result of, or in response to, actions proposed or adopted by the Legislature, if such decisions or proposed decisions will result in a negative fiscal impact to the state. The BOG must notify any association if its actions or proposed actions may require public postsecondary institutions to withdraw from the association in accordance with this subsection.

Teacher Preparation Programs

SB 52 expands the School Community Professional Development Act (1012.98) to allow a public or private college or university with a teacher preparation program approved pursuant to s. 1004.04, may also develop a professional development system that includes a master plan for in-service activities. The system and in-service plan must be submitted to the commissioner for approval pursuant to state board rules.

HB 1159 provides additional requirements for the core curricula of teacher preparation programs and EPI competency-based certification programs. The bill requires that the core curricula address:

- Strategies for the early identification of students in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge and the referral of such students to a mental health professional for support.
- Strategies to support the use of technology in education and distance learning.

The bill removes the requirements that an applicant for a teacher preparation program pass the GKT prior to admission. Participants in teacher preparation programs must now complete the GKT requirement prior to graduation from the program. Accordingly, the bill removes the authority for teacher preparation programs to waive admission requirements. The bill adds a new area of instruction that an EPI may provide, namely, instruction and professional development for part-time or full-time nondegreed teachers of career programs.

The bill allows applicants for teacher certification to satisfy the mastery of general knowledge requirement by submitting documentation of receipt of a master's or higher degree from an accredited postsecondary institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program resulting in a baccalaureate degree or higher.

The bill exempts an applicant that completes an EPI program approved by the DOE and is rated highly effected in their performance evaluation from the requirement to take or achieve a passing score on the professional education competency examination before awarded a professional certificate. The bill authorizes an organization of private schools or a consortium of charter schools to develop an alternative preparation program for certified teachers. Programs developed by these entities must be reviewed and approved by the DOE in the same manner as a program developed by a district school board.

University Lab Schools and Charter Schools

SB 1028 expands the current limitation of one lab school per university, allowing a university to establish a lab school to serve families of a military installation that is within the same county as a branch campus that offers programs from the university's college of education.

Additionally, SB 1028 provides that a state university may, upon approval by the Department of Education, solicit applications and sponsor a charter school to meet regional education or workforce demands by serving students from multiple school districts.

Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program

SB 52 establishes this new program providing that, beginning in the 2021 fall term, the program will reimburse eligible postsecondary institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by private school or home education program secondary students during the fall or spring terms.

Beginning in the 2022 summer term, the program will reimburse institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by public school, private school, or home education program secondary students during the summer term. Student participating in a dual enrollment program must meet the minimum eligibility requirements specified in s. 1007.271 in order for the institution to receive a reimbursement.

The FY 2021-22 state budget bill provides $15,550,000 for this program.

Civics Education Bills
SB 1108 revises several areas of education law, primarily relating to graduation requirements and statewide standardized assessments. With respect to the state universities the bill amends the civic literacy requirement for post-secondary education to include both an assessment and a course, as opposed to one or the other. It creates a process to allow students in high school to earn the civic literacy requirement before enrolling in a public college or university in this state, and it includes a provision regarding the character development curriculum required for public school students.

Issues That Didn't Make it to the Finish Line
Budget cuts targeting:

- Distance Learning Fee Revenue ($69,845,373)
  UCF's share of the loss would total $13,079,286
- 75% of CARES Act/HERRF funds allocated to each university ($50,614,422)
  UCF's share of the loss would total $11,068,822
- Reduction Based on Courses Not Associated with Programs of Strategic Emphasis ($83,963,724)
  UCF's share of the loss would total $18,984,784

Public Records and Meetings/Postsecondary Presidential Search
Senate took up the House bill on Tuesday of the last week of session. **HB 997** needed approval of 2/3 of the chamber to pass because it is an exemption from the public records and meetings law. The bill failed on a vote of 25-14. The minority party voted as a block against the bill.

Bright Futures
SB 86 State Financial Aid (Bright Futures) which would have removed the scholarship award amount from law had no support in the House.

Retirement – Closing FRS Defined Benefit
SB 84 would have ended the ability to enroll in the FRS defined benefit plan for new hires on or after July 1, 2022.

SB 1568 Department of Health
This bill carrying the DOH legislative priorities got bogged down with marijuana amendments in the Senate. Unfortunately, the bill also carried SUS amendments to address a critical issue by amending sections 490.003, 490.005, and 490.051, Florida Statutes, to clarify the educational requirements for psychologists applying for licensure by examination or endorsement.

Data Privacy
The bill included several provisions giving consumers more control over their private data collected by companies but was fiercely opposed by the state's business lobby.

A complete bill tracking chart, and further information on specific legislation of interest, will be provided promptly upon request.

Janet Owen

Vice President

Government & Community Relations

Office: (407) 823-3733

Cell: (904) 699-9750

janet.owen@ucf.edu

Charge On!